

McLean Community Players in rehearsal for "1776:" John Adams (Brent Stone) reads a letter from Abigail Adams (Marissa Chapman).

Rings True Still: '1776' at the Alden

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PHOT BY IRISH EYES PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOBY/COURTESY OF MCLEAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS
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Public Hearing, Public Access

McLean delegates and senators discuss guns, foster care, nursing, student debt, Judge Jane Roush and more.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Alexandra Reed Lajoux advocates for youth in foster care without a home, “sans domicile fix, as the French say.” The Fostering Futures advocate said 5,375 youth aged out of Virginia’s foster care system between 2008 and 2015.

Reed Lajoux grew up in McLean, attended Chesterbrook Elementary, Longfellow Junior High, and McLean and Langley high schools.

“All the while, I had a permanent address,” she said. “This permanent address was mine to claim even in my 20s as I made the transition to the working world and to a family of my own.”

In fact, 56 percent of the country’s 18-26 year olds currently live with their parents, according to the Pew Research Center.

Youth in foster care aren’t so fortunate, said Reed Lajoux.

“Unfortunately, these kids don’t have a nest to come back to,” said Yusuf Jamaludeen, who mentors foster children.

THE TWO ADVOCATES spoke before McLean’s delegates Marcus Simon (D-53), Rip Sullivan (D-48) and Kathleen Murphy (D-34), and senators Janet Howell (D-32) and Barbara Favola (D-31) at a Town Hall meeting at the McLean Community Center on Saturday, Jan. 16.

They were calling for support of legislation called Fostering Futures that would leverage federal funds to help former foster children who age out of the system without being adopted or reunited with family.

More than one in five teenagers who age out of foster care without permanent connections will become homeless after 18; one in four will be involved in the criminal justice system within two years of leaving the foster care system, fewer than three percent will earn a college degree by age 25 compared to 28 percent of all 25-year-olds; and only 58 percent will graduate high school by 19 compared to 87 percent of all 19 year olds, said Jamaludeen.

On the other hand, foster youth who receive services after 18 are two-to-three times more likely to be enrolled in college, more likely to avoid homelessness, school dropout or incarceration, and are more likely to seek health and mental health treatment when needed.

“We can pay now or pay more more later,” Jamaludeen said.

MORE THAN 45 people attended the hearing Saturday, Jan. 16 at the McLean Community Center.

“We are very eager to hear what’s on your



Yusuf Jamaludeen and Alexandra Reed Lajoux advocate for “Fostering Futures.”



Sen. Jane Howell, Del. Marcus Simon (D-53) and Del. Rip Sullivan (D-48).

mind,” said Howell.

“To hear your ideas and have conversation about what you think is important,” said Favola.

“I look forward to hearing from you,” said Rip Sullivan.

“To hearing your questions and finding out what you want me to be working on,” said Marcus Simon.

“I love serving this district,” said Murphy.

OF COURSE THE RALLY from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in front of NOVA Firearms was on

many people’s minds. Organizers held the rally in support of House Bill 422 sponsored by Simon and Murphy to allow local government to prohibit retail gun sales, gunsmithing services, or operating a sports shooting range within 1,000 feet of a school. Favola has similar legislation in the senate.

Jonathan Sullivan, of McLean, voiced his support for common sense gun legislation.

“We live in a society where gun violence in schools is a reality. At Franklin Sherman they practice emergency drills where they practice huddling in a corner,” he said. “Just



Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31)



Del. Kathleen Murphy (D-34)



April Georgelas discussed problems with some VDOT “megaprojects.”



Franklin Sherman Elementary parent Jonathan Sullivan advocated for common sense gun legislation.

think about that.”

“So when NOVA Firearms opened up, I thought this doesn’t make sense,” Sullivan said. “My kids said, ‘Dad, we don’t feel safe with a gun store right out our window.’”

Kris Gregory thanked McLean’s representatives for their efforts thus far.

“Thank you for your persistence against

SEE DELEGATES, PAGE 17

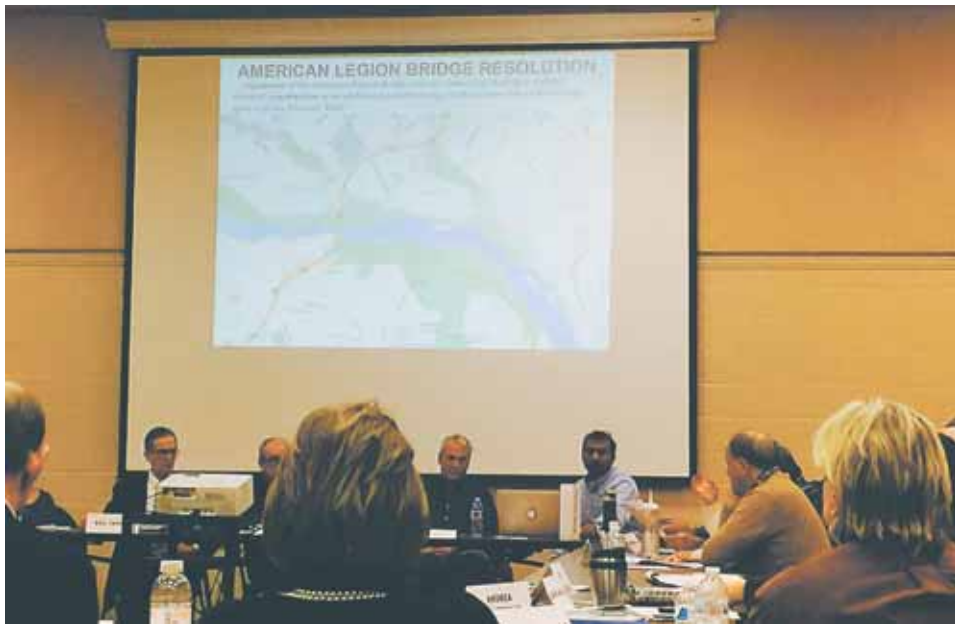


PHOTO BY KEN MOORE/THE CONNECTION

McLean Citizens Association meeting earlier in January where the influential association backed widening the American Legion Bridge.



Accident Ahead: McLean Citizens Association and many county business groups call for improvements to the American Legion Bridge in part because commuters clog McLean and Great Falls roads to circumvent the Beltway backup toward the bridge.

About Crossing the Potomac, Again

McLean Citizens Association, many county business groups, call for widening the American Legion Bridge, adding Express Lanes.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Each weekday, nearly 300,000 vehicles cross the American Legion Bridge, and each day traffic backs up into McLean, Great Falls and beyond.

Vehicle speeds during the afternoon commute slow to an average of 34.9 going towards McLean and 22.5 from McLean to the bridge, according to McLean Citizens Association. Traffic backs up for miles.

Glenn Harris, vice president of the McLean Citizens Association said it was important for MCA to get on the record. "I would like to see MCA come out in favor of fixing this enormous problem," he said. "This isn't exactly rocket science."

Sally Horn said it was time to do something. "It's time for us to act. If we're going to say something, we should change it at this juncture," said Horn, past president of the McLean Citizens Association.

"This is a huge issue and has enormous implications," said Jim Roberts, head of McLean Citizens Association's transportation committee.

The McLean Citizens Association passed a resolution at its last meeting urging the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland and the U.S. Department of Transportation to "expeditiously develop and implement a joint plan for the expansion of the American Legion Bridge and its connecting roadways, and the eventual construction of an additional parallel bridge on the eastern side next to the existing span over the Potomac River."

This week, business groups from Herndon, Reston, Springfield, and around Northern Virginia, 20 in all, also call for a new Potomac River crossing west of the American Legion Bridge, plus new man-

aged lanes in each direction over the American Legion Bridge to 270. Signers include the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce, Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, Tysons Regional Chamber, and others.

The American Legion Bridge is entirely in the State of Maryland.

MCA ACTED to encourage efforts between the Montgomery County Council and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, which wrote to the Governors and Transportation Secretaries of Maryland and Virginia on Oct. 19, 2015, "asking the states to come together and focus on making improvements to address the severe congestion problems at the American Legion Bridge."

A Potomac River Crossing Conditions study conducted by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and presented to the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) in July of 2015, found that the American Legion Bridge suffers from the worst congestion of all bridges crossing the Potomac River, and had the projected largest growth in traffic volume through 2040.

In 2009, The Maryland State Highway Administration and VDOT concluded The West Side Mobility Study in 2009. "VDOT staff recommended in that study that the 'top priority' for addressing Potomac River crossings should be extending the Express Lanes across the American Legion Bridge to the I-270 interchange."



The American Legion Bridge can back traffic up into Virginia anytime of the day or night.

"We want to put some pressure on the state of Maryland," said Rob Jackson at the Jan. 6 MCA meeting.

"I don't know why people are reluctant," said Harris.

"It goes without saying," said Mark Zetts, head of MCA's planning and zoning committee.

