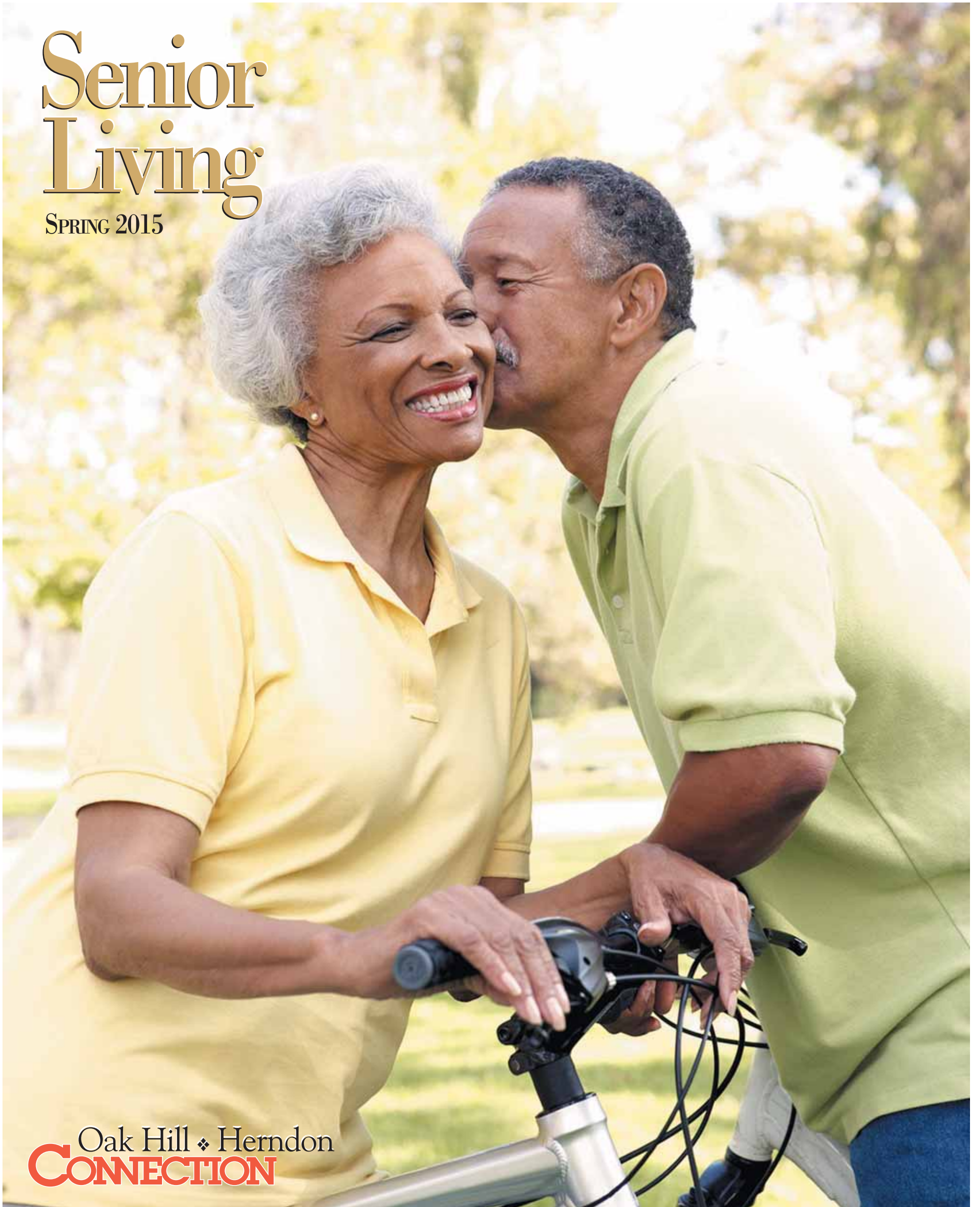


Senior Living

SPRING 2015



Oak Hill ♦ Herndon
CONNECTION

Senior Living

You owe it to your family to visit Brightview Great Falls.
It is the area's finest Assisted Living community.

"I am still me! This is just another stage in my life and at Brightview, I can still be who I am." – Dr. Jennifer (Ph.D.)

"Brightview offers possibilities, independence and choices. The people here are very caring and attentive. Brightview is a respectful and empowering community where we receive compassionate and dedicated care." – Sheila W.

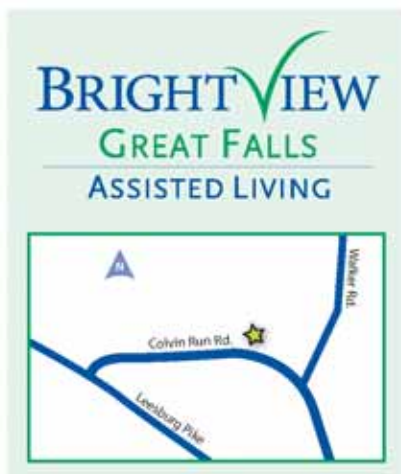
"I never wanted to leave my home, but moving to Brightview Great Falls was the best decision we made. The food is delicious and we particularly enjoy the musical entertainment and the friendships that we have made since moving here." – Bill W.

