

The Arlington Connection

It was 7:20 p.m., and the ice skating stopped. Arlington County Police Chief Jay Farr stepped up to the six-foot Menorah at Chanukah on Ice at the Pentagon Row Ice Skating Center in Arlington on Dec. 8. Rabbi Mordechai Newman, director of Chabad Lubavitch of Alexandria-Arlington, said Farr was being honored with lighting the Shamash, the middle candle of service, in recognition of his service to the community and keeping the community safe.

Lighting of the Menorah

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PEOPLE

Bill Neikirk Launches Novel, 'The Copperhead Club'

Spinning a tale of "sex, money, intrigue, and Washington politics."

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

William ("Bill") Neikirk says he has always wanted to write a novel, ever since he was an 8-year-old. Neikirk came to Washington from Kentucky as a young journalist in the early '70s. He was working for the Associated Press in Kentucky and then interviewed for a position in their Washington Bureau. The good news was he got the job, and the bad news was they offered him a job covering economics rather than the political beat he had wanted; his disappointment was evident. As he grimaced, his editor told him he should just do his best for a year, and then they would see if something else opened up. It was 1971. Nixon had initiated a series of wage/price controls that became a major story, particularly after the abandonment of the Gold Standard in 1973. Neikirk's career as a journalist took off, and not long after he joined the Chicago Tribune as their economics reporter in the Washington Bureau.

Neikirk, who was known as "Bill Bob" growing up in Kentucky, covered stories all over the world before retiring in 2008 because of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. When he received the Estill County Hall of Honor award in 2001, he noted that because re-

porting can take a person so many places it is difficult to single out the most memorable event covered. A few of the standouts were: a civil rights march in Louisiana in 1969; the trial covering the murder of three civil rights workers in Mississippi; the 1968 Democratic convention; the anti-war marches in Washington; Henry Kissinger's announcement of the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam; the courage of Anwar Sadat in Egypt; the despair of the Shah of Iran just before the revolution, the opening up of China in Beijing in 1978; and the WW II veterans visiting the Normandy Cemetery where their friends were buried.

At the Chicago Tribune, Neikirk served as economics correspondent, White House correspondent, assistant managing editor for financial news in Chicago, senior writer and chief Washington correspondent. He has received over 50 journalism awards including winner of the Chicago Tribune's Beck award, the Loeb, John Hancock, University of Missouri and Champion Media Business Writing Awards, runner up for the Pulitzer Prize; the Merriman Smith Award for presidential coverage; runner up in the Raymond Clapper and Nover Awards; and named as one of the top 100 financial journalists of the 20th century. He was elected to the Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame in 1998. He is a member of the Gridiron Club and the



PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION
Bill Neikirk and his wife Ruth welcome reception guests as he signs "The Copperhead Club."

National Press Club, and wrote a nationally syndicated column on economics. He has authored two nonfiction books, "Work Revolution" (1980) and "Volcker, Portrait of a Money Man" (1987).

And now, a novel.

"The Copperhead Club" is a story of terrorism, scandal, and snakes, fictional morsels in a stew full of Washington's corridors of power and Kentucky's backwoods, where Neikirk grew up. His book's characters are socialites, lawyers, economists, Arlington County residents, U.S. presidents, political consultants, Kentucky police officers, FBI directors, waitresses, U.S. senators, and gun dealers. His wife of 55 years, Ruth, says he

has kept journals and notebooks all his life, and that Neikirk began writing the book on yellow legal pads while riding to work on the Metro in the '90s. He stopped writing after 9-11. In 2009 his wife was recovering from knee surgery and asked him about the book. He told her it was a piece of trash, not worthy for anyone to read; but he handed over a stack of pages to read. She was hooked after the first page and read to the end — it may have been the first 10 chapters. She asked Neikirk what was going to happen next. He didn't know.

Much to her delight the novel was finished in 2010, but Neikirk remained unwilling to submit it to a publisher. In 2015, Neikirk's wife got him to agree to publish it, and now the book is finally out. There is a lot in the book that surprised her, not the least of which is her husband's ability to tell a story from a woman's point of view. But she is sure many of the characters come from Neikirk's observations as he went about life in Washington.

The book launch took place at the National Press Club and the Hendry House, on Nov. 16 and 18 respectively. Both receptions were attended by Washingtonians, Arlingtonians, The Yorktown Splash Girls, and a few out-of-town visitors.

The Neikirks are currently planning a trip to Kentucky to promote the novel, which is available on Amazon.com. For more information, see www.williamneikirk.com.

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Eat, Drink, and Be Merry

Suzanne McGrath pairs with Taste By Katie.

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

For anyone wondering where The Curious Grape went after closing its Shirlington restaurant this past March, Suzanne McGrath is still very much engaged in the local wine and food community, just without the restaurant. Her career interest has always been educating people about wine, and she wanted to do more of that, and less of the nuts and bolts restaurant business, which involved a 24/7 work week leaving little time for other interests. She recently paired up with Katie Gilman to offer custom wine tasting events, and the "pairing" appears promising.

On Dec. 7, Gilman and McGrath invited locals to sample their wine and holiday food pairings at the Dominion Hills shopping center location of Taste by Katie at 6017 Wilson Boulevard. Gilman made stuffed mushroom caps, spiced nuts, and rich chocolate ganache mini-cakes, and McGrath paired them with a 2013 Planet Oregon Pinot Noir and a non-vintage Jip Jip Australian sparkling Shiraz, which is traditionally quaffed by the Aussies on Christmas morning, but it goes with dessert too. It's the kind of surprise McGrath enjoys springing on her clients, and her expression of delight when a skeptic tried it and then wanted a case of it, is what makes this new venture exciting.



PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION
Suzanne McGrath, who ran The Curious Grape in Alexandria, is now collaborating with Katie Gilman at Taste by Katie. She and Gilman offered a wine tasting and food pairing event in anticipation of the holidays, on Dec. 7, at Gilman's Dominion Hills Shop.

Taste by Katie and McGrath are gearing up for the holidays with a five-course Wine Tasting Dinner offered through Dec. 31. McGrath also offers private wine tasting events with pairings of food by Gilman.

To order either the five-course dinner, or the private tasting, or to pick up holiday food gifts of biscotti and holiday breads, contact Gilman at tastebykatie@gmail.com or McGrath at tcgrape@earthlink.net. Orders should be placed one week in advance.



PHOTOS BY CORRIN REID/THE CONNECTION



Military and civilian volunteers opened up boxes delivered, distributed them to other volunteers, broke down the boxes and swept up the debris from the wreaths.

'Wreaths Across America'

"Wreaths Across America" delivered wreaths for each grave sites at Arlington National Cemetery on Saturday, Dec. 12. See www.wreathsaacrossamerica.org.



Lt. Col. Elroy A Stout, an almost 30-year member of the military, was one of the volunteers by placing wreaths across the graves. He is a member of the U.S. Cyber Command Unit, stationed at Fort Meade, Md.



A close-up of Walt Hunsicker's club jacket. He and his wife, Cynders, a retired Army veteran, are founders of their own club located in Pennsylvania. They are advocates for veterans' awareness and said this was the largest turnout they had seen in the multiple years attending the annual event.

