

# Serving You in the People's House

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U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) with her first granddaughter, Hailey Isabel Roller, born on Sunday, Jan. 18, to her daughter Caity and her husband Andrew. In this week's Connection, Comstock reflects on her first few weeks in Congress.

Chocolate  
Lover's  
Paradise

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Residents Air  
Concerns to  
Legislators

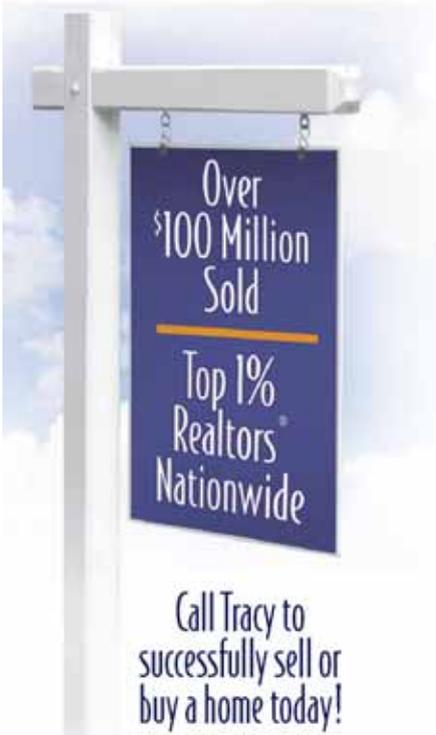
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PHOTO BY NORMAN BAYNE

**U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock being sworn-in by the Speaker of the House John Boehner.**



PHOTO BY NORMAN BAYNE

**U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock with family in her Capitol Hill office.**

## Serving You in the People's House

### Barbara Comstock reflects on her first few weeks in Congress.

BY BARBARA COMSTOCK  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE (R-10)

January 2015 marks quite a few new beginnings for the Comstock family – a new Congress, a new job representing the 10th District of Virginia in Congress for me, and our first granddaughter, Hailey Isabel Roller, born on Sunday, Jan. 18, to my daughter Caity and her husband Andrew. A new year, full of new hopes and new beginnings. I have never been so optimistic and committed to getting this country back on track. We must create a country full of opportunity and hope for every child and grandchild in this country. As I've met with my colleagues, it's clear that there is a strong commitment to working together and getting things done for our constituents — first and foremost — growing a healthy economy, helping our hardworking taxpayers make ends meet, dealing with the growing international threats we face, and finding ways we can produce a more efficient and effective government.

#### OPENING DAY AND SWEARING-IN:

Standing in the halls of Congress with my family and our family priest on Jan. 6, preparing for my swearing in, we couldn't help but see and hear the echoes of the past and consider the heavy responsibility on all who are privileged to serve in these halls. Only a little more than 10,000 people have ever served in Congress throughout our history. It is truly an honor to serve as the first woman to be the 10th District's congresswoman. One of the best things about my job is that unlike many of my colleagues, I



C-SPAN PHOTO

**U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) speaking on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.**

get to go back to my district every night and see my constituents at the grocery store, at church, driving into work, on the Metro, at restaurants or just about any place I may go. The people in my district also reflect a broad and diverse group of experts who can provide me with great guidance in any number of issue areas.

On Jan. 6, our first day of session, we held an open house for 10th District constituents. In between meeting constituents, I had the opportunity to do interviews with C-SPAN, and NBC 4 News talking about my first day in Congress and what it was like to be a freshman congresswoman. As noon-time approached, it was time to head to the House Floor. After Speaker Boehner was nominated and sworn in, all of the other Members of Congress jointly took our oaths of office on the House floor together. There were many young children with their parents on the House floor, while parents and spouses were watching us in the House gallery.

The House got right down to work that

afternoon, voting on The Hires More Heroes Act. This important legislation provides a great opportunity to help both veterans and small businesses. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 71 percent of small business owners say Obamacare makes it difficult for them to hire more employees. The Hires More Heroes Act simply allows veterans to stay on the healthcare program provided through the VA or Tricare. The legislation passed unanimously in the House of Representatives. Following the vote I went back to my office and met with more constituents and joined with family and friends in town at numerous celebratory events.

**MY COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:** I am fortunate that my committee assignments for this session reflect many of the same issues that I worked on in the Virginia General Assembly that are very important to my District. I have been appointed to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, the Science, Space and Technology Committee

and the House Administration Committee which oversees the U.S. Capitol itself as well as the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian where many of my constituents work. In my second week, Chairman Lamar Smith appointed me to chair the Research and Development Subcommittee on the Science, Space and Technology Committee. Having worked extensively with our local technology community and having served as the chairwoman of the Science and Technology Committee in the House of Delegates, I was pleased to be able to continue work in this area and particularly focus on how we can best promote and create the jobs of the 21st century. One of the first subcommittee hearings we will have will deal with the challenging issue of cybersecurity.

On the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, we will be tackling a highway bill this year, as well as the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration. Both of these have wide-ranging impacts in our area and I am pleased I will be able to serve on this important committee at this critical time. One of the first bills the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee brought to the House floor was the The Keystone XL Pipeline Act at the end of our first week. The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee shares jurisdiction on this important legislation with the Energy and Commerce Committee. My first brief speech on the House floor was in support of the Keystone XL Pipeline. Republicans and Democrats alike, as well as unions like the Teamsters and LIUNA, and groups such as the Tea Party, and the Chamber of Commerce all support this important project. Why? Because it is a jobs bill — plain and simple. Keystone XL passed by a strong bipartisan vote. Now the Senate is expected to pass it with a strong bipartisan majority and it will

SEE COMSTOCK, PAGE 5

**Dozens of community members came to the town hall meeting on Jan. 17 to air their concerns to local legislators.**



PHOTOS BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION

# Residents Air Concerns to Legislators

**Town Hall meeting held in McLean.**

BY REENA SINGH  
THE CONNECTION

**S**ix local state legislators listened to the concerns of a room full of people last Saturday.

Several delegates and state senators took part in a Town Hall meeting on Jan. 17 at the McLean Community Center to talk about some of their bills and find out what issues their constituents thought were important.

“We are representing your views, your values,” said Del. Mark Keam (D-35).

The other legislators at the meeting were state Sen. Janet Howell (D-32), Del. Rip Sullivan (D-48), Del. Marcus Simon (D-53), Del. Kathleen Murphy (D-34) and state Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31).

At the beginning of the meeting, the legislators talked briefly about what they have been doing in the short amount of time the General Assembly has been in session.

Simon said he was asked to carry the one handgun a month bill because of his work on the handgun safety committee.

He did not mention the bill he introduced to raise the minimum wage to \$15.15. The current minimum wage in the state is \$7.25.

Favola said she will be focusing on child care issues and a bill to end sexual violence on campuses across Virginia.

Newcomer Murphy mentioned her excitement for everything down in Richmond.

“I have been your delegate for a week, and it is the most gratifying and rewarding thing ever,” she said.

