



The five Hadinger Eagles of Troop 1983: James, Andrew, David, Ben and Alec.

### Oakton's Nest of Eagles

One Eagle Scout in the family is impressive enough, but the Hadinger family of Oakton has five.

Twins David and Ben Hadinger achieved Eagle scout ranking on Saturday, March 26. They are part of Troop 1983. They join their brothers James, An-

drew and Alec, who are also Eagle scouts.

The twins were installed as Eagle Scouts of Troop 1983 at Vale UMC on Saturday, March 26.

Ben and David are seniors at Gonzaga College High School and Paul VI Catholic High School respectively.



### Promoted to Eagle Scout

From left — Boy Scouts Erik McIntosh, Aaron Lippman and Josh Cohen rom Vienna Troop 152 were formally recognized at a Court of Honor ceremony on April 3 for achieving their Eagle Scout rank. Eagle Scout is the highest achievement of rank in the Boy Scouting program. Over 100 family, friends, supporters from Troop 152 as well as from the Vienna-Oakton community, including Del. Mark Keam (D-35) and Optimist Club of Vienna President Joe Miller, were present at the ceremony which was held at the Church of the Good Shepherd.

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# News

### Westbriar Elementary Celebrates 50th Anniversary

From 350 students in 1965 to 750 students today, Westbriar boasts outstanding academic programs and recognition.

By Donna Manz
The Connection

n the early years of Westbriar Elementary School's 50-year-run, there were but 350 students from the neighborhoods along Old Courthouse Road on down to Browns Mill. In 2009, Westbriar hit 500. Today, the school has 750 students, a Level 4 Advanced Academics Program (AAP) center, and, on April 15, the school celebrated its 50 birthday with all-day events and activities for its 750-member student body. Former principals and teachers returned to commemorate the school's history at the invitation of current principal Lisa Pilson.

"We didn't even have enough students for two full classes," said 1989 to 1999 principal Ricki Harvey. "Now, we need new buildings to accommodate all the students." She surprised the sixth grade audience when she told them the schools did not have SOLs then.

Harvey, joined for the event by former principals Joanne Goodwin and Jeanette Martino, spoke to an upper-grade class in the library, recollecting her tenure at Westbriar and the changes to the school and curriculum since then.

**FORMER PRINCIPALS** addressed classes from upper grades and those students shared their memories of tutelage under them. The ambiance was one of humor and wistfulness. Virginia Del. Mark Keam (D-35) stopped by to listen to their stories and laugh along with the children.

Joanne Goodwin, principal from 2009 to 2012, regaled the sixth graders, who were second graders when Goodwin left, with reminiscences and the kids responded with stories of their own, some of them tattling on their classmates in the process. Goodwin, alluding to her smooth wavy hair, informed the children that she had to blowdry her hair every day to get it smooth because her hair is curly. One day, she came to school without doing so and her hair was out of control curly. Her students, seeing her hair amiss, made a point of telling her, "Mrs. Goodwin, it's not crazy hair day."

While Goodwin was principal, Northern Virginia experienced a major snowstorm shutting down the schools for a week. Parent volunteers were on-hand during the closure to help clear sidewalks and walkways.



Virginia Del. Mark Keam (D-35), former Westbriar principal Jeanette Martino, current principal Lisa Pilson, and former principals Ricki Harvey, and Joanne Goodwin (with granddaughter) honored Westbriar's 50th birthday at the school's all-day celebration.



Tompkins and **Andrew Blount** were early-1980s students at Westbriar Elementary. Today, Tompkins is back at Westbriar as an advanced academics resource teacher; Blount is an assistant principal at Centreville **Elementary** School.

**Tara Demarest** 

Goodwin was remembered for walking about with a snow shovel in her hand when school reopened, a teacher noted.

Throughout the celebration day, classes hosted art exhibits, danced away in the gym, hosted special lunch-time activities, and watched a classic film.