Board Approves 173-unit Affordable Housing Complex

Some residents question socio-economic segregation.

BY VERNON MILES
THE CONNECTION

For the Arlington County Board, 2015 ended on a high note. With construction scheduled to begin in 2017, the current Arlington Presbyterian Church will soon be transformed into Gilliam Place, a home for 173 families at various levels of affordable housing needs. At the Dec. 12 board meeting, Gilliam Place was unanimously approved. It's an early Christmas present; from the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing and the Arlington Presbyterian Church, to a county with more than 500 households currently on its affordable housing waitlist.

The project is anticipated to cost \$68 million, including land acquisition. The property was purchased from the Arlington Presbyterian Church for \$8.5 million at a 20 percent, or \$2 million, discount off of the appraised value. However, the county will only be asked to provide \$18 million in loans to the APAH. Two thirds of the other funding comes from state and federal sources. APAH is currently requesting \$29 million in funding from Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

The proposal did have some detractors. Some citizens criticized the county for concentrating its affordable housing develop-

ment in South Arlington.

"Schools in South Arlington already have the highest levels of students receiving free or reduced price lunches," said Elizabeth Odar. "If you approve this project, you show that you also approve of the continued socio-economic segregation of our county and our schools."

John Reeder representing the Arlington Greens opposed Gilliam Place, saying that the County Board should instead use the \$18 million for rental vouchers to be spread across the county.

Odar and Reeder's criticisms of the plan carried some merit to County Board member John Vihstadt, who said the County Board needed to look more into spreading out the concentration of affordable housing throughout the area. County Board member Walter Tejada agreed, but argued that this objective shouldn't count against the current opportunity.

The majority of the feedback from the audience was approval. Holly Bray, chair of the Housing Commission, said the project had been unanimously approved at its meeting.

"This is a very creative use of this site and in that neighborhood," said Bray, who said the commission was particularly pleased that the affordability was spread out at different economic levels. Five percent of the

units are at 40 percent of area median income, 19 percent of the units at 50 percent area median income, and the remainder of the units are at 60 percent of area median income.

Chris Fornash, chair of the Planning Commission, reported that they had also unanimously approved the project, but recommended that the board look into a long range, 10-year view of architecture along Columbia Pike.

For many of the Arlington residents, the approval of Gilliam Place was deeply personal. Miles Townes, who lives nearby, said he's seen his neighbors squeezed out over the years by increases in property rates and rents. Townes joined Arlington Presbyterian Church after he heard about the work they were doing in helping to transition the property into an affordable housing neighborhood.

"We've watched a great number of luxury, high rise condominiums going up in the area," said Townes. "The need for affordable housing is growing on [Columbia Pike]."

Elizabeth Garcia, who moved to Arlington from El Salvador in 1980, said she'd seen a similar push over the years.

"We are doing OK, but many of our neighbors are not," said Garcia. "We love Arlington, and we want our daughter to be able to live here once she graduates school."

Viviana Novillo, a local teacher, said she's seen parents forced to change schools because rents in Arlington became



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Concept design for Gilliam Place.

unaffordable. It was a similar story repeated over and over by the Arlington residents advocating for Gilliam Place.

The Rev. Tara McCabe, a minister at the Arlington Presbyterian Church, said that she had celebrated thanksgiving this year with local Mexican and Turkish families at her young son's suggestion.

"We relished in the awkwardness of language and the joy of sharing our home," said McCabe. "This happened because of our economically diverse Arlington, let alone racially and ethnic diversity. I'm a Barcroft parent, PTA president, Presbyterian minister and a leader in V.O.I.C.E. and Mi Voz Cuenta, and I am proud to live in this community because this is how I was raised. We are complicated and beautiful, just like the first Thanksgiving."

Ultimately, the County Board agreed.

"[We are] making a diverse place for a set of people to have a higher quality of life," said County Board Chair Mary Hynes. "We don't get to say that every day. Thank you, to all of you in the room, who stuck to this."

OPINION

Season of Giving Never Has To End

Why ending childhood hunger should be your New Year's resolution.

BY AMY JOHNSON, JENNIFER KONISH
AND NICK ARENT

The holiday season is one of our favorite times of year because it's all about the best things in life. It's a time for celebrating, bringing age-old cultural traditions to life, and spending time with family and friends. It's about being thankful for all of the things we are fortunate enough to have in our lives and reminding people how much we love and appreciate them. Oh and we suppose the delicious food that accompanies all of these things makes them that much more enjoyable!

During the holidays there are still a number of people who are struggling to make ends meet and many who don't have enough to eat, but luckily, it is also the season of giving. Around the country, the holidays inspire hundreds of thousands of people to give to the poor. Caring individuals get involved by donating to hunger-relief organizations such as the Capital Area Food Bank — the largest non-profit serving the Washington metro area — serving at soup kitchens, and finding other ways to contribute to the improvement of our communities. Especially when it comes to sharing food, we make sure that everyone has something to eat. The holiday spirit unites us, brings out the best in us, and motivates us to make a real difference in the lives of others.

This year, let's make it our New Year's resolution to keep this level of engagement con-

tinuing into 2016 by tackling one of most tragic problems facing our country — childhood hunger.

About 400,000 children here in Virginia alone are at risk of going hungry and it's a problem we can't afford to put off for another year. Despite all the pies, casseroles, hams and turkeys that will be enjoyed over the next several weeks, over 15.5 million kids across the country are food insecure. According to No Kid Hungry "three out of four public school teachers say students regularly come to school hungry" — another alarming statistic. In a country as prosperous as our own, it is absolutely unacceptable that there are any children who don't know where they are going to get their next meal.

The bottom line is that when kids are hungry, they struggle to learn, and kids who struggle to learn, struggle in life. With stomachs growling, hungry children sit through class unable to focus and get the most out of school. Fatigue and weakness as the result of poor nutrition make it difficult for them to stay awake or participate in physical activities like recess and PE. They are more likely to suffer from hyperactivity, miss school, and experience other behavioral problems which creates a negative learning environment for all students — even their peers who are not food insecure. Perhaps the scariest thing about childhood food insecurity is the inability for a child to reach their full potential because of the dramatic damage hunger does to their brain. Over time, hungry students fall behind their peers academically and many of them never catch up making it far more difficult for them to find good jobs and take care of their children once they grow up. The medical sector is beginning to reprioritize its resources to see healthy food as the important intervention it is. For example, the American Academy of Pediatrics recently

recommended for the first time that pediatricians screen all children for food insecurity.

If we want to make sure every child gets a fair shot in life, we need to make sure our elected officials and decision-makers properly fund and improve existing food assistance programs such as free/reduced price school meals, SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) and WIC. Research shows that these programs help students to perform better in school and in life — but they don't go far enough. First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe is an excellent example of how politicians from both sides of the aisle should be making this issue a priority and continuing to develop new solutions.

Congress is currently considering legislation to reauthorize the Child Nutrition Act and to make changes to a number of food assistance programs. This legislation will influence funding for programs like the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program which allows the Capital Area Food Bank and other organizations to provide nutritious meals to food insecure children when school is out of session. If you are as concerned about childhood hunger as we are, you can contact your elected officials and urge them to take action by calling the congressional switchboard at 202-225-3121.