Howell said the fact it is an election year could make the session interesting.

“It has the possibility of being a fascinating, fascinating session,” she said.

Many community members told the legislators just what they should do with rest of their session.

Sharon Cummings, local mother and advocate, talked about a bill she wants the legislators to push called Conner’s Law, which has divorced spouses pay child support for children with autism.



**Local legislators get ready for the town hall meeting last Saturday at the McLean Community Center.**

“There’s no magic age where children start learning,” she said, noting that her 22-year-old son, Conner, just learned how to tie his own shoes.

Another advocate for loved ones with disabilities, Anne Bolster talked about the value of Northern Virginia Training Center, which is scheduled to close next year. She was among a handful of people at the meeting to ask legislators to keep the center open or find an alternative for the most fragile clients.

“I’m the older sister and legal guardian of a client of NVTC,” she said. “She has lived there for 40 years. It is her home.”

She said that the law closing the center wants the clients to integrate themselves into the community, a feat she noted would be impossible for people like her sister.

“There just aren’t enough IFC’s in the community for these people to move into,” she said.

Al Robinson told the legislators that they should remember they represent the people in their district.

“Remember the interests of the taxpayers,” he said.

Jack Crosby, representing Wolf Trap Woods, came to the meeting to discuss the future of the Route 7 widening project.

“It’s going to be major work,” he said. “We have very serious concerns. We are concerned about the exits and entrances of our neighborhoods.”

Some of the exits to neighborhoods along Route 7 tentatively may only be able to turn one way, then do a U-turn.

VIEWPOINTS

## Area Residents Reflect on Big Issues for General Assembly Session

— REENA SINGH

**Mary Beth Testa, policy consultant, Falls Church**

“We have a crucial moment to do something about not only the safety in our childcare, but the safety of all kids in the Commonwealth of Virginia.”



**Greg Brandon, Chairman of local democratic committee, McLean**

“Pre-K through 14 education. Higher education funding is one of my top concerns. I’d like to see an increase in the tobacco tax, the cigarette tax. We’re the lowest in the region by far.”



**Tom O’Reilly, semi-retired, Arlington**

“Right now, we’re working on solar power and renewable energy in the Commonwealth. Virginia has 15 megawatts of solar installed while North Carolina has over 800 megawatts. We want to see the state become moderate. We are so far behind the rest of the country.”



**Kathie Westpheling, semi-retired, Vienna**

“We are concerned about the transportation fund and the collaboration between the homeowners and (Virginia Department of Transportation) continues.”



# Comstock: First Few Weeks on the Hill

FROM PAGE 3

go to the President's desk. While the President has already threatened a veto before we even passed the bill, I would hope that the broad bipartisan support for this jobs bill would be cause for the President's reconsideration.

**GROWING RANKS OF WOMEN IN CONGRESS:** This year marks the first time there have been over 100 women serving in Congress. In the first weeks, we had a meeting of the bipartisan Women's Caucus and we discussed issues where we can work together. Over the holidays, I had already gotten together with a Democrat friend of mine, Rep. Debbie Dingell, to discuss how we can work together on my Young Women's Leadership Program that I first started in 2013. I look forward to continuing to work on this program to expose young women to women leaders who serve in a broad range of professions and we will be starting our application process again this spring. As my first weeks coincided with my daughter Caity and her husband Andrew preparing for the birth of their daughter, Hailey, I feel even more blessed to have this privilege to serve our community and prepare for the best future for the next generation.

**KEEP IN TOUCH:** As has been the case for the five years I served as the delegate for the 34th District, my door will always be open for all of my constituents in Virginia's 10th District. I want to continue the great tradition of Congressman Frank Wolf's



PHOTO BY NORMAN BAYNE

**U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock with constituents at her open house in the Cannon House Office Building.**

much heralded constituent service. That is why we hired many of his district staff to continue in their positions. We are opening up an office in Sterling at 21430 Cedar Drive, Suite 218, and if you are on Capitol Hill stop by 226 Cannon House Office Building to say hello. We also will have a Winchester office that will open in March. Fortunately, we were given the same phone number as Congressman Wolf's 202-225-5136 and you can follow what's going on in Congress by visiting [Comstock.House.Gov](http://Comstock.House.Gov). If you are on Facebook go to [facebook.com/RepBarbaraComstock](http://facebook.com/RepBarbaraComstock) and "Like" our page and if you are on Twitter go to [twitter.com/RepComstock](http://twitter.com/RepComstock) to follow our activities. Once again, I look forward to serving you in the people's house.

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**2ND ANNUAL Boys & Girls Club Fairfax Casino Night**  
**Friday, March 6, 2015**  
**The Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington/Fairfax Region help hundreds of at-risk youth every day right here in Fairfax County.

**Casino Night is a fun-filled evening featuring:**

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 Tickets: [www.bgcgw.org/fairfax/casino-night/](http://www.bgcgw.org/fairfax/casino-night/)

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**We invite your organization to consider sponsorship opportunities for our 2nd Annual Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, Fairfax Region Casino Night.**

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# OPINION

## Baby Steps, Not Enough

Supervisors should take action, not defer to “outside expert,” on absurd and outrageous behavior of police department.

Finally, now that the Fairfax County Police Department has taken stonewalling into the arena of the absurd, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has at least said it is time for change. It is a step, but a step that continues the appearance of obfuscation if not outright obstruction.

John Geer of Springfield was shot dead inside the doorway of his own home in Springfield on Aug. 29, 2013. Following an argument with his longtime partner, police arrived at Geer's home and spoke with him for more than half an hour while he stood in his doorway, unarmed, with his hands raised and resting on the frame. As he began to lower his hands, by all accounts still at shoulder level, he was shot in the chest and died in his house without receiving medical attention.

It took more than 16 months, a \$12 million civil suit by Geer's family and a court order to get the first tiny bit of information on the shooting, which came earlier this month. Police named the police officer who fired the shot that killed John Geer.

The short written statement by Police Chief Edwin C. Roessler Jr. included some very troubling references that appear to blame the

### EDITORIAL

shooting on the fact that Geer was a known gun owner. At least 35 percent of Virginia residents are gun owners; are they all more vulnerable if for some reason police are called to their homes?

Now Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova has asked the County Executive to locate “independent expertise in the field of police department operations and, specifically, in the area of policies and procedures with respect to information disclosures in the case of police-involved shootings.”

We agree with Supervisor Pat Herrity, who says: “As elected officials it is our job to make policy, not hire an ‘outside expert’ to do our job for us. ... We currently have the resources of a professional staff at our disposal.” Herrity also notes that the proposal does not contain a provision for public input, and that many county residents have researched this topic and qualify as experts.

A few minutes of research shows, for example, that the National Association of Police Chiefs, for example, has extensive documentation about best practices in a variety of police shooting incidents. (Naming the officer involved after 48 hours is among the recommendations.)

The problem goes beyond Fairfax County, and beyond police shootings.