The advocacy group Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance also recommends upgrading the American Legion Bridge with four conventional and two managed/HOT lanes in each direction, and extending the I-495 HOT lanes in Virginia to I-270 western spur in Maryland.

BUT THE RIVER CROSSING has caused intense debate and controversy for the last two decades, and had its critics at the Jan. 6 MCA meeting, as well.

MCA member Katie Probst urged caution. She suggested that the association not dictate the definite solution, but advocate that something needs to be done.

"I feel like this is a huge deal to support. It seems like a rather big issue," she said, stating that she believed she needed more information and more time to understand all the implications.

"Do you realize you just voted for adding two lanes to the American Legion Bridge without any public input?" said April Georgelas, who attended the meeting not as a member. "I've been here for 40 years and I've never seen anything like this."

Georgelas said later that McLean has suffered from ongoing express lane construction on the Beltway for years, and she doesn't welcome more.

Now, "the shoulder project added another lane of merging HOT lane traffic into an already overburdened and dangerous merging area of the Beltway up to the American Legion Bridge, all without public input," Georgelas said.

RESIDENTS ON THE OTHER side of the river in Potomac, Md. have advocated against second river crossing in Montgomery County.

During a multi-year Master Plan process, ratified in 2004 by the Montgomery County Council, Potomac's blueprint for landuse said a second bridge crossing through Potomac violates the responsibility of Potomac as a buffer and protection to the Potomac River.

SEE BRIDGE, PAGE 5

Bridge

FROM PAGE 4

However, members of the Montgomery County Council and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors jointly sent a letter to Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R) and Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe (D) on Oct. 19, asking that the two states “come together and focus on making improvements to address the severe congestion problems at the American Legion Bridge.”

Improving the American Legion Bridge should take priority over the possibility of building another crossing of the Potomac River, they said.

“Montgomery County believes strongly that our limited resources are best spent fixing the American Legion Bridge, and we should not be distracted by a divisive second crossing. That’s why we, as two bodies, are calling on our governors to move forward with this vital transportation improvement as quickly as possible.”

“The American Legion Bridge is the major chokepoint in our regional transportation system and it must be fixed,” said Councilmember Roger Berliner, chair of the Montgomery Council’s Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment Committee. “Adding an additional HOT lane in each direction will ease congestion and promote transit. Our two states must work together to make this happen.”

PROPOSALS for a possible new bridge west of the American Legion Bridge are not new, and neither is opposition to the concept.

In 2000, U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.), now retired, requested \$2 million to conduct a study on the feasibility of a Techway bridge over the Potomac River. Public outcry and preliminary analysis of the disruptions the bridge would cause prompted him to cancel the study seven months later.

In 2003, Maryland Gov. Robert Ehrlich (R) and Virginia Gov. Mark Warner (D) announced their support for a new Techway study because they believed the second crossing would benefit “U-shaped commuters” traveling from upper Montgomery County to western Fairfax County (e.g., from Gaithersburg to Reston). The Virginia Department of Transportation conducted a license plate study on the American Legion Bridge and found that only about 8 percent of Virginia and Maryland commuters would benefit from the Techway, because most commuters are traveling to destinations on or inside I-495 rather than to the suburbs outside it.

lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known

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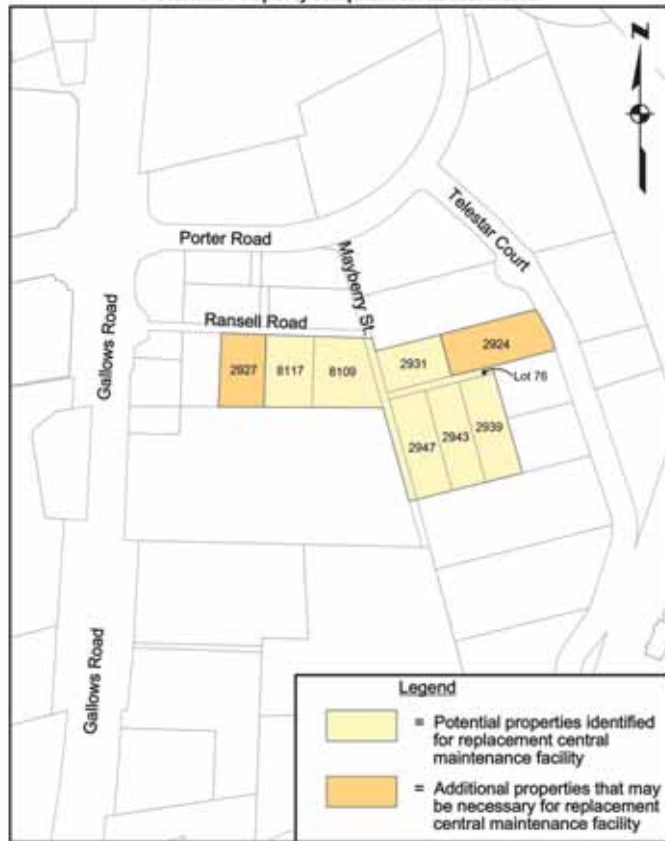
February 4, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

The Fairfax County Water Authority ("Fairfax Water") will hold a public input session at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 4, 2016, to receive and consider public comments on the potential acquisition of properties.

These properties are located at 2931, 2939, 2943, 2947 and Lot 76, Mayberry Street and 8109 and 8117 Ransell Road, Falls Church, Virginia.

Fairfax Water is also considering acquisition of additional properties: 2924 Telestar Court and 2927 Gallows Road.

Potential Property Acquisition in Merrifield



Fairfax Water may seek to acquire some or all of these properties for public use to serve as the site for a replacement central maintenance facility that Fairfax Water must construct and operate to meet the existing and future public water service requirements of its customers.

This location was suggested by the Greater Merrifield Business Association and others as a feasible site for such a facility. Information on this meeting can be found on Fairfax Water's website at this address: http://www.fairfaxwater.org/notices/pis_2016_02_04.pdf

The public input session will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA 22031. Those wishing to speak at this session should call Eva Catlin at (703) 289-6017.

Interested parties also may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Input Session Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on **Wednesday, February 3, 2016** to be included in the record of the public input session.



PHOTOS BY DANIELLE GRAE/THE CONNECTION

Protesters hold signs in support of gun store free school zone legislation.

Protesting, Supporting Gun Store Near School

Opposing views on display at Saturday's protest in McLean.

BY DANIELLE GRAE
THE CONNECTION

Two groups of protestors faced each other across the parking lot entrance to McLean gun store NOVA Firearms on Saturday, Jan. 16. Most chanted for a gun-store-free school zone, while others wore "guns save lives" stickers. Since the previous September protest when NOVA Firearms first opened on property adjacent to Franklin Sherman Elementary School, local politi-

cians have sought to prevent gun stores from locating close to schools.

The Virginia General Assembly prohibits localities from passing ordinances that would regulate where guns are sold.

"It's common sense. It's not about gun control. It's about school safety. I'm looking forward to the day when we bring gun control home to Fairfax County and not have the state dictate to us what we should do in terms of protecting our children from guns," Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) said.

State Sen. Barbara Favola, Del. Kathleen Murphy and Del. Marcus Simon are introducing bills that would transfer power from the state to local governments on how close gun stores can be to schools.

