

Happy Birthday Silver Line, and Many More

NEWS, PAGE 3

A view from the Tysons
Corner Metro station: The
Silver Line celebrated its
first birthday Sunday
evening. What is its im-
pact on the area?

Summer Reading Made Fun at Dolley Madison Library

NEWS, PAGE 4

'Happy Days' in Home Sales

REAL ESTATE, PAGE 5

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Wiehle-Reston East Station surpassed first-year ridership projections with nearly 9,200 boardings, or 18,400 weekday entries and exits last month.



In addition to the 9,197 boardings at Reston's station last month, McLean had 1,842 boardings; Tysons Corner, 3,423; Greensboro, 1,185; and Spring Hill 1,441, totaling 17,088.

Happy Birthday Silver Line, and Many More

Reactions to the \$3 billion project up and down the line.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

“Herndon is ready,” said Mayor Lisa Merkel, regarding Herndon’s future Silver Line stop. Merkel dubbed Herndon, “A Next Generation Small Town.”

“We are so fortunate,” she said. “This is a huge project, one of the biggest infrastructure projects in the country. There aren’t many towns that can get involved in projects like this.”

The Washington Metropolitan Airports Authority recently projected cost of Phase I, the 11.7 mile segment of the Silver Line with five stops, to be \$2.982 billion.

After a recently announced 13-month delay, construction is hoped to begin on Herndon’s future Silver Line Stop in 2016 with its opening by 2019-2020, according to a talk Merkel gave in May.

The entire Silver Line will be a 23-mile extension of the existing Metrorail system from East Falls Church, through Tysons and Reston, and eventually to Washington Dulles International Airport west to Ashburn.

The Herndon Town Council approved 38 acres to be set aside for its future Metro stop in February 2012.

“It’s the right space, we could never consider that in any other part in town,” said Merkel.

THE SILVER LINE CELEBRATED its first birthday Sunday evening, July 26 with an outdoor movie and festivities at the Wiehle-Reston East stop.

“Wiehle-Reston East continues to be the Silver Line’s commuting powerhouse, surpassing first-year ridership projections with nearly 9,200 boardings, or 18,400 weekday



PHOTOS BY CAROLINE WATKINS/THE CONNECTION

Walking to Tysons Corner Metro via Skybridge.

entries and exits last month,” said Mike Tolbert, public information officer with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Silver Line has been a positive and exciting addition to Reston and the area, in general,” said Sridhar Ganesan, president of the Reston Citizens Association.

“Even though Silver Line currently ends at Wiehle, which is at one end of Reston, we are still seeing a lot of people arriving to Reston during peak times,” he said. “Clearly, a positive impact is that this many people are off the roads and making it an easier commute.”

In addition to the 9,197 boardings at Reston’s station last month, McLean had 1,842 boardings; Tysons Corner, 3,423; Greensboro, 1,185; and Spring Hill 1,441, totaling 17,088, according to Tolbert.

“The other important note is that ridership patterns at the Tysons-area stations are more distributive than other Fairfax County stations, with afternoon peak ridership higher than other time periods, including the morning peak,” according to Tolbert.

Nearly 220,000 trips were taken to and from the five new Silver Line stations during the first week of service one year ago in 2014.

“It’s going to get a lot of people out of their cars,” said Dranesville Supervisor John Foust.

“I’ve heard from a lot of people that are using it,” he said. “It’s been a big success.”

GREAT FALLS resident Sherry Stanley Whitworth uses the Spring Hill station, the second stop on the Silver Line.

“It’s good for me, it’s good for my car, it’s good for the environment,” she said. “And it’s good for my stress level.”

“It’s kind of a new thing for me. It’s convenient,” she said. “It will be great when it goes all the way out to the airport.”

Silver Line is being constructed by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, and will be operated by Metro once construction is completed.

“I have, in fact, used the Silver Line and find it an easy way to get downtown. Visitors have found it easy to use,” said Sally Horn, of McLean Citizens Association.

Tom Brock, of McLean and also on the citizens association, started using Metro 15 years ago, resolving to drive every weekday morning to East Falls Church or West Falls Church stations. Now he commutes to the McLean Station.

“It’s definitely improved the service of

“This helps us to become a major league city.”

— Jerry Gordon,
President and CEO, Fairfax County
Economic Development Authority

Metro to residents of McLean, even those with easier access to East and West Falls Church stations than I did,” said Brock.

Bill Canis, Great Falls Citizens Association vice president, commutes downtown with a carpool early weekday mornings, but his son Patrick Canis, 22, takes advantage of his own starting time.

Patrick Canis commutes to the Wiehle-Reston Station every morning on his way to Cogent in Foggy Bottom. He believes he saves up to 25 minutes of commuting by car each way to Falls Church like he had before.

“I like how easy it is, you get a smart card and it’s in and out,” said Canis, a 2014 graduate from the University of Mary Washington who majored in international affairs and studied geographic mapping systems.

“THIS HELPS us to become a major league city,” said Jerry Gordon, president and CEO of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority.

Two large international corporations have made Tysons their home. Cvent, Inc., a cloud-based enterprise event management platform, and Intelsat, a multi-billion industry that is a provider of fixed satellite services.

“Had it not been for the Silver Line, they would not be in Tysons Corner,” said Gordon.

The Silver Line stops in Fairfax County’s largest business district (Tysons Corner) and in the county’s second-largest commercial center (Reston). The Silver Line has already had a big effect on business and workforce development and “changes are just beginning,” according to Alan Fogg of the Economic Development Authority.

“What’s already been realized is our abil

SEE SILVER LINE. PAGE 8

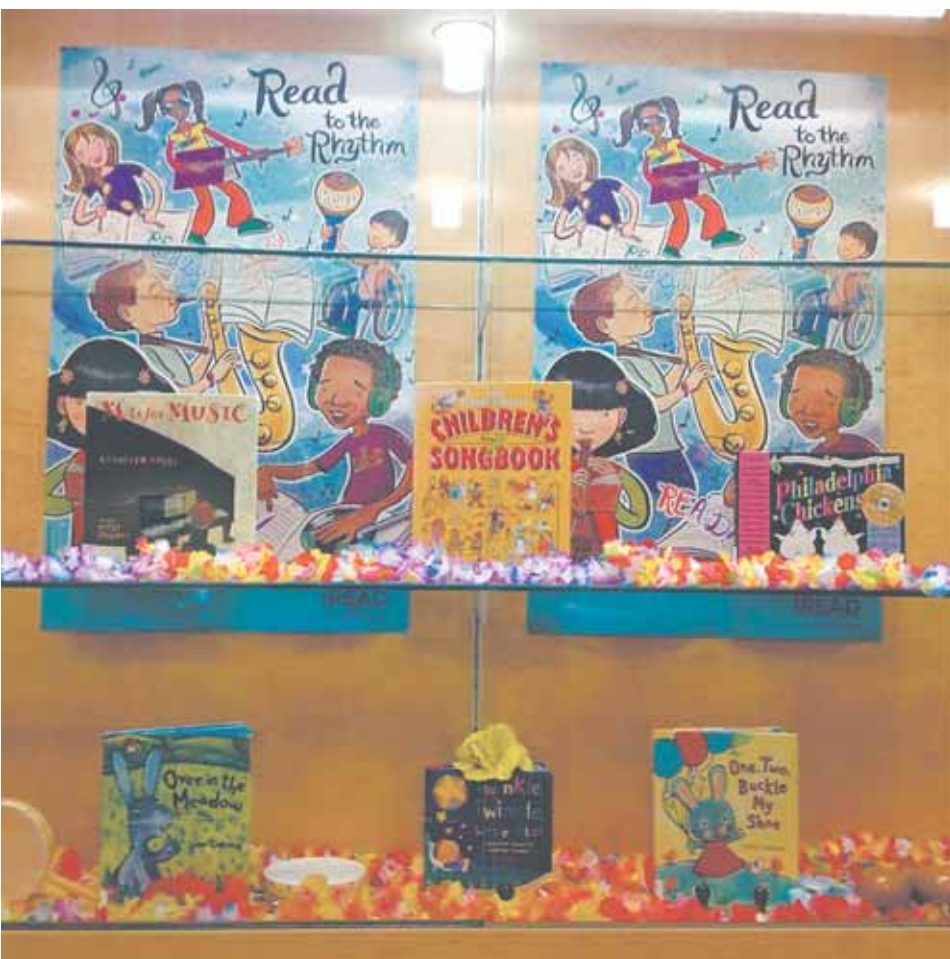


PHOTO BY DANIELLE GRAE/THE CONNECTION

Book display at Dolley Madison Library in McLean.

