

Great Falls Grange Reopens

NEWS, PAGE 6

Scoring Baskets for Haiti

NEWS, PAGE 10

A Time to Hunt?

NEWS, PAGE 3

More than half of respondents to a Great Falls Citizens Association survey on deer are in favor of having trained and licensed archers culling deer on private property.



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PHOTO BY JOAN BRADY PHOTOGRAPHY/CONTRIBUTED

One reason the deer population is out of control is that most does give birth to twins, and sometimes triplets, every year from the time they are one year of age for as many as 10 years. This pair was photographed in Great Falls in the Spring.



PHOTO BY GERALD PETERS/CONTRIBUTED

This photo from the back of Gerald Peters's home in Great Falls shows a buck very close to his house, with his neighbor's house in the background.

Oh Deer! What Can the Matter Be?

Support for archery hunting increases with deer population.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

First in an occasional series on deer and deer management.

Joan Brady added to the tally of deer-vehicle collisions a few days after she received notice of the Great Falls Citizens Association's deer survey results.

"I don't think I've even hit a squirrel before," the Great Falls resident said. "It was awful to see it coming and to know I wasn't going to be able to do anything to stop in time."

Deer-vehicle collisions are almost commonplace; an average of 4,000 to 5,000 Fairfax County residents hit a deer with their vehicle each year.

Nobody stopped to see if Brady or the deer was all right, she said, although many responded to her message on social media that night.

"I just hit a deer, and it sucked," Brady wrote on Facebook.

Brady didn't weigh in on deer management problems and solutions, but she didn't like her role. "There's got to be a better way to kill the deer than the car," Brady said the next day. "I'm just hopeful I didn't kill him."

Great Falls and McLean, with large lots and many parks, can be seen as the bullseye in the exploding deer population and the debate on what to do about it. Before the beginning of a county program to "manage"

Deer and Airplanes

The county Park Authority used aerial infrared surveys via fixed-wing airplanes to count the number of deer inside parks and within a small distance in the surrounding neighborhoods on Feb. 6, 2014 and Dec. 27, 2013, according to the 2014 Annual Report on the Environment for Fairfax County. To get the estimated population densities, authorities divided the counts by the number of square miles surveyed.

Deer management methods at the parks have included archery, sharpshooting, and management hunting, occasionally in combination.

"While many of the data are limited, taken collectively, the observations of professional park staff, poor health of evaluated deer and high deer densities indicate that deer are overabundant and are negatively impacting the ecology of sizeable areas of Fairfax County," according to the report.

2014 Aerial Infrared Surveys

Park	Est. Deer Per Square Mile	First Year of Deer Management
Riverbend	32	1999
Scotts Run Nature Preserve	40	2012
Lake Fairfax	43	2007
Fred Crabtree	92	2013
Old Colchester	13	2013
Laurel Hill	107	2010
Burke Lake	66	2002
Lake Accotink and Accotink Stream Valley	46	2012
Wakefield	60	2012
Frying Pan Farm	18	N/A
Ellanor C. Lawrence	15	2001
Sully Woodlands	35	2006

SOURCE: FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

the deer population in parks, Riverbend Park in Great Falls had a deer population estimated at 213 deer per square mile, more than 10 times what is considered healthy.

Deer management, by way of sharpshooting and bowhunting, which began in 1999 in Riverbend, has helped reduce the deer

density to 32 per square mile. Nearby in Scotts Run Nature Preserve in McLean, that number is 40.

DEER DENSITY is still at least two times greater than it should be in the Great Falls/

Archery Hunting in 27 Fairfax County Park Areas in 2015

Park(s)	Town(s)	Acres
Riverbend Park, Scotts Run Nature Preserve	Great Falls, McLean	785 acres
Colvin Run SV, Difficult Run SV	Great Falls	220 acres
Fred Crabtree Park, Little Difficult Run SV, Garnchayne, Waples Mill Meadow	Reston, Herndon, Oak Hill	603 acres
Sugarland Run SV, Shaker Woods Park, Folly Lick SV	Herndon	214 acres
Difficult Run SV, Clark's Crossing & Lahey Lost Valley Parks, Tamarack Park, Eudora Park	Vienna	419 acres
Accotink Stream Valley South	Springfield	490 acres
Patriot Park, Popes Head Park, Piney Branch SV, Fairfax Villa Park	Fairfax Station	371 acres
Fountainhead Regional Park, Sandy Run Regional Park	Fairfax Station	1156 acres
Laurel Hill Park, Laurel Hill Golf Course, Newington Heights Park, Old Colchester Park*	Lorton	904 acres
Pohick Bay Regional Park	Lorton	998 acres
Sandy Run Regional Park	Fairfax Station	307 acres
South Run SV, Lake Mercer Park, South Run District Park, Burke Lake Park	Springfield, Burke, Fairfax Station	579 acres
Pohick SV, Burke Station Park, Shannon Station Park, West Springfield Village Park	Burke, Springfield	579 acres
Bull Run Marina	Clifton	
Johnny Moore Stream Valley	Clifton	492 acres
Cub Run SV, Ellanor C. Lawrence Park*	Chantilly	626 acres
Elklick Preserve, Mountain Road Park, Sappington Tract	Centreville	802 acres
Bull Run Regional Park	Centreville	871 acres
Poplar Ford Park, Hickory Forrest Park	Centreville	460 acres
Sully Historic Site	Chantilly	113 acres
Huntley Meadows	Mount Vernon	537 acres
Lee District Park, Island Creek Park, Amberleigh Park	Mount Vernon	258 acres

SV=Stream Valley

* 3 month season 9/6-12/6; otherwise 9/6/14-2/21/15

SOURCES: FAIRFAX COUNTY ARCHERY PROGRAM; FAIRFAX COUNTY 2014 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

McLean area, said Fairfax County Wildlife Biologist Dr. Katherine Edwards, citing a number between 15-20 deer per square mile as healthy for deer and the environment.

SEE SUPPORT, PAGE 4

Increased Support for Archery Hunting

FROM PAGE 3

Fairfax County recently used aerial and infrared technology to study deer population in county parks, she said, including Scotts Run Nature Preserve, Riverbend and other parks around the county.

Other parts of the county have even more deer. Lake Fairfax Park in Reston has 43 deer per square mile while Fred Crabtree Park in Reston has 92 deer per square mile. Burke Lake Park in Fairfax Station has 66 deer per square mile. Laurel Hill Park has 107 deer per square mile.

At those densities, 4,000-plus deer-vehicle collisions a year are only part of the problem in Fairfax County. Lyme disease, agricultural damage and damage to suburban landscaping are rampant. Deer also damage the environment and other species by decimating the understory in the forests. Young trees can't grow up to replace older trees. Birds and other species that need cover decline because of lost habitat.

The county began the deer management program in 1998, and while there was considerable negative public response to archery hunting and other methods at first, a lot of concerns have died down, said Dranesville Supervisor John Foust, who represents Great Falls, McLean and Herndon.

"We initially had a lot of concerns about deer management when we started in the parks," said Foust. "There is some opposition, but not really as much as there used to be. ... We run a very very tight ship. Our hunters are very well monitored."

While the management efforts in the parks have reduced the number of deer, (the FY2014 "harvest yield" was 848 deer from 27 park sites) many believe that it's not enough. Most of the deer habitat is private property, and deer management will need to move onto private property to be effective, they argue.

"I've accepted we've got to do more," Foust said. "I think we will get the same results on private property because the hunters have conducted themselves with professionalism."

THE GREAT FALLS Citizens Association recently took the unusual step of surveying its residents about experiences with deer and opinions of what to do about it.

Part of the mission of the Great Falls Citizens Association is to preserve the semi-rural nature of Great Falls. The Committee on Environment Parks and Trails, "observed that the next generation of our forests has in many places disappeared under pressure from deer herds, raising questions about the sustainability of our highly-prized natural environment. ... The objective was to seek residents' views so that the GFCA could evaluate support for new initiatives to protect local woodlands and streams."

Jerry Peters, a retired ecologist who lives in Great Falls, is spearheading a program in Great Falls to connect licensed, professional archers to homeowners who permit archery on their land.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Christine Sullivan, Bill Canis, Matt Allison and Jerry Peters spoke to Great Falls Citizens Association in January about deer.

