

Adrienne Kralick demonstrates portrait painting technique of John Singer Sargent in a recent workshop. The twelve artists of Artists on the Green have been busy creating collectible pieces of art for the upcoming Great Falls Holiday Fest, Saturday, Dec. 5 and Sunday, Dec. 6.

Artists on the Green To Host Open House

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Sharing

SEASON OF GIVING, PAGE 10

Creating Families
with Adoption

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Great Falls Author Paints a Powerful Portrait

Laura Elliott launches her newest novel, 'DaVinci's Tiger.'

BY KRISTIN CLARK TAYLOR
FOR THE CONNECTION

It began about twenty years ago with a single question. Award-winning author Laura Elliott says the idea for her newest novel was first ignited when her daughter Megan, then a small girl, walked into the room one morning and asked her mother, "Did you know that the only Leonardo in all of the Americas is right here in Washington, D.C.?"

What came next was not a question but an urgent demand; a daughterly directive: "We've got to go see it. Today."

Elliott not only listened that morning, but she obeyed, and a few hours later they found themselves standing in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., totally transfixed by the real-life vision in front of them: the first portrait ever painted by Leonardo DaVinci. Both mother and daughter were mesmerized.

They knew that they were gazing upon the only DaVinci portrait to hang in a U.S. museum, and it took their breath away. The portrait itself depicts the young and beautiful Ginevra de' Benci, the wealthy, witty daughter of a prominent Florence family who posed for DaVinci in his early years and who served as the masterful artist's first muse.

FLASH FORWARD about twenty years, to today, as mother and daughter stand again in the National Gallery of Art – but this time, to discuss and celebrate the publication of Elliott's newest novel, "DaVinci's Tiger," a lush, historical romance which centers upon



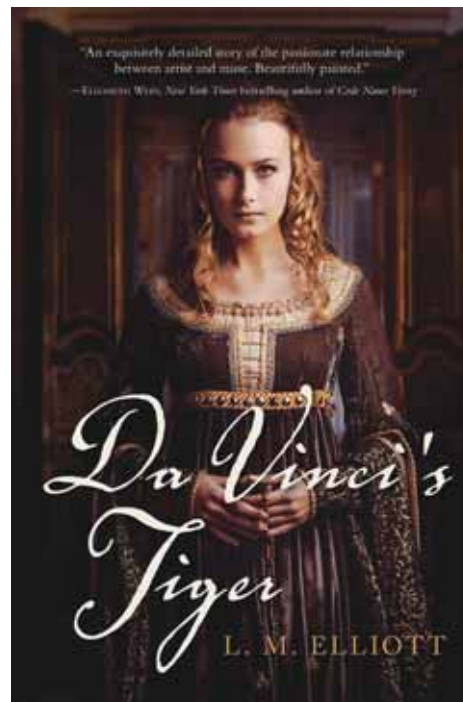
PHOTO BY MARY NOBLE OURS

Laura Elliott

this singular, seminal portrait and tells the story of the intimate, unfolding relationship between the master and his muse.

Using the National Gallery as the symbolic backdrop to launch her exciting new novel, Elliott, a long-time resident of Great Falls, recently stood before a standing-room-only audience in the famed hall to discuss her work. Her daughter Megan, now a 26-year-old theater artist, served as researcher for the book and also fielded questions from the audience at the end of the event.

Clearly, Elliott has come full circle — from that first moment when she laid eyes on the portrait a few decades ago, to today, as the best-selling author of a book on the same subject. And it was not just the powerful portrait that pulled her in – it was the story



behind the portrait.

It still is.

In the novel, much of it based on real-life events from that rich period, Elliott offers up a vivid backdrop of Renaissance Florence, complete with passion, exquisite art, elaborate feasts, jousting, and finally, a love that defies categorization.

Painstakingly researched (Elliott traveled to Florence twice and spent years poring over almost every last detail of Ginevra de' Benci's life), the New York Times best-selling author weaves a story about this ground-breaking portrait and all of the fury and passion that surrounded it.

"The portrait itself was revolutionary," she says in a quiet voice filled with respect and awe, "because before this, women were always depicted by artists as bejeweled, exquisite objects, always gazing out at nothing, staring off vacantly into space."

It was DaVinci's portrait of Ginevra, Elliott explains, which broke new ground and set the art world on its ear by depicting a woman looking straight ahead, her gaze direct, wearing a relatively unadorned gown and a solid facial expression – a bold and deliberate decision that firmly established the masterful painter as a force of artistic honesty and change.

But this beautiful portrait also broke other new ground: In those times, women were looked upon as talentless, voiceless, delicately domestic creatures, so submissive that they could not even pose for a portrait without assuming an indirect, silhouetted position.

That de' Benci posed so boldly was one thing. But that she was also a high-spirited, free-thinking, highly talented poet was something else altogether.

Elliott describes how the beautiful de' Benci, trapped in an arranged marriage and forced to limit her creativity to domestic duties, fell in love with the artist as he painted her portrait. And although the mutual admiration ultimately ended in heartbreak, de' Benci's story is inspirational because it shows how she defied convention during the Renaissance.

THE ACCOLADES for "DaVinci's Tiger" are already flowing in fast and strong:

Elizabeth Wren, New York Times best-selling author of "Code Name Verity," describes the new novel as, "an exquisitely detailed story of the passionate relationship between artist and muse. Beautifully painted."

Esther Eacho, an educator and avid reader, said "Laura's skill at bringing the subject to life is remarkable. Not only will the reader learn about DaVinci, but they will better understand 15th-century life from a young woman's point of view."

Community is important to Elliott. She

SEE POWER, PAGE 6

Artists on the Green to Host Open House

The twelve artists of Artists on the Green have been busy creating beautiful and collectible pieces of art for the upcoming Great Falls Holiday Fest, Saturday, Dec. 5 and Sunday, Dec. 6. Artists on the Green, located at 776B Walker Road in Great Falls, is known for offering a unique blend of original art and that just right creative collectible. And, to make the holidays a little brighter, each artist is offering discounts of up to 20 percent off their original creations. Open both days from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., the studio will have a festive Open House with food and bev-

erages from 2 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 6. Additionally, artists will be demonstrating their approach to creating their art all weekend. AOTG is conveniently located across from the Farmer's Market on Saturday morning and is a short walk to the Christmas tree lighting ceremony at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday.

Kurt Schwarz demonstrates still life painting in weekly class.



PHOTO BY GAIL PÉAN

NEWS

Great Falls to Host Holiday Fest

The Great Falls Holiday Fest, to be held Saturday, Dec. 5 and Sunday, Dec. 6, will offer shopping, art, food, lights and Saint Nicholas, too!

Both days, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Twenty-three Great Falls Studios member artists at the Grange and Old Schoolhouse, 9818 Georgetown Pike, will display something for Secret Santas and serious collectors. Original art, prints, photography, fabric arts, pottery, sculpture, wood carvings, holiday gifts, note cards and more.

Both days, noon–4 p.m. Santa will be at the Old Schoolhouse posing for pictures with girls and boys and local authors will be storytelling there, too. Gather for live music and dance, festive food and drink at the Grange, make an ornament at the Arts of Great Falls School, delight in art demonstrations at the Artists' Atelier and Artists on the Green.

Wraps up Sunday, 4:30–6:30 p.m. with the 25th Annual Celebration of Lights. Hot cider and cocoa to sip by the blazing Yule log and community choral



groups singing seasonal music. A petting zoo, pony rides and a live nativity scene. Santa and Mrs. Claus are scheduled to arrive by antique fire truck to begin the cheer when the own Christmas tree is lit!

Family friendly and free.

Brought to you by Great Falls Studios, the Fairfax County Park Authority, Celebrate Great Falls and the Arts of Great Falls.

For more information visit www.GreatFallsStudios.com.

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Langley High Orchestra to Perform British Classics, Hold Silent Auction

The Langley High School Orchestra presents a concert of British Classics on Tuesday, Dec. 1, at 7 p.m. Due to the renovation of the Langley HS Auditorium, the concert will be held at South Lakes HS, 11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston. The concert is free, and the public is invited to hear wonderful string orchestra music and participate in the Silent Auction.

"British composers have written some of the best music in the world for string orchestra," said Dr. Scott McCormick, director of Orchestra at Langley HS. The four orchestras will perform music by Gustav Holst, John Rutter, Peter Warlock, Ernest Bloch, Ralph Vaughan Williams, Henry Purcell, George F. Handel and Percy Fletcher. Guidance counselor Julie McGreevy will be contributing her refined accent and the Queen's finest English in her role as master of ceremonies.