Summer Reading Made Fun at Dolley Madison Library

BY DANIELLE GRAE
THE CONNECTION

Children break free of their parent's hand and saunter into the library, chin up and grinning from ear to ear, and trade their Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL) summer reading logs for a coupon booklet.

To lure students into the library, the Youth Services Manager of Dolley Madison Library, Tina Mraz, notified children at McLean elementary schools about the Summer Reading Program.

For the first time, Dolley Madison Library visited Kent Gardens Elementary School, resulting in Kent Gardens having the highest percentage of students participating in the Summer Reading Program of all McLean elementary schools.

In addition to visiting schools, Dolley Madison Library hosted performers such as puppeteers, zookeepers and magicians. The entertainers tailored their acts to promote reading.

For instance, magician Brian Curry performed tricks relating to favorite books. Curry described the book Matilda, a story in which a child uses her mind to move objects. He left the children awestruck with the illusion of levitating a table.

"All the titles he mentioned flew off the shelves. After the Rainforest and Under the Sea animal performances, animal books went like crazy," Mraz said.

FCPL encourages children to read over the summer so they not only strengthen their reading skills but also avoid the summer slide, which occurs when students abstain from reading and, consequently, reading skills regress.

"FCPL and the schools want kids to keep reading because if they don't, studies show that kids return to school in the fall having lost ground in their reading skills," Program and Educational Services Manager for FCPL and head of the Summer Reading Program Ted Kavich said.

Despite a lack of homework, the Summer Reading Program draws children into the library over the summer and excites them about reading.

"I meet a lot of kids who are reading for the joy of reading, not because they have to," Assistant Branch Manager and Librarian at Dolley Madison Library Jill Johnson said.

New this summer, Mraz started My First Book Club for children from kindergarten through second grade. Mraz reads, discusses and does crafts related to the books.

Once a child completes the summer reading log, he or she can acquire a coupon booklet. Coupons include free or discounted ice cream, golf, water park admission and more.

Some big sponsors include The Friends of the George Mason Regional Library in Annandale, The Fairfax Library Foundation and Friends of the Kings Park Library in Burke.

VIEWPOINTS

What do you like about the Summer Reading Program?

— DANIELLE GRAE

Narie Choi, mom, of McLean, and children Jackson Choi, 5, and Cami Choi, 4:

Narie: "My kids need to keep reading during the summer as well as during the school year. It's a way for them to keep their minds active. I think it's working. They read so much anyway that this reading log isn't long enough to list their summer books. We like the smelly bookmarks and the coupon books, and we like to read."



Kaoru Edwards, housewife, of McLean, and son Hiro Edwards, 6, Kent Gardens Elementary School:

Kaoru: "My favorite part of the Summer Reading Program was getting Hiro to read more and getting him interested about completing the reading log. He sees his friends putting their names on the board, so every time he walks into the library he wants to put his name on the board. He's discovered that there are many different nonfiction books he can read."



Zena Phillip, 9, East Silver Spring Elementary School, Silver Spring:

"I like the Summer Reading Program because after school, I feel like I want to read some more. Because I read a lot of chapter books, I am in the highly gifted reading program at my school. I think about all the people who can't read who have disabilities, and I know that I can read, so I feel like if I read I could graduate I could do lots of things to help. I like to read."



Kristin Cummins, real estate, of McLean, and children Cadence Cummins, 6, and Grant Cummins, 4:

Kristin: "It helps to have some structure and a goal for them to work toward. The program makes reading more fun."

Cadence: "Sometimes we get to read to one of our friends, and sometimes we read to ourselves."

Grant: "My favorite book is superhero book, the Incredible Hulk, because I like to pretend to smash stuff hitting the walls."



REAL ESTATE

'Happy Days' in Home Sales

Banner first half 2015 for real estate in McLean and Great Falls.

BY KAREN BRISCOE

The first half of 2015 in McLean and Great Falls is up over 16 percent overall in terms of number of sales in comparison to the first half of 2014. This is very good news for the market area as it indicates an environment for the potential for price appreciation, provided demand remains strong relative to supply.

The chart breaks out sales of homes for both zip codes into the lower brackets which is considered under \$1.25 million and the upper brackets which is above \$1.25 million. Looking deeper into the statistics, it reveals that all price points other than the over \$3 million market experienced an increase in number of sales. The lower brackets saw an increase of over 19 percent in number of transactions. The upper brackets



experienced a strong increase as well with 10 percent.

The largest increase is not surprising with the entry level home purchaser with almost 27 percent increase in demand. Many economists attribute this to the Millennial Generation now able to enter the market and purchase their first home, which in these areas is likely condo ownership. The 22102 part of McLean that is located in Tysons Corner offers numerous condo options. The opening of the Silver Line metro in 2014 has increased Tysons attraction for this demographic that desires an urban lifestyle. The other options available in McLean and to a lesser extent in Great Falls for the under \$750,000 price point are town homes and smaller, older single family homes.

As there is very little available land to purchase for development in McLean and Great Falls, new home builders continue to represent a portion of this market segment by purchasing lots for new construction. This type of in-fill development occurs by tearing down an older existing home for the land value. When the builders compete for lots, there is less available for owners that would buy the home to live in. These scenarios can make it challenging for a first time homeowner to purchase, although it actually can be a healthy sign of recovery when new home construction is strong.

The next price range up, between \$750,000 and \$1.25 million, experienced an increase in demand of 12.5 percent year over year. This market segment typically represents the first level move up home owner. Knowing that with confidence their home should sell quickly for a strong price, these owners are in a better position to make the move to the next price level home. The two upper bracket categories of \$1.25 million to \$3 million both experi-

McLean & Great Falls Market Analysis of Homes Sales

1ST HALF 2015 COMPARED TO 2014

(Based on Final Closed Price)

	>\$3 Mil.	\$2-3 Mil.	\$1.25-2 Mil.	\$1.25 Mil.	<\$750k
1ST HALF 2015					
22101	3	15	43	113	40
22102	2	10	23	26	115
22066	0	8	33	50	15
Total	5	33	99	189	170
Combined Total	137			359	

ALL SALES 1ST HALF 2015: 496

1ST HALF 2014					
22101	6	9	44	95	34
22102	6	8	20	36	90
22066	1	7	23	37	10
Total	13	24	87	168	134
Combined Total	124			302	

ALL SALES 1ST HALF 2014: 426

enced strong increases in demand as well. These are the next level of move-up homeowners.

Clearly "happy days are here again" for home sellers in McLean and Great Falls. Good homes priced correctly for the current market sold quickly and in some segments with multiple offers. All

signs are for 2015 to continue to have positive market conditions.

Karen Briscoe is an active and experienced Realtor with Keller Williams in the Northern Virginia, market place and would be delighted to assist whether for home buying or selling. Please contact her at www.HBCRealtyGroup.com, 703-734-0192 or Homes@HBCRealtyGroup.com.