Great Falls Deer Survey Results

	Strongly oppose	Oppose	Open (if sensible)	In favor	Strongly in favor	Total
Monitoring of deer activity on private property	52	41	176	125	202	596
Trained and licensed archers activity culling deer on private property	96	52	87	89	291	615
Hunter training program for local residents	129	92	136	67	174	598
Use of non-lethal methods such as sterilization or birth control drugs	43	57	154	91	267	612
Enforcing current laws against feeding wild deer	33	33	100	119	320	605
Trained and licensed firearm marksman culling deer on private property	119	64	124	79	231	617

"This is really deer heaven, and we have made it that way," said Peters. "We took away their predators." Deer used to be hunted in Virginia by bobcats, black bears, eastern gray wolves and eastern mountain lions.

For the past seven years, Peters has studied the deer grazing the understory of forests, the overabundance of deer in the Great Falls and Northern Virginia area, and the declining deer health because of the inability for the habitat to support the growing population.

A 125-pound deer requires approximately 6.5 pounds of forage per day, or some 2,370 pounds of vegetation per year, according to the Fairfax County Park Authority. Multiply more than a ton of vegetation by as many as 100 deer per square mile, and the resulting decimation of forest understory and suburban landscaping is not surprising.

About 95 percent of respondents to the Great Falls Citizens Association's Deer Survey have seen deer feeding on their property; 45 percent see deer multiple times each day in their yard and 27 percent more see deer daily on their land.

Bill Canis reported results of the citizens association's survey.

"The car is the only predator and that's

not very humane to the deer," said Canis.

The citizens association is studying and learning all sorts of options to educate Great Falls residents, said Canis. "Hunting is an effective way to control the herd."

HOMEOWNERS OF any size property in Fairfax County can give permission to hunt to qualified, licensed archery hunters. Archery hunting is permitted from the last Saturday in September through the last Saturday in March. The county encourages homeowners to notify their neighbors "as a courtesy," but that is not required.

Matt Allison moved to Great Falls two-and-a-half years ago.

"One of the first things that stuck out was the number of deer. ... There were too many deer for the habitat to support. I was energized to do something about it," he said.

Allison, an archer, grew up in Pennsylvania. His father hunted, his grandfather hunted, they hunted all together. The school system gave students a day off on the first day of deer hunting season.

Allison was surprised at first by anti-hunting sentiment, even at home. "My wife doesn't understand how I can kill them," he said.

"I love watching deer. I love seeing deer

Prior to Deer Management Program

Deer Density	Estimated Deer/Square Mile
Huntley Meadow Park	90-114
Riverbend Park	213
Meadowbrook Gardens Park	90-115
Bull Run Regional Park	419
Fort Belvoir	90

SOURCE: VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES

in my yard, but I want the habitat to support the deer. When I see deer coming up to the flowers right by the front door, I know they are starving."

The impact on shrinking understory in the woods and forest impacts more than pretty views, said Allison; it impacts birds and migratory patterns of birds as well as other wildlife.

Archery season is an effective way to reduce the herds, he said.

And archery is safe, according to Peters, Allison, and all data kept by Fairfax County, the state, and the state of Maryland.

No injuries have occurred to non-hunters because of bow-hunting, according to Fairfax and Montgomery counties. There are occasional injuries to bow hunters who fall from deer stands.

ALLISON AND PETERS have joined forces to try to institute Peters's program called Green Fire to cull deer in Great Falls.

Allison is gathering archers, and Peters is working to set up a database to track deer throughout Great Falls where landowners can add data, and a database that permits archers to know which landowners permit hunting on their properties.

"I'm going to set up a pilot program. ... It's been an obsession. It's almost like an intellectual puzzle," said Peters. "It's not about hunting and killing deer. I've come to really enjoy the challenge."

Christine Sullivan of Great Falls has made use of Green Fire's services.

"Seeing deer was nice initially, but then I noticed that all the foundation plants were being eaten," said Sullivan. "I was primarily using recommended lists of supposedly deer-resistant plants. ... Local landscape nurseries told me that there's hardly anything the deer would not eat if there are too many, or food is scarce."

Sullivan contacted Peters and Allison about hunting the deer in her yard.

"They showed me the well-worn deer trails and how the deer had completely eaten the understory of the forest. I started monitoring when and where I saw the deer to let Matt know where to best place his deer stand." Some of Sullivan's neighbors also gave Allison permission to hunt on their land.

"What is not acceptable is to do nothing," said Canis. "Great Falls is a heavily wooded area, but in 20 to 25 years, the understory will be gone. That's not the legacy we want to leave behind."



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Great Falls Grange Reopens

President of National Grange to speak at Great Falls Historical Society Program on March 11.

In a special program to celebrate the reopening of the Great Falls Grange building and to explore the history of the National Grange movement, Ed Luttrell, the 22nd President (Master) of the National Grange will be the keynote speaker at the March 11 program of the Great Falls Historical Society.

Luttrell, a native of Sandy, Ore., and a second-generation Granger, will discuss the beginnings of the Grange and the role it has played in local communities and on the national scene since its founding in 1867.

The GFHS program is free and is open to the public. It will be held at the Great Falls Grange, March 11, from 7 to 9 p.m. A social hour from 6 to 7 p.m. with refreshments precedes the program.

The National Grange has been a major farm and rural community service organization in the United States since it was formed after the Civil War to address the problems of the ravaged rural economy. With the country still reeling from the devastation of the war, many farmers were poor, discouraged and uninformed, and the Grange's focus was to help producers become better educated about advanced farming methods, and allow farmers to act collectively to obtain better prices for their crops and other measures to better bring their agricultural products to market.



The local community at Great Falls Day 2014, assuming the same position as on Opening Day, May 5, 1929.

PHOTO BY ARCHIE BROWN

THE GREAT FALLS GRANGE #738 was established in 1920, and the newly constructed building was officially dedicated on May 4, 1929. It was one of the first Grange Halls built in Virginia, and was a center of the community for the residents of this then rural area. In 1920, agricultural prices had collapsed, beginning a 20-year depression for the American farm economy,

and local farmers were seeking a way to band together to market their crops. At the time of the founding of the Great Falls Grange, the Great Falls (formerly known as Forestville) area was a community of dairy farms. Twenty-nine men and women founded the Great Falls Grange, and by 1921 more than 100 local farmers belonged to the Grange.

For many years, the Great Falls Grange

was the social center of the village and its families. Friday night dances and Saturday night fried-chicken suppers at the Grange were popular events. The Grange held an annual community festival, and maintained a baseball diamond for the entire community to enjoy. The first library service in Great Falls was an initiative of the Grange, and the Grange provided a library for the community for more than 20 years, from 1939 to 1961.

Luttrell will also discuss the use of symbolism, ceremony and form, and the strong emphasis on character development that were hallmarks of membership in the Grange.

Luttrell grew up on a small farm outside of Portland, Ore. He has been involved in the Grange his entire life. His Grange accomplishments were first officially recognized in 1978 when he was named Oregon's Outstanding Young Granger. He was Oregon State Master from 1996-2000, and has been one of the Grange's most influential state and national leaders for decades.

THE GREAT FALLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and dissemination of local history. Our local history mission is "To feel the pulse of earth where man has trod, and for the future, keep the past."

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OPINION

Staying Ahead of the Feds

The federal government is not always wrong. At the same time, the state government is not always right.

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)

The Virginia House and the Senate have penned similar but competing mid-point versions to the 2014-2016 biennial budget. These budgets will now go to a conference committee to work out differences in time for a Feb. 28 adjournment of the annual legislative session. With both houses being under the same political party control, the differences are not great and will likely be easily reconciled.

Governor McAuliffe had proposed revisions to the Commonwealth's budget, but his recommendations were ignored in one significant way: his budget proposal included the expansion of Medicaid for the working poor, but the majority party in both houses adamantly oppose it. Had Medicaid expansion been approved, the state would have saved \$107,000,000 in state spending in FY 2016



COMMENTARY

alone and would have picked up \$482,300,000 in new federal money. The issue of this column is not Medicaid expansion, however, for which I have made my position known in several columns. Instead, I want to focus on the paranoia in Richmond over the actions of the Federal government that the opposition to Medicaid expansion reflects. That paranoia was reflected among other places

in a budget amendment in the House that provided that "no general or non-general funds shall be appropriated or expended for such costs as may be intended to implement any federal program or Presidential executive action calling for 'free' tuition at institutions of higher education." The amendment passed with my speaking against it, suggesting that we should at least see the new program before we decided to oppose it.