Viewing and bidding for the Silent Auction will begin at 6:15 p.m. in the lobby. The silent auction closes at the end of intermission. Visit langleyorchestra2015.eflea.ca for details of the items available, and to bid online prior to the concert. Gift certificates are available for the following restaurants: Amoo's House of Kabob, Café Tatti, Café Oggi, China Express, Chop-n-Chicken, El Tio's Tex Mex Grill, Famous Dave's, Founding Farmers, J. Gilbert's, LAuberge Chez Francois, Listrani's, Maggiano's Little Italy, Mookie's BBQ, PaSa Thai, The Old Brogue, The Greek Taverna, Seasons 52, Social Restaurant, Star Nut Gourmet, Triny Tex Grill, and for Whole Foods. Services and products available include items from: Art and Sewing Cleaner, Astoria Laser Clinic and Med Spa, Bliss Spa and Salon, Dr. Edward Nelson DMD Pediatric Dentistry, Chain Bridge Cellars, Mesmeralda's, Gathered Stem, Lamps Unlimited, Jeff Lubin Fine Portrait Studio, Lilly Pulitzer, Magellan Tutoring, Music Masters, Name Droppers, Newseum, Old Dominion Animal Health Ceter, Potomac Vegetable Farms, Tiffany and Company, Washington Nationals, Salona Jewelers, Smith's of Bermuda, The Preppy Pink Pony, The Kellogg Collection, and Vineyard Vines. Additional items include an original acrylic painting, two framed limited edition military ornaments, an art glass necklace, a cookbook, and two dessert trays of tiramisu.

The 2015 White House Christmas ornament is also available for purchase at the concert. If you wish to purchase an ornament and cannot make it to the concert, please email angleywhitehouseornaments@gmail.com

Santa Picture Day
Saturday December 5, 2015
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Power of the Muse

FROM PAGE 3

says that it is the constant support and encouragement of her Great Falls friends and family that help add depth and meaning to her life as an author. The close, long-standing bonds, she says, add real value to not only her writing life, but to her daily life.

“One of the loveliest aspects of my talk at the NGA was that auditorium filling with dear friends from the area, from my Fairfax County childhood through those who have watched, with love and applause, my children grow up in Great Falls and McLean.”

She was also happy that “the barn ladies” showed up – a tight-knit group of female equestrians with whom she’s been friends for years and who nurtured her daughter Megan’s passion for horse-riding from the time she was a little girl.

“A large group of barn ladies from South Down, gave up an exquisite fall afternoon of riding to come hear me talk,” she says before rethinking it: “Maybe more to hear

Megan, since they have been such devoted fans of her equestrian career” since she was a little girl.

But it is Elliott’s two children who stand at the very center of her heart, both of whom provided invaluable assistance as she wrote the book.

Her son Peter, a 21-year-old junior at Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles, where he has majored in screenwriting and history, “offered insights that honed characters and dialogue and saved me,” she says.

“The greatest joy in watching all this has been the true sharing of the experiences with my children,” she says. “Both are creative artists. Both traveled to Italy with me to research. Both read the manuscript in various stages and offered story-saving advice.”

The tremendous power of the muse is a running theme that is woven masterfully throughout the book – in fact, even before Elliott writes the first word.

The muse is ever present in Elliott’s dedication writing, “For my muses, Megan and Peter.”

Award-winning Author Comes Home to Celebrate New Novel

On Thursday evening, Dec. 17, Great Falls resident Laura Elliott will discuss her newest book, “DaVinci’s Tiger,” and describe the intricate process of researching and writing the book.

“We’re thrilled to celebrate Laura’s wonderful new work, and to celebrate it right here in her own, beautiful backyard of Great Falls,” says Kristin Clark Taylor, founder and facilitator of the Great Falls Writer’s Group (GFWG). “Because her book touches deeply on both literary and artistic themes, we’re hoping that this event will bring writers and visual artists together under one roof. It gives us a chance to highlight the happy fact that, artistically, Great Falls is vibrant, visible and very much alive – creative convergence at its best!”

Robin Kent, president of Great Falls Studios, agrees: “We are especially excited about the opportunity for our members and the community of Great Falls to participate in an event that brings together two major creative media – writing and the visual arts,” he says.

The event organizers also hope to widen their embrace by welcoming not just the artists, but the entire Great Falls community.

Says Daniela Dixon, manager of the Great Falls Library, a co-partner in the event, “We have known this Great Falls author a long time and have followed her writing with interest. Our library system carries all of her novels – wonderful historical fiction written for a young audience. We are looking forward to partnering with GFWG to bring this exciting event to the Great Falls community.”

Elliott will discuss her work, perform a brief reading and engage in audience Q & A. She’ll also be on-hand to sign her books. Seating is open; an early arrival is recommended.

“The doors to this event will be open to the entire community,” says Taylor. “Sure, we hope the artistic community will come out in force, but we’re also eager for the community at large to help us celebrate our local literary hero.”

◆ *Laura Elliott, author of the new novel, “DaVinci’s Tiger,” will participate in discussion, reading and book signing on Thursday, Dec. 17. Reception (optional) begins at 6:30 p.m. Discussion begins promptly at 7:30 at the Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike. Open seating; event is free. Early arrival is recommended.*

BULLETIN BOARD

TUESDAY/DEC. 1

Successful Transitions. 8:30-10 a.m.

Brightview, 10200 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Join Gerontologist and our WellSpring Village Director, Mikki Firor, for an interactive discussion on understanding the fundamental aspects of dementia as well as signs, stages and supports. RSVP early. www.BrightviewGreatFalls.com. 703-759-2513.

All About IEPs - Answers to Frequently Asked Questions About IEPs. 7-8:30 p.m.

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

Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Dunn Loring. FCPS IEP Specialist, Andrew Guillen, from the Office of Special Education Procedural Support will discuss answers to the most frequently asked questions about IEPs. Free. Register at <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/osp/prc/index.shtml>.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9

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6 ♦ GREAT FALLS CONNECTION ♦ NOVEMBER 25 - DECEMBER 1, 2015

NEWS

Quiet Riot: 'C'mon Feel the Noise'

County passes new noise ordinance, will revisit effectiveness in 18 months.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

The Board of Supervisors is at peace with the county's new Noise Ordinance.

"Believe it or not, that passes," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova.

On the Nov. 17 meeting of the Board of Supervisors, the Board adopted a new Noise Ordinance. The new ordinance becomes effective on Feb. 17, 2016.

"There were times during this process that I thought we would never get to this point. Let me tell you, there are competing needs, issues all over the place as to what is too noisy, what is not noisy, about what is needed and what is not," she said.

In June, the Board had deferred action on the proposed changes to the county's noise ordinance in June until Nov. 17.

"It was a very productive evolution through five cycles of revisions," said Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville). "We negotiated this thing for so long."

"We're not totally where I want to be, but this is a significantly improved product and something I can vote for," he said.

Supervisor Michael Frey (R-Sully) spearheaded the Board's efforts and thanked county staff. "They've managed to grasp the things we were trying to codify," said Frey.

The Board delayed the effective date of implementation of the new ordinance to February in order to provide time for staff training, to update County websites, and to assist staff in understanding the new regulations, according to county documents.

The Board will revisit the impact of the noise ordinance and its effectiveness in 18 months to determine what might need to be tweaked for the long run.

"I'm not happy with everything that is in here, but at this point I'm prepared to support it, but appreciate that we can revisit it," said Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield).

Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee District) says the outcome makes the ordinance much easier to enforce.

"This turned into something entirely different from where it started. I also agree that this wasn't intended to address every noise issue," said McKay, "but at the end of the day it makes for better enforcement and makes it a lot more clear which made the noise ordinance difficult to enforce."

OVERALL GOALS of the proposed Noise Ordinance is to recognize that there will always be certain levels of noise that occur in the normal course of daily living; to allow certain levels of daytime noise so that people can live, work and play during the day; and to minimize noise at night so residents have an appropriate quiet environ-

ment in their homes at night.

More than 30 speakers testified at a public hearing last May on the noise ordinance.

"When babies cannot sleep, when the elderly cannot rest, when a voice teacher cannot instruct, when a family cannot share a meal together on their patio, when a homeowner has to close her windows and move to another part of the house just to make a telephone call, when a cancer patient cannot recuperate and rest in her yard because music is amplified in the neighborhood at intrusive levels, then we know something is not right with life in Fairfax County," said Joyce Harris of McLean.

Sheila Casey, of Reston, said she can hear mowers on a nearby golf course before dawn with maintenance crews sometimes using headlights on lawnmowers before 5 a.m. "All I know is when those lawn mowers are running, I can turn on my air conditioning, I can put in my earplugs, and I still hear the noise," she said.

Other speakers included: Greg Budnik who discussed helicopter noise from training runs at Fort Belvoir; Mark Grove of Fairfax whose wife was recuperating from cancer treatment and had to contend with music from a supermarket across the street that had permits to play music until 11 p.m.; Keith Elgin, worship director of Vine Church in Dunn Loring, who wants to create events such as outdoor movies and concerts during the summer months; to neighbors in Reston who say they can not get relief from noise of nearby dog parks; to those who take their dogs to dog parks to spare neighbors from noise.

AMPLIFIED MUSIC from loudspeakers at schools during athletic practices and pre-game festivities took center stage.

Fairfax County Public Schools will replace loudspeakers at McLean High School with regulators to ensure that they are properly calibrated.

The school system is finalizing regulatory guidelines so athletic directors know exactly what needs to be done to keep harmony with neighborhoods in proximity with the schools.

"That's a big deal, and let's make sure when that agreement is formally adopted that we keep it with our noise ordinance," said Bulova.

Other topics of major concern addressed dog parks, trash pickups from commercial shopping centers next to neighborhoods, and lawn maintenance.