We will start 2016 with one in six kids across Virginia waking up at risk of going hungry throughout the year. With your help — by making ending childhood hunger your New Year's resolution and taking action on this issue throughout the year — we can work toward a future where we wake up on New Year's Day to a country where every child's basic needs are met so that they all have a fair opportunity to be successful in life.

Amy Johnson and Jennifer Konish are the NOVA Kids Cafe Coordinators with the Capital Area Food Bank. Nick Arent is a Campaign Organizer with Virginia Fair Share.



PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Lighting the Menorah

"Dreidel, dreidel, dreidel, I made it out of clay." Children balanced on their ice skates sing traditional Jewish songs at Chanukah on Ice held at the Pentagon Row Ice Skating rink in Arlington on Dec. 8. This annual event included family ice skating, hot dogs and latkes with applesauce, as well as lighting of the traditional Menorah.



Rabbi Mordechai Newman has filled the Menorah with oil as he begins the celebration of the Jewish holiday Chanukah. Tradition says more than 21 centuries ago the wicks of the Menorah burned for eight days even though there was only enough olive oil for one day to rededicate the Temple. This event was a project of Chabad Lubavitch of Alexandria-Arlington.

The
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Connection

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PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

What Month Is This?

Temperatures seemed more like June on Sunday afternoon, Dec. 13, at Potomac Regional Overlook Park. Parents sat on picnic benches chatting as their children climbed the playground pegs, played hide and seek and ran around the park, some in their summer shorts and T-shirts.

BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to arlington@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

THROUGH JAN. 1

Holiday SoberRide. 10 p.m.-6 a.m.
Offered by the nonprofit Washington

Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the annual Holiday SoberRide program will provide free cab rides up to \$30. Call 1-800-200-TAXI.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 16

WMATA Forum. 7-9 p.m. at Wakefield High School, 1325 S. Dinwiddie St.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

"FLOURISHING AFTER 55"

Senior centers will be closed Christmas Day, Friday, Dec. 25: Lee, 5722 Lee Hwy.; Langston-Brown Senior Center, 2121 N. Culpeper St.; Culpepper Garden, 4435 N. Pershing Dr.; Walter Reed, 2909 S. 16th St.; Arlington Mill, 909 S. Dinwiddie St.; Aurora Hills, 735 S. 18th St.

Ballroom dance lesson, Monday, Dec. 21, 6:45 p.m., Walter Reed. Free. Register, 703-228-0955.

Current events discussion, Monday, Dec. 21, 10 a.m., Culpepper Garden. Free. Register, 70-228-4403.

Ways to capture your personal story, Monday, Dec. 21, 1 p.m., Lee. Free. Register, 703-228-0955.

Pickleball games and instruction, Mondays, 11 a.m., Arlington Mill. Free. Register, 703-228-7369.

Ice skating, Mondays, 8 a.m. - 9:10 a.m., Kettler Capitals Iceplex, Ballston Mall, \$1. Register, 703-228-4745.

Madison Chess Club, Mondays, 9:30 a.m. Games and strategies. Free. Details, 703-534-6232.

Table tennis, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Arlington Mill.

Free. Register, 703-228-7369.

Volleyball, Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m., Langston-Brown. Free. Register, 703-228-6300.

Belly dance class, Tuesdays and Fridays, 10 a.m., Lee. Free. Register, 703-228-0555.

Beginners full fitness exercise, Tuesdays, 10 a.m., Lee. \$60/15 sessions or \$4 per class. Details, 703-228-0555.

Arlington Mill Trekkers, Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. Free. Register, 703-228-7369.

Table tennis, Tuesdays, 10 a.m., -12 p.m., Walter Reed. Free. Register, 703-228-0955.

Poker games, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Lee. Register, 703-228-0555.

Duplicate bridge, ACBL sanctioned, Wednesdays, 10 a.m., Aurora Hills. \$5. Register, 703-228-5722.

Lee Woodcarvers share woodcarving tips, Thursdays, 1 p.m. Free. Details, 703-228-0555.

Scrabble games, Thursdays, 1 p.m., Culpepper Garden. Free. Details, 703-228-4403.

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FOR UNTO US

a child is born

Christmas

McLean Bible Church

You're Invited

We want to be part of your family's Christmas tradition throughout Maryland and Virginia this year. Join McLean Bible Church for Christmas Eve service at any of our campuses.

Christmas Services

DECEMBER 23, 2015
McLean Bible Church Montgomery County Campus
12440 Parklawn Drive, Rockville, MD 20852
Family services at 6:30 pm and 8 pm

DECEMBER 24, 2015
McLean Bible Church Tysons Campus
8925 Leesburg Pike, Vienna, VA 22182
Family services at 3 pm and 4:30 pm
Communion services at 7 pm, 9 pm and 11 pm

DECEMBER 24, 2015
McLean Bible Church Loudoun Campus
44180 Riverside Parkway, Lansdowne, VA 20176
Family services at 4 pm and 6 pm
Communion service at 8 pm

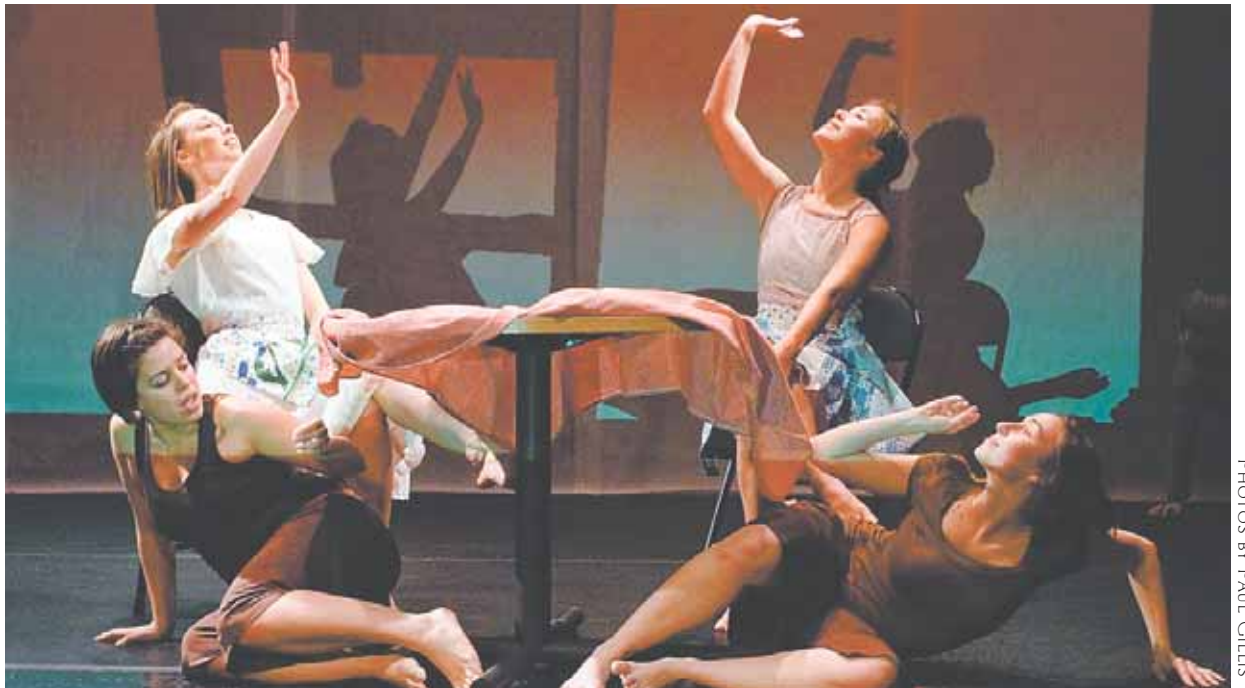
McLean Bible Church Prince William Campus
10002 Battleview Parkway, Manassas, VA 20109
Family services at 5 pm and 6 pm
Communion service at 7pm

To learn more about our Christmas celebration, visit www.mcleanbible.org/christmas.