Virginia has a long history of opposing federal action. Going back to 1798, James Madi-

son introduced the concept of interposition – that the state could interpose itself between the federal government and the people when it deemed federal laws to be unconstitutional. Interposition or nullification has been used by many states to oppose federal actions on many issues. The Civil War was the most dramatic statement at attempted interposition.

In the 1950's, Virginia attempted to interpose itself against federal action to desegregate the schools. Its efforts through more than 40 lawsuits became known as "massive resistance", which of course ultimately failed.

The call has gone out once again for the need to protect ourselves against the federal government, particularly the Obama administration. Several bills, for example, were introduced this session to nullify actions of the Environmental Protection Agency in air and water quality regulations. Our Federal system with its checks and balances have worked well for many years to protect citizens from a run-away government. At the same time, it creates challenges for smooth operation. This continuing power struggle diverts attention from the real issues of our economy and society and leads to the frustrations that many feel with the operation or gridlock of government. The federal government is not always wrong. At the same time, the state government is not always right. The public expects that leaders work through these differences and that issues be resolved.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Outstanding Article, Outstanding Services

To the Editor:

Mr. (Kenneth) Moore's feature article ("Combining Health and Mental Health," Connection, February 11-17, 2015), which provided information concerning the Community Services Board (CBS) services to the Fairfax community was outstanding.

Prior to reading his article, I did not know such an organization existed. The CBS services, described in the article, provided by the leadership and staff are to be commended for helping so many people in need these last few years.

Having been involved on the staff of a state's Mental Health and Disabilities department in the midwest prior to moving to Fairfax County, mental health needs were ever growing in numbers. As pointed out in the article, "One in every five people live with a mental health problem...and two-thirds go without treatment." This is alarming and most disturbing in today's society. From where I

came from, the state's budget for Mental Health and Drug Abuse could not keep up with the demand and needs of its citizen, and this was back in the 70s.

Fairfax County is well known for outstanding services provided in our schools.

It is also encouraging to learn the county, under the directorship of Tisha Deeghan and her staff commits themselves in providing mental health services by letting us know "we are here (to serve) everybody." Thank you.

Ronald L. Baker
Springfield

The writer is retired and was a former Budget officer for the State of Illinois, Dept of Mental Health & Disabilities including the Illinois Drug Abuse Program during the years, 1972-1976.

Lack of Responsibility

To the Editor:

The Connection's editorial last week ("Not the First or Only Time") about the FC police's decades' long refusal to allow the public access to internal investigations is timely and to the point.

Why has this posture been allowed to continue over the years? Because of the craven evasiveness of the FC Chairman and Board of Supervisors (FCBOS), with one or two honorable exceptions.

The obstructive Chief of Police has only been able continuously to obfuscate and to deny the public access to any of the internal reviews of the killing of unarmed civilians because the FCBOS has willfully and consistently avoided facing up to their responsibilities. Let us also remember that the Chief of Police reports to and is employed by the FCBOS. You would hardly think this was the case, given the vapid tone and content of Chairman Bulova's recent letter to the Washington Post mentioned in the Connection editorial, which somehow succeeds in placing her and her colleagues at a complete remove from events. Sadly, they are made to appear to be passive observers, not active participants, going along with the way the wind blows..

There are words for this. Lack of leadership.

This is not to take an adversarial position against the FC police (except perhaps in the eyes of the Chief).

All most people want is to have basic accountability for actions

taken by them. Asking for that is not to accuse or condemn. Indeed, it is something that I hope the huge majority of officers professionally and decently protecting the public every day and night would support.

Let's see Chairman Bulova and her Board finally step up to the plate in a responsible way. Handing everything over to a Senator and the Federal authorities is no way to run Fairfax County

John Hanley
Reston

Failing in Their Duties

To the Editor:

I applaud your editorial on the Geer murder ("No Justification for Secrecy, Delay on Geer Shooting," Connection, February 4-10, 2015). The Connection has done yeoman's work in keeping this tragedy in front of the public, unlike other newspapers which are johnnie-come-latelies.

Our chairman and county Board of Supervisors have failed in their duty to oversee the Fairfax County Police Department, except Pat

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 19

Great Falls CONNECTION

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It's Time for a "Place"

By KATHLEEN J. MURPHY

The community of Great Falls is abundant with creative talent. Our ability to socialize our children into many layers of being in the world is truly remarkable: the home and school, the beach, the mountains and ski slopes, the world of the spirit, the arts, the sciences, technology, philosophy...exploration in nature, taking walks, journeying on the river, photographing nature, looking out the window while doing homework - connecting with the tree spirits, the herd of deer, the birds outside the window, all hanging out in the same tree. Our children have access to the knowledge of the world through the centuries on their phone, laptop or computer. There is a dialectic between the human spirit creating and the experience of knowing it all, having it all. Our children deserve access to remarkable mentors, experts in our midst, our neighbors, who make themselves available to young, raw talent and show them everything they know without limitation - to transfer our best knowing for the

next generation to cultivate and advance.

Whether moms and dads in a tent, sharing how to cook a Jerusalem artichoke, or a bunch of physicists gazing at the stars, discussing constellations, or artists sharing how to layer the paint to show the trees dancing in the breeze, our community is robust with talent and deserves sufficient community space to nurture and grow the wide diversity of creative talent that is our true collective wealth.

The Great Falls Historical Society, for one, has been gathering history, filming oral histories, collecting photos and historic artifacts from local residents. As our work continues, the need for a place for the local story - an archive - grows. Further, having a place for people to come see the collection - a physical place in our village that would allow us to share the local story with our community, as historical societies are meant to do, would be awesome.

Many non-profits in our village experience the identical lack of place. How can we live in an affluent village and experience such

a paucity of community space? When will we properly house all the elements of our remarkably creative community so that our entire community thrives?

In our long journey of lobbying to leave as much of our land untouched, we have deprived ourselves of sufficient community space to experiment, practice, perform, show, become, accomplish, share with others, so as to grow a vibrant experience of community.

Now that the Grange has been made handicap accessible, now that the Turner Farm or Purple House are potentially eligible under the Resident Curatorship program, it is time to begin the conversation about finding a place for us - and gathering the resources needed to have a place for our creative community.

We cannot move forward without financial viability - not wealth that shows, but with simplicity - the humility of possession that characterized the farmers before us who managed their resources in a practical, earthy manner.

It is time for us to give serious consideration to a special tax district for the purpose of develop-

ing community spaces for our village. A special tax district would require that each resident contribute a modest percentage of their real estate taxes - in Reston and McLean that amount is 2.5% - for the sole purpose of funding their community space - their community centers.

Some in our community say they would never agree to be taxed. While establishing a special tax district through Fairfax County provides certain benefits in terms of tax collection, engaging the entire community in contributing their share, etc., it is also possible to set up a private community collective that is self-governed. Whatever the shape and form, it is time that the entire community have a part in realizing our potential and that all members of our community have a vote in community issues. A special tax district offers the most disciplined inclusiveness and our best hope of having sufficient resources to take our creative community to its fullest expression and most tangible manifestation.

Let's begin the conversation.
The author is president of the Great Falls Historical Society.

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Scoring Baskets for Haiti

GF Hoops sponsors "Shots for Shots," to help vaccination effort in Haiti.

GF Hoops shoots way beyond any basket by taking on an initiative to provide immunization shots for school-age children in Haiti. The children of Haiti are not permitted to attend school unless they have been immunized.

The cost to immunize a child for a year? \$1! It goes without saying, we live in a wonderful and caring community, however, GF Hoops goes one step further by giving back to communities way beyond its boundaries of Great Falls.

For the past two weekends, GF Hoops sponsored a "Shots for Shots" qualifying contest with high scorers advancing to a championship round. For \$5, participants had 60 seconds to make as many baskets. Proceeds from the contest will go to benefit the Community Coalition for Haiti (CCH).