SEE GUN STORE, PAGE 9

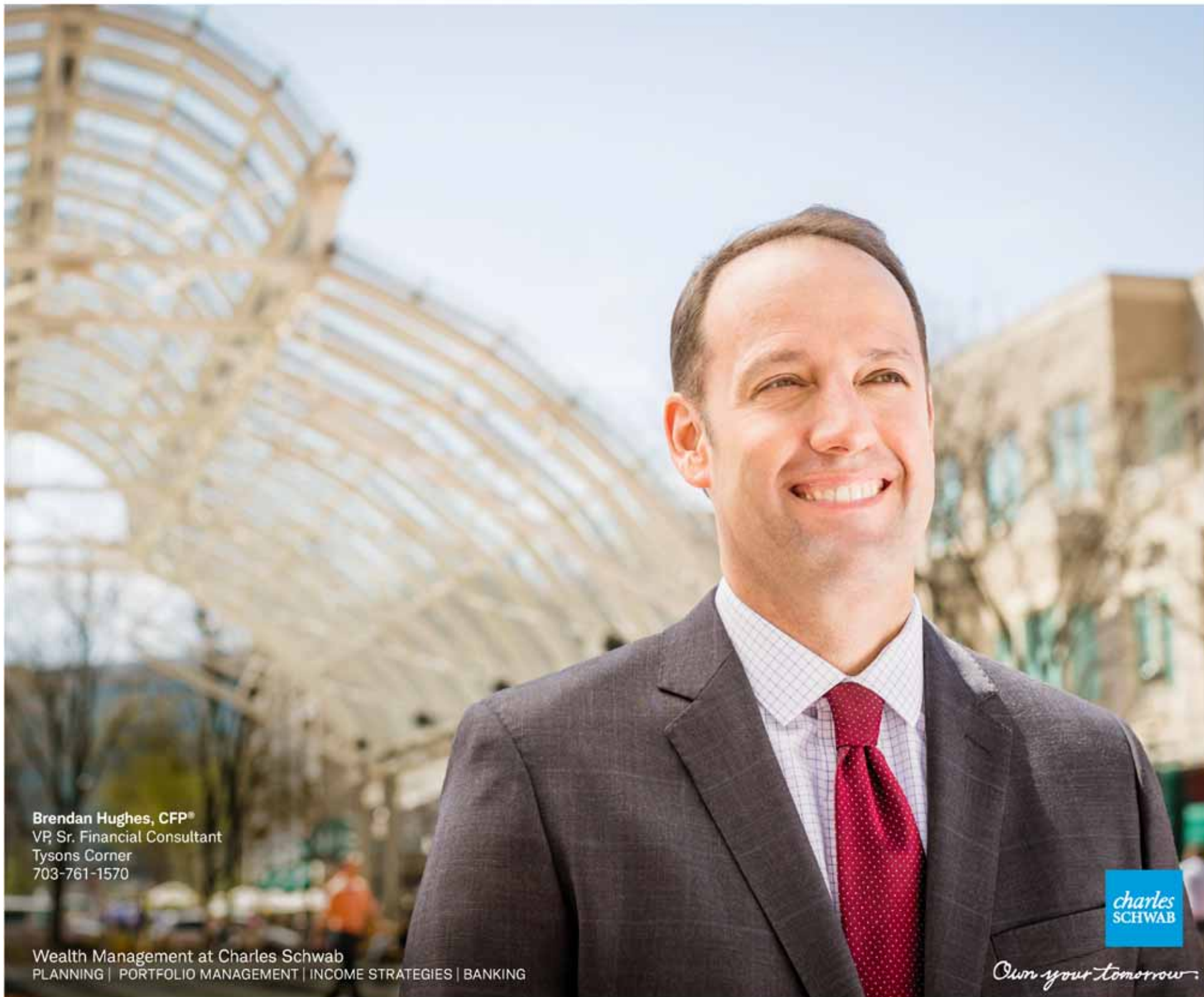


Protesters wearing "guns save lives" stickers participate in a counter-protest to the gun-store-free school zone protest.

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Pay Attention

The Virginia General Assembly began its 60-day 2016 session on Wednesday, Jan. 13. Here in Northern Virginia, residents are often far more cognizant of national politics and government than state and local government. But there are several reasons why, especially in Virginia, especially if you live in Northern Virginia, you should pay attention.

In Virginia, localities have only the power expressly given by the General Assembly. So living in Fairfax or Arlington or Alexandria, your local governments and regulations are often not able to reflect the values and preferences of residents.

For example, for Fairfax County to have any say about whether a gun store can operate adjacent to a school, where students can see customers coming and going with weapons, the General Assembly would have to vote to give the county that authority. While this has been a hot topic here, and several legislators have introduced "authorizing legislation," it would be remarkable if the currently constituted assembly would allow this to go forward.

Living in the wealthiest areas of the Commonwealth also raises concerns. Localities have very limited options for raising revenue. The revenue that is actually based on someone's ability to pay, income taxes, is only collected by the state; localities cannot claim any portion of income tax. Of course Northern Virginia is the economic engine of the state, and so it makes sense that a significant portion of the

state budget would be funded with Northern Virginia dollars. But it is unfair that the General Assembly limits localities ability to access other revenue choices to fund local necessities like schools.

There are dozens of other examples, and most are complicated. But local officials are elected, and if local government takes action not supported by local voters, they will be voted out.

Because of gerrymandering of districts in both the House of Delegates and the Virginia Senate, the makeup of the General Assembly is far more conservative than the Commonwealth overall, as evidenced by Democrats elected to all statewide offices. This makes the control from Richmond all the more egregious.

Every resident is represented by one delegate and one senator in the Virginia General Assembly. You can visit the General Assembly website to find out who represents you, for contact information, for session livestreaming and more.

<http://viriniageneralassembly.gov>

Vote Now for Presidential Primary

Who will be the next President of the United States also matters.

In order to vote in either of Virginia's presidential primaries on March 1, voters must be registered by Feb. 8. Voting "absentee in per-

General Assembly action matters more in Virginia.

son" (early voting available for myriad reasons, including anyone who will commute to work on Election Day) is already underway.

In Virginia, voters do not register by party. In the primaries for President, you can vote either the Democrat or Republican ballot, but not both. If you choose to vote the Republican ballot, you will be required to sign the following statement first:

Section 24.2-545 of the Code of Virginia allows the political party holding a primary to determine requirements for voting in the primary. The Republican Party of Virginia has determined that the following statement shall be a requirement of your participation. STATEMENT: My signature below indicates that I am a Republican.

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For details on absentee voting in Fairfax County, see www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/absentee.htm.

EDITORIAL

Transportation Improvements Will Bolster Economy

Northern Virginia Business Transportation Coalition 2016 policy statement.

We, the undersigned Northern Virginia organizations representing the vast majority of businesses and employees of Northern Virginia's private sector and non-profit workforce, believe that a strong, efficient regional transportation network is essential to our region's future economic competitiveness, security, and quality of life. We believe that unlocking Northern Virginia's transportation grid requires a strategic regional approach.

We believe that achieving the best solutions to our transportation challenges requires a big picture perspective — regionally as well as statewide. Efforts to constrain, either by law or regulation, the Commonwealth Transportation Board's ability to determine the best investments for the state, are counter to the goals set forth in House Bill 2, 2014 legislation

designed to address the commonwealth's congestion reduction and economic development needs.

The focus of the Commonwealth Transportation Board and the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, our region's designated transportation planning body, should be on the investment of regional, state, federal, and private sector transportation dollars for highway, transit improvements, and intelligent transportation systems that will:

- ❖ Move the greatest number of people throughout the region;
- ❖ Reduce congestion and travel time between major regional employment centers and communities;
- ❖ Increase reliability of the network region-wide while producing the best long-term return on investment;
- ❖ Promote regional economic

development and growth; and

- ❖ Enhance regional security.

We are concerned that the law requiring the long-term benefits of Northern Virginia's regional funds be distributed proportionally among jurisdictions impedes the ability of the regional body to address the region's most critical transportation needs.

We believe that regional transportation funds should be primarily focused and leveraged, where appropriate, with federal, state, and private funds on projects of large-scale regional significance. These include:

- ❖ I-66 — construct new lanes and enhance transit from US Route 15/Haymarket to Theodore Roosevelt Bridge.
- ❖ New Potomac River Crossing — constructed west of American Legion Bridge.
- ❖ American Legion Bridge — add new express/managed lanes in each direction.
- ❖ Metro — improve maintenance, operations, safety and rail fleet.
- ❖ Bi-County Parkway — construct between I-66/Route 234 Bypass in Prince William County

and Route 50 in Loudoun County.

- ❖ Route 28 — upgrade to eight lanes.

❖ Fairfax County Parkway — convert to limited access facility.

❖ I-395 — convert HOV lanes to express/managed lanes between the Capital Beltway and the 14th Street Bridge.

❖ Regional Express Bus network — implement in the I-66, I-95, I-395, I-495, Dulles and other major regional corridors.

We support performance-based statewide and regional transportation plans that focus on new and existing corridors of regional and statewide significance, the evaluation of highway and public transit projects utilizing the same criteria, and the prioritization of investments first and foremost on the ability to reduce congestion and improve travel time.

Brian M. Gordon, MPA, Apartment and Office Building Association
Leo J. Titus, Jr., PE, Committee for Dulles

Patricia Nicoson, Dulles Corridor Rail Association

Mark S. Ingrao, Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce Greater

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NEWS



PHOTOS BY DANIELLE GRAE/THE CONNECTION

Falls Church resident and legal assistant in law firm Bergstrom & Taylor that represents NOVA Firearms, Charlotte Denekas, stands with Arlington resident and salesman Jack Blakely to protest in support of gun shop. Blakely said: "The guns are not going to magically fly out of the store and into children's hands."

Protesting, Supporting Gun Store Near School

FROM PAGE 6

The legislation is based on concerns of constituents that NOVA Firearm's proximity to an elementary school poses a safety risk. Some constituents said the purpose of a gun free zone is to give schools visual warning of people carrying guns nearby so the school could react, perhaps with a lockdown. Some constituents are concerned that the regular sight of guns outside the school defeats this purpose.

"It's difficult to ascertain someone who is carrying a gun who is a good guy from who is a bad guy," Franklin Sherman PTA member and father Matt Rampy said. "I fear you could have a situation where people become complacent with people who have guns."

Some parents have moved their

children to different schools. Franklin Sherman has passed a resolution calling for a gun free school zone.