"For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

MCLEAN BIBLE CHURCH

ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTOS BY PAUL GILLIS

Jane Franklin Dance Presents 'Mouse in the House'

"Mouse in the House" is an adaptation of Elizabeth Spire's "The Mouse of Amherst," a fictional children's tale revealing a friendship between a mouse and reclusive 19th-century poet Emily Dickinson. Jane Franklin Dance will perform "Mouse in the House" on Jan. 16, 23, and 30 at 3 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Tickets are \$10-15. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

Email announcements to arlington@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

ONGOING

Truman Capote: "Holiday Memories." Through Dec. 20, 7:30 p.m. or 2 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Based on short stories by Truman Capote this show features Capote as a boy abandoned by his family in Depression-era Alabama. Tickets are \$10-35. Visit www.wscavantbard.org for more.

Fall SOLOS 2015. Through Dec. 20, gallery hours at Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd. Artists featured in the exhibit: Katie Duffy, Rachel Guardiollo, Dean Kessman, Sonya Lawyer, Nara Park, Austin Shull, and Benjamin Zellmer Bellas. Free. Visit www.arlingtonartscenter.org for more.

"Wired." Through Dec. 20, gallery hours at Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd. Artist Michele Colburn presents a solo exhibition exploring the impact of war and violence on culture. This is reflected in the use of gunpowder, trip wire, and military-themed fabric. Free. Visit www.arlingtonartscenter.org for more.

"Cause and Effect." Through Dec. 20, gallery hours at Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd. Artists Robert Allen, Kathleen Ramich, and Dave Seiler explore war and violence as a complement to Michele Colburn's "Wired." Free. Visit www.arlingtonartscenter.org for more.

"Adopt, Don't Shop." Through Dec. 23, at the Animal Welfare League of Arlington (AWLA), 2650 S. Arlington Mill Drive. AWLA will be offering special incentives for adopters. Visit www.awla.org for more.

Santa Photo Experience. Various times at Fashion Center at Pentagon City, 11 S. Hayes St. Families are invited to have a picture taken with

Santa. Free. Appointments available for \$10, photo packages start at \$29.99. Visit www.simon.com.

Wordless Shakespeare: "As You Like It." Through Jan. 17, Various times at Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell St. Synetic Theater presents a completely physical interpretation of "As You Like It." Tickets start at \$35 for adults, student tickets are \$15. Visit www.synetictheater.org for more.

"West Side Story." Through Jan. 24, various times at Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave. For Signature Theatre's adaptation of classic musical "West Side Story," no audience member will be further than 20 feet from the stage. Tickets start at \$40. Visit www.sigtheatre.org for more.

Christmas With Nova Y. Payton and Friends. Through Jan. 24, various times at Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave. Star of "Dreamgirls" and "Hairspray" sings some of her favorite holiday tunes. Tickets are \$35. Visit www.sigtheatre.org for more.

"The Civil War Grand Review." Through Feb. 1, Monday-Thursday 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Tuesday-Wednesday 1-9 p.m.; Friday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Cherrydale Branch Library, 2190 Military Road. View "The Civil War Grand Review: Photos of the Sesquicentennial Reenactment Parade." Free. Call 703-228-6330.

Sci-Fi Book Club. Third Wednesday of each month, 7-8:30 p.m. at Java Shack, 2507 N. Franklin Road. Free. Visit www.library.arlingtonva.us.

Arlington's Historical Museum Open on First Wednesdays. The Arlington Historical Museum is open to the public on the first Wednesday of every month from 12:30-3:30 p.m. The museum consists of exhibits chronicling Arlington County's history from Native American settlements up to the present day. The museum will continue to be open on Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. Admission is free. The museum is located in the former 1891 Hume School building at 1805 S. Arlington Ridge Road. Contact Garrett Peck at 571-243-1113 or at garrett.peck@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org.

LGBT & Straight Friends Social. Tuesdays. Happy Hour, 3 p.m.-7 p.m.; Mikey's "Bar A" Video Wall, 7 p.m.; start time at 8 p.m. IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. For 21 years and older. Free. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com for more information.

Open Mic Comedy. Wednesdays 8-10 p.m. at Ri Ra Irish Pub, 2915 Wilson Blvd. Doors open at 7 p.m. Age 21 and up only. Free show, \$25 cash prize for best joke. Call 703-248-9888 or visit www.RiRa.com/ Arlington for more.

Food Truck Thursdays. 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the corner of North Irving Street, and Washington Boulevard. Find a round-up of regional food trucks. Free to attend. Visit www.dmvfta.org.

Invasive Plants Removal. Work parties are held every month to keep the parks free of destructive invasive plants. Teens, adults and families welcome. Every second Sunday of the month 2-4:30 p.m. at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Road; call 703-228-3403. Every third Sunday of the month 2-5 p.m. at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Road; call 703-228-6535 or visit registration.arlingtonva.us. Free, no registration required.

Poetry Series. 6-8 p.m. second Sunday of the month at IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Hosted by poet Miles David Moore. Featured artists share their poetry followed by open readings. Free. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com or call 703-522-8340.

Open Mic Nite. 8 p.m.-12:30 a.m. every Wednesday at IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Sign-up times are 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. Bring instruments, fans and friends. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com or call 703-522-8340.

Karaoke. 8 p.m. on the first Sunday every month at Galaxy Hut, 2711 Wilson Blvd. Visit www.galaxyhut.com or call 703-525-8646.

Pub Quiz. 8 p.m. every Sunday at Whitlow's on Wilson, 2854 Wilson Blvd. Prizes for first place. Free. Visit www.whitlows.com or call 703-276-9693.

Storytime. Mondays and Fridays, 10:30-11 a.m. at Kinder Haus Toys, 1220 N. Fillmore St. Storytime with Ms. Laura. Call 703-527-5929.

Lego Club. Monthly on the first Wednesday. 4-5 p.m. Glencarlyn Branch Library, 300 S. Kensington St. The library provides tubs of legos and a special challenge and after the program the creations are displayed for everyone to see. No registration required. Call 703-228-6548 for more.

Ball-Sellers House Tours. Saturdays, April-Oct., 1-4 p.m. at The Ball-Sellers House, 5620 3rd St. S. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Arlington Historical Society receiving the house from Marian Sellers in 1975 for \$1. Free. Visit www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org.

Crystal City Sparket. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. on Wednesdays at 1900 Crystal Drive. Sparket — A Creative Market is an extension of DC's Eastern Market with arts, crafts, and handmade goods. Free to attend. Visit www.crystalcity.org.