CCH is an organization that transforms lives, one at a time through long-term community driven programs in healthcare, education and community development. Specifically, it provides vaccinations to children of the most impoverished regions in Haiti. GF Hoops set out to aid in this effort. The contest was an overwhelming success and they raised over \$3,000, far exceeding their goal.

GF HOOPS is a program that provides an outlet for children and young adults with an opportunity to learn, practice, and play basketball on either House or Select Travel teams. The program offers opportunities for players of different skill levels. The common thread throughout its programs is to instill the ideals of teamwork, good sportsmanship, and fair play. Their philosophy of winning games is secondary to achieving these ideals.

In addition to providing an opportunity to play basketball, GF Hoops supports a referee program. The referees range in age from 12 to 25. Each trainee undergoes a rigorous training, including training on-the-floor, quizzes, tests and a final exam. This is all in preparation to learn the rules to enable them to take the floor and make the tough calls when the season starts. The referees are compensated for working the House League games. Being a GF Hoops referee affords them the opportunity to learn how to act under pressure, handle situations with confidence, and, most importantly, it allows them to serve as excellent role models. The program teaches them portable life skills that will remain with them throughout their life.

IN THE INTEREST of continuing to develop its youth programs, in 2015, GF Hoops introduced a Leadership Scholarship. This scholarship is designed to assist college-bound high school seniors to defray some first-year expenses. Four awards will be given each year to a high school seniors who have distinguished themselves as leaders and upstanding and dedicated members of the GF Hoops Community.

"Pay it forward" says the Commissioner, Michelle Claude, who has served in many different capacities on the board for five years. All three of her children, Nick, Christopher and Tim, have gone through the program as players and referees and have since graduated. With no one left in the program, she still devotes most of her free time by serving as Commissioner of the club as well as the Director of the Referees. "This is a great program," says Claude. "It goes way beyond learning and playing basketball. It teaches our children to excel as players, athletes and leaders. We are now teaching awareness, with our Shots for Shots program and are able to make a difference in the lives of the children in Haiti."

— BINA B. CLARK



GF Hoops provides an outlet for children and young adults with an opportunity to learn, practice, and play basketball.

PHOTOS BY BINA B. CLARK



Proceeds from the GF Hoops' "Shots for Shots" contest will benefit the Community Coalition for Haiti.

PHOTOS BY MICHELLE CLAUDE



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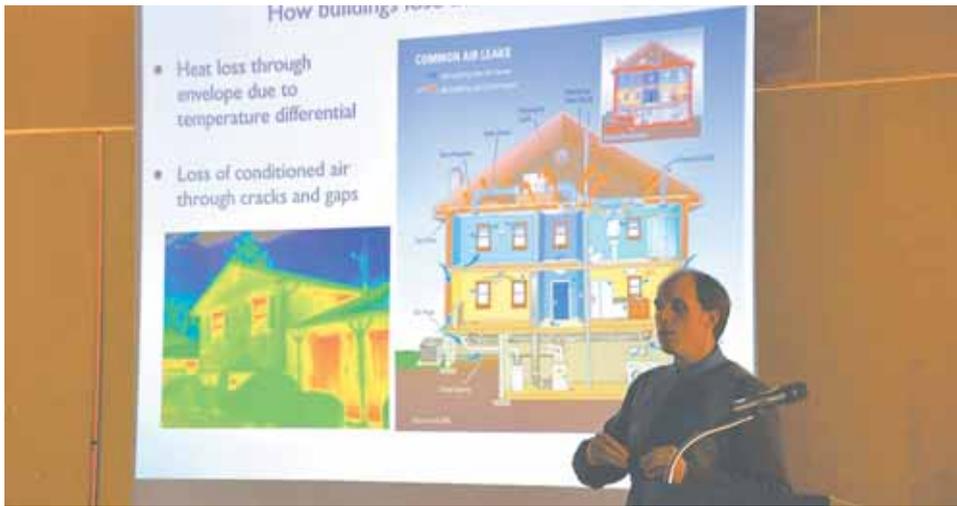
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BEFORE	AFTER	BEFORE	AFTER



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Architect Peter Henry was the event's guest speaker and helped educate the audience on just how energy is lost in a typical home. Henry offered suggestions on how to improve the situation and showed photos and drawings of the Passive energy home that he and his company, Peter Henry Architecture, just designed.

Architect Peter Henry and seminar host and presenter Rich Taschler showed the differences between standard wall construction and the super-insulated double wall/staggered stud method of framing that conserves a home's energy using a few handy props.

Super-Insulation Talk Attracts Homeowners

How to lower electric, gas and water bills?

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

The Rose Gallery at Reston Community Center at Lake Anne in Reston was the venue for a well-attended presentation by Rich and Marian Taschler on proper home insulation and its mostly unknown benefits. The program was offered under the auspices of Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at George Mason University. OLLI is a nonprofit organization founded to provide non-credit academic courses, special events and cultural activities for a mature adult membership, but the topic under discussion on Feb. 11 was of interest to any homeowner looking to lower those electric, gas and even water bills.

THE TASCHLERS are members of OLLI. Labeling themselves as "Those two ancient middle-aged teenagers," the tandem bicycle riding couple from Burke bought a 2-year-old house in that area back in 1975. "That was in the days of the '73 energy crunch," Rich reminded the audience. "Energy prices

Larry Cereghino represented the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and gave the welcoming address. After the seminar he joined super-insulated homeowner Marian Taschler for some chatting with other members.



were insane. Everyone was buying electric heaters as their solution. To me, that was addressing the effect. I wanted to go after the cause of heat loss in the house." The main cause turns out to be inadequate insulation. "With the standard 2x6 studded wall construction method, so much of the heat in a house is lost, because wood conducts heat, and this method creates micro channels where the heat escapes," explained Rich.

It took a lot of research and contact with experts from far afield – after all, Rich Taschler worked for the Department of Justice. He was a math major, not an engineer. But by 1976, the Taschlers were ready to start retrofitting their house. Over the

course of seven years, working on 1 or 2 rooms each year, they removed the drywall and re-framed the rooms with the innovative "double wall with staggered studs" method. The result? When the project was completed in 1983, Rich Taschler switched off the furnace in his house – and immediately had a parade of Washington Gas technicians and supervisors coming to the door trying to figure out what was going on. And what did this major renovation cost? The Taschlers spent about \$2,300 in materials, but were able to take a Federal tax deduction that brought the project cost to about \$300. In later years, the Taschlers wound up re-installing a furnace and AC unit. "You lose a lot of body heat that helps maintain

the home's temperature when the kids move out," said Rich. "But even so, we could never find a unit small enough for our reduced energy needs. We went with the smallest apartment-sized units we could find." Of course, the Taschlers continue to keep those utility bills to a minimum with their super-insulated home and now their solar hot water system that Rich designed and installed.

JOINING the Taschlers for this seminar was architect Peter Henry, who spoke about his designing of a certified "Passive Home" in Fairfax County. Henry took the audience through the evolution of home construction and spoke about the advances in energy efficiency being pioneered in Europe using the super-insulation concept and other technologies like heat recovery ventilation systems that virtually end the need for traditional heating and cooling systems.

The Taschlers and architect Henry stayed after the formal presentation to answer the questions of a number of attendees eager to learn more about how to super-insulate and cut those utility costs.

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute offers classes and seminars like this one to their membership. Visit their website at olli.gmu.edu for more information.

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Black History Month Celebrations

Local students learn about the history and accomplishments of African-Americans.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO COURTESY OF NORWOOD SCHOOL

Students at Norwood School in Bethesda wrote poems modeled after Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech and recited them at a school assembly.

Fourth grade student Eli West crafted a poem this month that was modeled after Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous, "I Have a Dream" speech. As part of February's month-long celebration of the history and culture of African-Americans, fourth grade students at Norwood School in Bethesda, Md., wrote and delivered poems reminiscent of the speech that the famous civil right leader delivered in 1963. The students also delivered their verses before Norwood's lower school community.

"I learned more about Martin Luther King, Jr. I learned that he was a very spiritual man," said West.

The exercise was part of a broader lesson in honor of Black History Month, a time when students learn about the history of African-Americans as that history is incor-

porated in to the overall curriculum of many schools. From concerts to school projects, there are opportunities to join the month-long celebration.