Fairfax and other Virginia governments had to rewrite their noise ordinance as a result of a Virginia Supreme Court decision overturning the ordinance in Virginia Beach, according to county documents.

For more, see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoning/noiseordinance/>

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8 AM - 11 PM
ICE SKATING PAVILION

11 AM
25TH ANNUAL RESTON HOLIDAY PARADE

12:30 PM - 4:30 PM
VISITS & PHOTOS WITH SANTA & MRS. CLAUS

MINI-TRAIN RIDES

5 PM
"FROSTY FOLLIES" PERFORMANCE

6 PM
TREE LIGHTING & SING ALONG

6:30 PM - 10 PM
HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDES

WEEKENDS

SUNDAYS Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 13, 20
12 - 4 PM **MINI-TRAIN RIDES**

SATURDAYS Dec. 5, 12, and 19
4 - 9 PM **HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDES**

THROUGHOUT DECEMBER
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- Victoria's Secret
- Wells Fargo
- White House Black Market
- Williams-Sonoma
- The Wise Investor Group

DINE!

- American Tap Room
- Barcelona Wine Bar
- Bartaco
- Ben & Jerry's
- Big Bowl
- BRB: Be Right Burger
- Busara Thai Restaurant
- Chipotle Mexican Grill
- Clyde's of Reston
- The Conservatory Lounge
- Cosi
- The Counter
- Edibles Incredible!
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- M&S Grill
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- Neyla
- Obi Sushi
- Panera Bread
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- Uncle Julio's Rio Grande Café
- World of Beer
- ...and much more!

Celebrate, Shop, Dine Locally

Every day can be “small business day.”

There is a joy to participating in community traditions and celebrations during the holidays, from walking along a sidewalk with the streets decked out for the holidays, to shopping in local stores, to being greeted by someone likely to be the owner of the store, to finding gifts that are not mass-produced.

One way to be sure holiday shopping comes with some holiday spirit is to do a portion of your shopping in some of the area’s locally owned stores. There is special holiday ambiance available by shopping in the heart of a town that is decked out for the season. Small retail shops are part of defining any community. Their livelihood depends on the livability and quality of the neighborhoods around them. A small business owner pays attention to every detail in his or her business in a way that is otherwise unmatched.

We all benefit when local stores thrive, when local business districts beckon. An effort to support locally owned businesses has resulted in the recognition of Small Business Saturday, the Saturday after Thanksgiving, also called

Shop Small. This year that day is Nov. 28.

Locally owned retail shops, services, restaurants depend on vibrant local communities to thrive, and communities depend on those businesses as well. Most small, locally owned businesses invest in community, helping to transform our towns and communities with a sense of place.

Frequently, it is the small retail person who is active in fundraising for local charities, advocating for improvements, for fire and rescue service, for local schools and in organizing holiday events.

Local retail stores, mom-and-pop stores, face tough challenges right now. Competition from big box stores and online sellers makes the holiday shopping season all the more important to locally owned retailers. But local families will literally spend millions of dollars to shop and exchange gifts during the next month in a variety of places.

Everyone will do some of their shopping at the mall. Everyone will shop online. Many will answer the call of the big box. But local shoppers should be sure to do some celebrating, shopping and dining locally. We promise it brings more joy.

— MARY KIMM
MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

EDITORIAL

Children’s Connection

During the last week of each year, The Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. It is a keepsake edition for many families. The annual Children’s Connection is a tradition of well over a decade.

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. To be published, we must have first and last name of the student. Please include the student’s age and/or grade, school attended and town of residence.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student’s full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Please provide submissions by Friday, Dec. 4.

Email submissions for the Children’s Connection to ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com. Subject line should be school name, town and teacher’s last name (e.g. Westgate ES, McLean, Card).

The Challenge of Ending Homelessness

BY MARGI PRESTON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FACETS

COMMENTARY

Sometimes it takes a challenge to make progress. That’s what happened here in Fairfax when leaders of six nonprofits serving those who are homeless decided to push themselves to do more.

With the second largest homeless population in the region, homelessness is a real problem in the Fairfax County-Falls Church community. A majority of the people who are homeless are in working families with children. Throughout the year, FACETS works in partnership with Fairfax’s Office to Prevent and End Homelessness and other nonprofits to bring our community closer to a day when no one is homeless through a variety of effective programs. And in the summer of 2014, we decided to do even more by teaming up with five other local nonprofits to motivate ourselves to reach new records in moving people from homelessness to housing.

Our power team — FACETS, New Hope Housing, Cornerstones, Shelter House, NVFS and Volunteers of America-Chesapeake — kicked off a year-long Fairfax County Housing Challenge. The challenge was modeled after the successful Rapid Rehousing Challenge, which was organized by the National Alliance to End Homelessness to motivate nonprofits statewide to rapidly re-house as many families as possible within 100 days.

Rapid re-housing is a proven and cost-effective strategy used by communities across the

country to reduce homelessness. It involves helping households move into housing as quickly as possible after they enter the shelter system. Families and individuals are housed in market-rate apartments or houses in the community, and receive rental subsidies and/or services that are tailored to their specific needs, including a caseworker to help ease the transition.

Our housing challenge showed the real benefits of collaboration. Together we set and met quarterly ambitious goals to find homes for even more people who were unstably housed and homeless. We brainstormed and found new ways to get people out of homelessness and into safe and secure housing. And it worked. At the end of the challenge, nearly 500 single adults and more than 220 families now have a home of their own and services to help them remain housed.

As important as it is to get people into housing right away so they can start the transition back to a stable life, we all recognize that preventing homelessness is the top priority. Like our nonprofit partners, FACETS relies on help from volunteers and partnerships with the faith and business communities to prevent homelessness throughout Fairfax County by offering a full spectrum of services, such as basic needs and financial assistance, career counseling and outreach, educational enrichment programs, and permanent housing.

With the cold temperatures approaching, we have begun to gear up for our Hypothermia

Prevention and Response Program. Through a partnership with over 40 faith communities, this program enables FACETS to offer refuge from the bitter cold to over 200 individuals in our community who are homeless each year. The success of the Fairfax Housing Challenge has inspired us to remain motivated in helping even more people come in from the cold this winter and ideally keep more from ever having to experience the cold at all. We are up for the challenge ... and I know our community partners are too. That’s a win for the whole community. To learn more, visit us at www.FacetsCares.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Entering Into the Arena

To the Editor:

Theodore Roosevelt once said that the credit belongs to those who are in the arena. Craig Parisot should be commended for stepping into the arena in what he knew would be a tough fight. Northern Virginia is becoming increasingly polarized and competitive and, as a result, the cost, both financially and personally, of running for office here is exorbitant. Respected incumbents declined to run for reelection this year, no doubt in part because of this strain. Craig knew what he was walking into, but he did it anyway out of a desire to serve his community. Thank you Craig Parisot for entering into the arena. I hope you are not done fighting.

Priscilla M. Griffith
McLean



LETTERS

Women Inspiring Women in Sports

To the Editor:

After seeing the article, "Area Coaches to be Honored for Work Empowering Girls," I could not help but think how great it is to see women inspiring women in sports. I think female coaches have a huge impact on the girls they coach because the young girls can so easily relate to them. I remember being in elementary school and feeling anxiety or nervous every time I had to participate in the mile or any other physical fitness test. Once I started soccer, basketball and dance, my female coaches helped me conquer my fears of not only being shy but playing sports in general. My confidence definitely grew because of them.

We see more and more that female coaches are disappearing and being re-

placed by a male coach. The Title 9 act made it so that there needs to be an equal number of male and female athletes at a school. Because of this more male teams are being cut to equal the number of female teams.

As the male teams are cut their male coaches move over to the female team. There has been a huge decrease in the number of female coaches. In 1972, 90 percent of female teams had female coaches but in 2008 only 43 percent had female coaches.

To see that there are still female coaches in my community encouraging and inspiring young girls is a great and heart-warming thing to see.

Mary Hagen Grow
Great Falls

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 6

Handling the Holidays. 5-7 p.m. Long and Foster, 1355 Beverly Road, Suite 300, Cafe 3, McLean. The Women's Center of Vienna identify common holiday stressors. Learn to cope with holiday-related emotions. Understand how to create expectations for your holidays that can become a reality. Free. 703-903-8643.

THURSDAY/DEC. 3

McLean Children's Academy Registration Open House. 9:45-11:30 a.m. 6900 Elm St., McLean. This is for registration for 2015/16 School Year as well as for next Fall, 2016/17.

Please bring your child and come tour the school. www.childrensacademy.com. 703-734-2353.

TUESDAY/DEC. 8

Rotary Club Meeting. Noon-1:15 p.m. Fellowship Hall of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Carrie Hessler-Radelet, director of the Peace Corps, will address the club at its meeting on Tuesday, December 8, 2015. Hessler-Radelet will speak briefly about the history of the Peace Corps and more extensively about the Peace Corps current activities. Free. www.mcleanrotary.org.

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SEASON OF GIVING

Sharing

Share of McLean continues to meet challenges faced by 250 families in need in McLean and Great Falls and Pimmit Hills.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Share of McLean raises \$50,000 this holiday season to give clothing, toys and gift cards to approximately 250 families in need in McLean, Great Falls and Pimmit Hills. Families are invited to a holiday celebration in December.