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OPINION

Wind Energy

Wind energy needs to be a part of the renewable mix of energy sources in Virginia and the nation.

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



COMMENTARY

With the federal Clean Air Act requiring higher air quality standards, many fossil-fuel power plants will be closing or converting to other fuel sources. On trips to the western part of our country and abroad, especially to Germany, I am reminded of the significant role that wind plays in being used to generate clean and sustainable electricity. In 2014, wind power added significantly more new electricity for consumers than any other source in the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

According to an American Wind Energy Association announcement last year the United States has more wind energy supplying its grid than any other country, enough to power 15.5 million American homes. Wind is the fifth largest electricity source in the U.S., generating 4.4 percent of all the electricity in this country. In Denmark, wind-produced electricity provides just under 40 percent of the

nation's power. Scotland has enough wind-produced electricity to supply all its homes. Wind power is the leading source of Spain's electricity and is the largest component of Germany's renewable sources that now constitute a quarter of its power. China leads the world in investments in wind power.

Among the states Texas, Iowa, California, and Oklahoma, each generated enough electricity from wind to power more than a million homes. Other states with significant wind capacity include Kansas, Illinois, Minnesota, Oregon, Colorado and Washington. Virginia and other eastern states do not make the list because they do not have as significant a wind resource. For Virginia, only off-shore and in the mountains mostly in the southwest is there wind sufficient to site a wind turbine farm. Dominion, the largest power provider in the Commonwealth, has invested in wind-powered electricity generation in West Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, and in Virginia where it holds a lease from the federal government for off-shore wind development.

The success of wind-produced electricity in Europe has been realized from a feed-in tariff system that has effectively subsidized investments. In the United States, the Production Tax Credit has been the primary federal tax incentive for wind energy. As all countries look for ways to save money these incentives are in danger at a time when wind energy is beginning to demonstrate its value.

Virginia is the first state to secure a wind energy research lease to build and operate turbines in federal waters. Dominion's plan to build a pair of six-megawatt test turbines about 24 nautical miles off-shore from Virginia Beach seems to be in trouble as bids to build the turbines are about twice that projected. The expectation has been that eventually there would be 300 turbines in the off-shore area. Stakeholders are currently at work to identify options to salvage the project.

Wind energy needs to be a part of the renewable mix of energy sources in Virginia and the nation. Congress needs to extend the federal tax credit that keeps our development of wind energy competitive with the rest of the world. Consumers need to be open to buying wind and other renewable energies even if there is a cost premium. Our air quality depends on it.

LETTERS

Slavery in 'the Land of the Free'

To the Editor:

America, "the land of the free." I have always considered it necessary for a land of free people to assist in freeing the enslaved.

Yet 36,000,000 men, women, and children throughout the world are enslaved through human trafficking, according to the Global Slavery Index. That is more than there have ever been at any point in time in the history of humanity.

How can a world that is supposedly improving socially also have a constant increase in slavery? The two cannot coexist, and it breaks my heart to see the number of human beings forced into slavery increase each day. Human trafficking is the use of force or fraud to control someone to labor without payment or engage in sexual activity. This crime occurs all over the world, from Malaysia to Northern Virginia. In Northern Virginia alone, from October 2013 through January 2015, 290 victims of trafficking have been identified, according to the NOVA Human Trafficking Initiative.

Malaysia, also a center for modern day sex-trafficking and slavery, is a popular destination for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking.



Though the Government of Malaysia proposed amendments to help decrease trafficking, these amendments have yet to pass through Parliament. Furthermore, despite Malaysia's significant increase in trafficking investigations, the government only convicted three traffickers in 2014, a sharp decrease from the 9 convicted in 2013 prior to the increase in investigations.

Crime does not dissipate naturally. Significant investigations and convictions are necessary if there is any hope for a decrease in human trafficking in Northern Virginia, Malaysia or worldwide.

Congress currently is reviewing the End Modern Slavery Initiative Bill.

If passed, the U.S. Government will authorize the formation of a

nonprofit grant-making foundation to fund projects and programs outside of the United States in hopes of putting an end to slavery. The passing of this bill is a crucial step in the fight to end slavery.

Olivia Grady
Fairfax
Rising senior at Woodson High.

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‘Trying to Find the Best Footing’

School Board honors retiring leadership team members, adopts budget review and audit plan.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

In their last meeting of the summer, Fairfax County School Board members began by remembering former superintendent Dr. Robert Spillane, who recently died, and recognizing outgoing members of the school system’s leadership team.

“He was one of the first people to reach out to me as I came on as superintendent,” said Dr. Karen Garza. The current superintendent called him “a gracious and impressive gentleman,” adding: “He’s a person who’s had a tremendous impact on this system.”

Assistant superintendent of human resources Dr. Phyllis Pajardo and Dr. Kim Dockery, chief academic officer, each received resolutions honoring their years of work and service in Fairfax County Public Schools.

Pajardo’s career with Fairfax County spanned 34 years and included positions of teacher, assistant principal, principal and cluster leadership roles. In 20 years, Dockery was also an assistant and principal, as well as assistant superintendent of special services, before reaching her final position as chief academic officer.

During citizen participation, several speakers also praised Dockery. Sheree Brown-Kaplan, founder and chair of the Fairfax Alliance for Appropriate Public Education, said, “Through my personal experience as a parent and as a special education advocate, I have observed Kim bring substantive change toward a problem-solving approach to special education disputes.”

TAKING HER TURN at the microphone, Dockery thanked the board for the honor and closed by saying, “The classroom is where



Retiring chief academic officer Kim Dockery was recognized at the July 23 Fairfax County School Board meeting.

everything happens and we have to make sure that politics doesn’t overshadow the quality of the teacher in the classroom and the great administrators — those two things are the most important things to our success.”

Two of the main items the board took action on were the Fiscal Year 2015 final budget review and Fiscal Year 2016 Audit Plan.



Fairfax Education Association president Kimberly Adams speaks on the final budget review at the July 23 Fairfax County School Board meeting.

Providence representative Patty Reed made the motion to pass the final budget review, which included revenue and expenditure changes versus the Fiscal Year 2015 Third Quarter Budget Review.

“It reflects hard work and prudent spending,” Reed said. “It funds Strategic Plan priorities,” she added and “sets aside money for Fiscal Year 2017, when we’re going to need every penny we can get. It’s responsible action.”



Retiring assistant superintendent of human resources Dr. Phyllis Pajardo was recognized at the July 23 Fairfax County School Board meeting.

The variances between the Third Quarter and Final reviews amounted to \$33.2 million in funds available.

Of those, this final budget review includes \$23.9 million that’s set aside, along with \$4 million already earmarked from the Fiscal Year 2015 Third Quarter Budget Review, for a total of \$27.8 million as a total beginning balance for Fiscal Year 2017.

SEE SCHOOL BOARD, PAGE 11

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The Silver Line celebrated its first birthday Sunday evening, July 26 with an outdoor movie and festivities at the Wiehle-Reston East stop.



Metro leaving Tysons Corner stop.

PHOTOS BY CAROLINE WATKINS/THE CONNECTION

Silver Line Birthday Celebrated

“We want to be ready on day one.”

— Lisa Merkel, Herndon Mayor

FROM PAGE 3

ity to retain and attract businesses,” said Gordon. “These are the corporations that every community wants ... technology driven, long term industries that are growing and high paying.”

Plans for the extension of the Silver Line to the airport will only enable the county to continue to attract more businesses, he said.

Without access to the airports on metro lines before, “They would say, ‘What kind of city is this?’” said Gordon.

Merkel called the Silver Line the “economic engine for the next 50 to 100 years.”

Herndon has more than 1,100 businesses and four corporate businesses with headquarters in town. Herndon anticipates attracting additional businesses and perhaps a campus or satellite campus in the future.