By contrast, Arlington resident and salesman Jack Blakely, a protester supporting NOVA Firearms, said the shop's location is a non-issue.

"The guns are not going to magically fly out of the store and into children's hands," Blakely said.

Politicians protesting in favor of the legislation included Foust, Favola and Murphy as well as Del. Rip Sullivan and Fairfax School Board Member Janie Strauss.

"Regardless of whatever legislation gets passed, we'll get grandfathered in anyway," NOVA Firearms proprietor James Gates said in the belief that a new law could not force his shop to change location.



NOVA Firearms proprietor James Gates (right) works with an employee.

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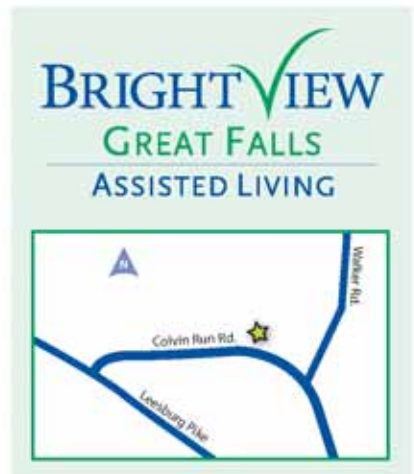
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Aaron and London Hall with Bryant and Nyrisha Beckman.



Nyrisha Beckman with her son Bryant.



Nyrisha Beckman at her desk.

Victor Not Victim

Modeling what it takes for success, Nyrisha Beckman overcomes childhood of foster care.

BY JOAN BRADY
THE CONNECTION

We stayed there until things got so bad that we ran away," she said. By that time, she was a 10th grader.

At tall, striking figure in red, Nyrisha Beckman stands in front of a room of recent Fairfax County high school graduates; not as a cautionary tale, but rather a true inspiration.

Her journey has been one of unrelenting perseverance—of getting knocked down and picking herself up, of being her own cheerleader. Today, despite many obstacles, the home she owns with her fiancé displays a wall of degrees including an associate's, a bachelor's and a master's. Shortly, a second master's will join the others.

Beckman wants these high school graduates, who are Fairfax County foster care alumni, to know that they can do it too. Quoting one of her favorite poems, Beckman tells them, "Rest if you must, but don't you quit."

And that determination was the example set by her older sister, Taneka, who says, "We couldn't help how we were brought up. It was on each of us whether, as adults, we were going to be a success or a failure."

Placed in foster care for the first time at age 6, Beckman lived in two different foster homes before returning to her mother's home where she lived for the next few years. About to start sixth grade, social services intervened again and she and her five underage sisters were removed from their mother's household for good. Beckman and three of the sisters were taken in by an aunt. Beckman was grateful to be placed with a family member and to have her sisters for support.

But for children living a precarious childhood, there are often no adults to confide in and when things went south at her aunt's, "We were afraid to go to the social worker.

RUNNING AWAY did get her removed from her aunt's house, but being split up from her sisters and living in four different foster homes over the next three years wasn't easy. "You were on eggshells in someone else's house. You never felt like you were part of that family," she said.

Educational success can be elusive for children who spend time in foster care. "Children often have many moves from foster home to foster home," said Marilyn Durbin, LCSW, BCD of Centreville and 25-year veteran of Fairfax County Foster Care and Adoption caseworker and supervisor.

"This can result in changing schools. With the educational disruptions, the trauma of moving and the trauma of the abuse and/or neglect that brought them into the system in the first place, learning can be difficult and sometimes impossible."

A recent study commissioned by the state of Virginia found that children who aged out of foster care were 37 percent less likely to have earned a high school diploma than their counterparts who were not in care.

Beckman and her siblings had an uncle who somehow managed to instill in them the idea that education was the key to success. Even with all of the turmoil and diagnoses of ADD/ADHD and learning disabled, Beckman didn't drop out of high school.

When she graduated, several of her older siblings were setting a good example by pursuing higher education. This sets the Beckman siblings apart. Fewer than two percent of foster care alumni earn a college degree by age 25, compared to 28 percent of all 25-year-olds, according to the Chapin Hall Midwest study.

WHEN BECKMAN began her freshman year at The State University of New York at Buffalo, in the city where she had grown up, she was 18. Having aged out of foster care, she was on her own without the safety net and support that parents often provide.

Beckman found herself far behind the rest of her classmates academically. She struggled to keep up while working to ensure she had a roof over her head and food to eat. Going to school also meant less time to hang out with her friends. It was too much. She dropped out after her freshman year.

With few options, Beckman joined the Army National Guard where she served for four years as a chemical specialist.

By 2003, she had fulfilled her military commitment and was juggling motherhood with several jobs in an effort to support their little family.

"My inspiration was my son," Beckman said, "I was working two - three jobs to support us. I knew I wanted Bryant to have a life where he had choices. To give him that, I needed to go back to college."

But her plans were derailed when her

application to return to the University at Buffalo was not accepted.

Instead of crumbling under the rejection, Beckman pressed on: "Cannot' is simply not in my vocabulary." She was determined not to let obstacles of money, childcare and academic challenges keep her from succeeding. She got out a piece of paper and starting writing down her goals.

With college at the top of her list, she matriculated at Erie Community College. Unable to afford evening childcare, Beckman brought her baby son with her to

class. As a result, some of Bryant's earliest memories are of classrooms with just one window and the single sheet of paper he had to entertain himself.

DESPITE THE SETBACKS, Beckman continued to push forward to achieve her goals. "That seed, planted by her uncle, might have been what it took to help instill the resiliency she needed to fight to return to college," said Jackie Stout, a licensed clini-

SEE SUCCESS STORY, PAGE 12

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BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

When musician Jeanne Kelly was asked to be a part of a study on creativity in the aging, she readily accepted. She was a natural to be tapped for the job, since she was running a program for older adults at the Levine School of Music's Arlington campus. She was tasked with helping to measure the impact of professionally conducted cultural programs on older adults.

"The study found that artistic excellence has huge benefits, physically, mentally and socially. Out of that study, I decided to start Encore," said Kelly, referring to a group of singers, all seniors, who are part of one of the 18 Encore Chorales that make up Encore Creativity for Older Adults.

Encore is a nonprofit organization that offers arts education and performance opportunities for seniors. The chorales are currently accepting new members through the end of January. There are no auditions and all levels of musical experience and ability are accepted.

CHORALE MEMBERS pay a fee which covers sheet music and the cost of the performances. In exchange, members receive



PHOTO COURTESY OF ENCORE CREATIVITY FOR OLDER ADULTS

Lee Lipsey is a member of and chorale master for the Encore Chorale of Reston.

music education and training from professional musicians, a chance to make social connections and an opportunity to perform challenging choral music. Participants learn proper breathing techniques and ways in which they can improve their voice, all under the guidance of a conductor.

"We don't dumb things down for our older adults," said Kelly. "Our members really appreciate the respect they get."

Adjustments are made, says Kelly, to accommodate the needs of some seniors. For example, rehearsals are held during the day out of consideration for those who don't

drive at night, and members with mobility issues are not required to stand during rehearsals or performances. Encore focuses on offering a classical music repertoire. Choral works such as Giuseppe Verdi's "Messa da Requiem" are chosen to pair well with seniors' voices.

"Our voices do change as we age," said Kelly. "Soprano voices aren't as high as we age, for example, so we choose wonderful music that really shows them off and will challenge them to the max."

"What they're doing is beautiful because they're not only making healthy social connections, they're also challenging their brains which helps maintain their cognitive flexibility," said Carolyn Lorente, Ph.D, assistant professor of psychology at Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria. "To be able to memorize a piece of music is impressive."

Encore Chorales travel and perform at venues around the globe. Janet Hansen, the chorale master for the Langston Brown Encore Chorale in Arlington, traveled to Cuba last year. "It was a marvelous experience that I wouldn't have had if I hadn't been in Encore," said Hansen, who is a retired education policy researcher. "I wanted to try new things that were different than I did

SEE ENCORE CHORALE, PAGE 13

Foster Child's Success Story

FROM PAGE 11

cal social worker specializing in the treatment of trauma and childhood issues using EMDR therapy.

Two years later when she re-applied to the University at Buffalo, Beckman was armed with an associates degree from Erie Community College in business administration and a 3.5 grade point average.

Acceptance back into the University at Buffalo meant continuing to juggle a full-time job with motherhood and her full course load, Beckman remembers how supportive her professors were, even entertaining young Bryant while she took exams.

When she accepted her bachelor of arts, she was ready to start working toward her next goal. The university had awarded her with a full-ride scholarship to complete a master's in Rehabilitation Counseling.

Daniel J. Smith, adjunct professor, Graduate School of Education remembers Beckman from those days, "She wasn't writing or researching on a graduate level [when she started]. But she went back and forth with me on her papers, accepting criticism and not giving up until she felt she had done her best. By the end of her third class with me, she was writing in the top 30 percent." And today, he said, "her writing is Ph.D. level."