"I can not think of a better way to spend the holidays than to spend all the months to prepare this program and then see the clients at the party, old ladies dancing, children opening gifts," said Chris Wilbur, the holiday program chair of Share of McLean. "To me, that's the true spirit of the holidays," she said.

More than 50 volunteers serve around 640 individuals in need who live in McLean, Great Falls and Pimmit Hills areas.

"I love talking to the kids and hearing what they are doing in school, what sports they play, and what character they dressed up as for Halloween," said Lisa Waldow, a volunteer.

Waldow has lived in McLean for five years. "It never occurred to me that there are so many families struggling to make ends meet. It was surprising to see the other side of the coin. All of my other volunteer work in McLean has been fundraising, and our community is very generous. I think a lot of people are simply unaware of this huge need in our midst."

"Many people don't realize that in one of the wealthier communities in the United States, we have so many needy people right here," said Wilbur.

SINCE 1969, Share of McLean has provided emergency assistance to the less fortunate in McLean and Pimmit Hills and Great Falls.

Programs include family emergency financial assistance; distribution of food and used clothing; recycled furniture; and transportation services for seniors.

Share also provides clients with grocery gift cards and gifts during the holidays, re-



Share of McLean prepares for its annual Holiday celebration.



Share of McLean was organized in 1969 to help with emergency needs of families of McLean, Great Falls and Pimmit Hills.

furnished computers and school supplies.

Share is an all-volunteer organization, so they are able to say that 100 percent of donations go to the direct benefit of their clients.

Food Pantry and Clothing Rooms are open Wednesday and Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to noon in donated space at the McLean Baptist Church, 1367 Chain Bridge Rd.

AROUND OCTOBER, Share of McLean shifts into high gear for the holidays.

"We definitely have volunteers that come back year after year. Starting in October, we get emails saying, 'Remember me?'" said Wilbur. "For everybody involved, it just makes Christmas a little brighter."

Share clients turn in holiday wish lists in October, and Share passes the wishes to the faith communities, schools, local businesses and generous individuals.

Many wish for gift cards and grocery gift cards.

"For some people, they think giving a gift

card is impersonal, but for our clients having choices to pick toys for their children and a pair of pants for them, that's part of the gift," said Wilbur.

"If someone needs bedding, they can ask for the appropriate size and a favorite color. A single mom can ask for gift cards for her children and then she can select gifts for her children that she knows they will love. Many elderly people just ask for grocery gift cards because they don't need stuff, they just need a little help making ends meet with their food budget," according to Wilbur.

The holiday program team needs to raise about \$50,000 yearly in donations, as well as procure assorted gift items.

Victor Kimm, of McLean, remembers the end of one party when Share volunteers were approached by a woman who said her husband was dying. All she wanted was to be able to stay in her house to honor her husband's request. "She said the help we gave her enabled them to stay in their home," he said. "Every year, we hear stories

like that."

SHARE hosts a party, which will be held Dec. 12 this year. One volunteer plays the piano for four hours throughout the party; a Santa and Mrs. Claus cheer children while a volunteer photographer takes photos for moms and dads to cherish.

"People love to volunteer at the holiday celebration," said Wilbur. "You start out with an empty gym and in the course of two days, it gets completely decorated. We have ladies that make the centerpieces, we have a man who plays the piano for four hours without a break. It's amazing."

And much of the community gets involved. Just for instance: Franklin Sherman Elementary School has a yearly mitten tree.

Haycock Elementary classes adopt families.

Each year, businesses, such as McEneaney Associates Realtors, adopt families for both Thanksgiving and the December holidays,

Get Involved

Businesses, organizations and individuals can become community partners by adopting a family, donating items such as laundry and dishwasher detergent, toothbrushes, restaurant gift cards, or by making a donation.

Contact Chris Wilbur at Sharewishes@gmail.com to sponsor a client or family.

and Child's Play Toys generously helps Santa fulfill his extensive toy list.

Giant Food has a wish tree and toiletries drive and provides around 350 reusable bags for Thanksgiving and the Celebration.

Trinity United Methodist and St. Thomas Episcopal have angel trees.

Rodef Shalom collected Thanksgiving grocery gift cards.

McLean Baptist provides grocery cards for Thanksgiving and various gift cards for the holiday celebration.

New Dominion Women's Club fulfills wishes and bakes cookies for the celebration.

First Baptist donates gifts cards for the holidays.

Immanuel Presbyterian donates gift cards for the holidays

Langley High School Key club fulfills wishes for teens.

McLean High School Leadership provides homeless kits.

McLean Crew Club has a gift card drive at the MHS holiday bazaar.

Many scout troops volunteer and hold drives to collect baby items or toiletry drives.

Rotary Club is providing most of the food for the celebration as well as volunteers.

McLean Preschool gathers baby items for Share's tiniest clients.

See www.shareofmclean.org.

Forget the Fruitcake.
Give a gift that really matters
this holiday season.



Enough with all the snowflake ties and reindeer sweaters, too. This year, there are lots of great ways to give and give back at the same time. Now you can donate to any of these Fairfax County nonprofits in honor of anyone on your gift list. It makes shopping easy and offers you a nice tax deduction. But best of all, it helps those organizations succeed in bringing goods and services to those who need them most at this special time of year. Learn more at givefairfax.net



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Share Programs: By the Numbers

1,000

About 1,000 volunteer hours per month are needed to maintain programs, so Share of McLean is constantly recruiting new volunteers. Share is an all-volunteer organization with no paid employees, no office and no paid fundraisers. Operations are run by about 35 core volunteers and another 200 occasional volunteers. See www.shareofmclean.org.

1969

Share of McLean was established as a non-profit corporation in 1969 by a coalition of McLean faith communities to meet the emergency needs of the poor in McLean, Pimmit Hills and nearby areas of northern Virginia. It now serves Great Falls families in need. Share receives no government funding and is dependent solely on the generosity of private donors.

1,500

Share served 1,500 households and 4,030 family members in some capacity during the 2015 fiscal year. Clients are best described as the working poor and include economically distressed families and individuals, seniors living on limited pensions who are often facing medical problems, impoverished immigrants, recently homeless folks and victims of spousal abuse.

995

The Family Assistance program with Share's crisis intervention program pays bills to cover short-term needs such as rent payments to avoid evictions, utilities payments to ward off service terminations and prescription drug emergencies. Share responded to more than 995 calls for assistance and provided \$144,776 of financial assistance to households, con-

taining about 2709 family members. During these activities, Share of McLean works closely with Fairfax County's Coordinated Services program.

\$389,200

The Food and Clothing Programs, operated in donated space at the McLean Baptist Church, provided households in need with about \$389,200 of "food-stuff." During the year, Share provided 11,120 bags of groceries and 3,200 bags of clothing to clients. About 174 families visited the food pantry and used clothing room each month.

2,000

Pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables were distributed from mid May to early October through Share's Fresh Produce program because of efforts at a combination of community gardens at Lewinsville Park, six faith-based community gardens in McLean, and local gleaning at area farms. Share joins the efforts of Fairfax County to improve the nutritional substance of food donations distributed through facilities located within the county to families in need. Share also procured fresh produce and frozen meat from the Capitol Area Food Bank to supplement supplies for food room.

297

The Furniture Exchange program made 297 deliveries of furniture last year to more than 250 households. The beneficiaries of the furniture exchange are indigent even though many of them have jobs, disabled, formerly homeless or victims of spousal abuse. Share owns two trucks with which volunteers pick up usable furniture from donors and deliver it to individuals and families who cannot afford to buy furniture. Nearly all of them are referred to by county social workers and nonprofits.

3

Share and its Family PASS program supports three families previously referred by us to Family PASS, which support families in need of in-depth assistance with family counseling, housing stabilization, budgeting and job training. In conjunction with these referrals to Family PASS, Share provides adjunct monetary support to Family PASS.

150

Computers and 40 printers have been refurbished in Share's Refurbished Computers program to give to families with school-aged children.

365

Share conducts year-round food drives through local schools, religious communities, local businesses, service organizations, and the local Post Offices through which individuals provide virtually all of the non-perishable foodstuffs for distribution through our food room to eligible client families. More than 300 volunteers signed up to organize, conduct, and process these food drives for Share.

2,700

Pounds of bread and pastries from participating supermarkets were delivered to the food room, local shelters and other charitable organizations through Share's Baked Goods program.

\$7,500

The School Supplies program provided approximately \$7,500 of new school supplies to meet the classroom and school specific supply lists for 124 students including calculators for local middle school students whose families could not otherwise meet these important needs.

Fairfax Water

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON WATER RATE AND PROPOSED 2016 BUDGET

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 17, 2015, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges and its proposed 2016 Budget. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes to the Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges, to be effective April 1, 2016, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from \$3,950 to \$4,100†.
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$9,750 to \$10,240.
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,090 to \$1,150†.
4. An increase in the Account Charge from \$36 to \$37.
5. An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$9.80 to \$10.10†.
6. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$2.55 to \$2.68 per 1,000 gallons of water.
7. An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$3.55 to \$3.80 per 1,000 gallons of water.
8. An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$50 to \$52.
9. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
10. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Labor from 110% to 104%.
11. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Materials from 25% to 16%.
12. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$45 to \$46.

†Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is proposing a \$170.4 million budget for calendar year 2016*. Revenues are expected to be \$170.4 million in 2016. Water sales are expected to provide \$147.3 million. Approximately \$23.1 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2015	2016
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 53,891	\$ 55,581
Power and Utilities	10,677	10,750
Chemicals	6,335	7,857
Purchased Water	6,717	6,090
Supplies and Materials	4,985	5,113
Insurance	1,017	1,050
Fuel	781	880
Postage	637	664
Contractual Services	9,930	10,422
Professional Services	1,146	1,046
Other	2,363	2,447
Sub-Total	98,479	101,900
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,669)	(9,616)
Total	\$ 88,810	\$ 92,284

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$41,417,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$24,131,000

*Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes to the rates and the 2016 budget can be viewed on our Web site at http://fairfaxwater.org/current/public_hearing_2015_12_17.htm. Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Mr. Ken Lasso at 703-289-6194. Interested parties also may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 16, 2015 to be included in the record of the public hearing.



Jerry Peters cautions on the dangers of ignoring the deer population - auto accidents, threat to the forest, crops, foliage, etc.



Farmers market shoppers enjoy venison cuisine as they learn about deer management strategies.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Deer Return to Great Falls Backyards

Deer management education event held Nov. 21 at the Great Falls Farmers Market.

BY KATHLEEN MURPHY
GREAT FALLS FARMERS MARKET MANAGER

Deer bucks are out, antlers and all, marking the launch of mating season. The spring crop of fawns have just lost their spots, meaning that they are now weaned and on their own. Typically, they go into their first heat in the month of November and are ready to deliver a fawn next April. They stick close to the place where they are born, so if they were born in your backyard, they, their offspring, and generations to come, are likely to be hanging out or hiding close by. It is also notable that hunting season has just begun.

A WAY TO CULL THE HERD

Jerry Peters, owner of Green Fire, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, worked for the Fairfax County Park Authority for most of his career before retiring. Indignant about the loss of the forest understory in the forest in his own backyard as well as throughout the local parks and neighbors' backyards, Peters launched Green Fire, to take constructive action against the uncontrolled proliferation of deer throughout Great Falls. He has set up an archery team and a contractual network in which neighbors can work together to cull the herd to sustainable levels. Visit www.greenfireweb.com for detailed information about options.

A TASTE OF VENISON BY TRINY CHEF

Triny's participated in the Deer Management event sponsored by Green Fire at the Great Falls Farmers Market last Saturday. Since deer is considered wild game, it could not be brought to a restaurant establishment to be prepared or sold. Thanks to the dona-

tion of deer meat by Green Fire, and the permission to prepare the venison dishes at the Great Falls Methodist Church's nonprofit inspected kitchen, Julio Gomez, Triny's chef, was able to prepare three venison dishes off site for the event. Those who visited the market were able to taste venison enchiladas, venison soup and venison fillet mignon, referred to as carne asado. The enchiladas were gone quickly, and all pots were empty by the end of the market. Lilia Dubynin provided support and assistance to accomplish the challenging workload in record time.

TRINY'S TEX-MEX GRILL - A NEW GREAT FALLS RESTAURANT

Four brothers and their families came to the U.S. from El Salvador without a penny 35 years ago. They began their first Tex-Mex business in Texas. It is still operating today. Porfirio Mejia, owner of Triny's, is the oldest of seven children in a close-knit family.



Doreen Peters, wife of Jerry Peters, pitches in to help serve the venison soup as Porfirio Mejia, owner of Triny's, tastes the enchilada prepared by Julio Gomez (in the background), while Porfirio's niece looks on. Venison enchiladas, fillet asado, and soup were kept hot on the barbecue stove behind.

Porfirio did not choose to locate his restaurant in Great Falls. Great Falls chose Porfirio and his wife Triny - short for Trinidad. A real estate agent called Porfirio to come see a commercial space that just came on the market in Great Falls. The current location is a dream come true, a true blessing. The family loves the place and they thank God everyday for the blessing of connecting them with this space - ever mindful of the blessing they have received.

Triny - Porfirio's wife for whom the Great Falls restaurant is named - is in the restaurant every morning, supervising the preparation of the homemade cuisine. Everything - including chips and salsa - are made fresh daily. The family business consists of four brothers in business together.

Porfirio's son and daughter-in-law are in the business, as well as Celso, his nephew, who is the manager. Nine family members work together to operate the restaurant. El Tio Restaurant in McLean is owned and run by Porfirio's brother.

The family is so happy to be in Great Falls and wants to do their best to prepare good food for the Great Falls community. They believe that when each family member does their job well, the entire family can benefit and thrive.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Ryan Laughrey

Ryan Laughrey Becomes Eagle Scout

Boy Scout Troop 673, sponsored by the Great Falls United Methodist Men, recently promoted a new Eagle Scout, Ryan Laughrey, on Nov. 12. Ryan is the 123rd Eagle Scout from Troop 673.

Ryan, son of Colonel James and Loretta Laughrey, joined Troop 673 in 2012 after transferring from Troop 173 in Carlisle, Pa. Ryan quickly emerged as a leader and served as a Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Quartermaster and Instructor. While serving in these positions, he was accepted into the Order of the Arrow, Scouting's National Honor Society, and earned 30 merit badges. Ryan was the only senior Scout who stepped up to lead the younger Scouts on their own version of a High Adventure in August 2013, leading a crew of a half-dozen rising sixth and seventh graders on the Hike Across Maryland - hiking for over 40 miles in five days along the Appalachian Trail and performing a service project along the way.

For his Eagle Project, Ryan su-

pervised the building and installation of shelves and a fireplace screen in the playroom and the office at the Alternative House, a home for abused and homeless youth, in Dunn Loring. Wall-mounted shelves allow the staff and residents to store toys, books, binders, and office supplies neatly and free up floor space. In phase 1 of the project, Ryan and troop Scouts painted the shelves at an offsite location. In phase 2, Ryan, his family, and troop Scouts installed the shelves.

Ryan is a senior at Marshall High School and has been active on the Robotics Team. He has also received numerous awards including Aerospace Science Student of the Year, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Regional Science Fair 2nd Place, and the FCPS Science Fair Rodger H. Flagg Memorial Award for Innovation. Ryan played soccer with the PA South Middleton Soccer Association (U13-U17) and the Northern Virginia Suburban Friendship League (U19) and has worked as a soccer referee.

NEWS

Front row: Anna Shepherd, Audrey Kim, Sophie Luraschi.
Middle Row: Molly Buckler, Sam Brascia, Haley Richardson, Courtney Brandt.
Back Row: Allie Brascia, Anna Brascia, Hannah Richardson, Victoria Stark, Bella Shapiro, Mari Gardiner.
Not pictured: Clara Nickles, Lorin Costley, Reece Herberg



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Great Falls Cheetahs Capture Third Straight ODSL Championship

The GFSC '00 Cheetahs, a U15 girls travel soccer team based in Great Falls, recently capped off an unbeaten season by winning the U16 Old Dominion Soccer League championship, their third consecutive ODSL title. The Cheetahs, made up almost equally of U14 and U15 players, competed in the ODSL U16 Division and posted an 8-0 record in league play. Including tournament play, the Cheetahs finished 11-1 during the fall season, scoring 35 goals while giving up 11, and finished second in the Diadora America Cup tournament. This is the second time

during their streak of championships that the Cheetahs finished with an unbeaten regular season record, posting a combined record of 19-2-3 over the last three seasons.

The Cheetahs are also two time winners of the Randy Rawls Sportsmanship Award, given to the ODSL team that exhibits the best sportsmanship and sense of fair play. The Cheetahs are led by head coach Philip Nickles, assistant coaches Bill Luraschi and Bryan Richardson, and team manager Tiffany Kim, and are trained by Nick MacLean.

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Holly & Ivy

A CHRISTMAS MARKETPLACE

Saturday, Dec. 5, 10-5
 Sunday, Dec. 6, 9-3

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33rd Annual
McLean Holiday CRAFTS SHOW
A Juried Arts and Crafts Show Since 1982



Friday-Sunday
December 4-6

Friday: 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Admission:
\$5 adults, children 12 and younger free.
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This highly regarded juried show features stylish home decor, functional pottery, wood and glass, fashion accessories, unique children's gifts, on-trend jewelry, organic and botanical body care and more!

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



CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

"Harvey." Check for show times. Nov. 12-Dec. 20. 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, this beloved classic is a treat for the whole family. Veta Simmons and her daughter Myrtle Mae have just moved back into town and are making quite a splash on the social scene. Gatherings and engagements abound as Myrtle Mae peruses for a viable suitor. \$15-\$30. www.1ststage Tysonsons.org. 703-854-1856.

Meadowlark Gardens' Winter Walk of Lights. Nov. 14-Jan. 4. A half-a-million colorful LED lights span the lakeside and gardens of Meadowlark Botanical Gardens off Beulah Road in nostalgic and fairytale scenes of the holiday season. <http://winterwalkoflights.com/>.

