

Back to the Future

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Budget Discussion
Weathers the Storm

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Celebrate Great Falls,
with Wine Tasting

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GREAT FALLS GRANGE
NO. 738.

The Grange was built in 1929 to be the social center of Great Falls. Now that it is accessible to all, after long-needed ADA renovations, the community hopes it will become a hub of community activity once again.



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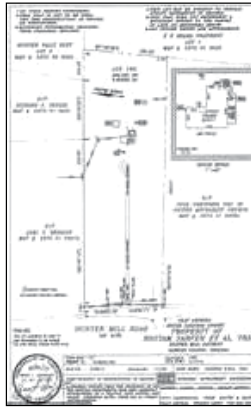
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PHOTOS BY KEN MOORE/THE CONNECTION

The Grange was built in 1929 and used to be the community center of Great Falls. "The Grange could be the jewel of Great Falls," said Jorge Adeler, the way it was in the past.



Musicians with the Difficult Run String Band filled the historic community center with sound. "Musicians say the acoustics are fantastic," said Kathleen Murphy, president of the Great Falls Community Farmers Market.

Back to the Future

Community celebrates the renovations of The Grange.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

The 13 steps of The Grange blocked the historic community center from one of its original purposes "as a symbol of commitment to community involvement and progress."

On Saturday, March 7, about 75 members of the community gathered to celebrate the renovations to the 1929 building and grounds that now make it accessible to all of Great Falls.

"For far too long, it was not accessible to our residents with disabilities and to our senior citizens," said Supervisor John Foust, who helped secure \$350,000 for the \$503,000 project from County carry-over funds in 2013. The Fairfax County Park Authority funded the balance of the project.

"Great Falls has many assets, but one thing it does not have is an official community center," said Foust. "The Grange is our de facto community center."

And Saturday, the community came to The Grange in a manner used for in the past by the original farmers that built the hall in the center of Great Falls.

Kathleen Murphy and Cindy Jordan brewed hot apple cider; the Difficult Run String Band filled the hall with banjo, bass, guitar and fiddle music; Adrian Bessenyei, 5, colored, when he wasn't helping his mother Marcela Bessenyei, one of the vendors with the Great Falls Community Farmers Market; and most all of the 75 patrons gathered and talked before and after the day's event.

"For a long time, it was just a building standing in the way. Now it's a focus point

Kathleen Murphy, president of the Great Falls Historical Society and manager of Great Falls Community Farmers Market.



Ann Kosche, of Herndon, calls herself the Puttery Mom. She calls the Great Falls Community Farmers Market a great way to meet people. Of the event Saturday, she said, "It's nice to see some fresh faces that might not know we're here year round."



that can really benefit the community," said T.R. Cook, of the Great Falls Optimist Club.

"It's gone through ups and downs, but through all its history it has always been the center of the community. It can become that again," said Phil Pifer, of the Great Falls Citizens Association.

The Great Falls Grange Hall was the first grange hall built in Virginia and one of five granges built in Fairfax County, said Kathleen Murphy, president of the Great Falls Historical Society.

"Now that the Grange has been brought up to code the question is what are we going to do with it?" said Jorge Adeler. "I hope



"It's an establishment that's been around longer than most of us," said T.R. Cook, of the Optimists Club. "For a long time, it was just a building standing in the way. Now, it's a focus point that can really benefit the community."



Cindy Jordan, of the Fairfax County Park Authority, operated the new wheelchair lift Saturday. "It's been a long time coming," she said. "My mother wouldn't be able to come into this building without it."

the effort won't stop here."

Of course, Adeler knows a gem when he sees one.

"The potential is extraordinary," he said. "The Grange could be the jewel of Great Falls."

He said the possible activities for youth, senior citizens, adults and the entire community are "endless."

The past decade, "the building has been completely underutilized," said Julie Casso, of Arts of Great Falls, formerly Great Falls Foundation for the Arts.

"It is time to begin to have conversations to bring our community center to life," said

"Now its time to have conversations to bring our community center back to life."

— Kathleen Murphy, Great Falls Historical Society

"Through all its history it has always been the center of the community. It can become that again."

— Phil Pifer, Great Falls Citizens Association

"Great Falls has many assets, but one thing it does not have is an official community center."

— Supervisor John Foust

Kathleen Murphy, president of the Great Falls Historical Society and Great Falls Community Farmers Market.

Stay tuned, or get involved.

"We can do a lot more to bring the community together. Come join us," said Eric Knudsen, president of the Great Falls Citizens Association.



PHOTO BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO/THE CONNECTION

Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville), Joe Mondoro, county deputy director of budget, Jane Strauss, school board member and Kristen Michael, FCPS finance assistant superintendent, present the advertised FY 2016 budget to Great Falls residents on Wednesday, March 4.

Budget Discussion Weathers the Storm

Great Falls residents meet county representatives, point to community's budget priorities.

BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO
THE CONNECTION

Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville), School Board member Jane Strauss, Kristen Michael from Fairfax County Public Schools and Joe Mondoro from the Fairfax County budget office met with 16 residents of Great Falls to discuss the advertised FY 2016 budget on a rainy and foggy night at the Great Falls Library on Wednesday, March 4.

Mondoro said that the county is very reliant on real estate taxes—63.9 percent of the revenue generated from homeowners and businesses. However, office vacancy rates are highest on record since 1991 at 15.2 percent, which causes a decrease in value. Mondoro said that investors view the county as a good place to put money in, “but we do have a high vacancy problem,” he said.

Michael pointed to the increasing number of students, 28.2 percent, who will be eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in 2016. She also stressed the increase in expenditure to offset for full-day Mondays and the growing size of classes.

Kris Gregory asked about the driving force for student enrollment growth. Strauss said that employment opportunities, birth rate and young families wanting to live closer to jobs are among many factors contributing to the increase.

Michael said that the FY 2016 budget is “realistic and balanced,” but acknowledges that it does not fulfill all of the needs of FCPS but it addresses its priorities.

Bill Canis, of the Great Falls Citizens Association, asked if the county budget accounted for the resident curatorship program that was being studied by the County Planning and Zoning Historic Preservation. Mondoro said that the process was started but is not in the FY 2016 budget.

Beverly Bradford pointed to the 93 county positions eliminated and the added 48. “What were the 93 positions eliminated?” Mondoro said that the redundant positions were spread out all over agencies. “Every agency has some form of reduction” based on process and “employee suggestion,” he said.

Foust said that he hoped to identify the community's priorities and get feedback with these meetings so they can be reflected in the budget.

VIEWPOINTS

What would you like to see in the budget?

Beverly Bradford, Great Falls:

“I'd like to see \$200,000 to start that resident curator program for the Turner Farm House.”



Kris Gregory, Dranesville District:

“I would like to see increased funding for the library. I'm one of the library advocates. The library system has suffered disproportionately. It has taken the highest percentage of cuts since the recession. We would very much encourage the county to try and consider finding some more alternate revenue sources.”



Bill Canis, vice president of the Great Falls Citizens Association:

“We're happy to hear that the parks budget has been pretty much kept intact. The resident curatorship program is very important here in Great Falls because we have a very prominent house right out here on Georgetown Pike that's been falling down for four years and it's owned by the park authority. The best option we have for it is to have the resident curatorship program be put in place and for the park authority to pick someone to actually live in that house as the curator.”



SCHOOL NOTES

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

On Saturday, Feb. 21, **crew team members from Langley High School** will participate in their “Boats and Oars” fundraising effort throughout neighborhoods in McLean and Great Falls. Each year, the Langley High School Crew Team asks the larger community for financial support. Donations to Langley Crew (LCBC) are tax deductible.

And the team invites you to come see a regatta or two in the spring. Regattas are

held Saturdays, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. from March 21 until May 9 (no regatta on April 4) on the Occoquan at Sandy Run Regional Park, 10450 Van Thompson Road, Fairfax Station.

Each year, **the Northwest Federal Credit Union Foundation** (NWFCU Foundation) awards a total of \$100,000 in college scholarships – \$5,000 each – to 20 students who have demonstrated qualities of leadership, dedication and commitment in school, at home and in the community. “These students have displayed the qualities that will make them future leaders in our community,” said Chris McDonald, Chairman of the NWFCU Foundation and President/CEO of Northwest Federal Credit Union.

WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

Nominations Sought for Jean Tibbetts History Award

The Jean Tibbetts History Award honors outstanding contributors to the research, articulation, dissemination, and preservation of the history of life along the Potomac River corridor from McLean to west of Dranesville and south through Herndon. Candidates for the Jean Tibbetts History Award are selected from annual nominations to the Society and the Award carries a stipend of \$200. The awardee's name is placed on the Great Falls Historians plaque, displayed in the Great Falls Library.

Nominations should include a brief resume of the nomi-

nee; a listing of significant achievements, such as leading publications, noteworthy accomplishments; and a summary of the significance of the nominee's overall record of contributions. Deadline for submission for the 2015 Award is March 31, 2015. Please mail nominations, with complete documentation, to GFHS History Award Committee, Attention Jack Nutter, Chairman / PO Box 56 / Great Falls, VA 22066 or by email to: jack.nutter@verizon.net.

Jean Tibbetts herself was a writer of Great Falls history, who recognized and displayed excellence in historical research. The Great Falls Historical Society is proud to commemorate her memory with this Award and we appreciate your support. Donations may be made to: Great Falls Histori-

cal Society / Attention: Treasurer / PO Box 56 / GF, VA 22066.