Smith didn't know prior to being interviewed for this article that Beckman had had a difficult childhood. He said, "I wish I

had known, I wouldn't have been so hard on her." But then thought better of it. He shouldn't have expected less of her than she expected from herself, and that is to be the very best that she can be, he said.

In 2013, Beckman earned her master in rehabilitation counseling. She says that over the thousands who came to celebrate the graduates, she could hear her then 11-year-old son cheering for her. Bryant remembers that day too; both his pride in his mother and how loudly he screamed "MOOOOOM!" when she accepted her diploma.

In addition to raising her son and merging their duo with her fiancé and his daughter, London, she is working on her second master's, works full-time during the week and has a part-time job on weekends. "[Nyrisha's] heart is as big as the world," her fiancé, Aaron Hall, said.

HER WILLINGNESS to help others without judgment is key to her success as an employment/workforce specialist for Linden Resources, Inc. Beckman is deployed to Fairfax County and works at the Merrifield Behavioral Health Outpatient Program.

"Her success in matching clients with employment is more than double the average. That's unheard of," said Lori Bell, Mental Health manager and Beckman's direct supervisor. "She is a superstar and ignites everyone around her to strive to be

the same."

Director of Mental Health Services LaVurne Williams can't say enough about Beckman's impact. "You can't be in the same building with Nyrisha and not meet her. Her personality is that magnetizing. Nyrisha works with clients with struggles that contribute to difficulties finding and keeping employment. Without jobs, they are unable to obtain housing and meet the basic needs of themselves and their families. She works tirelessly to figure out creative ways connect her clients with jobs. She changes the lives of everyone around her."

Beckman says she uses her own experiences to help her clients.

"You can't take care of yourself without employment and education. I can set an example. If I can do it, they can too."

Friends, classmates, colleagues and supervisors confirm the value of Beckman.

"Everyone wants to be around her," said Teresa Zutter, director of Education at First Star Greater Washington Academy, where Beckman volunteers.

"She has a 'pull yourself up by your bootstraps' attitude which she uses to encourage others," said Chauncey Strong, Chapter Liaison, Foster Care Alumni of America.

"She has a natural empathy," said Krystal Edmead, graduate school classmate.

"She has shown me that whatever you want to do in life, you can do, just stick with it," said Lillian Imes Gates, a childhood friend.

"She is a go-getter, a very impressive self starter," said Liesa Snodgrass, internship clinical supervisor

Beckman, reflecting on how she juggles a family, full and part-time work and her many volunteer commitments, posits that even the ADHD may have helped her along the way, "Maybe it's that hyperactivity that allows me to juggle and accomplish so many things," she said with a smile.

She is sympathetic to the people who failed her during her childhood. Her parents, a mother with a seventh-grade education and an untreated mental illness and a father who struggled with drug addiction, did the best they could, she says. Relatives and foster parents who failed her, were not properly trained.

Every day, Beckman wears something red. To her, it is the color of energy and it helps to fuel her drive. It is also her mother's favorite color, she notes.

Despite all of her success, Beckman is wistful when she talks of her one stuffed animal, long ago lost in one of those many childhood moves and of the pictures of her childhood never taken. She is unwavering in her resolve that Bryant and London's childhoods be different, with mementoes kept safe and memories captured in pictures.

Now 36-years-old, Beckman doesn't waste a single minute, setting an example every day as to what it is to be a victor, instead of a victim.

Encore Chorale

FROM PAGE 12

when I was working. This one has been very rewarding." Chorale masters are singers who assist the conductor with administrative duties, serve as contact for singers with questions, etc.

The chorales are open to everyone over the age of 55, regardless of musical experience or ability. Members range from beginners to accomplished musicians. Joan and Ted Thayer are members of the George Mason University Potomac Arts Academy

Encore Chorale in Fairfax. Ted Thayer has been a musician for most of his adult life, majoring in music at the University of Illinois and spending more than 30 years in the National Symphony Orchestra. Joan Thayer, however, had no musical experience. Both participate fully in their chorale.

Joan Thayer says she has enjoyed learning and sharing one of her husband's passions. "Singing is challenging for me, but I always come away happy and relaxed after an hour and a half rehearsal," she said. "It's a great group of people, and it's nice to be able to talk with someone about something

that happened in the 1940s or about things that seniors are going through now, and actually be understood."

Being challenged through musical performance is one of the things that Lee Lipsey, a member of and chorale master for the Encore Chorale of Reston, appreciates. "It's energizing and stimulating on a lot of different levels," she said. "It requires focus, hard work and practice to do it well, but there is a satisfaction in doing it well. You're part of a team, so your pursuit of excellence isn't an individual effort, it's for the team."

ENCORE has more than 1,200 members in 17 Chorale locations in the Washington, D.C. area and six Chorales in other cities. Opportunities for performance and travel for 2016 include a French Riviera cruise and intensive summer training at college campuses around the country. The season concludes with combined performances with other Chorales as well as local concerts at most Chorale locations.

For more information or to register for an Encore Chorale, visit <http://encorecreativity.org>, call 301-261-5747 or email info@encorecreativity.org.

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CALENDAR

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

THURSDAY/JAN. 21

"Brush Up Your Shakespeare." 7:30 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean. Experts from the Shakespeare Theatre, American Shakespeare Center and the Folger Shakespeare Library are back to give you a guided tour of the world of Shakespeare in preparation for American Shakespeare Center on Tour's Shakespeare Weekend at The Alden. Tickets: \$6/\$3 MCC district residents; free with the three-play ASC weekend package. Single tickets available at the box office only. <http://www.mcleancenter.org/>. 703-790-0123.

Zen Coloring. 7-8 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave, McLean. De-stress and meet new people while working on detailed coloring pages for adults. Coloring pages and colored pencils provided. Teens and Adults. 703-356-0770.

FRIDAY/JAN. 22

American Shakespeare Center on Tour's Shakespeare Weekend at The Alden: "Julius Caesar." 8 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean. In this profoundly moving, breathtaking and deeply human play, Shakespeare shows us a world on fire; a world turned upside down; a world where some of history's most famous men commit horrific crimes in the name of patriotism and honor. "Julius Caesar" is a dazzling thrill ride of betrayal, violence and perhaps most surprisingly, love. \$20-\$35 (three plays for \$50-\$88). <http://www.mcleancenter.org/> or 703-790-0123.

Robyn Hitchcock. 8 p.m. The Barnes, Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. One of England's most enduring contemporary singer/songwriters, Robyn Hitchcock began his career performing folk rock in Cambridge. Come enjoy his performance with Emma Swift, who is an alt-country songstress and award-winning radio broadcaster. \$25-\$28. <http://www.wolfftrap.org> or 703-255-1900.

McLean Art Society Meeting. 10 a.m.-noon. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Beverly Ress, a graphic artist who does Botanical illustrations, will be the featured presenter. 703-790-0123.

Playdate Cafe. 10 a.m.-noon. Meeting Room, Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Toys and playspace for children. Coffee and conversation for grownups. Ages birth-5. 703-757-8560.

Family Game Time. 3:30-5:30 p.m. Meeting Room, Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play assorted board games. All skill levels and ages welcome. 703-757-8560.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/JAN. 22-24

Henry IV, Part 1. Friday-Saturday, 8 p.m. Sunday, 4 p.m. Green Hedges School, 415 Windover Ave., Vienna. The Britches and Hose Shakespeare Company is thrilled to announce its upcoming production of William Shakespeare's play. The Britches and Hose Shakespeare Company is a gender-blind theater group devoted to creating innovative productions. \$10. <http://www.britchesandhoseshaakespearecompany.com/>

Hope on Ice. 3-9:30 p.m. Tysons Skate Rink, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Community ice skating extravaganza benefiting American Cancer Society and honoring cancer survivors. DJ Civil, live music, entertainment and Luminaria on ice ceremony. First 50 cancer survivors receive commemorative T-shirt. \$12. skatetysonscorner@gmail.com. 703-673-8044.