"Black History Month is a time to honor the accomplishments of the African-American men and women who have made contributions to the world in spite of the injustice they faced," said Sandi Hannibal, Director of Multicultural and Ethical Education at Norwood School in Bethesda, Maryland. "One might ask why it is necessary to highlight these accomplishments in 2015. After all, we have lived through the Civil

Rights Era and the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964. We have a black president. We have made so much progress. All of this is true, but in some schools the contributions and accomplishments of African Americans are not woven into the overall curriculum, so it is important that Black History Month provides an opportunity to learn about prominent African-Americans in a very intentional manner."

Some educators are encouraging students to take time to ponder the history of African-Americans. "It's more than just the Jim Crow Laws. There're a whole host of things that African-Americans have done," said

Lisa Styles, school counselor at Arlington Public School's Career Center in Arlington.

St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School, in Alexandria, will host a Middle School Student Diversity Conference on Friday, Feb. 20.

"Students at the middle school age are trying to learn who they are. We want to expose kids to the ideas of identity, inclusive behavior, and respect, and to let them know that what they feel matters," said KiKi Davis, St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School director of multicultural education, diversity, and equity initiatives. "We want to give them tools to become leaders in their own

Black History Month Celebration Concert

Saturday, Feb. 21, 11 a.m. at the GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. \$5 for children, students and seniors; \$10 for adults. For tickets, call 888-945-2468 or visit <http://cfa.gmu.edu/calendar/1830/>. For program questions, call 703-993-9889

schools, and it starts with being able to talk about diversity and social justice issues at their developmental level. What it looks like to them, in their lives, at this age."

St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac, Md., hosted a regional diversity conference earlier this month called "Diversity in the DMV" Conference. More than 200 representatives from independent schools in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia explored some of the tools needed for cross-cultural understanding.

Among the observances in Fairfax County Virginia, George Mason University Potomac Arts Academy and George Mason University School of Music will present a Black History Month celebration concert on Saturday, Feb. 21, called, "The Dream Lives On."

The Mason Wind Symphony and Vocal Studies Students, Mason Spiritual Ensemble will join local church choirs and elementary school choirs in a performance of gospel, spirituals, jazz and original compositions. The concert is designed to honor the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. and other African-American leaders.



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THURSDAY/FEB. 19

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

Open Mic Night. 9 p.m. Old Brogue, Village Centre, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Come flaunt your talents with Dusty Rose You can sign up on Dusty Rose's Facebook page.

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/FEB 19-21

"Big Fish." 7 p.m. McLean High School, 1633 Davidson Road, McLean. Follow the fearless Edward Bloom as he pursues the woman of his dreams, fights magical creatures, and learns that fatherhood may be the biggest challenge of all. Complete with juggling, silk dancing, and thrilling dance numbers, McLean's "Big Fish" is a show you will not want to miss! mcleandrama@gmail.com. Additional 2 p.m. show timing on Feb. 16, 21, 22.

FRIDAY/FEB. 20

Concert: HAPA. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. 8 p.m. With songs ranging from ancient chants to contemporary Hawaiian tunes, it's no wonder the L.A. Times calls HAPA's music "beautiful, fragile, spiritual, and powerful," all at once. Tickets \$25-30.

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.

Scott Ross. 9 p.m. Old Brogue, Village Centre, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Come listen to the music of Scott Ross.

SATURDAY/FEB. 21

Rain Arbo and Daisy Mayhem. 8 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. Described by The Boston Herald as one of "America's most inventive string bands," will lead lucky audience members in a bona fide revival when they bring "American Spiritual." Tickets are \$30, \$20 for McLean tax district residents.

Artist Reception. 5:30- 8:30 p.m. Frame Factory, 212 Dominion Rd, NE, Vienna. An artist reception for local artist, Thomas Xenakis. The show, Something Different..... Something New, will feature paintings and drawings of landscape and still life subjects. The show will be on display from Feb. 16-March 28. There is a slide show of Xenakis' paintings at <http://www.theframefactory1.com>

52nd Music Contest. 12:30-4 p.m. Assembly of God Church, 100 Ayrhill Ave., N.E., Vienna. The Vienna Host Lions Club will hold its 52nd annual James A. Bland Music Contest which is open to vocalists and instrumentalists from area middle and high schools. Each contestant will have up to eight minutes to perform, with awards announced at 4 p.m. Registration deadline is Feb. 16. Also, this is a free concert for the general public to attend. For information and/or application, email sandcs89@yahoo.com or call 703-938-1142.

Pocket Band. 9 p.m. Old Brogue, Village Centre, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Come and experience the very popular Pocket Band.

SUNDAY/FEB. 22

"My Funny Valentine." 3-5 p.m. The Alden, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. Admission: \$15 couples/\$8 singles.

MONDAY/FEB. 23

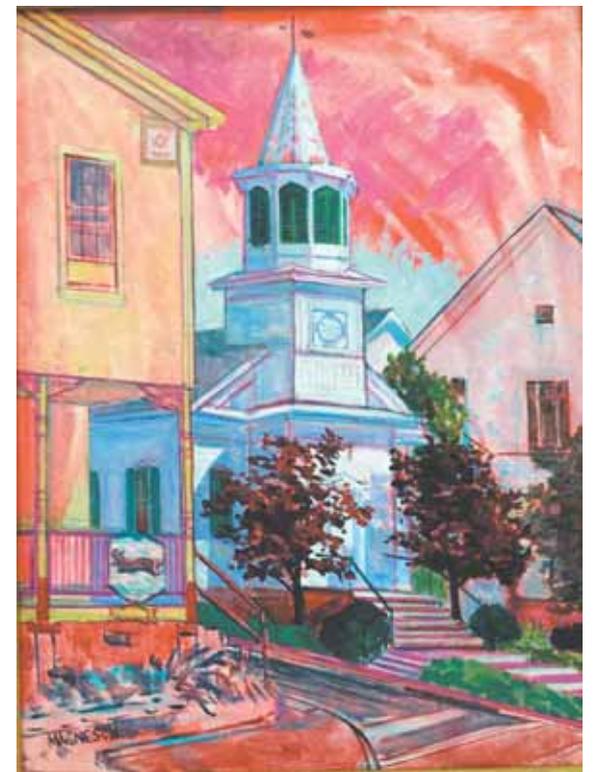
Preschool Storytime. 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Join us for stories, songs and activities. Ages 3-5 with adult.

Kids Book Club. 5:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Call branch for title. Ages 8-12.

TUESDAY/FEB. 24

Chita Rivera. 7:30 p.m. Come celebrate the one and only Broadway legend Chita Rivera in a unique solo concert event celebrating her 80th Birthday, coming to The Alden in McLean for one night only. Tickets and more information at www.aldentheatre.org or 703-790-0123.

Concert: Bettye LaVette. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. 8p.m. Dubbed the "High Priestess of R&B," this sizzling soul singer turns up the heat with her soaring voice that made "My Man - He's a loving' Man," a Top 10 hit (The Huffington Post.) Tickets \$45-48.



Members of the Vienna Arts Society celebrate Valentine's Day and the Carnival Season at the Vienna Art Center with colorful original art at 115 Pleasant Street, NW, Vienna VA 22180; 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Tuesdays - Saturdays, Feb. 17 - 28. Pictured is "Vienna Presbyterian Church," acrylic, by Bob Magnuson.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 25

Concert: Kat Edmonson. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. With special guest Robert Ellis. Float away on the sweet, jazzy vocals of this singer/songwriter cherished for her vintage pop and "timeless-sounding voice." (NPR). Tickets \$25-30.

Animals Underground. 10:30 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. An exploration of critters that spend their lives underground. Presented by Riverbend Park. Ages 3-5 with adult.

FRIDAY/FEB. 27

Concert: John Eaton. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. 8 p.m. Renowned pianist, vocalist, musicologist, and humorist delivers rendition of cherished American songs. Tommy Cecil, Bass. Tickets \$25-27.

Ice Skating. 3:30 - 10 p.m. Old Firehouse Teen Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean.

SATURDAY/FEB. 28

Mardi Gras Gala. 8 p.m. American Legion Post 180 Patriot Hall, 330 N. Center Street, Vienna. Music by Terry Lee Ryan (New Orleans' own). Heavy Hors D'oeuvres Costumes optional. Prize for best costume. Tickets: \$35 can be purchased at Post 180 or Online at <http://Legion180.net> Open to the public.