“We want to make sure we capitalize on this opportunity,” she said.

ANXIETIES, OF COURSE, are always produced by such a big project in the area.

“While the Silver Line has quickly ramped up to the averages of many of the stations within the metro area, the proposed funding formula creates anxieties for those that are forced to use the toll roads,” said Ganesan, of the Reston Citizens Association, “as the tolls are supposed to make up for revenue shortfalls to service the financing of Silver Line.”

Great Falls Citizens Association researched the importance of Metro to its members.

“Only 10 percent of Great Falls residents responded that they intend to use Metro regularly while another 56 percent plan to use Metro occasionally,” according to its 2014 survey that 592 residents completed.

According to the GFCFA transportation committee, “Unlike commercial areas (such as Tysons) that have immediate access to Metro, Great Falls will likely not benefit measurably from the Silver Line. Similarly, Great Falls will not benefit at all compared to communities such as Reston that have bus access from local neighborhoods to Metro.”

“While some Great Falls residents may benefit from the commuter parking lot(s) at the Wiehle-Reston East and McLean



Passengers departing Tysons Corner stop.

Metro stations, survey data suggest that commuter parking lots should not be built in Great Falls as relatively few residents of Great Falls would use them on a daily basis,” according to the committee.

“I have mixed feelings about Metro coming to this area because the cost of Metro is causing the tolls on the Dulles Toll Road to increase and when you raise the tolls it causes more cut through traffic to go through Great Falls,” said Scott Knight, co-chair of the GFCFA Transportation Committee.

“That’s a legitimate concern as toll rates go up to pay for Metro,” said Foust. “You have to expect that there will be less usage as people will be looking for alternatives.”

But Foust noted that he doesn’t think motorists will use Georgetown Pike for alternative purposes if the county keeps addressing Route 7 and keeps it flowing properly such as a widening project that has public information meetings scheduled for this fall.

According to the Airports Authority, toll rates will remain at current levels through 2018, and the previously published toll rate schedule will remain unchanged.

Revenue from tolls is one of several sources of funding for the Silver Line project.

McLean Citizens Association has been studying the impact of the Silver Line on McLean and on Tysons Corner, in terms of parking, traffic flow, and impact on house

values. The citizens association is even trying to determine if the Metro has had impact on crime at Tysons, McLean and in and around Silver Line stops.

The MCA Transportation Committee is staying aware of Metro’s plans and possible proposals to service changes on its crowded Blue Line that might impact commuters on the Silver Line used by McLean residents.

NINE OUT OF TEN times, Tom Brock of McLean, gets a seat. He liked to people watch when the Silver Line first opened, and he always carries a hardcover book on the Metro.

“I’ve gotten better at using my time on Metro better,” he said.

He has tried the downtown carpool, but “it was unpredictable because of a little thing called the Potomac River,” he said. “On good days it could take 25 minutes, but on really bad days it could take two and a half hours.”

Reliability is critical said Brock, former president of MCA and a member of the MCA Transportation Committee. “Delays people face on the Metro system isn’t good for Metro business,” he said.

Patrick Canis finds himself wanting better explanations than Metro gives when there are delays.

The Metro itself is expensive, noted Connie Hartke, of the Reston Citizens Association, who rides the line for fun, such as to soccer games in D.C. or Maryland plus

the opening ceremonies of the recent World Police and Fire Games.

“It is expensive, but probably no more so than driving and parking and it is so nice to relax on the way home rather than worry with getting safely out of a sports event parking lot and dealing with the beltway,” she said.

Whitworth notices that the drop off space at Spring Hill isn’t sufficient for eastbound traffic.

And Darlene Murphy found that a private parking lot is adjacent to the Metro lot that offers free Sunday parking.

“They trick you. It cost me \$10 to get out,” she said. Murphy was reimbursed by “a nice manager,” but she wants to alert others to the signs that she didn’t see.

“I bet this has happened to other people,” she said.

Back in McLean, Foust said he and his colleagues ensured that there would be sufficient parking when the Silver Line opened. The 711-space lot in McLean has plenty of space for those ready to try the Silver Line, he said.

HERNDON WANTS all details perfected by day one.

Herndon plans for 2,400 residential units and 3.1 million square feet of additional commercial space for business and retail use as well as a revitalized downtown.

And Herndon has planned vehicular traffic to stay on the south side of town by the Silver Line stop.

A year-long task force made recommendations to ensure residents to get to Metro easily. Approximately \$21 million is dedicated to projects resulting from the task force.

“We passed a resolution in February advocating for the county to put a Circulator Bus route for Phase II because we want our residents to get to the Metro without having to get in the car,” Merkel said. “If we have reliable, frequent transit options, people will use it.”

Merkel wants everything in place by the time the Silver Line’s doors open to Herndon in four or so years.

“People are going to establish their commuting patterns on that first day,” Merkel said. “We are working with Fairfax County because we do want to be ready on day one.”

A View from Wiehle: D.C. Gets Closer

Taking a train from Reston: Commuters express satisfaction and some criticism.

BY MADDY WEINGAST
THE CONNECTION

Clean, safe, on time ... Also: crowded, long wait time ... These are some of the mixed emotions coming to light in conversations with commuters reflecting on the one-year anniversary of the new Silver Line Metro operation. The line includes the following new stations: Wiehle-Reston East, Spring Hill, Greensboro, Tysons Corner and McLean, leading into the District and ending at Largo Town Center. Many locals use the new line to commute to work in Washington D.C.

"It's good to have a connecting station so close but it's always full. The commute to work in D.C. and Tysons is better than driving—to get to D.C. this is the option," said Metro commuter Swetha.

Commuters also credited the line with providing an atmosphere of safety.

"It's always on time and I'm able to get to work easily. Rarely are the trains delayed, and they are always clean. I've



Passengers prepare to board the Silver Line train toward Largo Town Center, which runs through downtown D.C.

never felt unsafe on the Silver Line, even late at night," said Adele Gibson from Great Falls.

Some suggestions for improvement in-



In town for the week, visitor Annie Condoluci boards the metro to go visit museums on the National Mall.

cluded increased signage and maps at the station and on the train especially for visitors so they are aware of upcoming stops.

In its one year of operation it appears the line is an efficient way for many visitors that

are unfamiliar to the area to travel into Washington, D.C.

"The metro was really fun and a lot cleaner than I thought it would be, but very crowded. It was really convenient to get to the museums in the District because there was no traffic and I would definitely ride it again when I come visit," said visitor Annie Condoluci from Brielle, N.J.

Despite an overall favorable impression some passengers expressed frustration with crowding and a lack of knowledge regarding train wait times.

"Around 5 o'clock the trains are pretty crowded and I normally have to stand for around 30 minutes for a seat, so more trains running on the line would be nice," said Gibson.

One commuter said many of her friends turned to ordering cars from the Uber app when faced with exorbitantly long wait times for a train.

"Lately I feel like the Metro has been worse. There's lots of track work, delays, it's crowded and less reliable. It seems like a systematic and political problem of not enough funding. The tri-state area of D.C., Virginia and Maryland need to collaborate and see it as a shared resource," said Metro Commuter Joy.

'Impressive' Change

Commuters discuss conveniences of Silver Line.

BY ALICJA JOHNSON
THE CONNECTION

July 26 marked the first anniversary of the Metro's Silver Line opening. In the year since, the new rail has changed commuting for Fairfax County and the area. The Silver Line begins at the newly constructed Wiehle-Reston East Station and travels four stations including Tysons Corner and McLean before lining up with the Orange Line at East Falls Church and then continuing to Largo Town Center.

As Chris, a salesman in D.C. puts it, the new route is "more expensive, but consistent." Before the silver line was opened last year, Chris had to take a bus out to Falls Church every day. "Now, my commute to work is more consistent and streamlined," said Chris.