"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.



Please call either
Carolyn or Joanna to
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10200 Colvin Run Rd. • Great Falls, VA 22066



Women of the Nova United, part of the National Senior Women's Basketball Association get exercise with a team sport. They are part of a new fitness trend.

Fit for Golden Years

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

One night each week, Sue Thompson can be found dribbling a basketball down the court, leading her team, the Nova United, to victory. Thompson, who is in her 60s, is one of the youngest players in her league, the National Senior Women's Basketball Association.

"There are women who play with me who are 80 and living out their dream to play basketball. We were way before Title IX," said Thompson, who is also a professor of physical education at Northern Virginia Community College in Annandale and Alexandria, Va. "The women are fit, but with seniors, the social part is really important. Some of the ladies have been widowed or have spouses with health issues. They've really been a support group for each other."

According to the American College of Sports Medicine, Thompson is part of a national fitness trend: fitness programs for older adults, including strength training and team sports.

"There are a lot of benefits for the aging population," said Lisa M.K. Chin, an assistant research professor at George Mason University's Department of Rehabilitation Science in Fairfax, Va. Exercise "slows physiological changes that come with aging. ... The other thing that exercise manages is chronic diseases that come with aging, such as cardiovascular problems or diabetes."

Mark Brasler, a 69-year-old who lives in Springfield, Va., has been

active for most of the past 20 years. He moved into a retirement community four months ago and got a fitness assessment in the property's gym. The results led him to up his fitness game.

"I still walk every morning and do weights and resistance machines every other day," said Brasler. "I was also told that I needed to take balance class. We focus on agility, how to stand up straight and how to get up when you fall. We also do stretching, yoga and Pilates. I feel more confident about myself."

Such fitness classes can help preserve mobility and cognitive function, say researchers. "It helps in terms of preserving bone mass and maintaining mobility longer," said Chin. "If you're using your muscles, especially during weight-bearing exercises, ultimately it reduces the risk of falling and improves balance."

An exercise class that includes aerobic, strength and balance exercises can help preserve freedom and independence for seniors. "The key components of staying physically active are having strong muscles, reasonable flexibility and endurance," said Rita Wong, professor of physical therapy and associate dean of graduate and professional studies at Marymount University in Arlington. "It's essential to keep oneself mobile and active." It's almost never too late to increase fitness levels, Wong said. "Often with older adults, people think that they can't improve anymore so why bother. But research has shown time and time again that older adults have an ability to improve that is as similar as young adults'."

ideal Insight into Determinants of
Exceptional Aging and Longevity

Why do some people reach age 80, 90, and older living free of physical and cognitive disease? National Institute on Aging (NIA) researchers on the Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging (BLSA) are exploring this question through the IDEAL (Insight into Determinants of Exceptional Aging and Longevity) Study. Although research exists on the relationship between long life and functional decline, we still know relatively little about why certain individuals have excellent health well into their 80's while others experience disease and physical decline earlier in life.

**IDEAL Study participants can help
NIH researchers uncover secrets of healthy aging.**

Participants are 80 years or older and:

- Can walk a quarter mile unassisted
- Have no severe memory problems
- Have no major medical conditions

Does this describe you or someone you know?

Call Toll-Free 1-855-80 IDEAL (1-855-804-3325)
or email IDEAL@westat.com

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Senior Living

'Your Life Is Today and Tomorrow'

Residents of local senior living communities share their experiences.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

“I didn't want to come here,” said Bill Woessner, referring to Brightview Assisted Living Community in Great Falls.

“That's right,” agreed Sheila, his wife of more than 50 years, with plenty of her native Scottish brogue to be heard in her voice. “He really didn't. We have a lovely house here in Great Falls and I don't think he was ready to budge. But how long after we got here did that change?” she turned to her husband and asked.

“At least a day,” he laughingly replied. “Seriously,” said Bill Woessner, “it probably wasn't more than the first 48 hours.”

What changed his mind, especially after what many would call a major life-upheaval?

“The food!” was his answer. “We have



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Always ready for a few hijinks around Brightview Assisted Living Community in Great Falls are L-R: Sheila Woessner, Porta Nickles, Sophia Coulopoulos, Bill Woessner, and director of Community Sales, Joanna Banks.

gourmet food at every meal, served by the nicest people in the most beautiful surroundings, and we never have to cook it or clean up afterwards.”