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 25

7th Annual Pre-Thanksgiving Wine Tasting Extravaganza. Noon-6 p.m. The Vineyard, 1445 Laughlin Ave., McLean. Pouring 25-30 perfect wines for Thanksgiving dinner and the rest of the holiday season. Special discounts on all the wines being tasted, as well as special prizes throughout the day. Free. www.thevineyardva.com. 703-288-2970.

Nature Night. 5:30-9:30 p.m. Meadowlark, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Visit with the naturalist and his reptile and amphibian friends. <http://winterwalkoflights.com>. 703-255-3631.

THURSDAY/NOV. 26

Wildfire Thanksgiving. 10:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Wildfire, Third floor, Tysons Galleria, 2001 International Drive, McLean. A special family style menu featuring spit roasted turkey and all the traditional Thanksgiving dishes. \$45.95 per person, \$19.95 for children 12 and under. Portion of the day's proceeds will be donated to Food for Others. 703-442-9110. www.wildfirerestaurant.com/mclean.

FRIDAY/NOV. 27

John Eaton. 8 p.m. The Barns, Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Join renowned pianist and vocalist, John Eaton, as he interprets the Great American Songbook. Eaton is one of the flagship artists of the Wolf Trap Recording label and he has released eight albums to date that include the music of Richard Rodgers, Ray Charles, the Beatles, and Cole Porter. Tickets: \$25-\$27. For more information, visit <http://www.wolftrap.org/> or call 703-255-1900.

SATURDAY/NOV. 28

CR Dance for Everyone. 6:30-11:30 p.m. Colvin Run Community Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. DJ Music mix of contemporary and classic dance music including west coast swing, east coast swing, hustle, Latin, country western 2-step, waltz and more. \$12.00 per person includes optional lesson, dance, soda and snacks. Contact Ed Cottrell at 703-435-5620 or EdCottrell@MACP.org for more information.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 27-29.

33rd Annual Thanksgiving Art and Craft Show. Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.



"A Christmas Carol" with a kid-friendly twist comes to The Alden in McLean for a two-show performance on Saturday, Dec. 12.

Spring Hill RECenter, 1239 Spring Hill Road, McLean. Featuring original, handmade craft and artwork of approximately 80 local artists and artisans. \$5. www.nvhg.org.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 4-5

Annual Renaissance Feaste. 7 p.m. Capital Church, 10233 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. Journey back to Merrie Olde England for a festive evening of Renaissance-style dining and musical entertainment. Enter the Greate Halle for a spectacular holiday celebration featuring costumed servers, jesters, minstrels, musicians and the Langley Madrigals. Reservations required. Go to <http://www.langleychorus.com/monthly-calendar/> to find out how to reserve your spot.

SATURDAY/DEC. 5

Holiday Open House. 1-4 p.m. Brightview, 10200 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Join the Brightview Great Falls community in ringing in the Winter Season! Enjoy the decorations, music, refreshments and good cheer.

Christmas Bazaar. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Epiphany United Methodist Church, 1014 Country Club Lane, Vienna. Handmade Wreaths, See's Candy, silent auction and more. 703-938-3494. www.epiphany.com.

Artist's Reception, Public Welcome. 3-6 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Former Corcoran docent Ralph Dashner describes the printmaking techniques that led to his 23-piece exhibit, "Truth and Beauty: Fine Art Prints in the Digital Age." The exhibit will be on display through December. Free. DashnerFineArts@gmail.com.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 5-6

Great Falls HolidayFest. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, 10 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Great Falls Grange and the Old Schoolhouse, 9818 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Shopping, art, food, lights, crafts. Noon-4 p.m. Santa will be at the Old Schoolhouse for pictures. On Sunday, 4:30-6:30 p.m. will be the Celebration of Lights, which will have hot cider and cocoa, Yule log, choral groups, petting zoo, pony rides, live nativity scene and the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus by antique fire truck. Town Christmas tree will be lit. Free. www.GreatFallsStudios.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 12

Traditional Holiday Tale, "A Christmas Carol." 1 and 4 p.m. The Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Perhaps the best loved holiday story of all time, Theatre IV's adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic is particularly suited to children. \$10, \$15. <http://mcleancenter.org/alden-theatre>. 703-790-0123.

SUNDAY/DEC. 13

SUNDAY/NOV. 29

Breakfast with Santa. 9 a.m., 10 a.m., noon. Wildfire, Tysons Galleria, 2001 International Drive, McLean. Chill, morning show co-host on 97.1 WASH-FM at iHeartMedia, will be Wildfire's special guest host for the event. In addition, children will get to visit with Santa and receive a special gift bag. \$15 for children under 12, \$20 for adults. Reserve at 703-442-9110.

THURSDAY/DEC. 3

Holiday Homes Tour. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Lewinsville Road, McLean. The four homes are all large, elegant houses on half- to one-acre lots and are easily accessible from Lewinsville Road and other local arteries. Each house will be decorated with the holidays in mind and will highlight family life in McLean. www.mcleanwc.org.

Face Painting. 5:30-9 p.m. Meadowlark, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Children will enjoy festive snowflakes, snowmen and other holiday face painting images. Free. <http://winterwalkoflights.com>. 703-255-3631.

Annual Champagne Tasting. 7:30-9 p.m. The Vineyard, 1445 Laughlin Ave., McLean. As always, there will be over 20 of our favorite sparkling wine and Champagnes available to try so you can find the perfect bottle for your New Year's celebration. \$30. RSVP at 703-288-2970 or info@thevineyardva.com.

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 3-5

"She Kills Monsters." 7:30 p.m. McLean High School, 1633 Davidson Road, McLean. TheatreMcLean, the recently renamed award-winning theatre department at McLean High School, launches its new season by entering into the fantasy role playing realm of Qui Nguyen's "She Kills Monsters." This show marks the first production directed by new theatre faculty members Chip Rome and Phillip Reid. \$12-\$15. Mature audiences. visit <https://sites.google.com/site/theatremclean/>

FRIDAY/DEC. 4

Happy Holidays from Rocknoceros. 10:30 a.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Happy Holidays from Rocknoceros is a musical "Norman Rockwell" that captures the essence of the procession of holidays that punctuate each year with a festive exclamation point. \$5. www.jamminjava.com.

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Charming "Harvey" from 1st Stage

Screwball comedy with terrific performances.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

With impeccable comic mastery, 1st Stage has produced a priceless, crisp "Harvey," the 1945 Pulitzer Prize winning play written by Mary Chase. Originally aimed at a WWII war-weary America, "Harvey" is a delightfully acted show, full of absurd situations and small gems of serious-minded moments.

"Harvey" spins around a character named Elwood P. Dowd, who may or may not be a delusional alcoholic. The show probes the notion that being "a perfectly normal human being" might make someone a "stinker." It rummages into the possibility that a "pooka" (in Irish folklore, a presence visible only to those who believe) exists in the guise of six-foot tall, "unseen" rabbit named Harvey.

Directed by Michael Chamberlin, "Harvey" has a cornucopia of stellar performances. A supporting ensemble has many laughable moments, making on-stage shambles into blissful entertainment. The supporting cast make the production appealing even with characters that might be viewed as out-of-date given their 1945 origins and viewpoints.

Eccentric to a fault, Dowd is played by Jonathan Lee Taylor. He is a smooth-talking, mild-mannered man, often fueled by thoughts of having a drink. With well-placed special effects, Taylor easily leaves the audience wondering if he might be the sanest person on the stage.

The supporting cast includes a confident, terrific performance by Tonya Beckman as Dodd's on-stage sister Veta. Beckman has a matchless ability to present a bewildering range of emotions such as exasperation, and vexation without speaking a word. Her work is a bright candy-land of vivid comic energy with her expressive face and physicality.

Sue Schaffel and Emily Morrison provide superb



PHOTO BY TERESA CASTRACANE/COURTESY OF 1ST STAGE
Johnathan Lee Taylor as Elwood P. Dowd and Sue Schaffel as Betty Chumley in "Harvey" at 1st Stage. Photo by Teresa Castracane.

Where and When

1st Stage presents "Harvey" performing at 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. Performances now thru Dec. 20, 2015. Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets: \$30; with student, seniors and military discounts. Call 703-854-1856 or visit www.1ststagetysons.org.

moments of animated slow-burning, daftness reacting to the fraught situations their characters find themselves in. Elliot Bates, a boorish, high-brow doctor, who transforms into an engaging oddball who believes Harvey is quite real.

As tentative love interests, Carolyn Kashner and Tim Torre perform agreeably. Robert Grimm has an over-the-top, burlesque-like turn as a medical orderly. Kelsey Meiklejohn and DeJeanette Horne are solid as foils to the on-stage clowning. With only a few moments on stage, William Aiken hits the mark delivering sobering, wise lines of dialogue.

The seamlessly detailed WWII setting includes a fanciful use of a turntable that comes from the fertile minds of scenic designer Kay Hughes, lighting designer Brittany Shemuga, costume designer Kara Waala and sound designer Edward Moser.

"Harvey" will bring fun and diversion to anyone ready to let their guard down and be tickled.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 14

"Welcome to Our World." 10 a.m. Great Falls Methodist Church, 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. a musical for Christmas written by Claire Cloninger and Robert Sterling. The musical includes traditional carols, newer praise songs and, of

course, original material. There's something for everyone in the family. www.greatfallsumc.org. 703-759-3705.