SATURDAY/JAN. 23

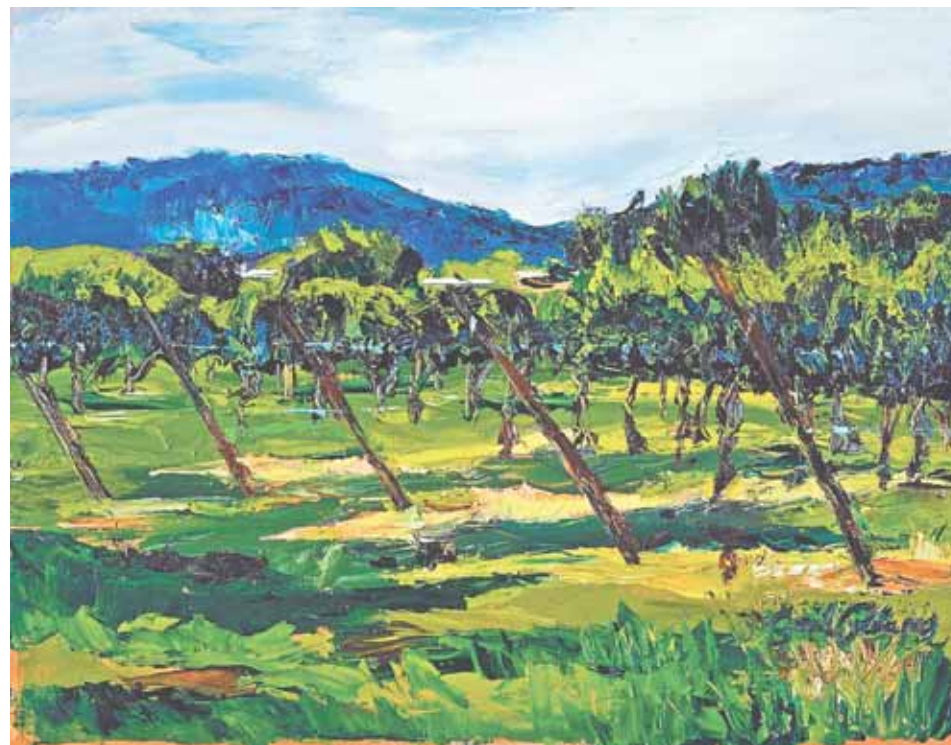
All Aboard! Ticket to Ride Game Event. 2 p.m. Barnes and Noble Tysons, 7851-L Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Customers of all ages can join booksellers and learn to play the popular Ticket to Ride strategy board game. 703-506-6756.

American Shakespeare Center on Tour's Shakespeare Weekend at The Alden: "The Importance of Being Earnest." 2 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean. Oscar Wilde's brilliant and wicked comic masterpiece defines wit and style. This "trivial comedy for serious people" is at once blissfully silly and outrageously shrewd. One-hundred twenty years after its first performance, "The Importance of Being Earnest" continues to delight audiences with its playful language, charming characters and



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

American Shakespeare Center on Tour presents "Henry V" at the Alden Theatre on Saturday, Jan. 23.



Gail Péan, 'Vineyard Dance:' Péan's impasto oil paintings - 'Excellent Schoolmasters' - are on exhibit at Katie's Coffee House/Old Brogue in Great Falls, Jan. 1-31.

biting look at contemporary society, and ASC on Tour's production will have you in absolute hysterics. \$20-\$35 (three plays for \$50-\$88). <http://www.mcleancenter.org/> or 703-790-0123.

American Shakespeare Center on Tour's Shakespeare Weekend at The Alden: "The Life of King Henry V." 8 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean. The story of England's hero-king and the greatest upset in European military history is Shakespeare's finale to his great history plays. More than that, Henry V — at once touching, heroic, savage and comic — explores the nature of greatness and its connection to theatre; and, perhaps more than any other of Shakespeare's works, it makes the audience part of the story. \$20-\$35 (three plays for \$50-\$88). <http://www.mcleancenter.org/> or 703-790-0123.

Marcia Ball. The Barnes, Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Grew up in Vinton, La., she began playing piano at age five and debuted with the country rock album Circuit Queen in 1978. Since then, she has released more than a dozen records, including her Grammy-nominated collaboration with blues stars Irma Thomas and Tracy Nelson, Sing It! (1998). \$35-\$40. <http://www.wolfftrap.org> or 703-

255-1900.

The Imaginary Landscape: Workshop with Carol Barsha. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Participants will create a series of sketches leading to a final composition — combining elements from the natural world within an imaginary landscape. \$60/\$55. <http://www.mpaart.org/events-2/>. 703-791-1953.

Exploring the Psychic World. 1-2:45 p.m. Meeting Room, Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave, McLean. Noted psychic Sherry Sherry presents a program on psychic phenomena, the paranormal, and the spirit world. Seating is limited. Registration is highly recommended. Registration begins Dec. 20. Adults. 703-356-0770.

SUNDAY/JAN. 24

The Philadelphia Orchestra Chamber Ensemble. The Barnes, Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Join esteemed players from one of the nation's finest orchestras, under the direction of Yannick Nézet-Séguin, in a rare evening of chamber music. The centerpiece of the performance will be Mozart's Clarinet Quintet (K. 581), featuring principal

Ongoing

Pigments of My Imagination. Jan. 4-March 31. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Long time Great Falls resident Donna Barnako, has created over a dozen colorful and whimsical small works. Her subjects are varied, from pigs to puppies and cowboy boots.

Weekly Storytime. Wednesday and Saturday. 11 a.m. Barnes & Noble, 7851 L Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Themes and Titles vary. Free admission.

"The Blues" Exhibition. Jan. 5-23. Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Exhibition of VAS members paintings with the theme, "The Blues." Free. 703-319-3971. www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

53rd Annual James A. Bland Contest. Through Monday, Feb. 15. Vienna Lions Club invites elementary and high school vocalist and instrumentalists to present a song or piece for cash prizes. For information and application, contact Susan Stiles at sandcs89@yahoo.com or 703-938-1142.

Gentle Yoga. Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. Emmaus United Church of Christ, 900 E Maple Ave. E, Vienna. Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Gentle Kundalini Yoga, one free introductory session, senior discounts. Increase your flexibility, improve your breathing and health, reduce your stress. Ravi Kaur has 15 years experience teaching yoga. \$15 per session. www.edimprovement.org. 571-213-3192.

"Poetry in Motion" Exhibit. Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. From Feb. 2-27. Exhibition of VAS members paintings with the theme "Poetry in Motion. Free.

Trail and Ales with Caboose Brewing and Grass Roots Fitness. Mondays through Jan. 31. Caboose Brewing Company, 520 Mill Street, NE Vienna. Come Run with us every Monday night. \$1 Off All Pints! All paces welcome. We will run between 3-5 miles with options to go shorter or longer. You can walk or run. Dog and stroller friendly. Contact Joann Meginley at joannandfrancine@grassrootsfitness.org.

Tai Chi Beginners' Practice. Saturdays, 8-9 a.m. St. Luke's Catholic School Gymnasium, 7005 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Weekly Tai Chi practice. Group has met for over 20 years. Free. FreeTaiChi.org. 703-759-9141.

clarinetist Ricardo Morales. Tickets: \$35. <http://www.wolfftrap.org/> or 703-255-1900.

TUESDAY/JAN. 26

Pre-School Storytime. 10:30-11:15 a.m. Meeting Room, Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Join us for stories, songs, and activities. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-757-8560.

Legos in the Library. 3:30-5:30 p.m. Meeting Room, Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Get creative with legos. Legos provided. Ages 5-12. 703-757-8560.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 27

Animals on the Move. 10:30-11:15 a.m. Meeting Room, Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave, McLean. Learn about migration, hibernation and active winter animals, through interactive activities, stories and songs. Presented by Riverbend Park and sponsored by the Friends of the Dolley Madison Library. Ages 3-5. 703-356-0770.

Pokemon League. 4:30-6:30 p.m. Meeting Room, Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play Pokemon with your friends! 703-757-8560.

THURSDAY/JAN. 28

Grant-Lee Phillips + Steve Poltz. 7:30 p.m. Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave E, Vienna. Join the two singers as they take a stage together to share some of their songs. \$20. <https://jamminjava.com/>. 703-255-1566.

Genealogy Program. 7:30-9 p.m. Kilmer Middle School, 8100 Wolftrap Road, Vienna. Fairfax Genealogical Society monthly meeting and program. Speaker: Sharon Hodges on Expanding Research to Resources Not Available On Line. Free. 703-644-8185.

NEWS

Crashes Diminished

Dangerous McLean intersection at Old Dominion and Bellview fixed.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Numerous car accidents, including one fatality, prompted neighbors around the intersection of Bellview Road and Old Dominion Drive to action.

"The sound of crashes and the sirens of first responders have been a common occurrence for years," said neighbor Robert Makheja.

After Makheja and other neighbors told Supervisor John Foust of their safety concerns in 2012, Foust asked the Fairfax County Department of Transportation to evaluate what could be done about the "frequent accidents."

There were 15 reported accidents at this intersection in 2014 alone.

Of the 68 reported crashes on Bellview Road from 2010-2014, 46 occurred at this intersection: five accidents in 2010, 10 in 2011, seven in 2012, nine in 2013, and 15 accidents in 2014.

Many of these accidents were not benign. Ninety-one people were involved in the accidents, with 22 injuries. There was one fatality. "In the fatal accident, the driver failed to acknowledge a stop sign and was impacted by a second vehicle inside the intersection, according to Fairfax crash data. "Neither speed nor alcohol was a factor in this crash. The driver of the impacting vehicle was not charged with a crime."

VDOT removed trees on public land in 2014, and vegetation, tree clearing and re-grading on private property in 2015 that cleared the view of drivers.