The first paragraph of Virginia Freedom of Information Act, passed by the General Assembly in 1968, states that all public records “shall be presumed open.” But the legislation includes an exemption that allows police to withhold “complaints, memoranda, correspondence, case files or reports, witness statements and evidence.”

Police officials in Fairfax, Arlington and Alexandria have adopted what they call a “blanket” approach to using their exemption. That means they have decided to withhold any document they can without any analysis of whether they should, whether the case is open or closed, whether they are about a “police-involved shooting” or information requested by a family about a homicide victim, or even about routine police activity in a neighborhood. Not even defense attorneys or victims of crimes can gain access to actual police reports.

This is about lack of accountability and denying the public access to information that must be made public.

Leaders of police departments here are engaged in serious and significant abuse of power. It's time for elected officials to represent the public and impose change on those who would hide behind a culture of secrecy.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Volunteer for the Games

To the Editor:

I love this community. There are so many ways to serve a community as diverse and as vibrant as ours. I recently competed in a special election to succeed Congresswoman Comstock. While I came up short in the vote count, largely due to the unfortunate weather on Election Day, I am as inspired to serve as I was on that day. My passion to serve others only strengthens with each pursuit.

Long before I decided to run for office, I have served the people of

Fairfax and Loudoun counties through my work on multiple not-for-profit boards. Two are particularly relevant to some big things happening in 2015. I am the president of Volunteer Fairfax (www.volunteerfairfax.org) and a member of the board of directors of The World Police and Fire Games (www.fairfax2015.com). Volunteer Fairfax and The Games organization have partnered around the massive volunteer recruitment and coordination effort. We require over 4,000 volunteers

to execute The Games and to demonstrate to the world that there is no better place to host a global sporting event than right here in the

suburbs of Washington D.C.

The Games are coming to Fairfax and Loudoun Counties June 26 through July 5 of this year. Over 12,000 athletes from around the globe will compete in 61 events. If you're serious about economic development then you need to support The Games as they are expected to have a direct economic impact of \$60M to \$80M

over a 10-day period, particularly to small business and our hospitality industry. I can also think of no better way in 2015 to demonstrate our commitment to the people of the emergency management and first responder communities than to be involved in The Games. Please take a moment to learn more about both Volunteer Fairfax and The World Police and Fire Games and find your way to get involved.

Craig Parisot  
McLean

### VOLUNTEER EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Fairfax County's free **Family Caregiver Telephone Support Group** meets by phone on **Tuesday, Feb. 10, 7-8 p.m.** to discuss Caregiving and Basic Tax Concerns. The guest speaker is an AARP Tax Aide Program Specialist who will share some basic tax information, as well as when to get an accountant or attorney involved. Register beforehand at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices) and click on Telephone Caregiver Support Group. Call 703-324-5484, TTY 711.

The **Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program** needs volunteer advocates for residents

in assisted living and nursing facilities. Training is provided in March. Call **703-324-5861**, TTY 711 or email [Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov). Find more information on the program at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ltc](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ltc).

The **Lewinsville Senior Center** in McLean needs an **office assistant** and instructors for the following classes: Current Events, Knitting/Crocheting, Certified Arthritis Exercise, Ballroom Dance, Square Dance, and Tai Chi. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call **703-324-5406**, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The **Gum Springs Senior Center**

in **Alexandria** needs a **Spanish teacher** on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call **703-324-5406**, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The **Wakefield Senior Center** in **Annandale** needs **Bilingual English/Spanish Activity Leaders**, a **Chair Exercise Instructor**, and certified instructors for classes in **Ballroom Dance** and **Pilates**. Volunteer instructor positions could lead to part-time employment. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call **703-324-5406**, TTY 711 or visit

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

**Korean Meals on Wheels** needs **Korean-speaking volunteers** to deliver meals in **Centreville, Reston and Annandale**. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call **703-324-5406**, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://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](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

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## PEOPLE

# Blurred Lines

## McLean doctor writes about what he knows.

BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO  
THE CONNECTION

The unassuming house right off Chain Bridge Road in McLean has a small sign bearing Dr. Robert Comunale's name in the front yard. For passersby or the mail carrier, it is just a sign to indicate who lives in the house. But for his patients, it is where they turn to see the doctor, who maintains a practice in the back of his home. Comunale is semi-retired, which according to him, means he takes four hours off on Sundays. His long-time secretary, Virginia, said that it is very rare to have a break in the influx of patients he receives daily. Comunale is an aviation medical examiner. These are doctors who medically clear pilots for flight.

But what belies the house more than the medical practice in the back is the doctor who masquerades as a writer. Or is it the other way around? An author of six books, Comunale writes "about what he knows and embellishes it."

"Characters write the book ... [they] write the story for you," he said. Taken from his life, starting from his childhood in the New York/New Jersey area, Comunale interweaves fact and fiction, blurring the lines between what is real and what is plot.

His publisher Phil Berardelli said that Comunale has "effectively melded his personal history and his imaginations."

He started writing about 10 years ago, when he reconnected with his high school friend, who in his books is the character "Edison," and just after his roommate at the Medical College of Virginia died from an auto accident. Comunale was going to meet his old roommate, who had just retired from practice, to celebrate. Instead, "I drove to his funeral," he said.

His friend's death got him thinking about his high school friend and looked him up. "It was like not a day had passed by," he said of the reunion. "Edison" challenged him to write a story about a vacation they never took. What came out was the incipient story that would grow into his first book, "Requiem for the Bone Man." It would also become the first of what he calls the Safehaven trilogy.

Comunale, now in his 70s, cryptically references the inspiration behind the charac-



PHOTO BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO/THE CONNECTION

**McLean doctor and author Robert Comunale writes about what he knows in his novels, shown in front, while behind him are patient charts.**

ters in his novels but never breaks the confidentiality that is the bastion of his profession. However, they are recognizable characters in the D.C. and Northern Virginia landscape — the Capitol Hill worker, the overzealous bureaucrat, the federal employee whose agency cannot be named. His more unusual patients and cases are often woven in the narrative, he said.

"He's had such experience in dealing with people that he's developed some really keen insight in human nature that he brings to his books," said Berardelli.

To find out who they are, Comunale said, "Read the books," which are available from Mountain Lake Press, <http://mountainlakepress.com/buyourbooks.html>, and on Amazon.

## Two Potomac School Seniors Honored for Science Research

It's been a banner year for Ashley Rodriguez and Josh Tarplin, two seniors in The Potomac School's Science and Engineering Research Center (SERC) program. Over the past few months, Rodriguez and Tarplin's two-year independent research projects have earned them awards and scholarships from some of the most prestigious competitions in the country.

On Jan. 9, Rodriguez's research on hemangiosarcoma, an aggressive cancer in dogs, placed first in the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) regional finals, held at Georgetown University. She received a \$2,000 scholarship and will advance to the JSHS national competition in April.