Christmas Festival. 6-7:30 p.m. Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The church choirs will be joined by a string ensemble as they prepare for

Christmas with a program entitled "Dance and Sing! Christ is Born!" The music includes those carols written with the rhythms of dance, including the final movement of the Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 5. The program will be followed by dessert in St. Andrews Hall. Free. www.lewinsville.org.

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Here's What's Happening at MCC



McLean Holiday Crafts Show

Friday, Dec. 4, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 5, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 6, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Adults \$5; Children age 12 or younger Free
Admission price good for all three days!

Old Firehouse Teen Center Friday Field Trip Double Feature at AMC Tysons

Friday, Dec. 4, 3:30-10 p.m.

\$33/\$23 OFTC members

Take a Day Away! A Victorian Holiday: Cape May, NJ

Thursday, Dec. 10, 6:45 a.m.-9 p.m.

\$157 per person/\$152 MCC district residents

Old Firehouse Teen Center Friday Field Trip ICE! at Gaylord Hotel National Harbor

Friday, Dec. 11, 3:30-10 p.m.

\$50/\$40 OFTC members

Onstage @ The Alden Theatre IV: "A Christmas Carol"

Saturday, Dec. 12, 1 p.m. & 4 p.m.

\$15/\$10 MCC district residents

Onstage @ The Alden John Eaton Holiday Spectacular

Saturday, Dec. 19, 2 p.m.

\$35/\$20 MCC district residents

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



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



Creating Families with Adoption

Adoptive parents described: 'Grateful. Generous. Awesome.'

BY JOAN BRADY
THE CONNECTION

November is National Adoption Awareness Month. With that in mind, meet two families expanded through adoption; two families whose kids describe their family as "awesome."

The Hagens of Vienna are a family of two parents, Kelly and Scott; three boys, two adopted and one biological; and two family dogs. Appreciative is the word that comes to mind listening to the Hagens talk about their family.

Lewis, 17, describes family priorities. "Somehow we find time to do stuff together. Like eating dinner. I've heard some families don't do that. That's very sad to me."

Spencer, 16, talks of how his brother, James, influences his life. "I know there are a lot of experiences that I get to have because James is so outgoing."

James, 11, appreciates time spent with his dad. "I like working outside with my dad. And, I like that he pays me for it."

Lewis loves having brothers. "You have people who are always there. I play Xbox with them. We talk. We listen to music. It's like having friends that are always there AND they are family." Would be different with sisters? Spencer says, "Well, they would probably make it all about them."

For parents Kelly and Scott Hagen, appreciation extends outside of their immediate family. "We have a lot of special issues in our family and that has made us more open minded about people," says Kelly. "We make fewer assumptions and we listen more."

Meet the Connelly Family

The Connellys have an immediate family that includes two parents, five sons — two



Hagen Family: Scott, Spencer, James, Lewis and Kelly of Vienna

PHOTO BY JOAN BRADY

biological, two adopted from Fairfax County foster care, and one foster son — and two cats. They hope to add a therapy dog in the next few months.

Jackson, 8, likes the commotion that a large family brings. "I like having brothers. It's interesting living with a lot of people. It's very loud, which means I'm never bored and I learn a lot about how to be nice."

Anthony, 17, has a deep appreciation for his parents, "Not every family would take in so many kids and do so much for them. My parents make sure to keep things fair and show us a lot of love."

Ben, 15, recognizes all that it means to be a family, "If you are looking for a family, you will find everything and more from the family right here. We are everything you would expect; the good and the bad. We are a real family."

Hunter, also 15, might complain about the noise, and apparently does, all of the time, but he wouldn't change a thing, "When we are at home and I'm trying to get work done and everyone's doing their thing around my area, it drives me crazy. But I wouldn't trade

them in for peace and quiet."

Scott and Megan Connelly have been foster parents to many kids over the years. According to Scott, the "spectacular" success of the foster children they have had over the years, many now grown, as well as the success of their biological and adopted boys is simple. "We make sure they know that we love them, unconditionally, and that we are going to hold them accountable. It takes a few weeks, but then they settle right in."

Megan adds: "One of the things that helps makes our household work is that the kids are flexible and giving. Each time we have added someone new into the mix, they follow the example set and pretty quickly, it's like they were always there."

Nicholas, the Connelly's 10-year-old foster son describes his foster parents this way: "They are grateful. They are generous. They are awesome."

Megan Connelly is one of 12 kids, 10 of whom were adopted. Megan says that with their current four, they are only just getting started.



Connelly Family: Hunter, Jackson, Ben and Anthony (Foster son, Nicholas, not pictured).



Scott and Megan Connelly.

PHOTOS BY JOAN BRADY

Photos and bios provided by Fairfax County Department of Family Services

Adame, an energetic 6-year-old boy has a big smile and big heart to match. Keeping Adame engaged will help him remain on task and minimize anxiety for him. A two-parent household, with one parent primarily in the home available to attend to Adame's needs would be ideal, Adame is resilient and would thrive in an adoptive family of his own.



Tim, an active 16-year-old, loves to keep busy. His favorite thing to do is go fishing. He would like a family who is active and loving. He gets along well with young children and has a good sense of humor. He hopes to one day attend a trade school to become a plumber because he feels this would be a great way to become financially stable.



Damon, a kind and thoughtful 14-year-old young man enjoys eating out, watching movies and going to the park. He has discovered rock-collecting and can identify many different kinds of rocks. Damon likes school; he is energetic and loves sports, especially basketball, rollerblading and riding his bike.



Summer, a 15-year-old young lady enjoys hiking and biking outdoors, and loves music and reading. She is self-taught on piano and guitar and can play songs by ear. She would like a family that has a love for music and enjoys being active in the community.



All 860

BY JOAN BRADY

Parental rights terminated. Available for adoption. Floundering in an imperfect system. These words describe many children who are currently living in foster care in Virginia. In Fairfax County, these four children are hoping that this will be the last Thanksgiving spent in foster homes.

Gov. Terry McAuliffe wants those children who are currently available for adoption, adopted into loving homes, and he isn't messing around.

"Let's make it a goal — all of us in this room — that one year from today all 860 of these children will be adopted," McAuliffe recently charged a room full of adoption and foster care professionals at the Connecting Hearts Summit.

Focusing on Virginia is a good start. More than 26,000 young people across the United States age out of foster care each year to futures more likely to include homelessness and hunger than jobs and careers that will pay the bills. All of those young people were once children like the 108,000 currently languishing in foster care. Children who hoped, in vain, that someone would come forward and

SEE ADOPTION, PAGE 17

THANKFUL Adoption

FROM PAGE 16

choose them for adoption.

In 2014, McAuliffe elevated the priority of foster care adoption by appointing Debbie Johnson as Virginia's Adoption Champion. An adoptee herself, one of her achievements to-date has been to create Connection Hearts. www.connectingheartsva.org. With Ericca Facetti at the helm, Connecting Hearts works with the Virginia Department of Social Services, local departments of social services as well as local businesses to engage and educate the public about children in foster care who are waiting for adoptive families.

One of Ericca's immediate goals is to get as many of those children as appropriate included in the Adoptuskids/Virginia listings. Currently, of the 860, just 180 are listed. www.adoptuskids.org/states/va/index.aspx

According to the Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG), there are 259 children in the DC metro area waiting for adoptive homes. Child Welfare Program Manager, Kamilah Bunn, works tirelessly to bring visibility to foster care adoption in our region. COG's adoption efforts include Wednesday's Child, The PicMe Project, Regional Adoption Events and the Regional Adoption Exchange.

Many children have no problem advocating for themselves. Perhaps one of the more memorable self-advocates was a 10-year old twin, who grabbed his brother, hopped on a stage in downtown DC, grabbed a mic and belted out to the cheering crowd, "WE NEED A FAMILY." Other children are not so forthcoming; They are embarrassed by circumstances that are no fault of their own. They have been disappointed by adults who have said they loved them, but who then turned away. They fear further rejection.

Social workers and other professionals like Kamilah Bunn and Ericca Facetti all work together to protect each child, as they work tirelessly to match children successfully with a small pool of potential adoptive families.

Adoption Expo

What: 2015 Adoption Expo will educate, inspire and celebrate families formed through adoption. Prospective adoptive parents can meet adoption professionals as well as current adoptive and foster parents to learn about foster care adoption and foster parenting.

Cost: Free

When: Dec. 5, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Where: 801 K Street NW,

Washington, DC 20001

More: adoptionfosterexpo.org

SPORTS



Langley sophomore Elena Shklyar (12) totaled 16 kills, 18 assists and seven blocks against Madison in the 6A state final on Nov. 20 at VCU's Siegel Center in Richmond.