For commuters like Steven Shearer, the silver line provides less of a hassle than driving. "It's much easier for me," said Shearer, "the toll and parking in D.C. is more expensive [than the Silver Line.]" Having been commuting from Northern Virginia to D.C. for 17 years, Shearer has found the Silver Line to be a great convenience this past year.

Loudoun County is also now connected to the D.C. metro more conveniently, via the Loudoun County Transit. Commuters can catch a bus and run to one of the Silver Line stations, including Wiehle-Reston and Spring Hill. This has been revolutionary for Loudoun commuters like Sara Johnson. "I never thought 15 years ago, from Loudoun, you'd be able to commute [to D.C.]," said Johnson. Johnson has been commuting to D.C. twice a week for the past three years, and she has been very impressed with the Silver Line. "The fares seem reasonably priced given the expanse of the distance," said Johnson, "and the cleanliness is outstanding."

The Silver Line also offers connections to other bus systems. The Fairfax Connector serves the four stations in Tysons, as well as Wiehle-Reston. The Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission provides a connection from Tysons Corner to Prince William County. In addition, Washington Flyer will provide a Silver Line Express service between Dulles Airport and Wiehle-Reston East.

The Silver Line has been attracting more than commuters. Nineteen-year-old Molly McKnight and her brother, residents of the Herndon/Reston area, use the silver line to see museums and monuments in D.C.

Whether they be commuters or sightseers, the Silver Line travelers seem to be enjoying the new conveniences.



PHOTO BY CAROLINE WATKINS/THE CONNECTION

The Silver Line stops in Fairfax County's largest business district (Tysons Corner) and in the county's second-largest commercial center (Reston).



PHOTO BY ALICJA JOHNSON/THE CONNECTION

Riders prepare to board a train to go sightseeing in D.C.

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

“The Healing Wall.” Tuesdays – Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., through Aug. 1. Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. “The Healing Wall” is assembled from two dozen puzzle pieces created by soldiers recovering at the Fort Belvoir Community Hospital. Each piece makes a powerful statement by itself as well as part of the larger puzzle.

Restful Pause. Wednesday-Saturday, through Aug. 1. Katie's Coffee House, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Robert Gilbert brings his nine, framed still-life paintings to exhibit. The subjects are wine bottles, wine glasses, ceramic pots, fruits and vegetables. The paintings are realistic in some areas and impressionistic in others.

What's in Your Garden? Tuesdays - Saturdays, through Aug. 1. Vienna Arts Society “Gallery in the Village Green,” 513 Maple Ave. W, Vienna. Featured artist Loy McGaughy of Reston exhibits a collection of watercolors inspired by her personal photographs. The exhibition includes more than a dozen other artists.

Tysons Concerts on the Plaza. Fridays, through Aug. 7. 6-8 p.m. at Tysons Corner Center, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, Tysons Corner. Sit back and enjoy live music with a special line up each week. Tickets are available on a first-come, first-serve basis beginning at 10 a.m. each Friday morning in the mall concourse on level 2 next to ZARA.

Summer Reading Program. Friday-Sunday, through Sept. 5. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike Great Falls. Attend summer events and check out books. All ages. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/gf/>.

Great Falls Concerts on the Green. Sundays, through Sept. 6. 6-8 p.m. at Great Falls Village Centre Green. Come out on Sundays and listen to some live music. Visit <http://www.celebrategreatfalls.org/concerts-on-the-green/>.

Vienna's Summer on the Green Concert Series. Fridays-Sundays, through Sept. 27. 6:30 p.m. at Vienna Town Green, 144 Maple Avenue E, Vienna. Come out on the weekend and listen to some good music. Visit <http://www.viennava.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2640>

WEDNESDAY/ JULY 29

Jambo. 10:30 a.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Discover the dynamic roots of American music for children's imagination. Tickets: \$10. Visit www.wolftrap.org

Jill Scott. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Triple-grammy winner Jill Scott performs. Tickets: \$45-\$100. Visit www.wolftrap.org

THURSDAY/JULY 30

Under the Sea. 2:30 - 3:15 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Meet live sea creatures. Age 6-12. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/dm/>.

Patrick Henry Book Club. 1 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. Recent title change: Me Before You by Jojo Moyes. Adults. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ph/>.

Reading Buddies. 4:30- 6 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Grab a buddy! Teen Volunteers available to read to or with beginning readers. Ages 3-9. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/gf/>.

Happy Birthday, Harry Potter! 7-8:30 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. Help us celebrate the birthday of our favorite literary wizard. Teens. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ph/>.

Under the Sea. 2:30- 3:15 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Meet live sea creatures. Age 6-12. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ok/>

Natyabhoomi School of Indian Dance. 10:30 a.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Revel in the rich traditions of South Asia. Tickets \$8. Visit www.wolftrap.org

Ben Harper & the Innocent Criminals. 7:30 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. For the first time since 2008, the group reunites on tour for blues, soul, reggae and rock performances. Tickets \$35-\$60. Visit www.wolftrap.org.

Wine Class. 7-8 p.m. The Wine Outlet, 278 Cedar Lane SE, Vienna. Wine class covering Europe's 43rd Parallel, discussing Provence, France, Tuscany, Italy and more. A light food pairing will be included. \$5. RSVP at 703-639-0155

FRIDAY/JULY 31

Playdate 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. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/gf/>.

Pokemon League. 3- 6 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. Learn and play. Ages 5-18. Open play. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ph/>.

Family Game Time. 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play assorted board games. All skill levels and ages welcome.

Dr. Seuss Spectacular. 7 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 7851 L. Tysons Corner Center, McLean. A celebration of Theodor Geisel known to the world as the beloved Dr. Seuss.

Kayak Tour-Sunset Over Riverbend. 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. A kayak tour of the upper Potomac River. Tickets: \$38. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov.

Parent & Child Fishing by Boat. 5 – 7 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Enjoy fishing with your kids. Tickets: \$16. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov.

Pushcart Players. 10:30 a.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Pushcart Players brings “Alice in Wonderland” to life. Tickets \$10. Visit www.wolftrap.org

Rufus Wainwright. 8:15 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Wainwright pairs his singing with the National Symphony Orchestra. Tickets \$25-\$58. Visit www.wolftrap.org

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JULY 31-AUG. 1

Pushcart Players: Alice in Wonderland. 10:30 a.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Pushcart Players will be performing Alice in Wonderland. Tickets: \$10. [wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/AUG. 1-2

The Rodgers Family: A Century of Musicals. 3 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. The Rodgers family will be performing music from several of their family's famous productions. Tickets: \$46. [wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).



PHOTOS BY CAROLINE WATKINS/THE CONNECTION

Tony Lucca and ZZ Ward (below) perform at Tysons Plaza last Friday.

Tony Lucca and ZZ Ward Rock Tysons Plaza

Fans of all ages gathered on the Tysons Corner Plaza last Friday for good music, laughs and stunning views of the sunset. Originally a member of “The Mickey Mouse Club,” Tony Lucca opened the night with soulful acoustic numbers such as “Pretty Things” and “Fight Song.” From personal anecdotes of honky-tonks he performed at in Nashville to his time on the second season of “The Voice” in 2012 (Team Adam!), Lucca made his performance intimate and fun.

ZZ Ward came on shortly after, striding the stage in a matching cheetah blazer and shorts, topped

off with a black hat. Citing Etta James as one of her muses, her velvety voice and enthusiastic band could be described as Amy Winehouse meets Eric Clapton. The description is fitting, seeing she performed briefly with Eric Clapton on tour, alongside other famous venues such as Bonnaroo and Coachella. Many could be seen singing along to her popular songs, such as “Love 3X”, “Put the Gun Down”, and “365 Days,” closing the night post-sunset with an encore/dance party.