Open Mic Night. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., sign ups are at 7:30 and 10 p.m., at Iota Club & Café, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Free. Visit <http://www.iotaclubandcafe.com/>.

Art for Life. Third Thursday of each month. The Hyatt Regency Crystal City's "Art for Life" Partnership with National Kidney Foundation brings a new artist each month to The Hyatt for a reception. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org.

Brunch at Freddie's. Third Saturday of every month, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Freddie's Beach Bar, 555 23rd St. The Arlington Gay and Lesbian Alliance gathers for an all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet (\$9.99). All are welcome. No reservation is required. Visit www.facebook.com/events/700174390103305.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 16

Holiday Sing-Along. 11 a.m.-12 p.m. at Culpepper Garden Senior Center, 4435 N. Pershing Drive. Adults 55+ are invited to sing along to holiday favorites. Free. Visit parks.arlingtonva.us for more.

Youth Services Holiday Open House. 4-6 p.m. at Arlington

Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. Listen to holiday stories, and make crafts. Free. Call 703-228-5946 for more.

Arlingtons Barbershop Chorus. 6-7 p.m. outside of the Clarendon Metro Station, 3100 Clarendon Blvd. The Arlingtones, founded in 1957, is a non-profit singing group dedicated to preserving and performing barbershop music. Free. Visit www.arlingtones.com for more.

Holiday Trivia Challenge. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Arlington Mill Community Center & Senior Center, 909 S. Dinwiddie St. Older adults (55+) are invited to test their holiday knowledge. Free. Visit parks.arlingtonva.us for more.

THURSDAY/DEC. 17

A-SPAN Client Holiday Party. 10 a.m. at St. Borromeo Catholic Church, 3304 Washington Blvd. Arlington Street People's Assistance Network seeks volunteers for a Client Holiday Party to serve the holiday meal, distribute the gifts and otherwise assist at the function. Visit www.a-span.org for more.

Workshop: How to Preserve Your Family's Story. 2-3 p.m. at Arlington Mill Community & Senior Center, 909 S. Dinwiddie St. Arlington resident Judith Sanchez tells her story of coming to America from Colombia. Learn how to preserve your own family's history using the StoryCorp app. Free. Call 703-228-5977 for more.

FRIDAY/DEC. 18

Art Institute Design, Media Arts, and Fashion Showcase. 12-1 p.m. at Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel, 2800 S. Potomac Ave. Students will display and discuss their work. Free. Visit www.aiportfolioshow.com/Arlington.

"An Astronomer Looks for the Christmas Star." 6:30 p.m. at Arlington Planetarium, 1426 N. Quincy St. Using the Planetarium's projector, guests will see the skies of Bethlehem and Judea at the traditional time of the birth of Christ. Explore the possibilities and vote for

ENTERTAINMENT

the explanation that seems most probable. The digital show will be followed by Q&A with Dr. Alice Monet, President of the Friends of the Planetarium. Tickets are \$4-6 plus a service charge. Visit www.friendsoftheplanetarium.org for more.

“Season of Light.” 7:30 p.m. at Arlington Planetarium, 1426 N. Quincy St. This multicultural presentation traces the history and development of many of the world’s holiday customs involving lighting up the night sky. Tickets are \$4-6 and are only available at the door. Visit www.friendsoftheplanetarium.org for more.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC 18-19

Second City: Holidazed & Confused. 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. on Friday; 4 p.m., 7 p.m., and 10 p.m. on Saturday at Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. Sketch and improv comedy ensemble the Second City will perform a Holiday Revue. Tickets are \$30. Visit www.arlingtondrafthouse.com for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 19

Breakfast With Santa and Holiday Food Drive. 8-11 a.m. at The Village at Shirlington, 2700 S. Quincy St. Make a donation of non-perishable food items and enjoy breakfast with Santa. Free. Call 703-820-0440 and ask for Mallori or select option 2 for the Sales Department to make your reservation.

Book Signing: Steven R. Hemler. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Joyful Spirit Gifts Catholic Store, 3315 Lee Highway. Steven R. Hemler, author of “The Reality of God” and President of the Catholic Apologetics Institute of North America (CAINA), will be doing book signings. Free. Visit www.joyfulspiritgifts.com, or call 703-294-4142 for more.

Candy Cane Crawl. 1-9 p.m. at 3100 Wilson Blvd. Attend a holiday-themed bar crawl. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$30 at the door. Visit www.candycanecrawl.com for more.

Christmas Ale Beer Tasting. 7-10 p.m. at Heavy Seas Alehouse, 1501 Wilson Blvd. This tasting will feature 10 Christmas ales and winter beers. Tickets are \$40. Visit www.heavyseasalehouse.com/arlington/events for more.

SUNDAY/DEC. 20

“An Astronomer Looks for the Christmas Star.” 1:30 p.m. at Arlington Planetarium, 1426 N. Quincy St. Using the Planetarium’s projector, guests will see the skies of Bethlehem and Judea at the

traditional time of the birth of Christ. Explore the possibilities and vote for the explanation that seems most probable. The digital show will be followed by Q&A with Dr. Alice Monet, President of the Friends of the Planetarium. Tickets are \$4-6 plus a service charge. Visit www.friendsoftheplanetarium.org for more.

“Season of Light.” 3 p.m. at Arlington Planetarium, 1426 N. Quincy St. This multicultural presentation traces the history and development of many of the world’s holiday customs involving lighting up the night sky. Tickets are \$4-6 and are only available at the door. Visit www.friendsoftheplanetarium.org for more.

Yule Log and Carol Sing. 5 p.m. at Walker Chapel United Methodist Church, 4102 N. Glebe Road. Sing carols with the Walker Chapel community. Refreshments to follow. Free. Call 703-538-5200 or visit www.walkerchapel.org for more.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 26-27

Second City: Holidazed & Confused. 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. on Saturday; 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Sunday at Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. Sketch and improv comedy ensemble the Second City will perform a Holiday Revue. Tickets are \$30. Visit www.arlingtondrafthouse.com for more.

SUNDAY-TUESDAY/DEC. 27-29

Virginia Ballet Company: “The Nutcracker.” 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. at Northern Virginia Community College Annandale Campus in the Ernst Community Cultural Center Theater, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Virginia Ballet Company and School with present its 66th season of “The Nutcracker.” Tickets are \$30 for adults, \$20 for children, plus \$3 service fee. Visit www.vaballet.org for more.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 30

Holiday Jeopardy. 11 a.m.-12 p.m. at Culpepper Garden Senior Center, 4435 N. Pershing Drive. Test your skills in this interactive holiday version of Senior Jeopardy. Free. Visit parks.arlingtonva.us for more.

THURSDAY/DEC. 31

New Year’s Eve at Twisted Vines. 7 p.m.-2 a.m. at Twisted Vines Bistro & Bottleshop, 2803 Columbia Pike. Enjoy a four-course prix fixe menu, dancing, and more. Tickets are \$75. Visit www.twisted-vines.com for more.

New Year’s Eve at the Drafthouse. 7:30 p.m. at Arlington Cinema &

Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. Watch New Year’s Eve celebration from around the world on the Drafthouse theater screens. Tickets are \$15. Visit www.arlingtondrafthouse.com for more.