Concert: Big Sam's Funky Nation. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. 8 p.m. Join these New Orleans "hot purveyors of funk, (Miami News Times) for urban funk electrified by distinct trombone riffs and rhythmic, jazzy beats. Tickets \$24.

SATURDAY/MARCH 7

Pancake Breakfast. Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center Street South, Vienna. 8 a.m. - Noon. All you can eat pancakes, sausage, bacon, juice and coffee. Adults \$8, Seniors 65+ \$7, Children under 12 \$6, Children under 4 free. There will also be tours of the fire equipment available. All proceeds go to the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department to assist in purchasing life saving fire equipment. Come have a delicious breakfast, spend time with the members of the VVFD and the community. For more information contact: Joanie@vvfd.org

ONGOING

Tai Chi Beginners' Practice. Through March 21. Free Tai Chi beginners' practice. Open to all. Every Saturday, 8-9 a.m. St. Luke's Catholic School Gymnasium, 7005 Georgetown Pike, McLean.

Free Comedy Showcase. Thursdays 8:30 p.m., at Kalypso's Sports Tavern, 1617 Washington Plaza N., Lake Anne Village Center, Reston. Kalypso's hosts weekly comedy shows that feature some of the best national touring and local comedians in the area. Free of charge.

ENTERTAINMENT

'A Legendary Celebration' in McLean

Dancer, actress and singer Chita Rivera to perform at the Alden Theatre on Feb. 24.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

A legendary talent will soon arrive at the Alden Theatre to entertain and enthrall; the incomparable dancer, actress and singer Chita Rivera.

In her six decade career, Rivera has been honored with two Tony Awards as Best Leading Actress in a Musical and six additional Tony nominations, received a Kennedy Center Honor for her lifetime contributions to American culture and a Presidential Medal of Freedom among many honors.

"This is going to be an important and unforgettable evening," said Sarah N. Schallern, director, performing arts, McLean Community Center. "Ms. Rivera is one of the most distinguished figures of the American Musical Theatre stage. To be able to spend an intimate evening seeing her perform and hearing about her career is indescribable...especially in a venue like The Alden."

It will be a special concert celebrating a career that includes iconic American Broadway musicals such as "West Side Story," "Chicago," "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (Tony Award); "Bye, Bye, Birdie" and "The Rink" (Tony Award). Another theater award Rivera received was a 2009 Washington, D.C. Helen Hayes for her performance in the musical "The Visit" produced at Arlington's Signature Theatre. Rivera's one-woman tour-de-force concert at the Alden will include live musical accompaniment.

In a phone interview, Rivera described her upcoming concert as "an evening with good friends getting together in a living room away from stresses of the day. I will be telling stories, talking with the audience, sharing things, with plenty of wonderful songs."

The songs will be a playlist of the upbeat and the



PHOTO BY LAURA MARIE DUNCAN/COURTESY OF MCLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER
Chita Rivera

Where and When

"Chita Rivera: A Legendary Celebration" at the Alden Theatre, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave, McLean. Performance: Tuesday, Feb. 24, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$75/\$45 (MCC district residents). Call: 703-790-0123 or visit <http://mcleancenter.org>

darker, many immediately recognizable and others to be savored if new to the audience. Songs expected will be from composers and lyricists such as John Kander and Fred Ebb, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, Jerry Herman and those from American musical theater.

A live performance "can bring surprises," noted Rivera. "And the music can make the audience just soar. Lyrics and melodies can help bring memories of times that are familiar come to life. The audience can reminisce and get away.

"I want the audience to be entertained; so they just enjoy themselves with a live theater performance," added Rivera.

Rivera returns to Broadway to star in the Broadway premiere of the musical "The Visit" opening in late March. Perhaps hear some songs before Broadway audiences do. Can't do better than that.

FAITH NOTES

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

Ash Wednesday at Antioch Christian Church. The public is invited to a free soup supper at 6:30 p.m. and Ash Wednesday worship on Wednesday, Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m. The service is a time of quiet and reflection on how we can prepare ourselves in the next 40 days for the death and resurrection of Jesus. Antioch Christian Church is located at 1860 Beulah Road in Vienna. For more info call 703-938-6753 or go to www.antiochdoc.org

St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls, offers musical, educa-

tional, outreach and fellowship ministries in addition to worship services, including a 7:45 a.m. worship service without music; 9 a.m. worship service, children's chapel and children's choirs; 10 a.m. Sunday school and adult forum; and 11 a.m. worship service with adult choir. 703-759-2082.

The Antioch Christian Church offers a time of Prayer and Healing on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. for anyone wanting encouragement and healing through prayers. People are available to pray with you or for you. Antioch Christian Church is located at 1860 Beulah Road in Vienna. www.antiochdoc.org

The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges.

www.jssa.org/growth-learning.

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

McLean Bible Church Fitness Class at Body & Soul Fitness. Gain balance, energy and strength at 9:45 a.m. Mondays and Fridays. Free childcare for registered students. bodyandsoul@mcleانبible.org.

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



McLean
Community
Center
The Center of It All



Here's What's Happening at MCC

**Old Firehouse Teen Center
Dinner & A Show featuring
the Alden's Unruly Theatre**
Friday, Feb. 20, 7-9 p.m.
Dinner for sale; show is free

**Onstage @ The Alden
Rani Arbo and daisy mayhem
"American Spiritual"**
Saturday, Feb. 21, 8 p.m.
\$30/\$20 MCC district residents

**McLean Kids Performance Series
Theatreworks USA's
"Fly Guy & Other Stories"**
Sunday, Feb. 22, 2 p.m.
\$15/\$10 MCC district residents

**Sunday Soirée Series
"My Funny Valentine"**
Sunday, Feb. 22, 3-5 p.m.
\$15 couples/\$8 singles



**Onstage @ The Alden
Chita Rivera:
"A Legendary Celebration"**
Tuesday, Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m.
\$75/\$45 MCC district residents

**Take a Day Away!
2015 Philadelphia Flower Show**
Monday, March 2, 6:45 a.m.-8 p.m.
\$134/\$129 MCC district residents

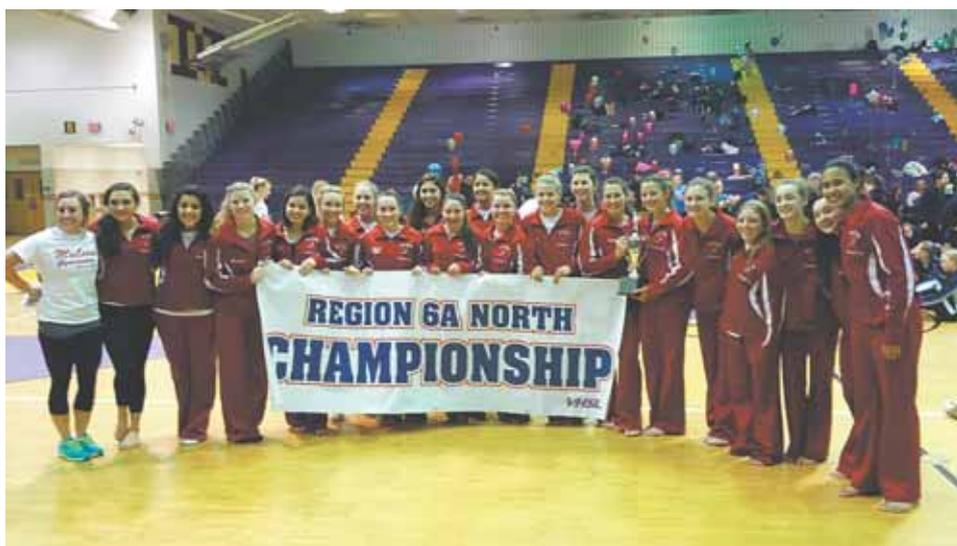
**Onstage @ The Alden
Les Ballets Trockadero
de Monte Carlo**
Thursday, March 5, 7:30 p.m.
\$50/\$40 MCC district residents

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



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





PHOTOS BY JON ROETMAN/THE CONNECTION



The McLean gymnastics team won the 6A North region championship on Feb. 11 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

McLean gymnast Lizzy Brown-Kaiser, left, placed fourth and qualified for states in the all-around during the 6A North region meet on Feb. 11.