Focus on Financial Crimes

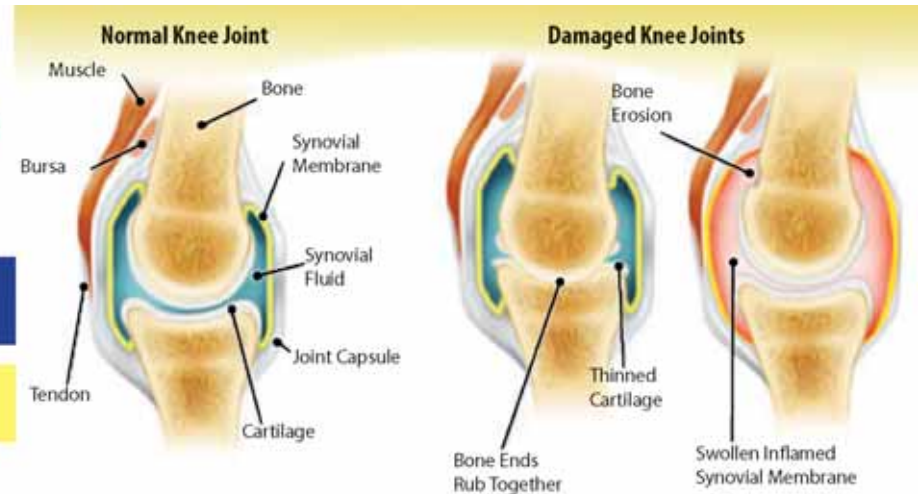
The Great Falls Senior Center speaker will be Tom Polhemus, Investigator with the Financial Crimes Section of the Fairfax County Police Department. Polhemus will speak on financial crimes, Internet fraud, and how not to become a victim, April 7 from 11 to 1:30PM at Colvin Run Schoolhouse, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. The program is being sponsored by Brightview Assisted Living Great Falls. To register email Polly Fitzgerald at pollyfitz1@verizon.net or call 703-759-4345.



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My name is Dr. Charles Arndt, of Chiropractic Health & Wellness Center. Since we opened, we've seen many people with knee problems leave the office pain free.

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- A thorough analysis of your exam and x-ray findings so we can start mapping out your plan to being pain free.
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The First 25 Callers Only can get everything I've listed here for only \$35. The normal price for this type of evaluation including x-rays is \$250, so you're saving a considerable amount by taking me up on this offer.

www.ChiropracticAndWellness.com
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Sterling, VA

Remember what it was like before you had knee problems; when you were pain free and could enjoy everything life had to offer? It can be that way again. Don't neglect your problem any longer – don't wait until it's too late.

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Due to the expected demand for this special offer, I urge you to call our office at once. The phone number is 703-376-3832.

Call today and we can get started with your consultation, exam and x-rays as soon as there's an opening in the schedule. Tell the receptionist you'd like to come in for the Knee Evaluation. Our office is located at 20 Pidgeon Hill Dr., Ste. 102, in Sterling, VA.

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Dr. Charles Arndt, D.C.**

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Here's what one of our patients had to say:

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Enjoying Another Snow Day in Great Falls

From left: Avery Perez, Trinity Day, Lexie Perez and Alexa Gianoplus pictured on snowy March 5 in Great Falls.



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Comstock Reflects on 'An Inspiring Weekend'

U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10):

"It was such a privilege to mark the 50th anniversary of Selma to Montgomery civil rights marches with my colleague, Rep. John Lewis, a civil rights leader and foot soldier in the fight for voting rights and justice. It was an inspiring weekend of faith and commemoration with over 100 Members of Congress attending to honor these American heroes."

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"I never wanted to leave my home, but moving to Brightview Great Falls was the best decision we made. The food is delicious and we particularly enjoy the musical entertainment and the friendships that we have made since moving here." – Bill W.

"At Brightview I still have my independence. I love everything here and I have everything here that I need. My family is welcome anytime and the best part is they no longer worry about me." – Sophia C.




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Tax Map #: 0803-02240001



Parcel 2 (Mohammed N. Shirazi, et al.): 10503 West Drive #D, Fairfax; Fairfax Professional Village Condos.
Tax Map #: 57-4-20-4C

Parcel 3 (Mohammed N. Shirazi, et al.): 4242 Chain Bridge Road #C, Fairfax; Fairfax Professional Village Condos. Tax Map #: 57-4-20-6C

Parcel 4 (Mohammed N. Shirazi, et al.): 4242 Chain Bridge Road #D, Fairfax; Fairfax Professional Village Condos. Tax Map #: 57-4-20-7D

Parcel 5 (John Samuel Jackson, et al.): 6313 Old Dominion Drive, McLean; Chesterbrook; 0.438 +/- Acre.
Tax Map #: 0313-01-0070



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Balancing Act: Budgeting for Housing

BY DAVID LEVINE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
GOOD SHEPHERD HOUSING AND FAMILY
SERVICES, INC.

In our work housing families and individuals experiencing homelessness, many of them have never lived in housing of their own. They have lived doubled up with relatives and friends, camped out in broken-down minivans, or checked into motels for overnight stays. But signing a lease with a commitment to a year's worth of monthly rent payments — that's a new or long-ago experience for them. And it's a scary one, too.

That's when we come into their lives to help them out. Our housing locators and case managers work with them to understand the basics of renting a housing property. Without question, the rental lease gives them rights. It bestows on them the new lawful designation of "tenant." But a rental lease also comes with new responsibilities.

The responsibilities are not easy. Paying rent on the first of the month is their highest priority as a tenant. Keeping in line with rental community rules and regulations is equally important. Making sure that they keep their housing

in a good condition is another one. Excessive damage and wear-and-tear of their rental housing will make their security deposits — the one they had struggled for weeks to pull together — vanish into thin air.

We know the hardest part is making that rent payment on the first of each month. It is a real balancing act. As the sociologist Sudhir Venkatesh once noted about low-income families living in South Chicago who struggled to make rent payments: "This does not mean people fail to plan but ... there are separate temporal horizons, one in the immediate future and the other a longer way off." In other words, these families focus on the expenses to be paid today, not tomorrow or next month.

In its just released poverty study of women and girls in the Washington D.C. metropolitan region, the Washington Area Women's Foundation included information on the average monthly expenses faced by poor families living in our region. Drawing on 2013 U.S. Census Bureau data and other datasets, the author of the study provided measures of economic security for what a family of three without public assistance would need to pay its expenses.

For example, even at \$1,325/month as the average rent in Fairfax County, this monthly rent is actually not the most costly of the family's household expenses. In fact, at an average of \$1,821/month, the highest monthly expense is for childcare. All told, when all the expenses are added up, a typical family of three would need \$82,572 in annual income in Fairfax County to afford to live comfortably there and cover all its expenses.

The federal poverty line annual income for a family of three is \$19,530. As many families experiencing homelessness are earning just above the poverty line, the amount of income needed to live without worries in Fairfax County is a long way off for them.

Still, even for low-income families and individuals experiencing homelessness, our case managers and housing locators can make a world of difference. They work to find them very affordable housing within a shrinking pool of this kind of housing. Once housed, they support them in getting a budget in place — and then we can only hope that nothing upends their budgets.

No medical emergencies. No transmission repairs on their cars used for work. No one-time spikes in their heating costs. It is a balancing act.

COMMENTARY

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

An Open Letter to Governor

Dear Governor McAuliffe,

When you visited our Pre-Session Round Table Luncheon in December 2013, we in the League of Women Voters were thrilled to hear you say, "I think we should do everything we can to make voting as easy as possible in Virginia."

You have kept your word, and have been a wonderful friend to voters in Virginia. We were proud to sit near the front when you announced budget money for new voting equipment, at your press conference in Virginia Beach — and to lobby for that budget line.

Now a bill has been passed by both houses, requiring citizens who apply for absentee ballots to include a photocopy of their valid photo ID. There is no real purpose to this bill, beyond making it harder to vote — because registrars have no photo with which to compare the mailed copy.

This measure would have especially harsh effects on the old, the poor, the disabled, and the homebound — depriving them of an easy way to vote if traveling presents a challenge.

A number of organizations — including many in the electoral board and registrar associations — oppose this bill. The League stood with them to lobby against this suppressive measure. And now we ask you, with great respect: Please

veto House Bill 1318!

We are counting on your strong promise to defend voters in Virginia. Thank you again for all you do for citizens.

Anne Sterling
President, League of Women
Voters of Virginia

Bully Bikers

To the Editor:

I'd like to share some comments about our wonderful town (Vienna) and the surrounding communities regarding bicycle riders. As a point of reference, I love to ride my bicycle, a Trek Hybrid that is perfect for the trails and the W&OD. I ride at least once a week and get in approximately 20 miles to get my exercise in and just general enjoyment.

My point here is that I recognize and appreciate all bikers and what they are doing as fun and exercise.

However, I witnessed yesterday an incident that is indicative of the increasing "bully" population of many bikers today. Bikers who ride in our streets designed for cars but taking aggression out on vehicles for following the motor vehicle laws when they themselves do not. I'm not talking about just the casual biker but the major bikers who think they are powerful enough to keep up a 50 mile an hour ride on our streets.

I was in the parking lot of Noodles and Company and Starbucks on

Maple Avenue on Sunday afternoon. A young lady driving her car in the right lane adjacent to the parking lot attempted to make a right turn (correctly) into the lot. A biker was attempting to pass her on her right side and he nearly clipped her. He started screaming and yelling at the young woman and then started hitting and kicking her car. She was terrified.

His obscenities and aggression was so horrific that it attracted numerous people.

As the young lady pulled into the parking lot the biker came to chase her and was all set to start yelling and screaming at her for "her fault" of hitting him. I intervened and stopped his aggressive approach and then he started taking it out on me! He saw my license plate as a Marine Corp's vanity plate and told me I was a disgrace to the Corps! He wanted a fight. That is all there is to it.

When is the Vienna Police department going to start ticketing these aggressive bikers who are driving on our roads but are not driving within the laws enacted for our roads? Also, what about "aggressive bicycle driver" behavior of these bully bikers? Can we do something about them as well?

Sean DuGuay
Vienna

Money Talks

To the Editor:

I must say I agree wholeheart-

edly with the "ugly" segment of your article that summarizes the end of the Virginia General Assembly (Editorial, "Good, Bad and Ugly: A look at recently ended session of the Virginia General Assembly," Connection, March 4-10, 2015). It seems as though lobbying and payoffs are far too common an occurrence in politics these days. This makes me question the legitimacy of our representatives, not to mention the government as a whole. When corporations fund a representative to a far greater degree than the majority of the public could donate during a campaign, wouldn't it be safe to assume that the money comes with multiple strings attached?

It comes with a price, that price presumably being an unwavering loyalty that disregards public opinion entirely. I see it almost as blackmail, "you put through policies that favor our business practices, the money keeps flowing and you get to stay in office."