Rodriguez's work was also recognized in the Siemens high school science, math, and technology competition, where she was named a regional finalist and a national semifinalist.

She was one of just 97 regional finalists nationwide, and one of only five Virginia students selected based on their individual research projects. In November, Rodriguez traveled to MIT to present her findings at the Siemens national semifinals. Although she was not selected as a national finalist, her research impressed many, garnering praise from MIT's dean of admissions and the CEO of Siemens. "Everyone was in awe of Ashley's accomplishments," said her advisor, Dr. Isabelle Cohen. "She truly represented the best of Potomac."

Tarplin also competed in the JSHS regional finals on Jan. 9 and was awarded fourth place for his work on the effect of hyaluronic acid on human mesenchymal progenitor cells' differentiation, a method to improve cartilage regeneration in patients with traumatically obtained extremity wounds. He will present a poster on his research at nationals.

Earlier this month, Tarplin was named a semifinalist in the Intel Science Talent Search 2015, a pre-college science and math competition. He was one of only 300 semifinalists selected from a pool of more than 1,800 entrants nationwide. He received a \$1,000 award from Intel, with an additional \$1,000 presented to The Potomac School. Later this month, Intel will select 40 students as finalists; they will compete for more than \$1 million in additional awards.

The Potomac School is an independent K-12 college-preparatory school in McLean. Now in its fifth year, the Potomac's Science and Engineering Research Center (SERC) program is one of three selective advanced programs offered by Potomac's Upper School. (The other two are the Visual and Performing Arts



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Potomac School seniors Ashley Rodriguez and Josh Tarplin pictured at the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) regional finals, held at Georgetown University.**

Concentration and the Global Perspectives and Citizenship Program.) SERC was created to give students opportunities to do long-term independent research, work in a professional lab, and stretch their minds. "The program is for students who want to take on some open questions and do more than just coursework," said Douglas Cobb, chair of the Upper School Science Department.

After taking biology as freshmen, students enter SERC as sophomores, taking two courses — one in accelerated physics and chemistry, the other focused on developing the experimental design for their research proposal. They also secure a mentor in the wider scientific community — an expert in their field of interest who will assist with their research and provide equipment, materials, or lab space.

Rodriguez was mentored by Dr. Jaime Modiano, head of the renowned veterinary lab at the University of Minnesota. Tarplin was mentored by Dr. Leon Nesti, a chief surgeon at the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases.

# College Prep for All

The ANA Project offers college test preparation tools to students at all income levels.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

Amir Mousavi of Arlington, owner of Langley Prep, a provider of private, in-home tutoring for standardized tests, says students with limited financial resources are often at a disadvantage when it comes to preparing for college admissions examinations such as the SAT and the ACT.

"My average SAT improvement is 300 points," said Mousavi. "There are parents who can afford to spend thousands of dollars on private test prep tutors like me. Their kids perform best on tests. Middle income parents can afford classes, which are better than nothing, but low income students can't afford anything."

Mousavi founded The ANA Project, named after the first three students he tutored free-of-charge, to offer quality standardized college test preparation tools to students at all income levels. The web-based program is an online re-

source for SAT and ACT preparation materials.

A graduate of Langley High School in McLean, and Vanderbilt University in Tennessee, Mousavi believes economics should not play a role in college preparation. In addition to the ANA Project, he tutors an average of two pro-bono students each quarter.

"The two most important factors for college admissions are test scores and GPA (grade point average)," said Mousavi. "High schools don't deal with test prep as much anymore. It's been privatized by companies that are looking to make money."

Ariana Kuhnsman, one of Mousavi's pro-bono students, says she



PHOTO COURTESY OF AMIR MOUSAVI  
**Private, in-home coaching for standardized tests is credited with helping students achieve high scores. Amir Mousavi of Langley Test Prep is one local instructor who offers these services.**

improved her test score by 400 points and earned a spot at The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg.

"The most valuable thing I learned was what specific areas of the test I needed to focus on versus what I already was doing well," she said. "Becoming comfortable

with the time pressure of the exam by learning how to work effectively was also a big help."

Mousavi believes that tailoring educational programs to the needs of a variety of students can lead to success.

"My pie-in-the-sky, long-term



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## Honors Orchestra Concert

Eleven students represented Langley High School in the District XII Honors Orchestra Concert on Jan. 10, at Wakefield High School. From left - front row: Elizabeth Chiu (violin), Jean Cho (assistant concertmaster), Hailey Lee (cello); middle row: Katherine Quion (principal viola), Emily Lu (violin), Tarra Olfat (viola), Brooke Baird (violin); back row: Arnold Leigh (cello), Daniel Chen (violin), Kevin Le (viola), Brent Davis (cello). Not pictured: Nora Dell (alternate violin), Aaron Grossman (alternate violin) and Patrick Quion (alternate cello).

goal is to have a functioning non-profit and to get the website used as a one-stop shop for test prep," said Mousavi. More information on the ANA project can be found at [www.theanaproject.com](http://www.theanaproject.com).



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## Marshall Academy CyberPatriots Advance to the National Competition

Students from Marshall, a Governor's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Academy, are advancing to the national round of the annual CyberPatriot Competition. They are doing so after two teams were awarded first and third place in the state competition, and after a long day of regional competition that took place on Saturday, Jan. 17.

In the various rounds of competition, teams had up to six hours to locate and secure cybersecurity vulnerabilities within images representing several different operating systems, for a maximum score of 300 points. Competitors at Marshall on Saturday also came from James Madison High School and McLean High School.

"The club teaches its members how to do this," said Quiana Dang, 15, on Saturday. Dang is a sophomore and vice president of Marshall's Cybersecurity Club. Marshall's club has several teams, including an all-girls team.

Ryan Walters, a former Air Force captain who now runs a cyber-company, wanted a way to bring cybersecurity into the classroom. With the help of his son, Jacob, Walters started Marshall's Cybersecurity Club. The club not only potentially produces



PHOTOS BY MARISSA BEALE/THE CONNECTION

**From left: Marshall Academy students Paul Benoit, 17; Joshua Shepherd, 18; Khang Lieu, 18; Jacob Walters, 17; and Michael Bailey, 17, won first place in the state round and ranked fifth overall in the nation in the CyberPatriot VII Competition. After Saturday's regional competition, these FCPS students ranked third in the nation.**

the next generation of information technology (IT) experts, but also the next generation of leaders.

"They all have different backstories," said

Walters of the students. "One was an avid gamer, but now leads one of the top-scoring CyberPatriot teams in the nation."

These students are developing skills at a

critical time when the demand for IT experts is growing quickly. Internships start for those as young as 16 years old at Northrop Grumman, a global security company providing cyber and aerospace defense technology. The financial cost of cyber defense continues to climb.

"All of these students are going to school for cybersecurity," said Walters, who also serves as a mentor for Marshall's Cybersecurity Club.