McLean Gymnastics Wins 6A North Region Championship

Oakton's Weaver places seventh on beam qualifies for states.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The McLean gymnastics team's quest for a region title got off to a less-than-ideal start, with the Highlanders failing to match rival Washington-Lee's score on beam during the first rotation of the 6A North region championship meet at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

McLean had finished region runner-up behind W-L each of the last three seasons. But after their early mishaps on beam, the Highlanders left no doubt who was No. 1 in 2015.

McLean captured the region team championship on Feb. 11, finishing more than three points ahead of the field. The Highlanders produced a score of 144.425, followed by runner-up Battlefield's total of 141.025.

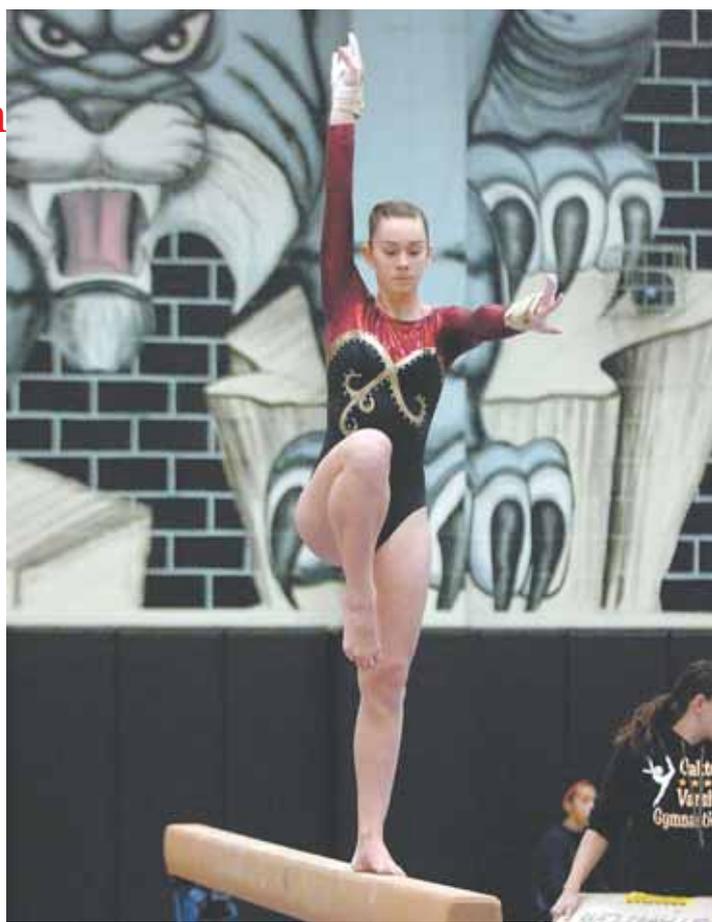
"It feels amazing," McLean head coach Courtney Lesson said. "They've wanted this for so long."

After winning three consecutive region titles, Washington-Lee placed third with a score of 139.525 and failed to qualify for states.

"If you looked at the individuals, there were only one or two [Battlefield] kids up on the medal (stand)," W-L head coach Joe D'Emidio said, "but they had better depth than we did."

After producing a score of 34.575 on beam, which ended up third behind Battlefield and W-L, McLean turned in the top score in each of the final three events.

"Beam, we started off a little rocky, but I think that was kind of a good wake-up call for us," McLean senior Lizzy Brown-Kaiser said. "It told us, look, we have to really get our heads in it and put everything into this meet and we did. We came back really strong on floor and that just set the tone



Oakton gymnast Natalie Weaver, seen earlier this season, qualified for states on beam with a seventh-place finish (8.9) during the 6A North championship meet on Feb. 11 at Lake Braddock.

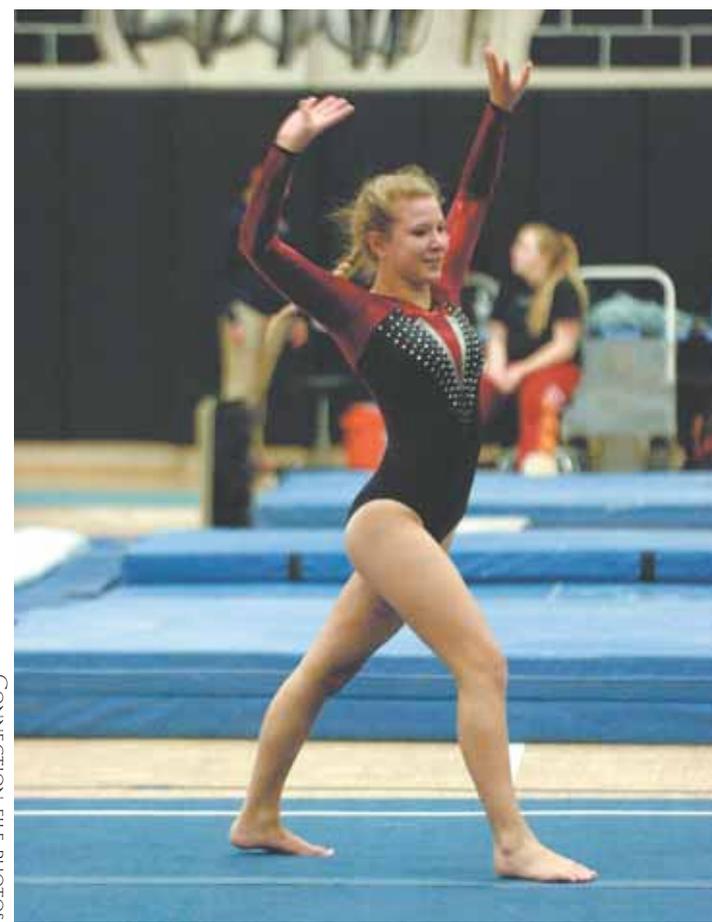
for the rest of the meet for us."

Brown-Kaiser led McLean with a fourth-place finish (36.95) in the all-around, which qualified her to compete at the state meet. W-L senior Sophie Hatcher won the all-around with a score of 37.65, followed by Yorktown freshman Bella Kane (37) and Hayfield junior Molly Overstreet (36.975).

South County sophomore Collea Burgess, last year's all-around champion, attended this year's region meet but did not compete. Burgess said her club coaches (Apollo Gymnastics) did not want her to compete.

Brown-Kaiser tied for third on bars (9.05), placed fourth on floor (9.575) and beam (9.075) and eighth on vault (9.3).

Brown-Kaiser was named the region's



Herndon gymnast Alexa Bradley, seen earlier this season, qualified for states on bars and floor during the 6A North championship meet on Feb. 11 at Lake Braddock.

Most Outstanding Senior.

"She did a great job," Lesson said. "She's a really great leader on the team. I couldn't be more proud. She really deserved that award. She cheers for everyone. Even other teams, she's always out there cheering for them."

McLean's Jacqueline Green placed sixth in the all-around (36.475), including second-place finishes on vault (9.55) and floor (9.7).

McLean's Carolyn Brown-Kaiser qualified for states on vault, placing eighth with a score of 9.3.

Herndon's Alexa Bradley, who won the Conference 5 all-around title, qualified for states on bars (sixth, 8.9) and floor (9.4).

"I didn't think I was going to make it because last year I didn't make it," Bradley said. "... [I learned] not to put so much pressure on myself because there are so many good girls here. I just had fun and it turned out well."

The Highlanders' 2014-15 season has included a Conference 6 championship and a 6A North region title. Now they will compete for a state championship.

The state meet is scheduled for Feb. 20-21 at Patriot High School.

"That would be amazing," Lesson said about potentially winning conference, region and state titles this season. "It's just all about hitting your routines — getting all your bonuses connected and hitting each event."

Linda Jones Exhibits at Great Falls Library

Linda Jones is the featured artist in February in the large meeting room at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike. The exhibit "Beneath their Boughs" features 35 watercolors, acrylics, pastels and mixed media paintings. There will be a reception to celebrate art and nature at Great Falls Library in the large meeting room, on Friday, Feb. 27, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be available. The exhibit is also open during regular library hours.