— CAROLINE WATKINS

SATURDAY/AUG. 1

Star Trek. 8:30 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Wolf Trap will be screening the film “Star Trek” while the National Symphony Orchestra performs the movie score. Tickets: \$30-\$58. wolftrap.org.

SUNDAY/AUG. 2

David Sedaris. 7 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. NPR humorist and author David Sedaris will be performing his comedy followed by a Q&A and a book signing. Tickets: \$25-\$55. wolftrap.org.

MONDAY/AUG. 3

Preschool Science 123. 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Mad Science presents fun and amazing experiments. Age 3-6 with adult. Each adult and child must be signed up separately.

TUESDAY/AUG. 4

Legos in the Library. 2 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Get creative with Legos. Ages 5-12.

TUESDAY-SUNDAY/AUG. 4-9

Mystical Arts of Tibet. 7:30 p.m. Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. The acclaimed Mystical Arts of Tibet will conduct a live exhibition of an elaborate Peace Mandala sand painting and perform related music, dance and lectures. www.unityoffairfax.org

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 5

Dan Navarro. 7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. \$20. For over 30 years, Dan Navarro has written, sung, played and acted throughout his career.

Books and Babies Storytime. 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Build an early literacy foundation for you and your child while enjoying rhymes, songs, stories and activities.

Pokemon League. 4:30 p.m. Great

Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play Pokemon with your friends.

THURSDAY/AUG. 6

The Piano Guys. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Piano and cello YouTube phenoms bring their beautiful compositions to the stage, with original works and classical/pop mashups ranging from Swedish House Mafia to Vivaldi. Tickets: \$30-\$55. www.wolftrap.org.

Reading Buddies. 4:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Teen volunteers available to read to/ with beginning readers. Ages 3-9.

Knit Club. 6 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Bring your supplies and practice your crochet, knitting and cross stitching techniques. Ages 8-18.

FRIDAY/AUG. 7

Madama Butterfly. 8:15 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Experience Puccini's heartbreaking masterpiece of passion, honor, and sacrifice with Wolf Trap Opera and the National Symphony Orchestra in this new, staged, and costumed production with custom video projections. Tickets: \$25-\$75. www.wolftrap.org.

Playdate Cafe. 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Children come and enjoy toys and a playspace, while adults enjoy coffee and conversation. Ages birth-5.

Family Game Time. 3:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play assorted board games. All skill levels and ages welcome.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/AUG. 7-8

“Fiddler on the Roof.” 7:30 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street SE, Vienna.

SATURDAY/AUG. 8

Vienna Art Society's Photography Exhibition. 4-6 p.m. Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant Street, NW, Vienna. Juror Matthew G. Schmidt

will select winners at the Vienna Arts Society's annual judged photography exhibition. Enjoy light refreshments and meet the artists at the awards reception.

Silver Line Music & Food Truck Festival. 12-9 p.m. Lerner Town Square at Tysons II, 8025 Galleria Drive, Tysons. Admission is free, over 20 food trucks and fun.

The Music of John Williams National Symphony Orchestra. 8:15 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Journey now with John Williams' and the NSO as they perform entrancing and exhilarating music by the most Oscar-nominated man alive, with songs from beloved films like Star Wars, Indiana Jones, Jaws, Jurassic Park, Harry Potter, Hook, and more. Tickets: \$20-\$58.

Fire Truck Visit. 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Come check out a fire truck up close and hear all about being a firefighter from the team at the Great Falls fire station.

TUESDAY/AUG. 11

Needtobreathe's Tour De Compadres. 7 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Immerse yourself in captivating alt-rock from premier bands. Tickets: \$25-\$45. www.wolftrap.org.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 12

Jim Gaffigan- Contagious. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Laugh it up with the Grammy-nominated humorist as he dishes on food, fatherhood, and everything in between. Tickets: \$30-\$60. www.wolftrap.org.

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

THURSDAY/AUG. 13

Counting Crows-Somewhere Under Wonderland Tour. 7 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Fall “Accidentally in Love” with the melodic alternative rockers and hear them play all their hits off their album. Tickets: \$45-\$60. www.wolftrap.org.

ENTERTAINMENT



From left — top row: MSA students in **RENT**: Danny Waldman (Woodbridge - 12th), Chad Vann (Alexandria - 11th), Jordan Sledd (Lorton - 12th), Kyra Smith (Alexandria- College Freshman), Trey Krause (Woodbridge- 12th), Merritt Palmer (Lorton - 11th), Bethel Elias (Springfield - 12th), Erin Coughlan (Lorton - 12), Ben Cherington (Lorton - 12th), Kathy Oh (Lorton-College Sophomore), Cara Bachman (Lorton-College Freshman), Marcia Cuning (Alexandria- College Freshman), Noah Mutterperl (Alexandria-12th). Bottom Row: Aida Campos (Woodbridge - 12th), Brian Perry (Springfield - 11th), Ben Fluett (Woodbridge - 12th).

Student-run Production of 'Rent' at 1st Stage

Metro School of the Arts (MSA), Youth Theatre department, is showcasing its completely student-run production of "RENT" at 1st Stage Theatre in McLean, July 31 to Aug. 2. Student directed and produced.



From left — Director Chad Vann (Alexandria - 11th grade), Producer Sam Cornbrooks (Springfield - 12th grade) and Musical Director James Woods (Alexandria- 11th grade).

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School Board Adopts Budget Review

FROM PAGE 7

"Given what we know the county is facing in 2017," said Braddock representative Megan McLaughlin, referring to a projected \$100 million shortfall, "I believe my colleagues are truly trying to help this school system find the best footing possible."

Kimberly Adams, president of the Fairfax Education Association teachers' union, praised past budget work for funding the on-time full-step increase in teacher compensation, and making "good on the promise of turf fields."

"We appreciate work that started weeks ago, with joint board committees," Adams said. "We need to see more work by both boards, more quickly. Our quality of life depends on it."

When called to a vote, the board unanimously passed the review.

At-large member Ilryong Moon next motioned for approving the Fiscal Year 2016 audit plan, intended to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the

school system. Moon explained that in addition to carryovers from the Fiscal Year 2015 audit, new components for 2016 would include performance audits of the online campus, homebound and home-based instruction, and business process and turnover audits.

Garza commended the work of the audit committee, which most recently held a work session July 13.

"It's a good approach to include the comprehensive evaluations," Garza said, that will have "a significant impact throughout the system."

The audit plan also passed unanimously.

AS A FOLLOW-UP, the board then voted to approve the process by which community members can apply to be part of the audit committee, as well as a timeline for how and when that group will operate. The committee comprises four School Board members and two appointed representatives from the community. Those two serve staggered two-year terms.

The request for community member applications began July 24 and will last until Aug. 21, with

the first meeting scheduled to be held in October.

"We clearly will, with the addition of community members, accomplish our goals of many years ago," said Mount Vernon representative Dan Storck, "to have a highly functional, independent audit process."

During new business, School Board members received information about the future of the Family Life Education Curriculum Advisory Committee, which is made up of community members, teachers, administrators and members of the central office staff.

As of the meeting, two School Board appointments to the committee were unfilled, along with four student representative appointments, a physician and a middle and elementary school administrator. The remainder of the committee members' term lasts until June 30, 2016.

The Family Life Education Curriculum Advisory Committee meets twice yet this year — Oct. 8 and Nov. 12 — at the Gatehouse Administration Center from 7-9 p.m.