"This is one of the most important road safety projects we have completed during my time in office," said Supervisor Foust.

THE NEIGHBORS organized a ceremony on Monday, Jan. 11 to thank Foust for "initiating and accelerating an important Fairfax County and State safety improvement project at the intersection of Bellview Road and Old Dominion Drive in McLean."

"As a result of Supervisor's Foust's determination and persistence to solve this problem, we in our neighborhood are delighted to see a dramatic decline in accidents since the project was finished, and in fact have not seen any accidents thus far," said Makheja.

High embankments on the intersection corners and the presence of overgrown vegetation and utility poles limited sight distance of drivers on Bellview Road and Old Dominion Drive, according to a 2012 Fairfax County Department of Transportation study.

Speed of drivers on Old Dominion Drive was also a factor. The report recommended short- and long-term changes to improve the safety at the intersection, according to Foust.

FCDOT and VDOT implemented several improvements, including improving signage and installing a no passing zone near the intersection along with trimming vegetation. VDOT also installed flashing beacons before the intersection and "headlights on for safety" signs along Old Dominion Drive to help car visibility during the day time.

BECAUSE ACCIDENTS CONTINUED, Foust pushed VDOT



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Neighbors thanked Supervisor John Foust for efforts to improve the safety of the intersection of Old Dominion Drive and Bellview Road. From left: Betty Stacey, David Poe, Robert Makheja, Supervisor Foust, Sejal Makheja, Jared Makheja and Michael Selig.



The most effective improvements to the intersection of Old Dominion Drive and Bellview Road included removing overgrown vegetation and regrading the corners of the intersection to improve visibility.

and County staff to implement additional solutions, which involved re-grading the corners of the intersection to eliminate berms blocking the view for drivers. He secured project funding through Commercial and Industrial Tax revenues and pressed to make the project a high priority.

"I want to thank the neighbors who provided easements for the project and the entire community for their patience during the planning and construction process," said Foust. "I'm very pleased that we have already seen a dramatic reduction in accidents since the project was completed.

"The sound of crashes and the sirens of first responders have been a common occurrence for years."

— Robert Makheja, McLean

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SPORTS

Langley Beats Madison for First Place in Conference 6

Saxons' Tarpley comes up clutch in victory over Madison.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The Langley boys' basketball team dominated Madison in the first half of Friday's showdown for first place in Conference 6, using its size advantage and on-point perimeter shooting to build a 13-point lead.

While the Saxons appeared in control, head coach Scott Newman sensed the second half wouldn't be easy.

"I said at halftime that I thought we were going to have to take a punch from them in the second half," Newman said. "They were going to make adjustments to their press. They did, they rattled us a little bit ..."

Pressure defense and an aggressive mentality helped Madison reduce its deficit to as little as two points in the fourth quarter, but an alert defensive play by leading scorer Tavon Tarpley helped the Saxons hold off the resilient Warhawks.

Down by three, Madison had a chance to tie with less than 30 seconds remaining, but Tarpley stepped in a passing lane and snagged the steal. Langley made 2 of 4 free-throw attempts in the final 15 seconds and pulled out a 62-57 victory on Jan. 15 at Madison High School.

"I slid to the gap, I saw him throw the ball," Tarpley said, "I ran at it and I got it."

The victory improved Langley's record to 10-4 and gave the Saxons sole possession of first place in Conference 6 with a 6-0 mark. Madison dropped to 11-2, including 5-1 in the conference, and had its 11-game win streak snapped.

"It really boosts our confidence, but mentality-wise, we're still hungry," Langley se-



Langley's Jay Goettman made a trio of 3-pointers against Madison on Friday.

nior Nate Shafer said. "We know it's not even close to where we want to be at the end of the season. We're still hungry. We're going to go into every game like we're the underdogs."

While Tarpley's defensive play helped Langley secure the win, the 6-foot-3 senior guard was also a force at the offensive end. Tarpley, who transferred from Forest Park to Langley prior to his junior season, led the Saxons with 22 points, doing most of his damage in the paint.

"It's starting to click for Tavon," Newman said. "He is a special player when he's attacking the basket and he can be one of the best perimeter defenders in the region when he wants to. He's come so far, he's matured, and his approach has improved. If he gets his defense going and he does what he does best, which is attack the basket, we're dangerous."

Shafer, a 6-foot-5 senior forward, finished

with nine points and 12 rebounds for Langley. Junior guard Jay Goettman made a trio of 3-pointers and finished with nine points. Sophomore guard Colter Carton made a pair of 3-pointers and scored eight points, and junior guard Grant Hughes made two from behind the arc and finished with seven points.

Langley made eight 3-pointers.

"We played great in the first half, I thought, because not only did we pound the ball inside, but when [Madison] collapsed, we kicked the ball out and we were sticking shots," Newman said. "I think we're dangerous when we've got the inside and the outside game going."

Taiga Walker led Madison with 24 points, including 18 in the second half. The senior guard showed emotion on several occasions, letting out passionate screams after multiple and-ones.

"I just think that we played with more



Senior guard Taiga Walker led Madison with 24 points against Langley on Friday.

passion and aggression as a team," Walker said about the Warhawks' second-half performance.

Madison opened the third quarter with an 8-0 run and trailed 45-37 entering the fourth. A 3-pointer by Brett Wellde pulled the Warhawks within five at 45-40, early in the fourth quarter, and a jumper by Walker cut the Langley lead to 57-55 with 1:51 remaining. Another Walker bucket cut Madison's deficit to 59-57 with 46.3 seconds left, but the Saxons scored the final three points.

Galiani led Langley with 15 points. Sophomore guard Jordyn Callaghan scored eight points junior guard/forward Ariana Aulisi added six.

McWeeney led Madison with eight points.

Langley Defense Stifles Madison in Conference 6 Matchup

Saxons hold Warhawks without field goal for nine-plus minutes.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Members of the Langley girls' basketball team realized their defense stifled Madison during the opening quarter of Friday's matchup, but the Saxons knew there was more work to be done.

Langley held Madison without a field goal for the first nine-plus minutes of the contest and limited the Warhawks to just one point in the first quarter. The Saxons' defense held strong for the final three quarters, as well, and Langley bounced back from its second loss of the season with a 38-27 victory at Madison High School.

Aidan McWeeney produced Madison's

first field goal when she dropped in a layup with less than 7 minutes remaining in the second quarter, cutting Langley's lead to 6-3. The Saxons led for the remainder of the contest.

"We noticed, but we're trying to keep our defense up," Langley senior Paige Galiani said about the Saxons' defensive effort in the first quarter. "We're not really trying to give ourselves credit yet. We still have three more quarters left."

Madison twice cut the Langley lead to one, including when Megan Miskell's bucket with 7:37 left in the fourth quarter trimmed the Saxon advantage to 24-23, but Langley scored 14 of the game's final 18 points.

The win improved Langley's record to 12-2, including 5-1 in Conference 6. Three days

earlier, the Saxons lost to undefeated Fairfax, 51-39, in a battle for first place in the conference.

Fairfax was the first team this season to score more than 45 points against Langley, which is allowing an average of 37 per contest. The Saxons have held opponents under 40 nine times and under 30 three times.

Langley excelled using the 2-3 zone Friday.

"It was good to be back in 2-3," Galiani said. "We played a lot of 2-3 last year, so we knew how to go about it, but this year we have been playing a lot of man. It was great to be back in 2-3. Two-three is my favorite defense, so I was really excited."

Langley senior Stephanie Sipple said the



Paige Galiani led Langley with 15 points during the Saxon's 38-27 victory over Madison on Friday.

Saxons take pride in their defense.

"Especially when [opponents are] usually up in the 50s and 60s and we manage to keep them to half of that," Sipple said. "That's a really big thing."

Delegates, Senators Meet Constituents

FROM PAGE 3

such entrenched opposition in the legislature," she said.

"We will be in Richmond on Jan. 18 for a vigil for victims of gun violence," Gregory said, along with more than five busloads of people who will then lobby for gun legislation. In particular, they want localities to have the right to regulate how close guns stores can operate to school zones.

Virginia is a Dillon Rule state, which means that localities have only the powers expressly given to them by the General Assembly.

"I'm incensed by what is happening with gun violence here in Virginia and across the country," said Howell. "I keep hitting myself in the face, and say, 'Remember, you're in Virginia, darling.'"

Murphy, Favola and Rip Sullivan attended the rally in McLean earlier in the day.

"We were just at a rally and we watched very quickly when hate is involved that common sense goes out the window," said Murphy.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY is "off to a rousing start," said Rip Sullivan, with a "very partisan issue" involving Judge Jane M. Roush, who Republicans are trying to keep off the Virginia Supreme Court, de-



A constituent makes a point to Murphy, Sullivan and Simon.