Nowadays your bank account is your mouth, and if you don't have the money then your mouth is sewn shut. This is classism in a nutshell, and if we want to be true to democratic process, then there is no place for lobbying practices in the people's government. Oh wait I forgot, corporations are people too right?

Christopher S. Fenwick
McLean

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Koko is all about family for us... it was my 17 year old who begged me to give it a try. I loved it at first because it was easy to fit into my schedule and was something fun for me



to do with my teenager. Now I love KOKO because I see the results and I feel so much better. KOKO is just a part of my life. KOKO is like no other fitness experience. It's not a regular gym (thank God -- no mirrors!). And it is an easy way to fit exercise into your schedule without it being a drag. I actually like working out now which was certainly not the case before. KOKO is fun because it challenges you individually, is efficient and gets results! I recommended it to my neighbors and now they're KOKO Nuts too!

~ Leesa Donner, Great Falls

I previously belonged to three other gyms in Reston, and I had never made it a full year before my attendance dropped off. With Koko, however,

I recently passed my two year anniversary and am still going strong. I love that I can get a full body workout every time in less than an hour.

The cardio and strength workouts continue to push me to work harder than I ever did on my own at previous gyms. As a result, I'm in the best shape of my adult life. And the desire to keep feeling this healthy and strong keeps me coming back. Thanks Koko!

~ Watt H., Reston, VA

There is absolutely no way I would achieve what I do at this club ANYWHERE else. I've lost over 15 lbs, my blood pressure is lower, and I am looking and feeling better than I have in 10 years!



~ Scott Kreitz



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PHOTOS BY PATRICK KORTEN/THE CONNECTION

Amy Frix, Patti Hulett and Alison Duenkel at the Winter Wine Tasting at River Bend Country Club.



Foundation Board members Erin Lobato and Mike Kearney thank Tim and Leigh Burke for organizing the local annual golf tournament for more than a dozen years. Proceeds benefit local elementary schools in Great Falls.

Celebrate Great Falls, with Wine Tasting

Community comes together at River Bend Country Club.

A sellout crowd of 200 Great Falls residents and members of the local business community gathered at River Bend Country Club on Friday evening, March 6, to mix, mingle and raise money for the Celebrate Great Falls Foundation. It was the organization's second annual wine tasting event, held at River Bend Country Club on a very cold evening.

The Foundation's origin goes back nearly 20 years, when a local nonprofit called The Brogue Charities began raising money for local citizens in need, and for supporting local projects and events, such as the annual Fourth of July Fireworks. Now known as the Celebrate Great Falls Foundation, the

group has donated more than half a million dollars to local schools, community projects, the Freedom Memorial, and many other endeavors. Old Brogue owner Mike Kearney is a member of the Foundation Board of Directors, as are Erin Lobato, Glynis Canto, Bev Lane, Malou Rennert and Katie Simmons.

Upcoming Foundation-sponsored events include the annual Charity Golf Tournament, on June 1 at Hidden Creek Country Club in Reston, and the 4th of July Celebration at the Great Falls Village Center on Saturday, July 4. Fall brings the Halloween Spooktacular, followed by the Celebration of Lights at Christmas time.

The Foundation invites all Great Falls residents to volunteer at Foundation events, to become sponsors and to join the mailing list. For more information visit www.celebrategreatfalls.org.

— PATRICK KORTEN



Susan Goggin samples a new glass at the Celebrate Great Falls Foundation Winter Wine Tasting at River Bend Country Club.



Mike Kearney presents Tina Aulakh, of Brightview Assisted Living on Colvin Run Road, with one of the gift baskets presented to lucky participants at the Winter Wine Tasting.



Celebrate Great Falls Foundation Directors Malou Rennert, Bev Lane, Erin Lobato.



From left — Tom Perkins, Sonya Schwierl and Missy Perkins were among the hundreds of Great Falls residents at the Foundation's 2015 Winter Wine Tasting.

Public Commission To Review Police Policy

Over some objections, Bulova launches ad hoc commission in wake of police shooting and obfuscation.

BY KEN MOORE
AND TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Supervisor Michael Frey did not mince words when voicing opposition to Chairman Sharon Bulova's establishment of an ad hoc police commission Tuesday, March 3.

"This is not the time nor the right way to proceed," said Frey (R-Sully).

Bulova's commission will include law enforcement, legal experts, citizens, academics, public information officers, and media.

Fairfax County Police officer Adam D. Torres shot and killed John Geer of Springfield inside the doorway of his own home on Aug. 29, 2013. Police were called following a domestic argument, 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. Geer was shot in the chest and died in his house without receiving medical attention. It took

Commission Members

POLICE

Det. Sean Corcoran, Fairfax Coalition of Police Local 5000
Det. John Wallace, Fairfax County Police Assn.
Brad Carruthers, Fairfax Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge 77
Joseph Woloszyn, Southern States Police Benevolent Association
Lt. Gervais Reed, Fairfax Black Law Enforcement Officers Association
Lucy Caldwell, civilian public information officer
Lt. Col. Tom Ryan
Maj. Joe Hill (alternate)
Representative from Fairfax County Sheriff's Dept.

LEGAL

Douglas R. Kay, Fairfax Bar Assn. president-elect
Bob Ross, former deputy county attorney
U.S. Department of Justice's Nat'l Institute of Justice (Invited)

ACADEMIC/CONSULTANT

Robert Kane - Drexel University, Director and Professor, Criminology and Justice Studies Program (Fairfax County resident)
Jack L. Johnson, PricewaterhouseCoopers, public sector practice

MEDIA/PR

Broadcast Media representative (shared seat): Jeff Goldberg, WJLA, Peggy Fox, WUSA9
Mary Kimm, Connection Newspapers
Merni Fitzgerald, former director of public affairs, Board of Supervisors
Representative from the Virginia Coalition for Open Government

CITIZENS

Jeff Stewart, Chantilly
Adrian Steele, McLean
Nicholas Beltrante, Virginia Citizens Coalition for Police Accountability (with alternate)
Tim Thompson, President, Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations
Shirley Ginwright, Chairman, Communities of Trust Committee, President, Fairfax County NAACP COUNTY STAFF (Ex-officio members/supporting)
David Rohrer, Deputy County Executive for Public Safety
Tony Castrilli, Director, Office of Public Affairs

more than 16 months, a \$12 million civil suit by Geer's family, intervention by a U.S. senator and a court order to get the first information on the shooting, which came in January when police named Torres.

FAIRFAX COUNTY released more than 10,000 pages of documents about the shooting and the investigation on Jan. 30, 2015, in response to the court order. The documents revealed that four other officers on the scene disagreed with Torres, who said Geer moved his hands rapidly down from his head towards his waist prompting Torres to shoot.

"I think there will be a time to do this, but I think this is after we deal with pending outcome of the Geer case," said Frey on Tuesday.

But that could take years, Bulova said, during Tuesday's Board session.

The commission will review existing policies, practices and programs regarding police-community relations, police-involved incidents and laws regarding the public release of information.

"Our board has been taking a hard look at our policies involving the timing and manner of releasing information in the case of critical police-involved incidents," Bulova said. "This effort can be greatly enhanced by engaging with the community in an open, transparent way."

"I think this is an excellent and right thing to do," said Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville).

"I'm real happy to see this review get underway," said Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield).

"This is a learning opportunity for our community. And I mean everybody," said Supervisor Jeffrey McKay (D-Lee).

Michael J. Hershman, founder of the Fairfax Group, is a citizen representative and will chair the commission. He is "an expert in government and corporate ac-



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Demonstrators from around Virginia met Jan. 8 in front of the Fairfax County Courthouse and Police and Fire department headquarters to demand an independent investigation of the shooting death of John Geer.

"This effort can be greatly enhanced by engaging with the community in an open, transparent way."

— Sharon Bulova

countability and transparency," according to the Board of Supervisors.

THE POLICE DEPARTMENT celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, said Bulova.

"Fairfax County is the safest jurisdiction of its size due in no small part to the hard work and dedication of our public safety personnel," she said. "The Board of Supervisors and the Police Department recognize the importance of maintaining that public trust and the importance of always reviewing policies and practices and seeking to improve."

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) commended Bulova for putting Fairfax County in a leadership role on a critical matter. "This is more than one case, it's part of a national discussion," he said.

"We want to take the time to get this right," said Herrity.

The board approved Cook's amendment

that a review of crisis intervention training within the police department be added to the commission's scope of work.

But Herrity and Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill) also raised concerns saying that the board itself be more involved in the review.

"It's been over two years since we have had a Public Safety Committee meeting, although one has been promised for some time," said Herrity. "The board needs to have a discussion in open session on these critical issues."

"I think it is the board that should be clearing the mind of the citizens as to where we are," Hudgins said. "This is not the way I would like to do this."

Frey believes the commission will solely focus on the Geer case. "This is the latest reaction to a nasty situation in the media," he said. "I guarantee that focus will not be on process, it will be on this case."

The commission will "review all police department policies related to critical incidents including how and when information is released to the public," according to a release issued by the county. It will also review police policies related to use-of-force training policies, threat assessments and the Internal Affairs Division.

"The commission will also review practices related to the release of information ... along with the relationship between the FCPD and the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney, and the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act."

"We will be better at the end for having done this," said McKay.

IN OTHER MATTERS, the board held a 90-minute closed session.

"This is not the time nor the right way to proceed."

— Michael Frey (R-Sully)

Afterwards, Vice Chairman Penelope Gross announced that County Attorney David Bobzien will retire June 30, 2016 and will reorganize the day-to-day operations of the office.

The board will begin the search process for a county attorney by the end of this year.



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CAPPIES REVIEW

A Play for All Times

Oakcrest School presents "The Importance of Being Earnest."

By ZOE HAWRYLUK
 WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL



PHOTO BY MITCHELL LATON

From left: Mary Payne, Maeve Ponticello, Jackie Pluta, Grace Pluta, Erin Paulson, Clare Kearns, Meg Hale, Mary-Cate Diederich and Jill Collins.