The team composed of seniors Michael Bailey, Paul Benoit, Joshua Shepard, Khang Lieu, Jacob Walters won first place in the state round, and after Saturday's regional competition, the team ranked third in the nation, and will be advancing to the national round in Washington, D.C.

Marshall Academy teams demonstrated skillful teamwork, critical thinking skills, and technical knowledge, earning spots in the platinum tier (representing the highest scoring teams).

Cyberpatriot was created back in 2009 by the Air Force Association to inspire high school students toward future careers in cybersecurity. To learn more about CyberPatriot, visit <http://www.uscyberpatriot.org/>.

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# CALENDAR

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

## THROUGH SATURDAY/JAN. 31

**Exhibit of Colorful Nutcrackers.** 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Closed on Tuesdays. Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. See an amazing array of nutcrackers, both old and new, in a colorful case exhibit. Did you ever wonder where the craze for collecting nutcracker dolls came from? Nutcrackers have a fascinating history. The first nutcrackers were produced to crack nuts more effectively and the oldest known metal example, on exhibit in Tarent, Italy, is from the third or fourth century B.C. The Leavenworth Nutcracker Museum in Leavenworth, Washington, shows a bronze Roman nutcracker dated between 200 B.C and 200 A.D. German nutcrackers, made as decorative pieces, were developed around 1500. Early nutcrackers were in the shapes of animals, birds and people. Later, they were made in the likeness of kings, soldiers, church leaders and ruling class figures. Fine wood carved nutcrackers were created across Europe, especially in France and England by the 15th and 16th centuries. Admission: \$7/adult, \$6/student, \$5/senior or child.

## THROUGH WEDNESDAY/MARCH 11

**Ice Skating at Tysons Corner Center.** Monday-Thursday, 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Tysons Corner Outdoor Center, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, Tysons. Adults, \$10; Child/Senior/Military, \$9; Skate Rental, \$6; Group of 10+, \$12 and includes skates

## THURSDAY/JAN. 22

**Reading Buddies.** 4:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Beginning readers practice reading to teens.  
**Evening Book Group.** 7:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Call branch for Title.

## FRIDAY/JAN. 23

**"Be My Baby."** 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. "Be My Baby" is a romantic comedy that tells the story of John, an irascible Scotsman and an uptight English woman, Maud, and how they're brought together when his ward marries her niece and the young couple decides to adopt a newborn baby. The older couple has to travel to California to pick up the child and bring her home to Scotland



PHOTO BY DAVID SEGAL PHOTOGRAPHY

**Actors Allison Shelby, Casey Bauer, Daddy Issa and John Barclay Burns rehearse a scene from Vienna Theatre Company's upcoming production of Ken Ludwig's romantic comedy, "Be My Baby," opening Jan 23.**

but John and Maud despise each other. While in California, they learn some startling lessons about life and love. Tickets: \$14. To reserve tickets email [vtshows@yahoo.com](mailto:vtshows@yahoo.com). Additional performances: Jan. 24, 30, 31, Feb. 6, 7; 2 p.m.: Feb 1, 8; 8 p.m.  
**Playdate Café.** 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Toys and playspace for children, coffee and conversation for grownups!  
**Drop-in Chess.** 3:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play chess. All skill levels and ages welcome.

## SATURDAY/JAN. 24

**Polyhymnia.** 8 p.m. Immanuel Presbyterian Church, 1125 Savile Lane, McLean. Polyhymnia is a *capella* chamber chorus that since 1991 has offered free concerts of works from Renaissance to contemporary and from many countries. Polyhymnia's Winter Concert series, under its conductor Steven Beck, features songs by Poulenc, Janacek, Tallis, Victoria, Desprez, Palestrina, and contemporary works by Steven Beck, Rich Campbell, and Ernst Toch. There is no charge for performances, but if you are willing to make a donation to support our costs it will be tax deductible.

## SUNDAY/JAN. 25

**Music from Oberlin at Oakton.** 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Music from Oberlin at Oakton is a musical outreach program that is designed to

give the Conservatory students an opportunity showcase their musical talents for interested audiences beyond Oberlin. Different groups of students perform in Oakton, VA three times a year and we are kicking off our 14th season. Local alums and community gets an opportunity to enjoy superb music from the Conservatory that has received the 2009 National Medal of Arts from the White House presented by the President Barack Obama. It is a free concert open to the public and is especially great for the whole family as there are Q&A session with the performers and reception at the end.  
**McLean Rotary Chocolate Festival.** 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. Calling all chocolate lovers! Come attend this delightfully delicious festival that supports a good cause. Admission: \$2. [www.mcleanchocolatefestival.org](http://www.mcleanchocolatefestival.org)

## MONDAY/JAN. 26

**Tiny Tots.** 10:30 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Join us for an exciting storytime featuring stories, rhymes and songs. Ages 13-23 months with adult.  
**Preschool Storytime.** 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Join us for stories, songs and activities. Ages 3-5 with adult.  
**Kids Book Club.** 5:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Ages 8-12. Call branch for title.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

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## SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

### FEBRUARY

2/4/2015 ..... Valentine's Dining & Gifts I  
 2/4/2015 ..... Wellbeing - National Children's Dental Health Month  
 2/11/2015 ..... HomeLifeStyle  
 2/11/2015 ..... Valentine's Dining & Gifts II  
 Valentine's Day is Feb. 14 • Presidents Day is Feb. 16  
 2/18/2015 ..... A+ Camps & Schools  
 2/25/2015 ..... Pet Connection Pullout

### MARCH

3/4/2015 ..... Wellbeing  
 3/11/2015 ..... HomeLifeStyle Real Estate Pullout  
 3/18/2015 ..... A+ Camps & Schools  
 3/25/2015 ..... Spring Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment  
 FCPS Spring Break 3/30-4/3

### APRIL

4/1/2015 ..... Wellbeing - Senior Living Pullout  
 Easter Sunday is April 5  
 4/8/2015 ..... HomeLifeStyle  
 4/15/2015 ..... A+ Camps & Schools  
 4/22/2015 ..... Real Estate Pullout - New Homes  
 4/29/2015 ..... Mother's Day Celebrations, Dining & Gifts I

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# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

## TUESDAY/JAN. 27

**LEGO Club.** 2 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and build with LEGOs! Ages 3 & up with adult.

## WEDNESDAY/JAN. 28

**Winter Wonderland.** 10:30 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Learn how different animals survive in winter. Presented by Riverbend Park. Sponsored by Dolley Madison Friends of the Library. Age 3-5 with an adult. Call branch to make arrangements for sign language interpreters, listening systems or real-time captioning by calling the library branch.

**Pokemon League.** 4:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play Pokemon with your friends!

## THURSDAY/JAN. 29

**Reading Buddies.** 4:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Beginning readers practice reading to teens.

## FRIDAY/JAN. 30

**Playdate Café.** 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Toys and playspace for children, coffee and conversation for grownups!