New Years’ Eve Bond Ball. 8 p.m.-2 a.m. at Westin Arlington Gateway, 801 N. Glebe Road. Find signature cocktails, champagne, and more. A VIP ticket buys a three-course meal. Tickets are \$199-219 plus service fee. Visit www.newyearsevedmv.com for more.

New Years’ Eve Casino Night. 8 p.m.-3 a.m. at Hyatt Regency Hotel, 2799 Jefferson Davis Highway. Find casino games, show girls, karaoke, burlesque, and more. Tickets are \$60-\$150. Visit www.eventbrite.com/o/social-architects-terry-frasier-1124509851

New Years’ Eve MADsquerade Ball. 9 p.m.-2 a.m. at Mad Rose Tavern, 3100 Clarendon Blvd. Celebrate the New Year with food, drinks, and a live showing of the Ball Drop in Times Square. Tickets start at \$35. Visit www.madrosetaVERN.com.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JAN 1-2

Piff The Magic Dragon. 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. on Friday; 7 and 10 p.m. on Saturday at Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. Piff the Magic Dragon is a dragon costume-wearing comedian who performs magic tricks. Tickets are \$20. Visit www.arlingtondrafthouse.com.

THURSDAY/JAN. 7

Fireships. 8:30 p.m. at IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Fireships, a collaboration between Honey Brothers and Andrew Vladeck, will launch their tour. Tickets are \$10. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com.

FRIDAY/JAN. 8

Stand-Up Comedy: Pete Davidson. 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. at Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. Pete Davidson is a Saturday Night Live cast member. Tickets are \$30. Visit www.arlingtondrafthouse.com for more.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/JAN. 8-10

“Snow White.” 7:30 p.m. on Friday, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturday, and 3 p.m. on Sunday at Thomas Jefferson Community Theatre, 125 S. Old Glebe Road. Encore Stage & Studio presents the classic tale of a princess who is banished by her evil, jealous stepmother. Tickets are \$10 or children, student, military and seniors, and \$15 for everyone else. Visit www.encorestageva.org.

JAN. 8-FEB. 7

“Georgie: The Life and Death of George Rose.” Various times at Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave. In a limited engagement, Signature Theatre will host the world premiere of “Georgie: The Life and Death of George Rose,” a one-man play written and performed by Ed Dixon detailing Dixon’s relationship with friend and mentor George Rose, a Broadway character actor. Tickets are \$25-45. Visit www.sigtheatre.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 9

Stand-Up Comedy: Pete Davidson. 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. at Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. Pete Davidson is a Saturday Night Live cast member. Tickets are \$30. Visit www.arlingtondrafthouse.com.

SUNDAY/JAN. 10

Arlington Philharmonic: “Ritmos Festivos.” 3 p.m. at Wakefield High School, 1325 S. Dinwiddie St. The Arlington Philharmonic continues its 10th Anniversary Season with “Ritmos Festivos” featuring Spanish influences on classical music from the Old World to the New. The repertoire includes Borne’s “Carmen Fantasy,” a flute solo, by Aaron Goldman, based on Bizet’s themes, directly from Spanish folk influence. North America will be represented by Gershwin’s “Cuban Overture” and Moncayo’s Mexican dance (Huapango). Admission is free, \$20 suggested donation. Visit www.arlingtonphilharmonic.org.

MONDAY/JAN. 11

Meditation Made Easy. 7-9 p.m. at Teal Center, 4001 N. 9th St., Suite 230. Learn techniques for an effective meditation practice. The fee is \$40. Visit www.lightyourfiremeditation.com for more.

TUESDAY/JAN. 12

Sip & Sample. 6-8 p.m. at Bistro 360, 1800 Wilson Blvd. This reception will benefit Bowen McCauley Dance company. Tickets are \$50. Visit www.bmdc.org for more.

THURSDAY/JAN. 14

“How the C&O Canal and W&OD Railroad Shaped Arlington.” 7 p.m. at Marymount University–Reinsch Library auditorium, 2807 N. Glebe Road. Leader of C&O Canal Trust and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, Michael Nardolilli will discuss the connections between the towpath, trail, and the history of Arlington County. Free. Call 703-942-9247 for more.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/JAN. 15-17

“Snow White.” 7:30 p.m. on Friday, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturday, and 3 p.m. on Sunday at Thomas Jefferson Community Theatre, 125 S. Old Glebe Road. Encore Stage & Studio presents the classic tale of a princess who is banished by her evil, jealous stepmother. Tickets are \$10 or children, student, military and seniors, and \$15 for everyone else. Visit www.encorestageva.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 16

“Mouse in the House.” 3 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Jane Franklin Dance gives a performance of an adaptation of the book by Elizabeth Spire, “Mouse in House,” which reveals a friendship between a mouse and reclusive 19th-century poet Emily Dickinson. Tickets are \$10-15. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

“Niche.” 7:30 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. “Niche” follows an unremarkable couple with a new house, big careers, and odd neighbors. 2-D cut-outs projected via ‘old school’ technology supply visuals. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 20

Pet Therapy. 10:15-11 a.m. at Walter Reed Senior Center, 2909 S. 16th St. The public is invited to meet Zoe, a therapy Yorkshire Terrier. Free. Call 703-608-8314 for more.

THURSDAY/JAN. 21

Forty+ Performance. 10:30 a.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Forty+ is a group of performers past the age of 40 that study with a local choreographer at Jane Franklin Dance studios. Tickets are \$5. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

FRIDAY/JAN. 22

The Accidentals & Kevin Heider. 7 p.m. at FORUM Arlington, 3304 Washington Blvd. Live music. Tickets are \$10-15. Visit www.arlingtonforum.org for more.

SATURDAY/JAN. 23

“Mouse in the House.” 3 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Jane Franklin Dance gives a performance of an adaptation of the book by Elizabeth Spire, “Mouse in House,” which reveals a friendship between a mouse and reclusive 19th-century poet Emily Dickinson. Tickets are \$10-15. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

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Yorktown junior Juliette Mitrovich was all-state on bars and beam last year.



Olivia Zavrel and the Yorktown gymnastics team won a five-team meet on Monday night at Langley High School.



Yorktown freshman Julia Hays won the all-around competition at Monday's meet at Langley High School.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Yorktown Gymnastics Has Talent, High Hopes

Patriots win five-team meet at Langley Monday.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The Yorktown Patriots were arguably one of the top three gymnastics teams in the 6A North region last year, but fell victim to the tremendous competitiveness of Conference 6.

Yorktown placed third behind McLean and Washington-Lee at the 2015 Conference 6 meet despite a score (141) that would have resulted in a first-place finish in other conferences. With only the top two teams earning a regional berth, Yorktown had to settle for individual representation at the 6A North meet. Meanwhile, McLean, which won its fourth consecutive conference/dis-

trict championships, went on to win region and state titles. W-L placed third at the region meet, snapping its streak of three consecutive championships.

Ten months later, Yorktown is considered a contender for the 2015-16 season. With the return of talented juniors Juliette Mitrovich and Oliva Zavrel, and the addition of freshman Julia Hays, the Patriots have their sights set on a regional berth and potentially a trip to the state meet.