What happens when two women are engaged to the same man? Naturally, one can assume that things get dramatic. But when mistaken identities, good friends, and true love are involved, pandemonium erupts as Oscar Wilde's most beloved play, "The Importance of Being Earnest," withstood the test of time and exuberantly came to life on the stage of Oakcrest High School.

Written in 1895 by the brilliantly witty Oscar Wilde, "The Importance of Being Earnest" had a highly anticipated premiere at the St. James's Theatre, and is considered Wilde's most popular work. The show has endured numerous stage adaptations, as well as three film adaptations from 1952 to 2011, proving the show to be just as big of a success in modern times as it was in Wilde's time.

John Worthing is an Englishman who absolutely despises the drudgery of conservative society in 1895, and invents a double life for himself where he is known as "John" in the country and "Earnest" in the city. In order to earn the approval of Lady Bracknell to become engaged to his love Gwendolyn, John must prove he has at least one living parent. Upon returning to the country, he finds that Algernon has proposed to young and beautiful Cecily Cardew, John's ward, while he is pretending to be John's younger brother "Earnest." As the two women believe they are engaged

to the same man, chaos ensues as this tangled plot unfolds.

Being an all-girls school, the students at Oakcrest faced the daunting task of playing roles of both genders, which they believably executed through masculine mannerisms and thoughtful hair and makeup. The cast had animated energy that was infectious to watch, portrayed through their strong blocking and acting choices. Despite some issues with diction and enunciation, the students displayed an acute understanding of the classic text and superbly pushed through microphone issues.

As Algernon, Grace Pluta accurately maintained a masculine physique throughout, while utilizing grand gestures and dynamic vocal inflections to emphasize the character's mischievously quick wit. Algernon's playfulness was contrasted by the realistically uptight views of his good friend John Worthing, played by Jill Collins. Collins maintained a consistent English accent, and chose to use fewer, more deliberate arm movements to contrast further from her counterpart. John's relationship with Gwendolen Fairfax, played by Mary Cate Diederich, was believ-

able and tender, even though both roles were portrayed by female actors. Another notable performance was that of Sofia Lulli as the young and innocent Cecily Cardew. Lulli was unbelievably sweet, and proved her comedic talents when she reveals her fantasy three month engagement to "Earnest" (who is really Algernon under a false name), when they meet in the garden for the first time.

The set for the show was extremely versatile; it featured four navy blue panels embellished with gold fleur de lis, which were rotated to reveal a lush garden scene, complete with hand painted stones, climbing vines, and delicate flowers. Even though some props did not reflect the time period of the show, the cast utilized real food and drink onstage, including tea and cucumber finger sandwiches, popular snacks at the time.

"The truth is rarely pure and never simple." However, the cast of Oakcrest High School's The Importance of Being Earnest gave a pure performance of this complex classic, proving that age most definitely does not come before beauty.

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3. no longer owned or known



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NEWS

Great Falls Scout Wins Pine Wood Derby

Ian Hoffman, of Forestville Elementary, won the Powhatan Pine Wood Derby on Feb. 7. He's a Bear Cub Scout in Pack 55 and lives in Great Falls.



Happy St. Patrick's Day • Celebrating our 34th Year



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PHOTO COURTESY OF VIRGINIA OPERA

Cecilia Violetta Lopez as Violetta and Rolando Sanz as Alfredo in Virginia Opera's "La Traviata."

A Heartbeat Through the Universe Virginia Opera present "La Traviata."

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Be smitten with Violetta, the brave woman who learns that “love can be inspired by a passing glance,” but happiness is not such an easy journey. This is the grand sweep of Verdi’s “La Traviata,” the world’s most performed opera, coming to the Center for the Arts, courtesy of Virginia Opera with music by the Richmond Symphony Orchestra.

“La Traviata” is about “life on the edge with a woman who took a wrong way” said Lillian Groag, director. Set in decadent 19th century Paris, Verdi’s masterful story tells of a lovely courtesan who unexpectedly falls in love with a man that ultimately is not meant to be.

“With an extraordinary cast, ‘La Traviata’ is a timeless story with an emphasis on tumultuous relationships and spurned love and compassion.” It also may be recognizable from movies such as “Pretty Woman” or “Moulin Rouge.”

“Even if you think you don’t know ‘La Traviata’ you will instantly recognize a number of its songs,” added Groag. One of those songs might be the aptly named “The Drinking Song” or the grand show-stopping aria, “Siempre Libre” about making choices between independence and the constraints of love.

The production, created in partnership with Des Moines Metro Opera, takes place within a “gossamer, delicate setting: like a dragonfly’s nest of beautiful abstraction,” added Groag.

In her Virginia Opera debut, Cecilia Violetta López is the ill-fated character Violetta. Lopez described her role as an “elegant, confident woman who is swept away by love, but is also scarred by love. She is real; trying to deal with her complicated life. We can relate to her as she learns that love is so overpowering.”

Where and When

Virginia Opera performs “La Traviata” at the George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performances: Saturday, March 21 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, March 22 at 2 p.m. Tickets \$44-\$98. Call 888-945-2468 or visit: www.cfa.gmu.edu. Note: Will be performed in Italian with English supertitles. Each performance will feature a free pre performance opera discussion by Virginia Opera’s Dr. Glenn “Dr. Opera” Winters.

“La Traviata’ is full of emotion, all with Verdi’s music and lyrics to dig into,” added Lopez. As Verdi wrote, love can be “madness and euphoria”.

Rolando Sanz, portrays Alfredo, the man who loves Violetta. He also shows her the destructive power of love and commitment.

Beyond his opera performances, Sanz is the artistic director for the D.C. area’s Young Artists of America, created to provide talented young musicians the opportunity to be mentored by professional artists. Andrew Bisantz, in his Virginia Opera debut, will lead the Richmond Symphony.

Virginia Opera President and CEO Russell P. Allen commented that the production of “La Traviata” will astonish with an “amazing cast in an exciting operatic experience.” An evening to hook audiences into the opera experience.

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

FRIDAY/MARCH 13

CTK Lenten Fish Fry. 6:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall, Christ the King Lutheran Church, 10550 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Join us for fish, fries, slaw, cornbread, mac and cheese, ice cream sundaes, brownies and more. Games and activities, too. 703-615-8660.

Play-date Cafe. 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Toys and playspace for children. Coffee and conversation for grownups. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/gf/>.

Drop-In Chess and Board Games. 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play chess and assorted board games. All skill levels and ages. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/gf/>.

SATURDAY/MARCH 14

Cars & Coffee. 7-9 a.m. 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Early on Saturday mornings you’ll find an amazing gathering of cool cars at Katie’s Coffee House. Antique, custom, hot rods, exotic, sports cars, they’re all here.

6th Annual Running to Remember Josh. 7:30 a.m. The Josh Anderson Foundation (JAF) was formed for two purposes – to keep Josh’s memory alive and to collect funds for the education and prevention of teenage suicide. Register at <http://runrocknroll.competitor.com/dc/register>

SUNDAY/MARCH 15

Brendan Conway, Violin and Florian Noack, Piano. 4 p.m. Saint Francis Episcopal Church,

9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Amadeus Concerts welcomes Conway and Noack for a recital titled “The Fisherman and his Soul,” featuring music by Faure, Schumann, Szymanowski and others. A pre-concert lecture by Music Director A. Scott Wood will begin 45 minutes prior to the start of the concert. A reception will follow the concert. \$30, 17 and under free. Purchase at the door or online at <http://www.amadeusconcerts.com>.

TUESDAY/MARCH 17

Ukulele Phil & the Hula Kids. 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Sing and dance with Ukulele Phil & the Hula Kids.

Treasured Threes to Fives. 10:30 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. Join us for stories and songs. Ages 3-5 with adult. To register visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ph/>.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 18

Pokemon League. 4:30 p.m. - 5:45 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play Pokemon with your friends! <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/gf/>.

THURSDAY/MARCH 19

Artists Meet for Coffee. 8:30 - 10 a.m. Katie’s Coffeehouse, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Local artists gather to get to discuss art while enjoying some morning coffee.

FRIDAY/MARCH 20

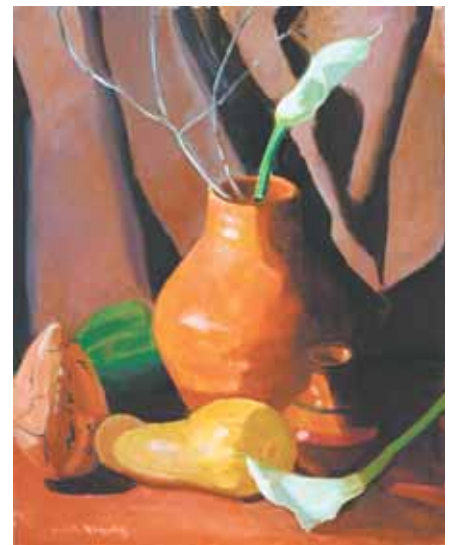
Enter the Haggis. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Experimental roots-rock stalwarts push the boundaries of Celtic music with

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 15

Judith St. Ledger-Roty to Exhibit at Katie’s Coffee

Judith St. Ledger-Roty will have a solo juried show at Katie’s Coffee at the Old Brogue, April 2-May 1, with the opening reception on Saturday, April 11, 2-4 p.m. Her show is titled “Containers for Living: Copper, Ceramic and Glass.”

St. Ledger-Roty specializes in painting in contemporary color, and has been studying color at Studio Incamminati, an atelier in Philadelphia that traces its color application back to Monet and the Impressionists. She not only paints but loves to explore the history of paint, such as when reds were made from the cochineal beetle in Mexico, and pirates roamed the seas in search of ships carrying that red back to Europe from the new world. She is of French heritage, and has purchased pots made in France which are decades or centuries old. She loves the glazes on the pots or the unglazed clay that lets you feel the old powder if you rub it. She often combines new living flowers to these paintings to juxtapose the old and the new. See French Ceramic Vase with Sunflowers on her website www.JudithSaintLedgerRoty.com. She also likes to paint pots that one can feel the potter’s hands molding the clay. She says, “It’s the closest thing to being there with the potter, to just hold the pot and follow the finger work.” She always paints these pots (and everything else) from objects that are be-



“Southwestern Table,” oil on canvas, by Judith St. Ledger-Roty. Her show, “Containers for Living: Copper, Ceramic and Glass,” will be on exhibit at Katie’s Coffee at the Old Brogue, April 2-May 1.

fore her, often as the focal point.