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

AUGUST

8/12/2015.....HomeLifeStyle
8/19/2015.....A+ Camps & Schools – Back to School – Private Schools
8/26/2015.....Newcomers & Community Guide Pullout

SEPTEMBER

9/2/2015.....Wellbeing
Labor Day is Sept. 7
9/9/2015..HomeLifeStyle Pullout – Real Estate & New Homes
9/16/2015.....A+ Camps & Schools Back to School, Open Houses
9/23/2015.....Fall Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment
9/30/2015.....Professional Profiles & Your Business in the Community

OCTOBER

10/7/2015.....Wellbeing Senior Living Pullout
10/14/2015.....HomeLifeStyle
10/21/2015.....A+ Camps & Schools

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- Oak Hill/Herndon Connection
- Potomac Almanac
- Reston Connection
- Springfield Connection
- Vienna/Oakton Connection

Q&A: McLean's Norton Committed to Indiana as Sophomore

Catcher is superstitious, listens to 30-song playlist on game days.

McLean catcher Bella Norton knew from a young age that she wanted to play college softball. Once she got to high school, it didn't take Norton long to choose the college at which she would play.

Norton committed to Indiana University at the beginning of her sophomore year. She has remained motivated despite committing early in her high school career, citing her desire to be the best.

After spending her freshman season as the Highlanders' designated hitter, Norton moved behind the plate as a sophomore. As a junior in 2015, Norton batted .450 and earned first-team all-Conference 6, first-team all-6A North region and first-team VHSL all-state honors. She was also named first-team All-Met by the Washington Post.

Now a rising senior, Norton has one more season at McLean before competing at the Division I level. She recently participated in a Q&A via email with The Connection.

Connection: What was it about Indiana that made you commit?

Norton: It was a combination of the beauty of the school, the academic excellence and the B1G competition/amazing softball I'd be playing. The biggest thing for me was IU will obviously be a huge challenge, going into the collegiate level, but they have a loving, family feel about their organization and school I felt nowhere else. I fell in love with everything about it.

Connection: Were there specific reasons behind why you decided to commit to a college at the beginning of your sophomore year?

Norton: At that time in my recruiting process other offers were being presented to me. I visited other schools but when Indiana University came up, as soon as I walked on campus I just knew it was the school for me.

Connection: What teams did you play for prior to high school that allowed you to receive a DI offer early in your high school career?

Norton: I played with the Vienna Stars organization from the time I was 11 years old. I guest played with 18U Gold when I was in eighth grade, and the program was so strong and allowed me to play with the best girls in the country and gave me the exposure that I needed. Although I don't play for the organization anymore, the Stars, combined with my efforts to be recruited got me to where I am today and I'm very thankful for that.

Connection: What teams do you play for now, other than McLean?

Norton: I play for the Newtown Rock 18U Gold (Garvey). They are based in Newtown, Pa.

Connection: How, if it all, do you feel being committed to a college affected your approach to softball during your sophomore and junior seasons?

Norton: It has affected my work ethic and approach to the game in the best way



McLean rising senior catcher Bella Norton is committed to play softball at Indiana University.

"The most difficult part of being a catcher is the same as the most rewarding, which is being the leader off the field and developing your IQ of the game. It's difficult to master, but there's something about having your teammates trust you and knowing you have each other's backs that is really special."

— Bella Norton

possible. I want to be the best, and I want to represent Indiana the best way I possibly can. Every practice, every game, I am working for Indiana, and I'm ultimately working on becoming the best. I am playing to grow as a player so I am ready to go when I get to Indiana. It's given me even more drive and passion playing the game of softball.

Connection: At what age did you start playing softball?

Norton: I started playing softball when I was 4 years old.

Connection: When did you realize playing college softball was an option for you?

Norton: When I was 10, I saw the University of Alabama play on TV, and ever since then my goal was to play at the biggest and most competitive level of softball I was able to reach. In middle school, I got my first look and I really started to look at colleges that I could potentially go to, to play softball.

Connection: What is the most difficult part of being a catcher? What is the most rewarding?

Norton: The most difficult part of being a catcher is the same as the most rewarding, which is being the leader off the field and developing your IQ of the game. It's difficult to master, but there's something about having your teammates trust you and knowing you have each other's backs that is really special.

Connection: You're sitting around playing a board game with family/friends. Do you play to have fun or play to win?

Norton: I'm the most competitive person I know. I definitely play to win.

Connection: Do you have a specific game day routine?

Norton: I have to write the number 24 (for Madison Small) on my hand before every single game to honor her. I hit before warm ups even start on a normal game day. I'm very superstitious, so for high school, I

have to eat a tuna sandwich no matter what. I have to wear the same sports bra and spandex under my uniform, and I have a specific 30-song playlist I have to listen to before I play.

Connection: What do you like to do when you're not playing a sport?

Norton: I love seeing my goddaughter, Georgia, when I'm not playing softball. I love being around my family. I love to work out when I'm not playing softball and reading about old bands and music.

Connection: Are you a pro sports fan? Which team(s) do you root for?

Norton: The Nationals! My favorite sport and team to watch.

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

Norton: The farthest I've traveled is California.

Connection: What's your favorite food?

Norton: I love Lebanese food all around (cause I'm Lebanese), but my favorite is grape leaves.

Connection: Who is your favorite music artist? Why?

Norton: I love Aerosmith, Van Halen and Rush. I love classic rock; it's my favorite kind of music.

Connection: What is your favorite movie?

Norton: "Mean Girls."

— JON ROETMAN

Leonard Stephens demonstrating for Offensive Line Academy (football) the Weighted Power Walk.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Training for Perfect Performance

Youth Sports Training Academy relocates to Tysons location.

Local resident and former Washington Redskin, Leonard Stephens, relocated his Youth Sports Training Academy, Perfect Performance, to new 25,000 square foot Facility in Tysons Corner. Living in the area for more than 20 years (six of those years playing in the NFL), Stephens recognizes the desire and devotion that local boys and girls have to learn, train, and successfully compete in sports. After leaving the NFL, Stephens began the new sports career of mentoring and teaching expert standards in athletic training at his youth sports academy, Perfect Performance. Stephens has been sharing his professional athletic knowledge and proven successes with young athletes since 2007 and has effectively branched out to all sports beyond football. Stephens is excited to move Perfect Performance to the newly constructed, state-of-the art, 25,000 sq. ft., indoor, turf facility located at 8502 Tyco Road, Tysons Corner. The new facility includes a weight room, locker rooms, showers and a parent viewing area.

Perfect Performance provides specialized training programs at all skill levels, specifically for ages 10 through collegiate years, in football, baseball, lacrosse, volleyball. Perfect Performance also directs a Speed and Strength Academy which delivers champion advantages in all sports including basketball, soccer, softball, rugby. Perfect Performance is equipped with plenty of free parking and is walking distance to the Spring Hill Metro Station on the Silver Line. Perfect Performance is open seven days a week.

The 6-foot-3, 245-lb, Stephens can be found at Perfect Performance seven days a week engaged in most of the training taking place there. Stephens has selected only top quality sports trainers to work in the sport that they themselves have proven to master. All of the Perfect Performance trainers have played and competed at the collegiate level.

Stephens grew up in Princeton Junction, N.J. lettering in three sports, football, basketball and track, but had the most success on the gridiron. Over his six-year NFL career, Stephens played with



Student Alex Bendler performing Prowler Power Walk for the Offensive Line Academy for seventh through 12th grade, while Leonard Stephens watches.

current and future Hall of Famers and perennial Pro-Bowlers, and was also coached by future Hall of Famers. Some of those individuals include Darryl Green, Marcus Pollard, Ben Coates, Joe Gibbs, Joe Bugel, Steve Spurrier and Mike Holmgren. He has played with many great wide receivers and tight ends including Laverneus Coles, Roy Williams, Walter Rasby and Marcus Pollard.