**Drop-in Chess.** 3:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play chess. All skill levels and ages welcome.

## WEEK IN MCLEAN

### Fine Arts Scholarship Competition

High school students who want to further their interests in the fine arts are invited to enter the 2015 James C. Macdonald Arts Scholarship Competition. Sponsored by the Alden Theatre, the scholarship competition encourages artistic achievement and promotes study in the arts by high school students. The deadline for applying for this year's competition is Friday, Feb. 13.

The competition is open to ninth through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who reside or attend school in Dranesville Small Tax District 1A. A \$1,200 scholarship prize will be given to first-place winners in each of the following categories: Dance, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Theatre and Visual Arts. Second-place winners in all five categories will receive \$800. Third-place winners each receive \$400. There are no restrictions on the use of the award money. Finalists must be present and prepared to perform at the final competition in the Alden Theatre at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, March 25, to be eligible to receive an award.

Application forms are available at the reception desk of the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, and online at [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org). A non-refundable, \$15 fee is required for each application form submitted.

For more information visit: [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org) or contact Alden youth programs director Kathy Herr at [kathleen.herr@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:kathleen.herr@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-790-0123, TTY: 711.

### Fundraiser Supporting Haycock PTA

A fundraiser for Haycock PTA has been announced by HBC Realty Group's (Keller Williams Realty) Community Charity Champions. Dinner on Tuesday, Feb. 10 from 5 to 8 p.m. at Pulcinella Italian Host in McLean will support Haycock PTA. Approximately 70 percent of the proceeds from food and drink will go to the charity, as long as the diner brings the flyer for the event. Contact HBC Realty Group at 703-734-0192 or visit [www.HBCRealtyGroup.com](http://www.HBCRealtyGroup.com) to receive a flyer.



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## Here's What's Happening at MCC

### OFTC Teacher Work Day Trip Timeline Arcade plus Skateland

Friday, Jan. 30

\$55/\$45 MCC district residents

### Jazz Masters with John Eaton "Richard Rodgers: One Man and His Lyricists"

Saturday, Jan. 31, 1 p.m.

\$10/\$5 MCC district residents

### MCC Summer Camp Registration Begins

Monday, Feb. 2, MCC tax district residents

Monday, Feb. 9, for all others

### OFTC Teacher Work Day Trip Skiing at Massanutten Resort

Monday, Feb. 2

\$135/\$115 MCC district residents

### Classics of the Silent Screen The Movies' First Western Stars: William S. Hart and "Broncho Billy" Anderson

Wednesday, Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m.

\$12/\$8 MCC district residents

### Old Firehouse Teen Center Decades Party

Friday, Feb. 6, 7-10 p.m.

\$5 Member/\$10 All others



### Just in time for Valentine's Day! 8th Annual McLean Jewelry Showcase

Saturday, Feb 7, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Admission: \$3, (save \$1 with this ad)

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# SPORTS



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Oakton's Lindsey Abed, left, goes up for a shot against Westfield on Jan. 9**

## Oakton Girls' Basketball Improves to 14-1

The Oakton girls' basketball team extended its winning streak to 13 games with a 50-34 win over Centreville on Jan. 16.

The Cougars improved their record to 14-1.

Oakton and Centreville have met in the last two Concorde District/Conference 5 championship games, with the Wildcats winning in 2013 and the Cougars coming out on top in 2014.

The Cougars faced Chantilly on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. Oakton will travel to face Herndon at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 23.

## Langley Girls' Basketball Starts 11-1

The Langley girls' basketball team has maintained its hot start to the midpoint of the season.

After losing to Fairfax on Dec. 16, the Saxons won their next eight games, improving to 11-1 with 53-39 victory over South Lakes at Langley High School.

"The team is playing well and improving each game," Langley head coach Amanda Baker wrote in an email. "Each player is really starting to take ownership of their individual role and everyone is committed to team success over individual success."

Baker is in her fourth season as head coach of the Saxons. Langley's combined record in her first three seasons was 25-45, with the Saxons losing in the opening round of the district/conference tournament each year. However, the 2014-15 team seems to have turned things around.

"Focus has been a huge factor in our success," Baker wrote. "Each week players identify individual goals for themselves and they have a partner that helps keep them accountable for achieving that goal. As a team we prepare for each opponent with absolute focus on our specific game plan. After each game the team does a great job refocusing for the next opponent."

Langley recently faced two of the top teams in Conference 6 and came away with a win in each game. On Jan. 16, the Saxons knocked off defending conference champion South Lakes. Three days earlier, Langley won a low-scoring affair against Madison, 36-33. The Warhawks, led by 6-foot-2 Virginia Tech signee Kelly Koshuta, reached the region semifinals last season.

Junior guard Paige Galiani leads Langley in scoring at 18 points per game, including 31 3-pointers. She is averaging 4.6 rebounds and 1.5 steals per contest.

Sophomore guard Ariana Aulisi is averaging 8.8 points, 6 rebounds and 2.4 steals per game, to go with a team-high 15 blocks. Junior guard Lizzy Shamloo is averaging 6.8 points, and freshman point guard Jordyn Callaghan leads the team with 32 assists.

Lauren Meyer is the team's top defender. The senior forward was matched up against Koshuta and South Lakes' Princess Aghayere.

Langley faced Thomas Jefferson on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. The Saxons will host rival McLean at 5:45 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 23 as part of a girls'/boys' doubleheader.

"Our goal is to keep improving each day," Baker wrote. "The team understands that early success is not the ultimate goal, it is to be playing our best basketball at the end of the season. We have been at the bottom before and know that if we don't stay focused and committed to improving, our season could end earlier than we'd like."

— JON ROETMAN

## Langley Snaps Madison Girls' Basketball's Winning Streak

The Madison girls' basketball team had its nine-game winning streak snapped by Langley as the Saxons defeated the Warhawks 36-33 on Jan. 13.

Madison returned to the win column three days later with a 64-40 victory over McLean on Jan. 16, improving its record to 10-4.



PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

## McLean Gymnasts Win Fairfax High Meet

Jacqueline Greene and the McLean gymnastics team finished first during a meet at Fairfax High School on Jan. 10. The Highlanders, who finished state runner-up last season, will compete in a meet at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 22 at Washington-Lee High School in Arlington.



**Madison's Julie Collier competes during a meet at Fairfax High School on Jan. 10. The Warhawks are scheduled to participate in a meet at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 21 at Chantilly High School.**

The Warhawks faced Fairfax on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. Madison will host Hayfield at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 23.

## Golden Girls Senior Women's Softball

The Golden Girls Senior Women's softball league is looking for women ages 40 and older to play in its four-team league on Wednesday nights and Saturday mornings in Vienna.

Learning skills, physical exercise, and good sportsmanship are stressed, all while having fun. You are never too old to play! For more info, go to [www.goldengirls.org](http://www.goldengirls.org)

## Squash Tournament Coming to McLean

A junior squash tournament will be held at The McLean Racquet and Health Club Feb. 13-15.

Registration deadline is Feb. 10.