According to Sheila, while the food really is that good, what probably impacted her husband's initial attitude was “the amazing staff, the friendly and interesting residents, and the freedom. Of course, we're retired, so we're not bound to the responsibilities of work.” But neither are the Woessners bound to home maintenance concerns, housekeeping, cooking and cleaning.

Or “shoveling snow, like we would have been doing last month if we weren't right here,” gloated Bill. “We have the time to do what we like, to try new things and meet new people, without that worry.”

Bill and Sheila Woessner chatted about their experiences as residents in a senior living community with friends and fellow residents Porta Nickles and Sophia Coulopoulos, over lunch in the Brightview dining room.

Porta Nickles, who is 99, admitted to a bit of a sweet tooth. “My father owned a candy and ice cream shop in upstate New York,” she said, recommending the homemade coffee ice cream for dessert.

The ice cream is made using the recipe of the area's beloved Thelma Feighery. Brightview is built on the site of Thelma's Ice Cream, once the hotspot for local gathering in Great Falls. Thelma and her husband Frank

started with a gas station on the site in 1950. Thelma took over and served her own recipe ice creams and other goodies after Frank's death in 1988, until her own in 2001.

Long-time Great Falls resident Sheila Woessner said she used to go to Thelma's “just to catch up on all the local doings” even though she's not one for sweet treats. “I think Thelma would be pleased. Not only do we have our own “Thelma's” on site and make ice cream to her specifications, but it's still the place for us to gather and keep up with what's going on.”

Porta Nickles came to Brightview after living the last 70 years in Middletown, N.Y., where she helped run the family's Coney Island hot dog franchise, and later went on to enjoy a career in education with the local school district. Having lived somewhere that long, it's understandable that the move took some adjusting to, but Nickles found herself comfortable and more than content in short order. “I was lonely there,” she said. “And I didn't even know how lonely until I got here, starting making new friends, finding out there were so many things I could still do and learn and enjoy. And now I get to see my kids, grandkids and great-grand kids.”

Having family nearby, the visits, and having opportunities designed to promote interaction with different age groups, all help make Brightview a home environment in the estimation of this group of residents.

“Get involved and take advantage of your time,” was Sheila Woessner's advice for new residents.

Sheila Woessner has always been a game

player “and she knows the words to every song going,” Porta Nickles said in admiration.

During her days with the British Information Services in New York City with Bill, Sheila Woessner took home some hefty prize money by playing on the televised “Name that Tune” game show, money that she used to finance their wedding. The couple even appeared on Johnny Carson's “Who Do You Trust?” game show. Nowadays, Sheila uses her ability to help out at the community's sing-a-longs.

Bingo is Sophia's favorite. She's been pretty lucky, winning often enough to splurge with her earned Brightview “bucks” at the monthly “gift shop” where you never know what interesting items might be on offer.



With Dale Jarrett on the piano performing some of the residents' favorites, Garrey Stinson, owner of Dancing With Garrey, Therapeutic Ballroom Dancing for Seniors, brings a smile to Sophia Coulopoulos.

Oak Hill & Herndon
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Senior Living

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Creative Aging Festival Coming in May

Includes 114 performances, poetry readings, art exhibits, lectures, classes and more.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

A Creative Aging Festival will take place throughout the month of May at 100-plus local venues in Fairfax County, the City of Fairfax, Arlington and Alexandria. The month-long festival includes 114 performances, poetry readings, art exhibits, lectures, classes and more.



The festival is being sponsored by Fairfax County, AARP Virginia, the Fairfax County Arts Council and several other community organizations and businesses, and

coincides with Older Americans Month. It will also include programs that unlock the creative spirit through yoga, tai chi and even a walk through a garden labyrinth.

“What we’re hoping is that people will discover where the opportunities for art are for Fairfax County. We want them to know that it’s here; it’s in the community and we’re hoping they will participate,” said Grace Lynch, manager of communications with the county’s Division of Adult and Aging Services. She said the festival “gives us permission to do something that we may not have done before and to explore ourselves in a more creative and artistic way.”

“Fairfax County is home to over 200 non-profit art organizations many of them offering exciting events for the 50-plus com-

munity. The Creative Aging Festival is a wonderful opportunity for our arts organizations to market their existing programs by and for 50-plus residents, encouraging older adult participation in the county’s many arts offerings, and showcasing opportunities to engage in our community,” said Lisa Mariam, grants director and master arts plan coordinator at the Arts Council of Fairfax County.

Planners are now developing the program and expect to post the full calendar of events in early April (see sidebar). Some of the examples include:

- ❖ An open house allowing guests to participate in an organization’s dance, music, visual art, yoga, gardening programming;
 - ❖ A speaker on art, gardening, yoga, etc.; or
 - ❖ An older adult artist, writer, actor, poet, dancer or musician to speak about their art.
- “We’re not about bingo anymore. We’ve really raised the bar. We’re focusing on yoga, tai chi, in addition to painting and music, performing arts and dance,” said Julie Ellis, Director of Hollin Hall Senior Center in Mount Vernon.