Langley senior Jess Donaldson had 13 kills and 15 digs against Madison during the 6A state championship match on Nov. 20 at VCU's Siegel Center.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Langley Volleyball Falls to Madison in Five-Set State Final

Sophomore Shklyar totals 16 kills, 18 assists in defeat.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

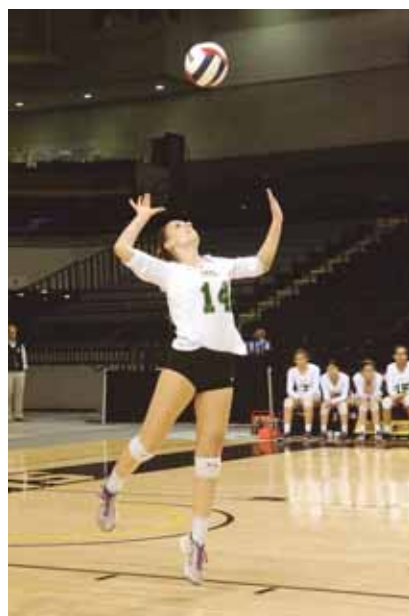
For senior outside hitter Jess Donaldson, Friday's 6A state championship match at VCU's Siegel Center included a change in roles — and outcome — from her experience in the 2013 state final.

For sophomore setter Elena Shklyar and other Saxons who will continue their high school careers next season, Friday's state final was a learning experience.

For the Langley volleyball team, Friday's match against Conference 6 rival Madison was a tough way to end to an otherwise successful season.

After dropping two of the first three sets, Madison battled back to defeat Langley 3-2 (20-25, 25-17, 22-25, 25-17, 15-8) in the VHSL 6A state final on Nov. 20 in Richmond.

Madison captured the program's first state championship by winning the first all-Fairfax County big-school volleyball state final in VHSL history. It was the fifth meeting of the season between the Warhawks and the Saxons, including the third with a championship on the line. Madison defeated Langley in the Conference 6 tournament final, and the Saxons knocked off the Warhawks in the 6A North region championship match. The teams had split their first four meetings.



Langley senior Kristian Stanford had 10 kills and 16 digs against Madison in the 6A state final.

"I think that both teams started off the match a little on the edge due to all the nerves in the gym for this big game," Shklyar wrote in an email. "Once we got past those nerves, we got into a groove and that's when we were at our best. In the final two sets, we simply started making some unforced errors that we usually don't make and that was the difference in the game. If we kept our discipline from the first sets throughout the entire match, there could have been a different ending for us."

TWO YEARS AGO, Langley won the state championship with a sweep of First Colonial. Donaldson, an all-state performer

as a sophomore on the Saxons' 2013 title team, finished with 13 kills and 15 digs on Friday, but fell short of her bid for a second state championship.

"It honestly just felt different," Donaldson wrote in an email. "My sophomore year, there were seniors and juniors to lean on when we struggled with something. This year, that job was up to me and other teammates like Kristian [Stanford] and Katie [Sissler] that had been to Siegel Center in past years. It's hard to play in a gym like that when you aren't used to it."

Donaldson will play at Lehigh University next season.

"I'm not sure I can express how much Jess has meant to this program," Langley head coach Susan Shifflett wrote in an email. "She is the perfect mix of competitor and genuineness. She works hard every day, pushes her teammates in such a positive manner, communicates with coaches and is just fun! She is just so easy to love."

Shklyar finished with 16 kills, 18 assists, seven blocks, four digs and two aces.

"Elena had a great match, played way above her sophomore level," Shifflett wrote. She is "so mature in the game. The next two years with her should be very competitive."

Senior outside hitter Stanford had 10 kills and 16 digs for the Saxons. Junior libero Sarah Maebius had 31 digs, and junior

setter Lauren Pratte had 19 assists and eight digs.

FOR MADISON, senior setter Kendal Hall totaled five aces and 47 assists. Seniors Natale Zanellato and Jaynie Carter finished with 19 and 18 kills, respectively. Junior Emily Calhoun had 11 kills for Madison.

Langley finished the season with a 25-6 record and the 6A North region title. Madison ended the year with a 23-6 record and took home Conference 6 and 6A state championships.

"I was very proud [of] the players on the team this year," Donaldson wrote. "We played hard and it was an accomplishment to make it to the Siegel Center. At the beginning of the year, Coach Shifflett told the team that anything less than states would be a disappointment. I think it was disappointing that we didn't win because we have beaten them before and we can, but Friday night, it just wasn't there."

Shklyar said the loss can be a learning experience.

"I think that the experience of losing in that fifth set in such an important match really showed our team just how much harder we need to work for next year," she wrote. "Being so close but not quite getting what we came to accomplish definitely stung, but I have no doubt it will motivate us to work even harder next year."

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All Four It



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

In fact, it was my idea (and I do think much of it), as it has been previously, but this time, my oncologist felt – to quote my late father: “The idea had merit.” And so, infusing forward, I will be visiting (I use that word loosely), the Infusion Center every four weeks instead of three. A change nearly seven years in the making. Now whether it hastens my demise or simply improves the quality of my life, I certainly don’t know. All I know is what little I know. Nevertheless, given my amazing good fortune to still be alive so many years after my original prognosis “prognosed” otherwise: “13 months to two years,” (as stated by my oncologist on 2/27/09), I suppose I’m living proof that cancer works in mysterious ways and not always according to medical expectations. Thank God!

Perhaps the future – and maybe even the present, is what I make of it. And though it’s difficult – but not impossible – to do so, among the rather grim tales that one hears in the lung cancer/cancer-in-general world, there are success stories, many of which I’ve actually heard. And the more of these stories I hear, the more I feel empowered and realize that even though we have not won the war on cancer, we are winning battles, not just skirmishes. Lung cancer patients are living longer, as I have been fortunate to do; now we’re going to try and improve the quality of that “living longer.”

Not that you readers can’t sort it for yourselves, but extending my infusion schedule by one week from three to four is not merely a 33 percent increase in that interval, it’s an exponential increase in my head; meaning it feels way more significant than one week. It almost seems as if I can breathe normally again (not that I have any cancer-related difficulty breathing other than climbing stairs, lifting heavy objects or otherwise over-exerting myself); the sensation now, the expectation now, is that I have control of my life for an extra week EVERY SINGLE MONTH that I’ve not had for almost seven years. I don’t want to go commercial here, but can you spell relief? For me, it’s not a product, it’s a lifestyle.

However, as relieved as I am, this decision/possibly even accommodation from my oncologist, is not because I’m cured, in remission or cancer-free. No. It’s because I asked and my most recent PET Scan answered by indicating that I was “stable,” according to my oncologist. News, I like to joke, with which I can live. But news which hardly extricates me from “Cancerville.” Rather, news that allows/enables my oncologist to consider some options that many cancer patients are unable to consider. For the record, though: this is unlikely to be permanent and guarantees are not being made. Still, to invoke Hubert H. Humphrey: “I’m pleased as punch.”

As a long-time salesman, I’ve heard many technique advisories. One I will mention here: “Don’t be afraid to take ‘yes’ for an answer.” Well, I’ve learned my lessons. I am going to take “yes” for an answer. I’m not looking for trouble. If my oncologist is happy to oblige/agree with the four-week interval, then who am I to question it? Question it is the last thing I’m going to do. I’m going to embrace and enjoy it. Besides, I deserve it. I only wish there hundreds/thousands of other “terminal” cancer patients receiving similar results and subsequent improvement in the quality of their lives. And though it may be temporary (until the results of my next CT Scan in January, that is), for the time I’m still being: “Oh, what a relief it shall be!”

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

FAITH NOTES

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

Tuesday/Nov. 24

Emmanuel Lutheran Church will hold its 17th Annual Community Thanksgiving Worship Service on Tuesday, Nov. 24 at 7:30 p.m. Clergy will lead the service with prayers for peace and thanksgiving. Local choirs from participating congregations will join together under one roof to provide an evening of inspirational music. An offering will be collected to support CHO and The Lamb Center. Bring the family, or come with friends. The church is located at 2589 Chain Bridge Road, Vienna.

Celebrate Advent and Christmas at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Weekly worship is Sundays at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.; Wednesdays at noon. Holiday events include:

Sunday, Dec. 13, Children’s Musical, 10:30 a.m. service.

Sunday, Dec. 20, Lessons and Carols, 10:30 a.m. service.

Thursday, Dec. 24, Christmas Eve, 5 p.m. family service; 8 p.m., Candlelight and Communion; 11 a.m., Candlelight and Communion. www.imtrinity.org.

The Churches of the Ecumenical Council are offering a Blue Christmas worship opportunity Sunday, Dec. 13 at 2:30 p.m. at Katie’s Coffee House, 760 Walker Rd., Great Falls. This is an opportunity to come together expressing the griefs, losses and challenges of our lives as we connect to hope and faith. Call Carol 703-582-1640 with questions.

Chancel Choir, children and youth of the Great Falls United Methodist Church invite you to join them for worship as they offer “Welcome to Our World,” a musical for Christmas written by Claire Cloninger and Robert Sterling on Sunday, Dec. 13 at 10 a.m. The musical includes traditional carols, newer praise songs and original material.

Robert R. “Mitch” Mitchell, Director of Music Ministries at Great Falls UMC, former U.S. Army Bandsman, and local area Piano teacher/freelance Musician will be conducting the choir and narrators. Church keyboardist Thomas Pandolfi will be accompanying the musical. Great Falls United Methodist Church is located at 10100 Georgetown Pike, right next to the Fire Station in the center of the village. All are welcome.

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.

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

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



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