"They're hopeful, but we're trying not to get ahead of ourselves, because we've been hopeful before and have fallen a little short," Yorktown head coach Joanne Price said. "We are trying to just take it one practice at a time, one meet at a time. We don't talk a lot about where we're going to end up in the conference or in the region, we talk more about where we want to end up individually and as a team score."

"... We keep hearing that from other coaches ... that we're the ones to watch,

but ... it's scary to go in with that mindset."

On Monday night, Yorktown won a five-team meet at Langley High School. The Patriots finished with a score of 136.925, followed by Washington-Lee (129.175), South Lakes (120.325), Langley (109.4)

value."

Zavrel, a level 8 gymnast at Arlington Aerials, also competed at last year's state meet.

"Olivia has gotten really strong as far as her dance on floor," Price said. "She has become very consistent on beam and bars, as well. She's a solid competitor."

Zavrel stands 5 feet 10, which is considered tall for a gymnast.

"Most events it's actually not that bad, except for bars," Zavrel said. "I have my own ... height settings and I have to be very careful about touching the ground sometimes."

The addition of Hays, a level 9 club gymnast, helps fill the void created by the departure of sophomore Bella Kane, a 2015 state qualifier in the all-around, who decided to focus on club gymnastics rather than compete for Yorktown. Price said freshman Courtney Frisk and sophomore Marisa Daugherty are also expected to be key contributors.

Yorktown will compete at a meet at Oakton High School on Jan. 9. The Conference 6 meet is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 5 at Washington-Lee High School and the 6A North region meet is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 13 at Patriot High School.

"I don't want to get too ahead of ourselves because anything can happen — someone could have a really good day and we could have a terrible day," Mitrovich said, "but I think this is a good year for us and we can go really far."

"They're hopeful, but we're trying not to get ahead of ourselves, because we've been hopeful before and have fallen a little short."

— Yorktown gymnastics coach Joanne Price

and Madison (100.25).

Yorktown produced the top three finishers in the all-around competition: Hays (35.025), Mitrovich (34.825) and Zavrel (33.825).

Mitrovich, a level 9 club gymnast at Arlington Aerials, has focused on adapting her routines to meet high school gymnastics requirements in order to improve her scores. Mitrovich was all-state on beam and bars as a sophomore.

"Juliette has gotten really confident and she is really willing to do the high school requirements versus her club requirements," Price said. "... The first year or two she was a little apprehensive about changing stuff around or going for it. She's got her head in the game and she's willing to go for it to make sure she gets the 10-star

SCHOOL NOTES

Email announcements to arlington@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon. Photos are welcome.

Phuc Truong has been inducted into the Alpha Lambda Delta national honor society. Truong will also perform in the annual College Choir Concert. Truong is a sophomore at McDaniel College (Westminster, Md.).

Erik Wagner, the son of Karl T. Wagner of Arlington, has been named to Randolph-Macon

Academy's (Front Royal, Va.) dean's list for the first quarter of the 2015-16 school year.

Stevenson University (Owings Mills, Md.) men's cross country runner **Adam Michalak** helped his team place first at the Shannon Henretty Twilight Memorial Meet.

Lillian Goldstein has been inducted into the The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi at Virginia Commonwealth University (Richmond, Va.).

Lessons in Charitable Giving

Conversations, modeling behavior and hands-on actions can help teach children about giving.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Matthew Mamalian's holiday shopping list included some items that might seem atypical for a 12-year-old middle school student: shampoo, socks, soap and a few snacks. He, along with several friends from his Sunday school class, packed the items in shoeboxes wrapped with holiday paper and tucked a handwritten note of encouragement inside each box.

"We were all laughing and having fun packing them," he said. "We also learned that there are people who really need these things because they don't have a lot else."

The project was part of Interfaith Works' holiday giving program, an effort by the local nonprofit organization to meet the needs of the homeless. The holiday season can be a time for children to learn the principals of benevolence, say child development experts. Involving children in charitable activities, modeling altruistic behavior and making a link between compassion and a higher power are all effective ways parents can teach their children the value of giving to the less fortunate.

"Children need to have empathy modeled for them and they need a script to follow or ideas for carrying out charitable acts," said Christine Pegoraro Schull, Ph.D., professor of Early Childhood Education at Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria. "Children aspire to be kind and to be good citizens, but they don't necessarily know how to do these things,"

Involving Matthew and his siblings in philanthropic efforts through Potomac Presbyterian Church is one of the ways that their mother, Cyndy Mamalian, makes a connection between gratitude, charity and a higher power. "I think it's important for them to think beyond themselves and live out their faith," she said. "You need to put your faith into action, and that is about caring for other people."

Janet Dunlop, Matthew's Sunday school teacher and a member of the Mission Committee at Potomac Presbyterian Church, melds volunteer projects with class discussions to teach her students about gratitude and charity. This holiday season, as the middle-school aged children clipped wrapping paper and tied ribbons around shoeboxes filled with deodorant, toothpaste, snacks and other essentials for the homeless, she gave them a description of those who are on the receiving end of their project.

"Many young people growing up in Potomac don't have much experience with homelessness," said Dunlop. "When my husband and I arrive at the shelter with these boxes, the people there are so happy to receive them. So, this is also about helping the children see another aspect of life and trying to in-



Cyndy Mamalian's three children are collecting gifts for the homeless this holiday season. She hopes the project will help them understand the impact that giving can have on others.

still in them a life-long ideal of service."

Charitable giving for adults often means donating old clothes at the end of the tax year or writing a check to a nonprofit organization. However, children might find it difficult to understand how these abstract actions make a difference. That's why psychologists and educators recommend giving children first-hand experience in caring for others.

Jenny Trope, Ph.D. and her children raised money to purchase grocery store gift cards that they are distributing to homeless men and women they encounter this winter. "It gives the kids a glimpse of what it's like to be alone, hungry and stuck outside when it's cold," said Trope, who is also a marriage and family therapist based in Arlington.

Such hands-on projects, coupled with a conversation about why it's important to take action to aid people in need of a helping hand, could drive home the message. "Children aspire to be kind and to be good citizens, but they don't necessarily know how to do these things," said Schull.

A study by the United Nations Foundation and the Women's Philanthropy Institute at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis found that talking to children about giving

is highly effective for encouraging philanthropy, and increases a child's inclination to give by 20 percent.

"Conversations are critical. Talking about giving in combination with modeling is what actually increases children's giving," said Debra J. Mesch, Ph.D., director of the Women's Philanthropy Institute. "We ... know that these conversations need to be focused on why and how giving ... makes an impact on individuals in need, rather than simply talk that is more general, such as giving is the right thing to do."

The dialogue can include concrete examples of how a charitable action will benefit others, say mental health experts. "Around the holidays when you're struggling to survive, when you've lost everything and every decision you make is about meeting your absolute, basic needs, like how you're going to take a shower, it's a nice surprise to get a wrapped box of soaps, toothpaste, socks, snacks and a personal note," said Nikki Stanaitis, LCSW-C of Interfaith Works. "It makes a person feel human and gives them the sense of normalcy that we all want."

Acts of charity displayed year-round can lead to life-long habits of philanthropy. "Don't reserve donating and volunteering for the holidays. By making it a way of life, you're sharing your value system about giving and helping others with your children," said Trope.