PHOTOS BY KEN MOORE/THE CONNECTION

spite an exemplary reputation and record as trial attorney and Fairfax County Circuit Court Judge, he said.

"Get involved," he said. "She should remain on the Virginia Supreme Court."

Simon discussed a George Mason University student whose debt started at \$25,000 but increased to \$65,000.

He wants a student loan ombudsman officer where debt and student loans can



April Pinch-Keeler is the CEO of MVLE Working with Purpose, and advocates for employment for people with disabilities. "It's amazing what people can do given the opportunity."

be monitored.

And he wants to add sexual orientation to Fair Housing laws to prohibit discrimination.

APRIL PINCH-KEELER is the CEO of MVLE Working with Purpose, and advocates for people with disabilities and the employment of people with disabilities.

"It's amazing what people can do given the opportunity," she said. "Medicaid reform has to happen."

Robert Stewart spoke on behalf of Social Action Linking Together and its legislative priorities, including medicaid expansion that could benefit as many as 400,000 low income uninsured Virginians among other issues.

Rings True Still

'1776' the musical arriving at the Alden.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

"I have come to the conclusion that one useless man is called a disgrace, that two are called a congress. And by God, I have had *this* Congress!" Nope, those are not thoughts from contemporary political commentary on some cable news network. Those are the words of John Adams in "1776," the musical production about the signing of the Declaration of Independence some 240 years ago.

Performed by the McLean Community Players, "1776" uses quotes from the actual letters of the participants to create a musical rendition of how strong temperaments, gathered together in the heat of summer, led to the Declaration of Independence. The dialogue by Peter Stone with musical numbers by Sherman Edwards bring forth the passionate perspectives of the likes of John Adams who takes a center stage in "1776" and the dozens of others to what could have been

"just dusty history, but instead kicks away the cob webs" said director Annie O'Neill Galvin. The musical won three Tony Award, including for Best Musical.

In interviews at the McLean Community Center, director O'Neill Galvin with cast members Jeff Westlake (Ben Franklin), Brent Stone (John Adams), David Weaver (Joseph Hewes), Marissa Chapman (Abigail Adams), Shawn Cox (John Dickinson), Bob Cohen (Thomas McKean), spoke how the production "rings true" today.

It is a tale of fervent "struggles and compromises by flawed, real human beings" over contentious issues that still vex, noted Westlake. Stone suggested that "many of the issues raised then, are still with us."

Chapman noted the political importance of Abigail Adams to the thinking of her husband John in a day when women were not often visible, but could be viewed as mere "trophy wives."

Veteran music director John Edward Niles and a 10-piece band will set musical bearings to "1776" with its fifteen numbers. The songs include many involving John Adams and his prickly personality such as "Sit Down, John" or "But, Mr. Adams" as well as the strong sentiments of "Molasses to Rum" that indicts Northern hypocrisy about slavery delivered by James Myers as the delegate from South Carolina, Edward



PHOTOS BY IRISH EYES PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOBY/COURTESY OF MCLEAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS

McLean Community Players in rehearsal for "1776:" John Adams (Brent Stone) convinces Thomas Jefferson (Scott Gustaveson) to write the Declaration of Independence.

Rutledge.

The set design by Bill Glikbarg and George Farnsworth will include a very visible hand marked vote tally board giving visible expression to tensions of "how close it all was as voting for independence proceeded," added O'Neil Galvin.

Where and When

McLean Community Players present "1776" at the Alden Theater, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave, McLean. Performances Feb. 5-21, 2016. Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: Call 866-811-4111 or visit www.mcleanplayers.org

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Pills A-Poppin'



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I ingest between 40 and 50 pills per day. It's the first thing I do before breakfast, an occasional thing I do before/during/after lunch, and the last thing I do before dinner and sometimes before bedtime as well. To say I'm pill-centric would be an overstatement; I will admit to be pill-mindful though. Either I'm arranging them, organizing them, counting them or ordering them. Whether it matters or not to my health, I try never to be off my schedule too much or be too many days without my normal pill allotment/inventory. If I leave the house at pill time, I will take pills with me and swallow them accordingly. If people ask for any details, I offer as few as possible and move on. Not that I'm uncomfortable with any of the questions, it's more that there are infinitely more interesting topics of conversation.

Being away from home and routine does present some problems, however, especially if the trip involves planes. Trains and automobiles are not the problem. Not having a dedicated travel case, like the "train" case my mother had for her cosmetics, I simply stuff my 25-plus bottles into a plastic shopping bag and knot the handles at the top. No fuss, no muss. Planes, or rather the carry-on rules about such things are another matter entirely. I have never inquired – or gone on the TSA Website, to determine pill procedures. Certainly I'm aware – post-9/11, of the limits concerning toiletries, etc., and the plastic bags into which it all must fit. Not wanting to risk having hundreds of dollars of expensive pills confiscated at the airport, I've always preferred checking my bags (containing the pills) and avoided the potential nightmare. As to the alternative solution of segregating 40-odd pills (into three-times-a-day packets) times however many days into some kind of daily packaging – and leaving the bottles home instead – that has not been a solution I've been able to conjure. Not that any of this is an impediment, more like a challenge and inconvenience. And most definitely a consideration.

Still, it's a small price to pay – so to speak, to incorporate/assimilate a pill plan into my everyday life. I mean, for all I know, and I know very little, these pills might actually be responsible for my life-expectancy odds having been so badly beaten. Accordingly, I see no reason to stop now, especially considering that the majority of the drugs I take are designed to build up my immune system. Which, when one understands that at its core, cancer treatment weakens one's immune system, enhancing its resilience is crucial.

Recently, an entire new class of drugs called Immunotherapy ("OPDIVO") have been introduced. They have been designed – among other reasons, to stimulate the body's own immune system to fight the cancer. Rather than the process occurring externally and unnaturally as before, these new drugs will fight the cancer internally and naturally. It's an extremely encouraging and exciting evolution in the cancer treatment world, and holds great promise for many of us cancer patients burnt out (no pun intended) on the toxic chemotherapy drugs of our past.

In the interim, since I am not now on Immunotherapy, as a prudent and logical adjunct, I will continue to give myself and my body every opportunity, dare I say advantage, in its efforts to keep the cancer at bay. The pills are never really a problem, more so a piece of the puzzle. And the longer I live, the more convinced of it I become.

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

BULLETIN BOARD

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

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 20

Fairfax Commission on Aging.

Noon. Oakton Regional Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. The public is welcome to attend and join in the comment period that begins each session. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/coa.htm. 703-324-5403, TTY 711 for meeting access needs.

McLean Newcomers and

Neighbors Monthly Luncheon.

11:30 a.m. Ristorante Bonaroti, 428 Maple Ave., East, Vienna. Eileen O'Grady, a nurse practitioner and wellness coach, will speak about the Science of Flourishing. \$29. For further information on the club, visit www.McLeanNewcomers.org. RSVP Ann Skelly at mfskelly@verizon.net by Jan. 13. Prospective members invited.

Dyslexia, An Overview for Parents.

7-8:30 p.m. Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1, Dunn Loring. Workshop presented by specialists from FCPS Office of Special Education. Register www.fcps.edu/dss/osp/prc or 703-204-3941.

THURSDAY/JAN. 21

Model Investment Club. 6-9 p.m.

Meeting Room, Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave, McLean. Learn about investing following an investment club model. New visitors welcome. Adults. 703-356-0770.

Transportation

FROM PAGE 8

James C. Dinegar, Greater Washington Board of Trade
Anthony Howard, Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce
Virgil Frizzell, Northern Virginia Association of Realtors

Jim Corcoran, Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce

Mark Looney, Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance

Lori Y. Lopez, Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce

Pat Dean, Associated Builders and Contractors, VA

James N. Larsen, Dulles Area Transportation Association

Eileen D. Curtis, Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce

Nancy-jo Manney, Springfield Chamber of Commerce,

Ken Garrison, Heavy Construction Contractors Association

Martha D. Marks, NAIOP, Northern Virginia Commercial Real Estate Development Association

Jon Lindgren, Northern Virginia Building Industry Association

Bobbie Kilberg, Northern Virginia Technology Council

Deborah Jones, Prince William Chamber of Commerce

Keith Merlin, Washington Airports Task Force

The Northern Virginia Transportation Coalition is a group of chambers of commerce and industry organizations throughout Northern Virginia that share a common belief that greater investment in regional transportation infrastructure is essential to sustained regional prosperity.

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
BVP Exxon, Inc. trading as BVP Exxon, 4746 Lee Hwy, Arlington, VA 22207. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Arpit Sethi, President
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

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-Werner Heisenberg

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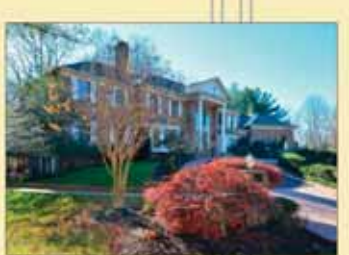
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