Many Fairfax County programs will be held at local libraries, 14 senior centers, adult day healthcare centers and park programs are planning to be involved. For example, seniors here will have the opportunity to experience movement classes with professional choreographer Janet Storms of the Choreographers Collaboration Project. “She’s going to talk about the joy of movement as you age,” said Ellis.

The festival’s objectives are to encourage audiences for the arts, especially for art created and performed by older adults; encour-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY STAN SCHRETTER

Seniors take part in programs at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at GMU.

age older adult participation in the county’s many public and private art programs; promote public understanding of the benefits of older adult participation in the arts; establish the festival as an annual event each May with Older Americans Month.

“Research has shown a strong connection between participation in the arts and the cognitive health of older adults,” said Richard Chobot, chair of Fairfax Area Agency on Aging. “The Creative Aging Festival will provide examples of the variety of arts experiences available to older adults, and individuals of all ages.

“The Creative Aging Festival gives the public an opportunity to dive into the soul of the many programs the area offers for adults with dementia,” said Isabel Castillejo, CTRS, of the Herndon Adult Day Health Care Center. “Fairfax County’s Adult Day Health Care Centers understand the value behind creative arts and the opportunity to see someone’s unique expressions through art, music and various other mediums. We encourage the public to get a glimpse of these wonderful gems their community has to offer.”

“The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at (GMU) is excited to take part in the festival, offering four events that will showcase our popular acting and Tai Chi classes, fabulous musical performers, and first rate fine artists and photographers,” said Jennifer Disano, executive director.

As part of the festival, GMU will be hosting an “Arts, Aging & Well-being” panel on Monday, May 18 from 9 a.m. to noon, on the Fairfax campus. “When we connect with others through creative expression, great things happen,” said GMU Associate Professor Holly Matto, Ph.D. “The arts and health research shows that participation in the creative arts can enhance cognitive, emotional and interpersonal functioning,

Reston, Herndon Events

Public Art - Art for the People. This multimedia presentation will focus on a broad range of Public Art in all its many forms. Public art is becoming the most popular form of art. The audience will see examples from around the world, including a special look at Reston and the surrounding area. May 6, 7 p.m.; Free. **At Reston Regional Library**, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Call 703-689-2700/703-662-1812 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rr/

Entertainment and Art Display. Herndon Adult Day Health Care Center welcomes you to their Open House with program tours, art displays and entertainment courtesy of the National Theatre (11a-12). Light refreshments will be offered. May 15, 10:30 a.m.-Noon; Free. **At Herndon Adult Day Center**, 875 Grace Street, Herndon. Call 703-435-8729 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/adhc/

ArtSpace’s Herndon Senior Tea. Enjoy Behind the Scenes with the Loudoun Sketch Club, light refreshments, and the companionship of art lovers. A local music group will offer entertainment during the tea. May 15, 1-2 p.m.; Free. **At ArtSpace Herndon**, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Call 703-956-6590 or visit www.artspaceherndon.org

Creative Writing Workshop for Seniors. Participants will animate a memorable moment from their life and practice creative writing techniques. March 15, 1-3 p.m.; Free. **Reston Regional Library**, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Call 703-626-3894 or visit rollercoasterlearning.com/

Art Beat Open House. What a great day to visit us! On display will be art from our oil painting, ceramics, and jewelry classes. We’ll also display art from community artists. Three “people’s choice” prizes will be awarded in the visual arts category. On “stage,” some of our many dance and song groups will perform. May 15, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Free. **At Herndon Senior Center** 873 Grace Street, Herndon. Call 703-464-6200 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nccs

Blind Curves - One Woman’s Unusual Journey. After completing a 2,500 mile road trip the author tells a story of how a woman of a certain age can break with tradition and turn frustration into triumphant joy. May 21, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. \$15 Reston/\$30 Non-Reston. **At Reston Community Center**, 2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston. Call 703-390-6157 or visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com

For more see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/fairfax-creative-aging-festival.htm>

and studies on the arts in health care settings show biological effects such as pain reduction and improved immune functioning.”

Festival partners include: the Arts Council of Fairfax County, the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging, the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, Fairfax County’s Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, Public Libraries, Adult Day Health Care Centers, Long Term Care Coordinating Committee, George Washington University, the National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations, the National Center on Creative Aging, Goodwin House at Alexandria and Bailey’s Crossroads, AARP Virginia, and Pure Prana Yoga Studio. Most programs are free. Because of the variability in venue space, participants should call respective venues to register and inquire about program information, fees and parking.

The festival calendar will be posted by early April at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/fairfax-creative-aging-festival.htm>



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY STAN SCHRETTER

Seniors take part in tai chi programs to stay fit at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at GMU.