It's a silver tournament, which is recommended for those players who have finished in the upper half of a bronze tournament.

Age groups for boys and girls include U11, U13, U15, U17 and U19.

Early registration fee is \$95. Registration after the deadline is \$110. Register online at [ussquash.com/tournaments](http://ussquash.com/tournaments) or contact Hunt Richardson at [hunt@jahangirsquash.com](mailto:hunt@jahangirsquash.com) or by calling 202-365-1526 for more information.

## Vienna Babe Ruth Online Registration Open

Vienna Babe Ruth has unveiled a new website along with a new online registration process. Vienna-area ballplayers ages 13 to 19 can register now for the Spring 2015 season. Go to [GVBR.org](http://GVBR.org) and click on the red "Register Now" button. Register before Feb. 1 for the early-bird discount.

# A Musical on Challenges of Growing Up

**“13,” the musical, arriving on the Alden stage.**

BY DAVID SIEGEL  
THE CONNECTION

“I face the world for what it is, and not what I wish it could be” are key lyrics from the McLean Community Players (MCP) production of the musical “13.” With rock-infused music and thought-provoking lyrics by Tony Award winning Jason Robert Brown, “13” is about the challenges of growing up.

For the McLean Community Players, producing “13” was “a great opportunity to work with younger performers in the community,” said co-producer Laura Dailey. With its “insightful” score of nearly 20 songs, Dailey added, “the lyrics resonate as lessons we should take to heart at any age.”

With a book by Dan Elish and Robert Horn, the show chronicles the story of Evan Goldman, a New York City boy whose life is on the cusp of teen-hood. Evan finds himself dealing with a divorce, trying to fit in



© Irish Eyes Photography by Toby

PHOTOS IRISH EYES PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOBY/COURTESY OF MCLEAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS  
**Rehearsal photo of the cast of McLean Community Players’ (MCP) winter musical, “13.”**

with the cool kids at a new school in an Indiana town, and one other major event ... his impending Bar Mitzvah.

The MCP production of “13” includes a seasoned, yet all adolescent cast of 17 between the ages of 12-16. Selected through an open audition, the cast members include students from Northern Virginia schools such as Langley High School, McLean High School, Frost Middle School, Longfellow

Middle School, Rachel Carson Middle School, Thoreau Middle School, Spring Hill Elementary School Our Savior Lutheran and the Metropolitan School of the Arts.

Director Kevin Sockwell wanted to direct “13” because it is “a fun, emotionally engaging show” and it “speaks of a time when most of us first ponder questions about who we are, what we want from life and what is our place in the world.”

## Where and When

McLean Community Players present “13” at the Alden Theatre, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave, McLean. Performances: Jan. 30 - Feb. 15, 2015. Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$23-\$25. For tickets call OvationTix customer service toll-free: 866-811-4111 or visit: [www.mcleanplayers.org](http://www.mcleanplayers.org). Note: Through a cooperative agreement with the Metropolitan Washington Ear, audio description services are provided for those with visual challenges.

“As adults, if we’re lucky, we learn it was never about a destination, but about the lessons learned on this journey we call life,” added Sockwell. In describing the youthful cast he said “their energy, enthusiasm and dedication are amazing and a privilege to behold.”

“It’s easy to be fooled by the rock-song aesthetic of ‘13’, but from the very first bar of the first number, Brown weaves musical threads that correspond to plot points all throughout the show,” said music director Itai Yasur.

Langley High School freshman Cuinn Casey (playing Evan) called “13” an “up-beat musical about coming-of-age that is great for all ages.” Cast member Tori Garcia called it a “perfect example of what being a teenager really is.”

## Chocolate Lover’s Paradise

**McLean Chocolate Festival returns on Sunday, Jan. 25.**

BY REENA SINGH  
THE CONNECTION

One day every year, McLean Community Center is a chocolate lover’s dream.

The McLean Chocolate Festival will host 17 vendors selling decadent artisan chocolate goods on Jan. 25, ranging from candies to chocolate dipped bacon.

And it is all for a good cause.

The festival, which has a \$2 entry fee for visitors older than 6, will be from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the community center located at 1234 Ingleside Drive.

“The great thing about this festival is that you’ll find chocolates you won’t find anywhere else,” said McLean Rotary member John McEvelly.

The festival began four years ago as the McLean Rotary’s desire to work with the McLean Community Center.

“The original thought was to do something around Halloween,” said McLean Rotary member Jan Auerbach, event organizer.

She said the community center representatives told her that the events calen-

dar was already packed for fall and that the post-new year calendar had more room for a festival.

“When they said that, it just popped into my head — a chocolate festival,” said Auerbach.

That year, McLean Rotary was not expecting many visitors because the event was advertised through word of mouth. To everyone’s surprise, 2,700 people showed up.

“We overwhelmed the place,” said Auerbach. “It was a madhouse.”

McEvelly said they could have had more people if the line to pay the entry fee had not been so long.

“People were leaving because the line was out the door,” he said.

McLean Rotary moved the festival to McLean High School the following year, but said the event belonged at MCC.

This year, 17 vendors will sell chocolate items. In addition, American Heritage, a division of Mars Co., will be doing demonstrations on how chocolate was made during the colonial days.

“There’s enough variety between the vendors,” said McLean Rotary member Michael Arietti. “Some make sweets. There’s one that brings a chocolate pizza. There’s chocolate-covered bacon.”

The festival will have the children’s game room like it has in past years. This year, local act Ukulele Phil will play at 11:30 a.m., 1:30 and 3:30 p.m.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

**Visitors enjoy a chocolate fountain from Capitol Chocolate Fountains in a past McLean Chocolate Festival. This year’s festival will be Sunday, Jan. 25 at McLean Community Center.**

In past years, McLean Rotary has made more than \$8,000 to raise money for local organizations and schools. In addition to the entry fee, the Rotary also makes 25 percent off of vendor sales.

Some of the specific items the money goes towards are high school scholarships books for students in need. Visitors who want to learn more about the local rotary club can look out for the information booth

at the event.

“It all stays local,” said Auerbach. “We pay dues, so all our administration costs are paid for.”

For more information about the McLean Chocolate Festival, visit <http://www.mcleanchocolatefestival.org>. More information on the Rotary Club of McLean can be found at <http://www.mcleanrotary.org>.

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AT&T intends to submit a Section 106 submission for a proposed modification to an existing telecommunication facility (Sequoia) at 2110 Washington Blvd in Arlington, VA. AT&T is publishing this notice in accordance with federal regulation 37CFR 1.1307. Three (3) antennas will be replaced on the 66 foot building, with centerline heights of 62 feet. Parties interested in submitting comments or questions regarding any potential effects of the proposed facility on Historic Properties may do so by contacting Scott Horn (856-809-1202, [scotthorn@acerassociates.com](mailto:scotthorn@acerassociates.com)) at ACER Associates, LLC at 1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091.