In addition to still life paintings, St. Ledger-Roty paints nature, both mountains and still water and waves, and figures and portraits. She is also known for her series of paintings called “Blue Horses”. You can see the selection of her works at Katie’s Coffee from April 2 to May 1.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 14

vigorous performances and inventive albums. Tickets: \$28.

St. Paddy's Day Party. 7-9 p.m. The Old Firehouse Teen Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. These popular 5th and 6th grader parties include music, dancing, games, snacks, videos and more. \$35/\$25 MCC tax district residents. Advance registration is required. Call 703-448-8336.

Pokemon League. 3 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 maple Avenue East, Vienna. Learn and play Pokemon. Age 5-18. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ph/>.

SATURDAY/MARCH 21

New Artist Reception. 1-4 p.m. 212 Dominion Rd NE, Vienna. New Artist Reception for Thomas Xenakis.

SUNDAY/MARCH 22

Choral Splendor: Music of France. 4 p.m. Saint Luke Catholic Church, 7001 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The Reston Chorale presents works of Maurice Duruflé, Gabriel Fauré, César Franck, Louis Vierne and Charles-Marie Widor — including Vierne's magnificent *Messe Solennelle* as the composer intended: with two organs. Guest artist: Paul Skevington. Advance, online tickets \$20/Seniors, \$25/Adults; at door \$25/Seniors, \$30 Adults. Youth 17 and under admitted free with adult or senior. Tickets and information at www.RestonChorale.org.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 25

Karla Bonoff. Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. A velvety-voiced, folk-pop singer/songwriter whose

Northern Virginia Restaurant Week March 23-30

The 2nd Annual Northern Virginia Restaurant Week, being held from March 23-30, is a week-long, value priced dining experience taking place at a variety of establishments, ranging from fine dining to fast casual.

Building on the success of last year, which included more than 20 participating restaurants, the event once again brings together some of the area's favorite and new restaurants, including: American Tap Room, Big Bowl, Captain Mas Crab House, Il Fornaio, Tavern 64, McCormick & Schmick's - Reston Town Center, Mon Ami

Gabi, Morton's - Reston Town Center, The Melting Pot - Reston, Mellow Mushroom - Herndon, M&S Grill, Paladar Latin Kitchen & Rum Bar, The Zone, JALEO by Jose Andre's, Mum Mum, Naked Pizza, Europa Herndon, Seasons 52, Trummer's on Main.

For more information about Northern Virginia Restaurant Week or the partnership with VHTA please contact Latraniecesa (LJ) Wilson at 703-707-9045, ljw@restonchamber.org or visit restonchamber.org/northern_virginia_restaurant_week.aspx.

heartfelt ballads have been covered by Linda Ronstadt, Bonnie Raitt and Wynonna Judd. Tickets: \$27.

Creatures of the Night. 10:30 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Learn about the animals of the night and how they adapt to night life. Ages 3-5 with adult.

Creatures of the Night. 10:30 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Learn about the animals of the night and how

they adapt to night life. Presentation by Riverbend Park. Ages 3-5 with adult. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/dm/>.

Toddlin' Twos. 10:30 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. Join us for an early literacy enhanced storytime featuring stories and songs. Ages 2 with adult. To register visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ph/>.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Hearing on the McLean Community Center's FY 2017 Programs
Wednesday, March 25, at 7:30 p.m.

The Governing Board of the McLean Community Center is **seeking input from residents** of Dranesville Small District 1A at its Public Hearing on Programs for FY 2017, which runs July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

The Board is interested in hearing residents' ideas for classes, community events, theatre programs, exhibits, tours and youth and teen activities.

If you would like to speak at the hearing, call the Center to have your name placed on the speakers' list. You also may submit comments in writing to: george.sachs@fairfaxcounty.gov

The McLean Community Center
1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean VA 22101
703-790-0123/TTY: 711
www.mcleancenter.org

Call for Candidates
McLean Community Center
2015-2016 Governing Board Election

Candidate Qualifications

- Must be a resident of Small Tax District 1A-Dranesville
- Ten (10) signatures of tax district residents on candidate's petition

Petitions to Qualify

- Candidates must pick up an information packet, which are available now at the Center.
- Deadline: Petitions must be submitted no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, March 27.

Positions

- Three (3) Adult Seats - Three-year terms
- Two (2) Youth Seats - One-year term

Voting will take place at

- McLean Day
- Saturday, May 16, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
- at Lewinsville Park in McLean

For more information, please contact the Center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 411, or write elections@mcleancenter.org.

SPORTS



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

McLean senior Jacqueline Green placed fifth on floor, earning all-state honors at the VHSL individual state gymnastics meet on March 8 at Patriot High School.



PHOTO BY JON ROETMAN/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax gymnast Rachel Barborek won the all-around championship at the VHSL individual state meet on March 8 at Patriot High School. Hickory's Haley Cole finished runner-up, followed by Marshall's Morgan Stahl, Cox's Mary Munitz and Washington-Lee's Sophie Hatcher. Stahl finished second on floor (9.625) and beam (9.6), ninth on vault (9.575) and tied for 20th on bars (8.825).

McLean's Brown-Kaiser, Green Earn All-State Honors

Seniors each place top eight in one event.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

More than two weeks after helping the McLean gymnastics team win the 6A state championship, seniors Lizzy Brown-Kaiser and Jacqueline Green received some individual recognition.

Brown-Kaiser and Green each earned all-state honors in one event at the VHSL individual state meet on March 8 at Patriot High School. Brown-Kaiser placed sixth on beam with a score of 9.3, and Green finished fifth on floor with a score of 9.425.

"I am very satisfied with my beam performance," Brown-Kaiser wrote in an email. "It always feels good to get through a routine without a fall and it was a nice way to wrap up my beam career."

Brown-Kaiser competed in the all-around after qualifying with a top-four finish at regionals. She finished seventh with a score of 37.

Along with her beam result, Brown-Kaiser finished 12th on floor (9.25) 17th on vault (9.4) and tied for 12th on bars (9.05).

"I am really happy with my overall performance," Brown-Kaiser wrote. "This was one of my best meets of my personal high school career, so I'm thrilled that I could peak at my last competition."

Along with floor, Green also competed on vault (18th, 9.375) and bars (16th, 8.95).

Fairfax senior Rachel Barborek won the all-around title with a score of 38.7, becoming the first Fairfax County gymnast to accomplish the feat since Herndon's Maria Hayden in 2010. Prior to Hayden, the last Fairfax County gymnast to win the state all-around title was Lake Braddock's Christina Ghani in 2002.

Barborek finished first on bars, beam and floor.

Marshall's Morgan Stahl placed third in



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

McLean senior Lizzy Brown-Kaiser competes at the VHSL individual state gymnastics meet on March 8 at Patriot High School.

the all-around (37.625) and Washington-Lee's Sophie Hatcher finished fifth (37.325).

The individual competition was originally scheduled for Feb. 21, but was postponed three times due to inclement weather concerns. The meet was re-scheduled for Feb. 28, March 7 and finally March 8.

On Feb. 20, Brown-Kaiser and Green

helped McLean win the 6A team title. The Highlanders, led by head coach Courtney Lesson, became the first Fairfax County team to win the title since Langley in 2004. McLean also captured Conference 6 and 6A North region championships during the season.

"I could not have asked for a more perfect season," Brown-Kaiser wrote. "Taking



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

McLean senior Jacqueline Green competes on bars during the VHSL individual state gymnastics meet on March 8 at Patriot High School.

home the first-place trifecta as a team and performing one of my best individual meets at states is an incredible feeling. I am so proud of my team and very thankful for my amazing coach Courtney Lesson, friends, and family for their support and faith in the team throughout my final season. This was an extremely memorable year."

SPORTS



The Langley hockey team split their final two games.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Langley Hockey Finishes with Win Against Patriot, Loss to Stone Bridge

The Saxon hockey team played against Patriot in the first round of the NVSHL playoffs. Patriot was the No. 5 seed with Langley coming in as the underdog.

The Saxons got off to a slow start and surrendered two goals before freshman Evan Guidi got the team on the board with three and a half minutes to play. Junior assistant captain Jason Guidi netted the equalizer in the final minute of the period.

Strong defense from seniors Chris Lane and captain Will Clemson, and sophomore Kevin Wang held Patriot at bay while Wyatt Conrow, Sam Shapiro and Jason Guidi provided the rest of the offense that was necessary. Freshman JT Gorman had another strong showing between the pipes as Langley ended Patriot's season with a 5-3 victory.

Round 2 of the playoffs brought on a much more formidable foe. Stone Bridge was undefeated with a 10-0 record in the regular season. With the drop of the puck, play quickly moved into the Langley zone

where Stone Bridge peppered Langley's goalie with shots. Less than 2 minutes into the game, Langley Senior Sam Lafuria got a break away and scored the first goal of the night. With 4 minutes to go in the first, Stone Bridge tied it up and went ahead 2-1 early in the second. Although Langley was outshot 11-3 in the first period, the team continued to play with heart and tied the game at 2 when Wyatt Conrow tipped a shot from Will Clemson that bounced hard into the upper corner with less than a minute to go in the middle period.

The Saxons would again take the lead early in the third with another goal from Lafuria, but Stone Bridge tied the game quickly thereafter and pulled ahead with 11 minutes to play. The Saxons played hard and evened the score with 6 minutes remaining on another goal by Conrow, but Stone Bridge proved too much for the Saxons to handle as the game ended 6-4.

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Oakton Girls Win Region Championship

Oakton forward Delaney Connolly knocked down four 3-pointers, scored a game-high 20 points and helped Oakton beat Madison 50-42 in the 6A North region championship game at Robinson Secondary School. It was the Cougars' first region title since 2012, when Oakton went undefeated and won the AAA state championship.

Each team clinched a berth in the state tournament by reaching the region final. The semifinals are Friday in Richmond.