Jones loves living surrounded by trees, looking up at the sky through their leaves and branches with their many colors and textures in all seasons. Although her style tends towards realism, it portrays impressions of her perceptions, sometimes leading to more abstract paintings derived from nature. Her work reflects her love of color and an intimate relationship with the environment, whether it is a landscape or an individual tree or branch. These paintings have been created over the last few years and sadly some of the trees depicted have been lost in tropical storms and the derecho. Most of the paintings portray local scenes from Northern Virginia: Great Falls, River Bend, the Potomac, Difficult Run and her own backyard overlooking Rocky Run. Others represent trees and landscapes from her travels in Maryland's Garrett County, Colorado and Arizona.



Fall's Finery, by Linda Jones, Mixed media.



Season of Mists, by Linda Jones, Mixed media.

More often associated with watercolor paintings, Jones has had fun introducing acrylics, pastels and mixed media into this series. She is a long time member of Great Falls Studios, and teaches watercolor and mixed media painting in her studio. For more information call 703-442-9251 or visit www.lindajonesart.com

History Alive at Great Falls Senior Center Event

The Great Falls Senior Center (GFSC) will have Mary Ann Jung, award-winning actress; Smithsonian scholar, writer, and director recreate one of history's most fascinating women, Rosie The Riveter at the March 3 event. Jung researches and writes her own scripts, and performs in the authentic costumes, accents, and attitudes for her characters' eras. She has appeared on CNN, the Today Show, and Good Morning America. She has been a lead actress and Director of Renaissance History and Shakespearean Language at the Maryland Renaissance Festival for 32 years. She performed as queen and was Director with the Florida Renaissance Festival from 1994-2006; she was Director of Street Theater and Family Performances for Artscape. The March 3 event will be held at the United Methodist Church, 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The program runs from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and includes lunch; a modest contribution is appreciated. Reservations are a must. To reserve, email Polly Fitzgerald at pollyfitz1@verizon.net or call 703-759-4345.

The event is being sponsored by Great Falls Assisted Living (A Memory Care Community), 1121 Reston Avenue, Herndon. Great Falls Senior Center has partnered with the Fairfax County De-

partment of Neighborhood and Community Services in all ventures and events.

Jennifer Chronis to Run for Dranesville Supervisor

Great Falls resident Jennifer Chronis announced her campaign for Fairfax County Board of Supervisors-Dranesville District. Chronis is a graduate of Fairfax County Public Schools and the University of Virginia McIntire School of Commerce. She has lived in Fairfax County for 18 years. She served in the U.S. Army for more than two decades and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 2010 after serving in combat roles in Operation Desert Storm and Bosnia. She is currently an IBM Vice President responsible for more than \$600 million in annual revenues. She is on the Board of Directors for the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association Washington D.C. Chapter, is an IT Fellow with the American Council for Technology-Industry Advisory Council (ACT-IAC) and has been a volunteer for the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia. Visit www.JenniferChronis.com for more information.



Jennifer Chronis

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

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 A+ Camps & Schools Pullout
- 4/29/2015 ...Mother's Day Celebrations, Dining & Gifts I

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For store hours, or to schedule a donation, visit www.restorenova.org.

Real-Time, Really Late



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I'm not a night owl. More of an early bird, worms notwithstanding. But given the contents of last week's column, "Scantsy," I find it difficult to write about anything else while waiting for the results of my CT Scan. I mean, nothing matters more than these results in determining my next course of treatment/quality of life/life expectancy, so to pretend otherwise is a bit naive; and expecting a sound sleep is equally challenging, so here I am, 2:04 A.M., early Sunday morning, February 15th.

I can take it, really. I can function. You couldn't tell by looking at me or talking to me to know that I think my life may hang in the balance. After nearly six years of scanning and waiting, I've found my level. I'm not morose or depressed or pre-occupied, but I am something. Stuck in a kind of neutral, sort of. And though I am still positive about this negative, to say I can joke about it/be dismissive about it, or be unaffected by the potentially hugely complicated result as yet unknown, would be a bit presumptuous on my part and define "naive" in an entirely new way.

Certainly I understand that cancer is a disease and not necessarily impacted by my hopes and prayers; still, I've never wanted to be disrespectful of it. I've never spoken or written arrogantly about any success I've had combating this terrible disease any more than I would kick a man when he's down. If, for the time being, cancer is not having its way with me, and I am able to semi go about my regular business - until the next CT Scan three months hence that is, then I am one lucky son-of-a-gun and humbled by my amazing good fortune. And until I know the results - definitely by my next appointment on Friday, February 20th, I am sleeping at night only intermittently and living my days fatigued by the lack of sleep accumulating from the previous nights before. I'm not complaining. I'm just saying why it's 2:34 A.M. and I'm sitting on the edge of my bed hunched over and scribbling into this notebook.

The related problem is the speculation; being able to leave well enough alone, if it is well enough. And therein lies the dilemma. Somewhat surprisingly, my scheduled infusion went in as scheduled this past Friday. Typically, if there had been a change for the worse, treatment would have been delayed until my next appointment, where the oncologist and team Lourie would discuss the options. But that didn't happen. Does that mean that my scan results were still encouraging and thus there's no reason to change, or was it too close to the appointment to bother stopping and restarting again, if in fact that was our decision? Maybe? Perhaps? What if? What do I know? More importantly: What does my oncologist know?

So we wait. I'm not happy about it, but I am used to it. And even my wife, Dina, has gotten used to the delay; my brother, Richard, also. Still, it doesn't make it any easier, as odd as that may sound. Just familiar. I wish there were a different means to this madness, but apparently there isn't. Cancer rules, and I'm here to play fair - out of respect.

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

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21 Announcements

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The Oak Hill/
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The Burke Connection
The Fairfax Connection
The Fairfax Station/Clifton/
Lorton Connection
Zone 3: The Alexandria
Gazette Packet
The Mount Vernon Gazette
Zone 4: Centre View North
Centre View South
Zone 5: The Potomac Almanac
Zone 6: The Arlington Connection
The Vienna/Oakton
Connection
The McLean Connection
The Great Falls Connection

21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
Smitten Boutique Salon II LLC trading as Primp by Smitten: A Styling Studio, 3000 Washington Blvd. Suite F, Arlington, VA 22201. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Day Spa license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Melanie St. Clair & Lisa Rittiner/owner
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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Community engagement, communication with readers and sources. Continuously seeking new sources of local information.
Copy editing, fact checking, familiarity with AP Style.
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Send letter, resume, three clips or examples of work to resumes@connectionnewspapers.com

Helping Keep Faith Communities Safe

Fairfax County Police are implementing a new program, modeled after Neighborhood Watch, that aims to help keep houses of worship safe and crime-free. "Worship Watch" is intended to encourage congregants to become more involved in reducing the opportunity for crimes to occur on facility premises. Congregants, as well as neighbors of houses of worship, will learn how to be more aware and the importance of speedy reporting of any suspicious activity.

Houses of worship are not immune to criminal activity. More common crimes that are targeted towards them include larceny, burglary, vandalism and arson.

Fairfax County Police are hosting their first Worship Watch workshop, free of charge, on Saturday, Feb. 28, from 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Room 102 C.

Workshop attendees will receive crime prevention training, facility security assessments, information on how to receive crime alerts and community information, and other valuable crime prevention tools.

The meeting is open to all, and is aimed towards anyone who is interested in learning how to help keep Fairfax County safe.

RSVP to attend this meeting by emailing the Reston Crime Prevention Office; Katy.Defoe@Fairfaxcounty.gov . Questions may be directed to 703-478-0799.

Letters

FROM PAGE 8

Herrity who seems to have spoken out against this scandal early. The "blanket approach" to deny FOIA requests you mention is simply a policy. Policies are guidelines for what should normally be done; they are not a legal requirement and can be changed with a stroke of the pen by the FCPD either on its own or at the direction of the Board of Supervisors.

I hope you will call for the resignation of the chief of FCPD; oppose reelection of the chairman and Board of Supervisors, less Herrity; oppose re-election of our Commonwealth's Attorney; and payment of the \$12M to Geer's estate.

The chief has condoned a cover-up and our elected officials have failed in their duties. The \$12M should come from the budget of the FCPD and our Commonwealth's Attorney, and foreclose raising the pay of the chairman and Board of Supervisors based on their inexcusable handling of this affair.

Mike Shumaker
Fairfax



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