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## Seasonal Seven Dwarfs



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Sneezy, Coughy, Phlegmy, Stuffy, Achy, No-Sleepy and Post-Nasal Drippy; and no Doc, which is possibly what led to this column being written. To tell you the truth – and I always do – if I didn't have stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer, I wouldn't have given these symptoms a first thought, let alone a second one. But since I do have cancer and it's mostly all I think about; as much as I tried to pretend otherwise and consider these symptoms unrelated, my lungs/breathing did seem to be affected.

And so after 10 days or so of coughing, then full-blown "colding" and back to coughing again, I acquiesced and scheduled an appointment with my Primary Care physician. After asking me the usual and customary how-I-feel questions – which did not prompt an OMG-type reaction from my doctor, he next unwrapped his stethoscope from around his neck and approached me to listen and presumably learn. He placed his stethoscope on my upper back and then on my chest and of course asked me to "breathe in," and "breathe out," repeatedly. Apparently, he heard nothing of consequence. No indications to warrant a chest X-ray, he said; no suspicious sights or sounds to further investigate. As he summarized his assessment: "It's winter," which I correctly understood to mean my symptoms were not cancer-related, I exhaled in relief, smiled widely and thanked him for the reassurance. Then he put his hand on my shoulder and said: "Nothing to worry about." A few minutes later, I left his office with a precautionary prescription for cough medicine and four days of antibiotics; completely normal protocol, lung cancer notwithstanding. But it didn't stop me from worrying. Cancer sort of has an intent of its own.

And that's the problem, underlying and overlaying. Everything I say or do or think or write is filtered – unconsciously anymore, through the prism of my being originally diagnosed with a "terminal" form of cancer. If ever there was a disconnect between symptoms, feelings, mortality, etc.; well, there isn't anymore. We're (cancer and I) not exactly one big happy family, but we are all living together under one roof, residing in one head; mine, mostly. I've had better roommates, that's for sure. Unfortunately, this is one I can't simply ask to leave.

Usually, I can manage, except when there's a blip, something not typically seen or felt on my emotional radar. This most recent bout with the symptoms I've described, completely normal and expected almost at this time of the year, probably should not have been neglected by yours truly for as long as they were (seven to 10 days). Sometimes, fear has a way of affecting your better judgment, though. In retrospect, I certainly should have acted sooner. Hopefully, I've learned my lesson. Next time, I won't ignore the "seasonal seven dwarfs." I was lucky this time. Life is not a fairy tale. Pretending otherwise could be grim.

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 north@connectionnewspapers.com. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication.

### FRIDAY/JAN. 23

**McLean Art Society Meeting.** 10 a.m. - noon. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. Alice Kale will be the featured artist. She will talk about artist travel diaries for sketching and recording memories, using convenient and easy-to-carry materials. There will also be a chance to sign up for a painting trip to Greece scheduled for the May 2-16, 2015. All are welcome.

### SUNDAY/JAN. 25

**Free Seller Seminar, "What Every Seller Needs To Know,"** 1-4 p.m. Presented by The Lyons & McGuire Team of Keller Williams Realty. Come learn invaluable tips on selling your home from a professional stager, a photographer, a home inspector and more. RSVP by Jan. 19 to LyonsMcGuire@TeamGreatFalls.com. Seating is limited.

### MONDAY/JAN. 26

**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.

**Evening ESL Conversation Group.** 7 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Practice speaking English in this informal conversation group.

### TUESDAY/JAN. 27

**Improve Your English Skills.** 11 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Get focused help with reading, writing, speaking and listening. Adults.

### WEDNESDAY/JAN. 28

**English Conversation Group.** 1 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Practice conversational English in a group setting.

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

### ONGOING

**Food Addicts in Recovery.** Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at The Vine Church, 2501 Gallows Road, Dunn Loring. Are you having trouble controlling the way you eat? Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA) is a free twelve step recovery program for anyone suffering from food obsession, overeating, under-eating or bulimia. For more information or a list of additional meetings throughout the U.S. and the world, call 781-932-6300 or www.foodaddicts.org.

**Vienna Toastmasters.** 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m., at the Vienna Community Center on the 2nd floor room opposite the elevator, 120 Cherry St., S.E., Vienna. A friendly place to get comfortable with public speaking and impromptu speaking for new and experienced speakers. Open to the public.

**Run With the Doctor.** Every other Saturday at 7 a.m. 8230 Boone Blvd, Tysons Corner. The Center for Orthopedics and Sports Medicine offers its services in a convenient format to runners at this running event. Free. facebook.com/runwiththedoctor.

**Senior Fall Prevention Classes.** 1:30-2:30 p.m. and 2-3 p.m., The Woodlands Retirement Community, 4320 Forest Hill Drive, Fairfax. Classes are held in a heated indoor pool and are designed to work on balance and core muscles. \$10. 703-667-9800.

**Coffee/Tea Poetry Group.** Poets and poetry lovers seek to form a group to meet once a month at a local coffee/tea shop to enjoy each other's creations. 703-819-1690.

**Virginia Sheriff's Institute Scholarship Program.** Those enrolled in a Virginia college or university who are pursuing a degree in the field of criminal justice are eligible for the Virginia Sheriff's Institute Scholarship Program; recommendation letter needed. 703-246-3251, shf-pio@fairfaxcounty.gov or http://vasheriffsinstitute.org/scholarship/.

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**STUNNINGLY RENOVATED and UPDATED** 4 br/3 bath home with elegant/sun-filled living room with bow window; updated kit; oversized side-load garage; McLean HS pyramid!

**3708 Whispering Lane**  
 Falls Church    **Super Lake Barcroft location!**  
**\*BEAUTIFUL\* 4br/3.5 bath home** with brand new granite & stainless steel kitchen (~15); new paint; refinished hardwoods; 2 fireplaces; oversized 2-car garage!

**6500 Old Dominion Drive**  
 McLean                                      **\$1,125,000**  
**\*GORGEOUS\* uniqueness and artistry in this fabulous 5br/4.5 bath** with nearly 7000 fin. square feet! 2 owner's suites; oversized gourmet kitchen!

**INCREDIBLE REBUILD in Mclean HS pyramid!**



**\*OPEN\***  
 Sunday, 1/25  
 2-4pm!

**2131 Grayson Place**  
 Falls Church                      **Less than a mile to Metro!**  
**SPECTACULAR 5 bedroom/3 full bath home** with open floor plan rebuilt in 2004 and kitchen renovated in 2014! Family room off kitchen; 4-season room w/ vaulted ceiling!



**Falls Church/Brilyn Park**  
**\$654,999**



**McLean/Chesterbrook**  
 Call for details!



**Falls Church**  
 Call for details!



**Falls Church /Casemont**  
**\$775,000**



**Falls Church City**  
**\$999,000**



**McLean/Chesterbrook**  
**\$2600/month**

**CALL ME TODAY TO SCHEDULE A PRIVATE SHOWING OR FOR A FREE ANALYSIS OF YOUR HOME'S VALUE! (703) 606-7901**