Oakton sophomore Delaney Connolly scored 20 points and grabbed nine rebounds during the Cougars' 50-42 victory over Madison in the 6A North region final on March 7 at Robinson Secondary School.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

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ing Company, 520 Mill St. NE
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the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT
OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE
CONTROL (ABC) FOR A
Wine and Beer on premises li-
cense to sell or manufacture
alcoholic beverages. Matthew
Greer, member
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How Lucky Am I



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

You'll note there's no question mark after the "I." If any grammatical mark, there could be an exclamation point, but that's overstating my reaction a bit. I am not referring to the usual happy-lucky-grateful to be alive sentiment I regularly express in this space; no, this is micro more than macro. What I am specifically referring to is the winter weather and its predictable effects on appointments: cancellations in general, chemotherapy cancellations to be Kenny-column specific.

Yesterday, March 5, the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area received approximately six inches of snow, give or take, complicated further by the previous days' ever-unpopular "wintry mix." Ergo, governments and schools were closed and many lives were put on hold, for a day at least, as many activities/appointments were likely to be re-scheduled. All well and good, mostly, except when you're a "terminal" cancer patient and your chemotherapy infusion (your presumptive life-saving/sustaining treatment) is to be administered that day – then it's not so good. Then your life passes before you even faster than when your oncologist first advised you of your extremely unexpected, abbreviated life expectancy/prognosis (for me, it was "13 months to two years").

Fortunately, Thursdays are not my chemotherapy day; Fridays are. But what brought this column's subject into focus was a call I received Thursday evening from the Infusion Center providing me/patients with a special inclement-weather phone number to call to find out if the Center would be open the next day, what hours, etc. This was the first time – in six years of non-stop treatment – when I was given such a specific number/circumstance to call. Previously, I would have simply called the Center or "cell-phoned" my oncology nurse (I have his number on speed dial), to learn of any closures or delays. But, and this is the luck I referred to in the title, never had I experienced any weather-related/affected reason to stress/call. Never experienced the anxiety of wondering, worrying and waiting to learn if my hoped-for, life-saving treatment could go in as scheduled.

Now, whether skipping/delaying treatment really matters in the medical world's reality, I can tell you this: in my world, the patient's world, it seems like it matters an awful lot. Rescheduling feels like you're losing days of your life. What little I know (and it's very little; it's mostly what I feel and think) is that any change in frequency, duration, reduction in medicine and/or protocol, all of which so far has kept me alive way past my original expiration date, can't be a good thing, certainly not a preferred thing; again, in my head, anyway.

And it's these feelings that can complicate the cancer experience: knowing what to make of things externally, and of course, internally. Controlling one's emotions so as not to exacerbate an already difficult situation is my macro cross to bear. However, sometimes small things can weaken that resolve. After six years, I should know better, and usually I do. But receiving that phone call last evening was a reminder of how fortunate and yet sort of clueless I've been about what has happened to other patients and what hasn't happened to me.

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

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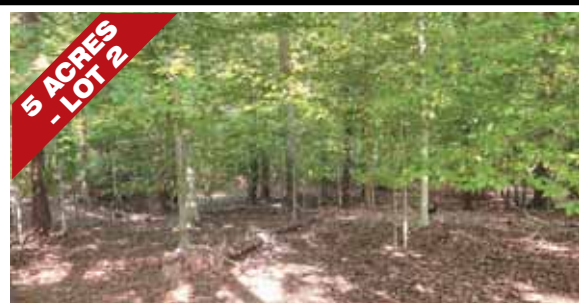
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His and Hers: Special Spaces

Addition pulls together styles and overcomes challenges.

BY JOHN BYRD

On the face of it, adding a two-level structure to a 30-year-old brick house is not especially difficult. Essentially, Vienna homeowners Al Dobson and his wife Joan Davanzo each have a pet project — a spacious first level garage to house sport cars, motorcycles and '60s rock for him; a lovely sunroom comprised of floor-to-ceiling window walls for her.

Knock out the existing screen porch; slightly expand the footprint for the garage; sun room goes on top embracing the rear deck and pool; and, Bingo, it's done.

Yet as anyone who has lived in the Fairfax County for a while knows, no project is without complications, and add to this the problems of an unlevel grade, set-back restrictions, strict rules on structures with lots of glass and the owner's desire to preserve all the surrounding trees, and suddenly there are the makings of an intricate engineering challenge — the sort of brain-buster most contractors wouldn't attempt to unravel.

That's how it all started with this deceptively understated Vienna addition: several contractors told Dobson and Davanzo they couldn't have the amount of glass in the sunroom they were looking for; county rules regarding glass and where it can be positioned are rigorously enforced; and then, too, the glass must be "braced" to resist winds that otherwise might cause it to implode — a requirement which inevitably reduces sightlines.

"County rules on glass in new construction have been in place for over a decade," said David Foster, president of Foster Remodeling Solutions, the contractor the couple hired to execute the project.

What several contractors plainly told Joan Davanzo, nevertheless, was that her dream project — as she envisioned it — simply couldn't be built.

"We were told the windows couldn't be as low to the floor, nor as close to the corner as we wanted," Davanzo said. "Since I had particularly liked the openness of the old screen porch the sunroom was to replace, this was discouraging."

By contrast, Davanzo said, Foster began addressing the project's technical hurdles from the first meeting.

"His experience was palpable," said Al Dobson, 70, who has had several previous encounters with remodelers. "The first consideration — which he pointed out immediately — was how to develop a site plan that would satisfy the county, but also give us a sustainable result that allows the aes-

Details

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



Al Dobson and his new spacious garage to house his sport car, motorcycles and '60s rock memorabilia.

thetic effects we were seeking."

Part of the assignment would also entail a plan for preserving mature trees on the property's eastern side.

THE GARAGE, which would house Dobson's collectible motorized vehicles, needed a footprint of some 400 square feet, the contractor determined; the sunroom, one level up, would be plenty spacious at slightly over 200 square feet. Hence, Foster's "stacked" pyramidal design not only satisfies family "use" requirements, but also allows the "growing room" needed for an entire grove of mature trees bordering the property's perimeter.

The plan was, of course, partly predicated on lowering the lot's existing grade some five feet, enough to carve out a foundation for the garage and create driveway access.

The foundation also figures prominently in an innovative engineering solution that gives the couple the amount of glass they had been seeking in the sunroom.

To meet the county's wind-bracing requirements, Foster and team designed a narrow-gauge, all-steel framework for the sunroom's many large glass panels which is anchored all the way down to the concrete foundation itself.

"Our dogs can even look out the windows," Joan Davanzo said. "The design gives us a really a stunning view in all directions."

But, surely, a nearly all-glass room must be quite cold in the winter?

"All the windows are Low-E Argon-filled double pane — state of the art thermal resistance," Foster said.

On the other hand, the sunroom feature Davanzo most appreciates is how fluidly it will open to spring's balmy breezes. All the windows are casement-style which can be independently adjusted to let in cross breezes. Overhead, two skylights open electronically — and individually. The skylights are also equipped with electric blinds and rain sensors.

The room's interior design scheme, which Davanzo developed in conjunction with



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The sun porch solution emphasizes views. Windows are insulated and wind-resistant.

Foster, reflects a number of favored owner lifestyle preferences. The tongue-and-groove ceiling and warm sea-foam green wall color, likewise, were chosen to highlight a verdant visual continuum that recalls childhood adventures in the country.

The new sunroom is accessible through an adjacent family room separated by three French doors which Davanzo mostly leaves open.

"This is where I spend most of my time when I'm at home," she said.

For Al Dobson, the favored hang-out now is his "man cave" garage which houses a Corvette, his Italian motorcycle and a sound system that plays choice sounds of the '50s and '60s.

A racing enthusiast who participates in time trials at Summit Point, Dobson wanted a room that speaks to his passion for motor sports. Underfoot, PVC tiles in an iconic checkerboard pattern set the tone for a private retreat decorated with '60s movie posters and other period memorabilia.

"It's a really peaceful spot to just relax," Dobson said. "That's what this process was always for, so I'm glad we pursued it."

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Historic Virginia in Gardens

Tour includes a rare private look at special properties in Fairfax County, Old Town Alexandria and Leesburg.

The Virginia Historic Garden Tour is an 8-day event that stretches across the Commonwealth. Each spring visitors are welcomed to over 250 of Virginia's most beautiful gardens, homes and historic landmarks. This event provides the opportunity to see unforgettable gardens at the peak of Virginia's springtime color, as well as beautiful houses sparkling with more than 2,000 flower arrangements created by Garden Club of Virginia members.

The Clifton Historic District, registered as a Virginia Historic Landmark, was a Civil War railroad stop and is filled with shops, memorable restaurants and restored homes. Clara Barton, founder of the American Red Cross, tended to soldiers after the Battle of



PHOTO COURTESY OF GARDEN CLUB OF FAIRFAX

Nestled in an equestrian neighborhood, a 10,000 square-foot contemporary home was built in 2013 for an active family with young children, and includes a stable.

Second Manassas at St. Mary's Church and the historic Fairfax Station, now a Railroad Museum.

A self-drive tour on April 21 features stables, vineyards, a world-class garden,

Georgian-revival architecture, and a 10,000 square-foot contemporary home with a vanishing edge swimming pool – four private

SEE HISTORIC GARDENS, PAGE 7

Old Town Alexandria, Saturday, April 18

Old Town Alexandria was in 1946 the third city in the country to create a historic district to preserve its downtown. Today it has 4,000 buildings with a historic designation. The April 18 walking tour in Old Town includes five row houses with courtyard gardens in this preserved area, and refreshments at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. In addition to the private properties featured, the tour ticket allows access to The Carlyle House Historic Park, Lee-Fendall House Museum and Garden, George Mason's Gunston Hall and George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens. The tour is hosted by The Garden Club of Alexandria and Hunting Creek Garden Club. www.vagardenweek.org

Clifton and Fairfax Station, Tuesday, April 21

This self-drive tour features stables, vineyards, a world-class garden, Georgian-revival architecture, and a 10,000 square-foot contemporary home with a vanishing edge swimming pool – four private homes with gardens and two stables in all. Tour ticket includes a tea at the Clifton Presbyterian Church. Advance Ticket Sales: \$30 at www.vagardenweek.org or email fairfaxtickets@vagardenweek.org. Visit www.gardencluboffairfax.blogspot.com for a list of local retailers selling tickets.