Stephens is married to Dr. Candice Turpin-Stephens and they have a young son and daughter. Stephens recently formed Perfect Performance Sports and Education Trust which provides young, disadvantaged football players in the greater Washington metropolitan area with the necessary skills and support to be equally successful on and off the playing field. The Perfect Performance team of trained coaches, educators, and support staff provide athletic training, academic support, and social and professional development to athletes beginning in middle school lasting through high school graduation.

For more information, visit Perfect Performance's website at www.perfect-performance.com.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

From left — Lois Page and Dianne Blais.

Dianne Blais and Lois Page Elected Co-presidents of the League of Women Voters of Virginia

Dianne Blais and Lois Page, of Fairfax, were elected co-presidents at the League of Women Voters of Virginia's 37th Biennial Convention in Charlottesville. They will lead the state League for the next two years, taking over from Anne Sterling of Richmond. Blais has been a Leaguer for over 15 years and Page for more than 40 years in four different states.

The 63 delegates and four non-voting members traveled from across the state to plan for and provide the vision that will guide the members during the 2015-17 biennium.

The convention also elected 10 other members of the Board including:

First Vice-President, Sue Lewis, and Treasurer, Pat Hurst from the Charlottesville Area;

Second Vice-President, Carol Noggle, from the Prince William Area, and Rebecca Shankman, Secretary, from the Montgomery County LWV. Directors include: Lynn Johnston of Richmond, Ron Page of the Fairfax Area, Linda Garvelink of Falls Church, Frances Schulz of Charlottesville, Adarsh Trehan and Maggi Luca from the Fairfax area. Sherry Zachry will head the Nominating Committee.

A major theme of the convention was "Redistricting Reform: What it is, Why it is needed, and How you can help." A panel moderated by Kristin Goss, president of the Arlington LWV, included Ellen Buchman, vice-president of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a premier civil and human rights coalition; Nick Mueller, an attorney in Northern Virginia, who specializes in election law, including redistricting law and Mark Flynn, General Counsel of the Virginia Municipal League. Panelists emphasized the need to act now and advocate locally for reform. Attendees were

given a "Tool Kit" with materials to help in this endeavor.

Levar Stoney, secretary of the Commonwealth, also spoke on a favorite League topic, the restoration of voting rights for felons. Secretary Stoney summarized the efforts the Governor has spearheaded to restore voting rights to more people than in all previous administrations. The League also voted to concur with a position called "Ban the Box" that urges employment applications to eliminate the required checking of a box to indicate the applicant has been convicted of a felony until after the initial interview. Checking the box usually results in an applicant not even being interviewed.

Greg Buppert, a senior attorney for the Southern Environmental Law Center, also spoke on the efforts of his organization to prevent increased hydraulic fracturing (fracking) in Virginia. Attendees later adopted a new study of the environmental impacts of fracking to determine if the state league should consider adopting a position on which to advocate.

Honored guests at the convention included Peggy Appler, LWVUS Liaison from South Carolina who reviewed the kinds of help and materials state and local leagues can receive from the national staff. Also recognized was Rebecca Young-Marquardt, daughter of the late Virginia Gwathmey-Young who served for a number of years as Virginia League President. Her daughter has established a grant that has helped to fund some state initiatives.

The delegates also voted to support resolutions offered by LWV of the Fairfax Area to support legislation that would increase firearm safety in situations involving domestic violence and access to guns by children.

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- Ralph Waldo
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On A Tangent



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not that I live day-to-day or even month-to-month, but I do live – in my head anyway – quarter-to-quarter; that interval representing the usual and customary time between my recurring diagnostic scans. The time when the rubber hits my road. The time when push comes to shove. The time when my oncologist tells me whether my warranty has been extended for the next three months or not. Not that I anticipate that my time will run out that quickly after a disappointing scan result; still, bad news seems to travel faster and cause adverse consequences quicker than good news causes relief, a sort of “disharmony,” to quote James Cagney from the movie, “Mister Roberts.”

But what else is new? Nothing, really. Because to live the life of a cancer survivor is way better than not living, or casting yourself as a victim, which, for those who know me, know I never do. Where’s the future in that? Blaming, “woeing-is-meing,” “self-dissatisfying?” To what end? Misery might like company but it’s boring to be around miserable people. And to survive a potentially devastating and depressing set of circumstances – expected or not – associating and/or being exposed to/subjected to people who look at life through black-rose-colored glasses provides no help whatsoever.

I don’t want to feel better about myself by being around people who feel worse about themselves. I want to feel better by being around people who feel good and act/behave positively. Strength may indeed come from numbers, as they say; but when you’re a cancer patient/survivor, strength comes from attitude: yours, your fellow cancer survivors and the people with whom you surround yourself. I don’t want to have overcome someone else’s negativity. I want to be overcome by their positivity. I want/need to feel good about everything I do/attempt to do. I don’t want/definitely don’t need to feel/be made to feel bad about anything. Granted, it’s a subtle line between encouragement and disappointment where you might be suggesting one thing and minimizing another. Yet, finding a middle ground becomes imperative. Not that cancer patients’ psyches are fragile and easily affected by the words and deeds of others; however, cancer does exert some subconscious and even unconscious control and consequently, you might end up feeling/emoting/reacting differently than you ever have or ever anticipated. As an example: I tear up regularly while watching television, and not just at “tear-jerkers,” either: news, weather, sports, comedies, dramas, fiction, non-fiction; anything, everything.

Mastering one’s domain, in a non-Seinfeld-type context is crucial to surviving a cancer ordeal. Taking the ups and downs and all-arounds in some sort of stride, even two steps forward and one step backward isn’t so bad. At least your net movement is forward. And forward is the goal. Certainly I’m not looking forward to my next scan in October but it is something to look forward to; it’s progress, sort of; it means that life is still being lived. It’s not ideal, but ideal left the building on February 27, 2009 when I received my initial face-to-face diagnosis/prognosis. Nevertheless, I remain positive about my negative. In my opinion, the alternative serves no purpose.

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

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to north@connectionnewspapers.com. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication.

MONDAY/AUG. 3

Spanish Chat. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. All levels welcome to practice Spanish in a relaxed environment with a native speaker. Adults.

MONDAY/AUG. 10

Spanish Chat. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. All levels welcome to practice Spanish in a relaxed environment with a native speaker. Adults.

MONDAY/AUG. 24

Spanish Chat. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. All levels welcome to practice Spanish in a relaxed environment with a native speaker. Adult admission.

ONGOING

The **Shepherd’s Center of Oakton-Vienna** has an urgent need for volunteer drivers to take area seniors to medical appointments and other activities. Opportunities to volunteer for other services are also available. No long-term commitment and hours are flexible to fit your schedule. Visit www.scov.org or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 703-281-5086 or email volunteer@scov.org.

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

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

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

FAITH NOTES

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

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 2589 Chain Bridge Road, Vienna, is holding Sunday evening worship service in a less formal atmosphere and more intimate setting to help you get ready for the week ahead. Sundays, 6 p.m. Communion offered. No childcare. 703-938-2119 or www.elcvienna.org.

St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls, offers musical, educational, outreach and fellowship ministries in addition to worship services, including a 7:45 a.m. worship service without music; 9 a.m. worship service, children’s chapel and children’s choirs; 10 a.m. Sunday school and adult forum; and 11 a.m. worship service with adult choir. 703-759-2082.

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

The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. www.jssa.org/growth-learning.

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
Michael Nicholas Katrivanos trading as Metropole Brewing Company, 2709 S. Oakland St. Arlington, VA 22206. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Brewery less than 500 barrels license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Michael Katrivanos, owner. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200

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OPEN Sun. 8/2 1-4pm!

6632 Hazel Lane McLean, VA \$1,699,000
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OPEN Sun. 8/2 2-4pm!

6522 Old Chesterbrook Road McLean, VA \$1,349,000
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