"Children need to have empathy modeled for them and they need a script to follow or ideas for carrying out charitable acts."

— Christine Pegoraro Schull, Ph.D.,
Northern Virginia Community College

Saint Ann Catholic Church

SUNDAY LITURGY SCHEDULE:
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SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

DECEMBER
 12/30/2015.....Children's Connection

JANUARY
 1/6/2016.....Wellbeing, Renewal, Resolutions
 1/13/2016.....HomeLifeStyle
Martin Luther King Jr. Day is Jan. 18
 1/20/2016.....A+ Camps & Schools
 1/27/2016.....Community Guide
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Naive and Delusional

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Some days, like today, I don't feel like I have cancer. I feel – delude – myself into thinking that I have/feel what everyone else at my age who doesn't have a "terminal" disease, has/feels. Now whether I'm into something or just rationalizing symptoms like any other cancer patient does – discounting any signs of potential trouble for fear of the consequences – I certainly don't know, and probably wouldn't admit to it anyway; mind over what might actually matter. Nevertheless, it's a good feeling to have, so long as I don't think about it too much and just go with the uninterrupted flow, at least until it's interrupted. I'll spare you the details – in this column, anyway.

But not thinking about having cancer – when you have cancer, seems counterintuitive almost. How do you not think about the most important thing in your life, the "thing" which is very likely shortening that life? I mean, being diagnosed with cancer is not exactly chicken soup for the soul; it's more a harbinger of things to come, most of which are not particularly good. And as much as I would encourage not focusing on a negative and the presumptive self-fulfilling outcome it might portend, denying its existence and pretending that all is right when previously your CT Scans indicated you've been wrong, is reckless and irresponsible, unless you know/feel something that modern medicine has yet to detect.

I don't know anything except what I feel, and most of those feelings are probably being routed through my brain and its desire for self-preservation. The point being: Am I thinking clearly? Thinking wishfully/hopefully? Or thinking normally? That is: pretending, denying, waiting, wondering. Being a cancer patient/survivor is an emotional roller coaster, and feeling good – however fleeting, has many rewards, but feeling bad as I now do (a mere two paragraphs later) is all it's cracked up to be.

Sure, I had chemotherapy the other day, so feeling good, then hours later feeling bad, was not totally unexpected; as you might imagine after nearly seven years of cancer treatment I sort of know the routine/cycle. Still, whenever I feel as good as I did in the opening paragraphs, I get disappointed when the inevitable bad feelings return, which last for a week or so – and what bothers me even more: I should know better (I do know better). But I can't help thinking/hoping that this will be the post-chemotherapy week when I won't feel what I've always felt every week after chemotherapy since the infusions began in early March 2009.

As much as I readily acknowledge how amazingly lucky I am to still be alive, I can't help expecting more. And when I don't get more, but instead get less, I don't usually take it well. Emotionally I get challenged and physically I get compromised. The combination results in a difficult set of circumstances. I don't exactly lose my focus or forget my good fortune, but I am reminded that I have a serious disease, one that is looking for trouble, and occasionally, it does have its way with me. The only saving grace is that it is all very familiar to me now, and as my Auntie Irene used to say: "This too shall pass," which of course, it always does – and then we're back to abnormal.

However, that time when I feel good, it's almost a tease, as I know the forthcoming bad. And yet I want to believe that feeling good, for whatever period, is somehow indicative of a future less complicated than my present. Still, I keep thinking that maybe after this infusion, the week-after will be different. Unfortunately, it's never different. It's always the same. Hope springs eternal though, and as a cancer patient, hope is our most valuable commodity. Thankfully, there's plenty for everyone.

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

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THURSDAY/DEC. 17

A-SPAN Client Holiday Party. 10 a.m. at St. Borromeo Catholic Church, 3304 Washington Blvd. Arlington Street People's Assistance Network seeks volunteers for a Client Holiday Party to serve the holiday meal, distribute the gifts and otherwise assist at the function. Visit www.a-span.org for more.

MONDAY/DEC. 21

Residency Applications. Arlington Arts Center, 3550 Wilson Blvd., is accepting applications for residency. Deadline for long-term space is Dec. 21, short-term residency applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Visit www.arlingtonartscenter.org.

SUNDAY/JAN. 10

TreeStewards Application Deadline. The TreeStewards of Arlington and Alexandria are volunteers dedicated to improving the health of urban trees through educational programs, tree planting and care, demonstrations and tree maintenance. New volunteer training will be held Tuesday evenings, starting Feb. 2-April 12, 2016, with some Saturday mornings. Free. Visit www.TreeStewards.org.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 6

"Topping Out" of the Springs Apartments. 11 a.m.-12 p.m. at APAH Tent-First Presbyterian Church, 601 N. Vermont St. The Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing will celebrate the new new building reaching its highest level with the placement of its final beam. Free. Visit www.apah.org for more.

MONDAY/JAN. 11

"Moving Words" Poetry Contest Deadline. Six poets will have their work printed and displayed inside area buses April-September. Winners will also each receive a \$250 honorarium, and will be invited to give a public reading during National Poetry Month. This contest will be juried by poet Francisco Aragón. Free to enter. Visit www.arlingtonarts.org.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 20

Money Talk: A Financial Course for Women. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. This course is designed specifically for women. This session will cover financial basics. Free. Visit www.bit.ly/VCEFinancePrograms to register.

THURSDAY/JAN 21

Leadership Arlington Town Hall. 6:30-8 p.m. at George Mason University's Arlington Campus, 3351 N. Fairfax Drive. Leadership Arlington in conjunction with co-host, George Mason University, and supporting partner, Arlington Chamber of Commerce, invites citizens who live, work, or have interest in the Arlington County community to attend its annual Meet the Chair. Free. Visit leadershiparlington.ejoinme.org/MTC2016 to register.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 27

Money Talk: A Financial Course for Women. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. This course is designed specifically for women. This session will cover insurance basics. Free. Visit www.bit.ly/VCEFinancePrograms to register.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 3

Money Talk: A Financial Course for Women. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Arlington Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. This course is designed specifically for women. This session will cover investing basics. Free. Visit www.bit.ly/VCEFinancePrograms to register.

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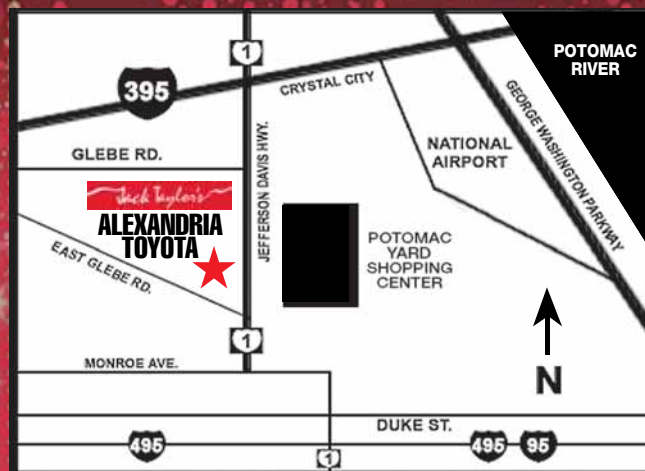
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