Leesburg, Sunday and Monday, April 19-20

Leesburg was mapped and recognized by the Council of the Colony in 1758. Most of the 11 featured tour properties are located on two historic roads, Edwards Ferry Road and Cornwall Street. The neighborhoods offer a variety of architectural styles and well established gardens. This two-day Towne and Country tour features 11 properties and coincides with the Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival, which takes place on April 18 and 19.

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Luxury Apartments Popping Up

Renters want resort-like amenities and access to transportation.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

After a long, hard day at work, Jordan Coleman comes home to a large apartment with modern amenities, including a 24-hour concierge, ample living space, a state-of-the-art fitness center and a pool. The apartment features high-end appliances and finishes as well as an open, flowing layout and large walk-in closets. Coleman – a lawyer and Capitol Hill staffer – shares the pricey rent with a friend. The complex is owned by Avalon, which has properties in Arlington, Fairfax, Herndon, Falls Church, Tysons Corner and Vienna, Virginia, as well as Bethesda, Maryland, and Washington.

The demand for high-end apartments in the Washington, D.C., area is high, with rents soaring over the \$7,000 mark. There are some who say the luxurious living spaces and carefree lifestyles are worth the extra money.

“There are two kinds of people who would be inclined to spend that kind of money in the luxury rental market,” said David Freishtat, who teaches in the Masters in Real Estate Development program at the University of Maryland and practices law in Potomac, Md. “First there are fairly successful, young people who buddy up and share an apartment with two or three friends. They can afford to spend 35-40 percent of take home pay in housing. They don’t spend much on food because they don’t have a family to feed,” he said.

“Empty-nesters who’ve sold their homes and decided to downsize are also inclined to rent high-end apartments. If they bought their house 20-30 years ago and sold it recently, they’re flush with cash,” said Freishtat. “They might be looking to buy a house in Florida or Arizona where there’s no income tax, but for the year and a half until they make that decision they’re going to live in a nice apartment because they’ve always lived in a nice house so they’re adaptable to those kinds of apartments.”

“These buildings ... are in great neighborhoods,” said Coleman. “They’re new construction and the layout is like you’re living in the suburbs, but with the convenience of living in the city. There are kitchens, bathrooms, living spaces are fluid and the closets are ridiculously large.”

ONE OF THOSE NEIGHBORHOODS is Reston Town Center in Reston, Va., with restaurants and shops and public transportation. A new, luxury apartment building will have 360 apartments with easy access



PHOTO COURTESY OF RENAISSANCE CENTRO

Easy access to public transportation and close proximity to restaurants and shops attract residents to luxury apartments communities like The Harrison at Reston Town Center in Reston.

to such a lifestyle.

The Harrison at Reston Town Center is now open, promising 28,000 square feet of luxury, resort-style living, and an easy trip to downtown Washington, D.C. for work or play.

At The Harrison, where rent runs from just under \$2,000 to as high as \$6,650 a month, residents are offered such amenities as a culinary demonstration kitchen; a private dining room for wine tastings; a gaming area that offers pool, shuffleboard, chess, and card tables, a massage room, a spin studio and a 24-hour gym with state-of-the-art equipment. The pet-friendly property even caters to four-legged friends with a dog park and pet spa.

“People now want to simplify their lives,” said Karen A. Kossow, Vice President of Marketing, Community Realty Company, Inc. which provides leasing and management services for The Harrison. “They want an opportunity for a healthy and enriched lifestyle. For example, with the fitness center and lounge area, there are opportunities for socialization. You can keep your pet here, and there’s even a place to walk your dog or give it a shower. If you work from home there are offices with a printer and fax and conference rooms where you can hold a meeting. These things just make your life easier and simpler and give you more

time to enjoy life.”

Also at Reston Town Center is The Metropolitan, owned by Kettler, a real estate development firm based in McLean, Va., and which manages apartments throughout Northern Virginia. Residents at some of the firm’s properties pay more than \$7,000 a month for features such as 17-foot ceilings, floor-to-ceiling windows, wood flooring and ceramic tile bathrooms.

Kettler is also putting the finishing touches on The Acadia, a 411-unit, high-rise luxury apartment building in the Metropolitan Park section of Arlington, Va., and plans to begin leasing units this spring. In October, the firm will begin construction on m.flats Crystal City. It will be Kettler’s sixth property in the Pentagon-Crystal City neighborhood in Arlington.

“Our m.flats apartments are meeting a growing demand for living spaces within walking distance of work, shops and entertainment,” Robert C. Kettler, chairman and chief executive officer of Kettler, said in a statement. “Many young people are forming families later in life. As a result, they not only want to enjoy the vibrancy of city life, but live in an apartment that has many conveniences and amenities.”

At Bent Tree in Centreville, Va., managed by Lincoln Property Company, high-end

units include cathedral ceilings, walk-in closets, lighted tennis courts, racquetball courts, a resort-style swimming pool, a cyber café, a fitness center, bike trails, barbeque and picnic areas and a spacious club house where people can hang out.

Proximity to transportation is another bonus, said Jeremy Feldman of Bent Tree. “You have the Fairfax Connector and we’re near the Metro.”

Luxury apartments that offer residents access to public transportation are doing well. Twenty percent of the units in The Harrison have already been rented, even before its grand opening.

“They’re new construction and the layout is like you’re living in the suburbs, but with the convenience of living in the city.”

— Jordan Coleman

Historic Virginia in Gardens

FROM PAGE 4

homes with gardens and two stables in all. Tour ticket includes a tea at the Clifton Presbyterian Church.

Tour proceeds fund the restoration and preservation of Virginia's historic gardens, and provide graduate level research fellowships for building comprehensive and ongoing records of historic gardens and landscapes in the Commonwealth, and support the mission of the Garden Club of Virginia.

For a complete list of tours, see www.vagardenweek.org

Virginia Historic Garden Tour in Clifton and Fairfax Station

❖ Redlac Drive, Clifton: Located in a pastoral setting with grazing horses nearby, this graceful 1987 Georgian Revival house draws its elegant inspiration from historic Williamsburg. Large rooms with arching Palladian windows overlook a formal boxwood knot garden and serene five-acre landscape. The hardwood tree canopy shades a hillside azalea and rhododendron garden with a bridge over a swale. Details inside include formal dining and living rooms with deep crown and base molding and regal blue and gold wallpaper. Antiques and the owners' serendipitous flea market finds abound. The foyer, with Currier and Ives prints, leads to the living room with its 1876 grand piano.

The bedrooms upstairs are filled with vintage linens and family heirlooms including the family's first-communion dress, and are connected by a central library furnished with an antique parlor set. Balconies overlook a shaded flagstone patio and swimming pool. Dennis and Cyndy Patrick, owners.

❖ Willowbrook Road, Fairfax Station: Nestled in an equestrian neighborhood, this 10,000-square-foot contemporary home was built in 2013 for an active family with young children on the site of their previous house. A handsome entrance of stone, leaded glass and ironwork leads to a spectacular open-plan living, dining and kitchen area designed by the fun-loving owners with year-round entertaining in mind. The living area contains a double fireplace and a backlit onyx bar. Large doors open to a long covered veranda fitted with retractable screens where family and friends enjoy dining outside during warm months over-

COURTESY OF GARDEN CLUB OF FAIRFAX

Located in a pastoral setting with grazing horses nearby, this graceful 1987 Georgian Revival house in Clifton draws its inspiration from historic Williamsburg.



looking the infinity-edge swimming pool. Other thoughtful details include an elevator, a home gymnasium and a separate garage for the children's bikes and toys. The immaculate two-stall stable on the property has attached horse trailer storage and is home to a beloved horse and a pony. The wife is an accomplished equestrian as evidenced by a tack room filled with trophies and ribbons. Local equestrians will be in the stable to answer horse-related questions. Garth and Heather Viar, owners.

❖ Also Willowbrook Road, Fairfax Station: Serenity awaits visitors at this single-story California-style property. The experience begins on the long drive that winds past a riding ring and pastures. Slate steps lead to the entrance courtyard, where a koi pond and bamboo fountain set the warm spa-like mood of this wonderful home. The house, purchased in 2003, has been completely renovated by the current owners, and has been personalized with twin studies, an open-plan kitchen. Clean, contemporary and connected to nature, the rooms along the back of the house each open to a series of graceful garden rooms with an entertaining deck, a yoga/meditation deck, an outdoor shower and a seating area surrounding a fire pit. Inside, visitors find delights like a glass con-

SEE HISTORIC GARDENS. PAGE 11

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Home Improvements Earn Awards

Four Sun Design remodeling projects named Washington-area “Contractor of the Year” winners.

BY JOHN BYRD

It’s been a good year for Sun Design Remodeling.

In January, the full-service design/build remodeler won four “Contractor of the Year” awards from the Washington, D.C. chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI). Then, in February, an already locally-honored gourmet kitchen was named category best (“kitchen above \$150k”) in the 10-state southeastern region.

Winning projects include: a rear elevation poolside recreation solution; a French Country gourmet kitchen (the southeastern regional winner); an open kitchen plan in a traditional interior style; and a lower-level build-out to designed for use by three generations.

French Country Kitchen Is Local and Regional COTY winner: Residential Kitchen Over \$120,000

For Dr. Rick Layfield and his wife Kelly Layfield, the search for their dream kitchen started shortly after they purchased their 3,700-square-foot, four-bedroom home in Clifton eight years ago.

“The kitchen suite was a primary selling point,” Kelly Layfield said of the 400-square-foot room.

But she found the rear of the house dark and dated. Sightlines to the children’s backyard play areas were not well-aligned. And there was a visually obstructive bulkhead over the primary food preparation zone.

Also, the pentagon-shaped food preparation island and dining counter wasn’t well suited for in-kitchen dining. And the corner breakfast area was cramped — making it hard to access a door to the back porch which used to be a pathway to the family’s outdoor grill.

Fortunately, Kelly Layfield’s first meeting with designer John Benson was productive from the start. He proposed a rectangular food preparation island with a granite surface, parallel with the two corners of the cook’s work zones.

Benson also helped Layfield explore the lighter, more textured hues she had been seeking: marble subway tile wall covering; surfaces in Granite Bianco Antico; white cabinets with glass facings; and an oven backsplash in a white quatrefoil tiling. The coffers, likewise, are delineated in a white and grey duotone.

“This is just the balance I was looking for,” Layfield said. “It feels like home.”



PHOTO BY BRYAN BURRIS

With its private entrance, fully operative kitchenette and dining table for four, the new lower level allows Tina’s mother, Kay, to host bridge parties for friends independent of any other household activities.



PHOTO BY MITRO HOOD

BEST RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN: Sun Design’s winning kitchen solution takes full advantage of a 13’ cathedral ceiling with a two-level window wall. Owner Melynda Britt says the space is much better organized, yet more accessible — perfect for entertaining.

Open Floorplan Defines Casual But Elegant Kitchen Residential Kitchen; \$80k to \$120k; COTY Honorable Mention

Steve and Melynda Britt’s four-bedroom colonial in Vienna offered considerable charms when the couple purchased it 10 years ago.

There was a nicely finished library and living room, a formal dining room and a sizable family room in the back half of the house with a 13-foot cathedral ceiling framing a lovely view of mature landscaping.

For Melynda Britt, the larger goal was a kitchen footprint that offered an efficient work space — integrated with the surrounding great room.

“Since the emphasis was on a more intelligent use of limited square footage,” Sun Design’s Durosco said, “we thought custom-built-ins would help create better coordi-

nated work zones.”

Critiquing the kitchen now, Britt is amazed at how much more effectively the solution works on several fronts: The food preparation island protects the cook’s work triangle, and is positioned for easy service to the family room; the beverage station, an effective space divider, is accessible from both the breakfast area and family room; the coffee bar is situated between doors leading to the dining room and the breakfast room, out of the chef’s way; the kitchen’s mosaic tile flooring has been replaced by a refinished hardwood flooring.

“We can now comfortably entertain 20-25 guests,” Britt said. “Better yet, the space is really warm and comfortable.”

Finished Lower Level Offers Multi-Gen Family Solution COTY Honorable Mention

Eric Park and his wife Tina, both physicians, were already quite busy 10 years ago when they purchased a 3,400-square-foot two-level neo-colonial in Falls Church.

“Our plan all along was to create a family home,” Tina Park said. “We saw the lower level eventually playing a part in our daily lives, but were only using it for storage. It wasn’t until my mother began regularly helping us with the girls that we began looking at the house more closely.”

At first Park’s mother, Kay, would stay in the guest room, but gradually everyone started looking at ways to increase available privacy.

It’s at this point that Sun Design Remodeling enters the story.

“A basement conversion is challenging,” said Sun Design’s Liz Lee-Sint, who guided the Park project from concept to completion, “especially when it’s going to be mainstreamed with the rest of the house.”

For Kay, the top priority was a suite with all the features of independent living, including a private entrance, a comfortable master suite and a fully functional kitchenette with dining for four.

On a separate note, the Parks envisioned a 195-square-foot family fitness center and a children’s play zone with custom built-ins.

Describing the finished décor as “modern Asian contemporary,” Tina Park stressed simple lines, soft tones and open visuals.

“It’s really the nicest place in the house now,” Park said. “And it satisfies so many different needs that it’s become our main gathering place.”

House and grounds reconciliation judged this year’s best Exterior Solution/COTY Grand award winner

As Monte Zaben tells it, the rear elevation to his 8,300-square-foot colonial in Fredericksburg was so sun-exposed it was uncomfortable sitting by the pool he had just installed the year before.

After researching several options, however, he stumbled on Sun Design’s portfolio of indoor-outdoor solutions, and set up a meeting.

Combining an extended radius that steps down to the pool with vaulted entrance way, the structure’s architecture is welcoming.

Tapered craftsman-style piers support a seam metal roof. Inside, three distinct activity zones flow together: an open-air lounge; a cozy poolside vista with a pair of wicker chairs; and an outdoor kitchen equipped with a traditional grill, a power burner and refrigerators. A second level grilling deck is now, likewise, under roof.

Happy with the outcome, Zaben said he enjoys the outdoor kitchen so much he was out grilling one of his specialties this past January. “We make regular use of the outdoor space on just about every seasonable day,” he adds. “It’s very much a part of our lives now.”

John Byrd has been writing about home improvement for 30 years. He can be reached at byrdmatx@gmail.com.



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Local REAL ESTATE

January, 2015 Top Sales in Great Falls and McLean

IN DECEMBER 2014, 9 GREAT FALLS HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$2,875,000-\$675,000. AND 52 HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$2,575,000-\$210,000 IN THE MCLEAN AND FALLS CHURCH AREA.

1 214 River Park Drive, Great Falls — \$2,875,000



2 6609 Brawner Street, McLean — \$2,575,000



3 859 Nicholas Run Drive, Great Falls — \$2,550,000



5 952 Dominion Reserve Drive, McLean — \$2,350,000



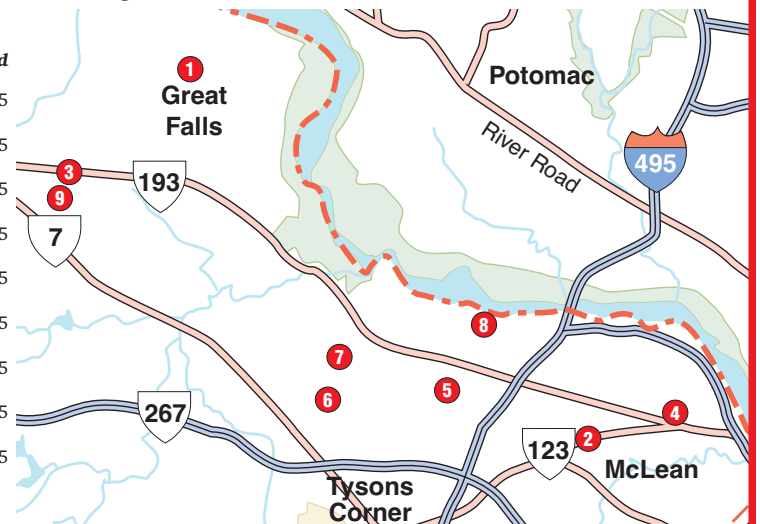
6 8718 Woodside Court, McLean — \$1,995,000



7 1040 Bellview Road, McLean — \$1,928,000

Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal	City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	Postal Code	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 214 RIVER PARK DR	6	7	3	GREAT FALLS	\$2,875,000	Detached	1.72	22066	RIVERBEND FARM		01/16/15
2 6609 BRAWNER ST	5	5	3	MCLEAN	\$2,575,000	Detached	0.48	22101	SALONA VILLAGE		01/30/15
3 859 NICHOLAS RUN DR	6	6	2	GREAT FALLS	\$2,550,000	Detached	1.73	22066	GROVEMONT		01/09/15
4 1222 SOMERSET DR	5	5	1	MCLEAN	\$2,445,000	Detached	0.51	22101	CLEARVIEW MANOR		01/16/15
5 952 DOMINION RESERVE DR	5	4	1	MCLEAN	\$2,350,000	Detached	0.85	22102	GARFIELD PARK		01/15/15
6 8718 WOODSIDE CT	5	5	2	MCLEAN	\$1,995,000	Detached	1.77	22102	WOODSIDE ESTATES		01/14/15
7 1040 BELLVIEW RD	7	5	1	MCLEAN	\$1,928,000	Detached	1.05	22102	JACKSON RICHARD T		01/07/15
8 615 POTOMAC RIVER RD	6	5	2	MCLEAN	\$1,690,000	Detached	0.96	22102	POTOMAC OVERLOOK		01/30/15
9 10754 TERKES VW	5	4	1	GREAT FALLS	\$1,535,000	Detached	0.98	22066	ESTATES AT LONGWOOD		01/23/15

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Historic Virginia in Gardens

FROM PAGE 7

servatory and studio, a relaxing slate tiled guest bath with heated towel bar, solid cherry doors throughout, a master suite with his and hers dressing rooms and a sleek bath with heated marble floors. The eco-friendly, award-winning stable complex contains a four-stall barn, equipment storage, dry lots, round pen, composting system and pastures. Randall and Joan Onders, owners.

❖ Poplar Grove, Lakewood Lane, Fairfax Station: Time stands still at Poplar Grove. A curving driveway leads visitors through towering oaks and flowering cherry and plum trees to a slower, more gentle way of living. The cream-colored Federal-style home was built in 1964 and renovated quite literally from the ground up in 2001.

The owners, one a landscape architect of world-class talent and the other a graduate of DuPage School of Horticulture and a seventh-generation Virginian, carved a paradise of 18th-century grandeur out of what had been seven overgrown acres. The owners' passion and expertise brought to life a two-level Colonial parterre kitchen garden with boxwood topiary, oyster-shell walkways and a climbing-rose-covered chicken coop. Nearby is a vineyard with over 400 Petit Verdot grape vines. Visit the swimming pool garden and follow a shady path that leads to the secret white garden with a pond and splashing fountain. In fact, fountains can be heard bubbling and splashing in every direction. Another fountain brings wandering guests to an alfresco dining area remi-



PHOTO COURTESY OF GARDEN CLUB OF FAIRFAX

The self-drive garden tour in Fairfax Station and Clifton in Fairfax County features stables, vineyards, a world-class garden, Georgian-revival architecture, and a stunning 10,000 square-foot contemporary home with a vanishing edge swimming pool – four private homes with gardens and two stables in all.

niscient of Charleston. Inside, visitors find grand moldings, sparkling chandeliers and museum-quality artwork and antiques. Master Gardeners will be available to answer questions in the gardens. Charles Prillaman and Parker Jennings, owners.

Nearby places of interest include the Clifton Historic District, St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church, Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, and Mason Neck State Park.

More at www.viriniagardenweek.org.

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