Westbriar operates with 13 classroom trailers out back housing the fourth, fifth and sixth grades. Three resource trailers take their places with them. When the new addition is completed, in time for the new 2016-17 school year, the trailers will be gone and the student body will learn together again.

Westbriar ES was named a Blue Ribbon School in 2013 — the only elementary school in the Commonwealth to be recognized "Blue Ribbon School." In 2014, Westbriar received the Virginia Board of Education Distinguished Achievement Award.

Westbriar's Level IV AAP center opened three years ago, bringing to the school kids from throughout the Vienna area who benefit from advanced academic programs in all core areas of instruction. More than 175 students participate in the Advanced Academics Program there. The school has a collaboration with George Mason University with math and math modeling, and, a Model Fairfax Friends Forever Program that focuses on peer mentoring. This program will soon be implemented throughout Fairfax County Public Schools. Students from Westbriar presented at this year's Science and Engineering Festival in Washington, D.C., held the weekend of April 16 and

Many of Westbriar's current students are the children of young parents who attended Westbriar in the 1980s. Several years ago, two 1980s Westbriar students became teachers at Westbriar after college graduation. One, Andrew Blount, left for a Fairfax County Public Schools position as an assistant principal, while the other, Tara Demarest Tompkins, remains at Westbriar as an advanced academic resource teacher.

Jeanette Martino served as principal of Westbriar from 1999 to 2009, and, the year she left, the school hit 500 students, a landmark status for Westbriar. A current kindergarten teacher, Ewa Meoni, was a parent volunteer before joining the school as a teacher.

**ON MAY 21**, the Westbriar PTA hosts a 50th anniversary gala celebration at Westwood Country Club, featuring food, open bar, raffle prizes, silent auction, and casino games. Donations for the silent auction are welcomed.

Funds raised from the event will go toward upgrading Westbriar's playground.

Tickets are priced at \$50 per person, \$1 for every year of Westbriar's existence.

For more information on the gala celebration, go to http://www.westbriarpta.org/50th-Anniversary-Gala-Auction.





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### VIENNA CRIME REPORTS

### Notable incidents from the Vienna Police Department from April 8-14.

**Incidents** 

Lost Property - 400 Block Branch Road, SE. Between April 1 at 6:00 p.m. and April 10 at noon. A resident reported that he lost his wedding ring.

Burglary - 1100 Block Park Street, SE. April 5 between 8:10 a.m. and 4:45 p.m. A resident reported that while she was out of the house an unknown person entered her home. It appeared the person searched through various areas of the home, taking jewelry and U.S. Currency.

Suspicious Event - Vienna Woods Swim Club. 950 Desale St., SW. Between April 5 at 9 a.m. and April 8 at 1:18 p.m. An employee found clothing and other personal belongings on the Swim Club property near the

creek. An officer walked around the property with the employee but was unable to locate anyone.

**Arrest - Driving While Intoxicated** - Lawyers Road at Upham Place, NW. April 8, 12:04 a.m. An officer observed a driver commit a traffic violation and initiated a traffic stop. Upon his interaction with the driver he determined that the driver may have been impaired. After the driver refused

to submit to any sobriety tests, an officer arrested the 37-year-old man from Children's Center Road, SW in Leesburg, Virginia for Driving While Intoxicated. He was transported to the Vienna Police Station where he was given the opportunity to provide a sample of his breath for analysis, which he also refused. The man was then transported to the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center where he was charged with Driving While Intoxicated and Refusal and held on a \$5000 secured bond. He was released to the custody of the deputies.

Police Service - Vienna Carwash. 159 Maple Ave., West. April 8, 8:39 a.m. Officers were requested at the business while an employee served a notice of trespass on a former employee. The former employee then left the area without incidence.

Fraud - 100 Block Elm Street, SW. Between April 8 at noon and April 11 at 3:46 p.m. A resident was notified by his credit card company that someone attempted to make an unauthorized purchase using his credit card. There were also attempts to change information on his account and to open a new account without his authorization.

SEE CRIME, PAGE 7



#### NO EXPENSIVE BUY-INS | SPACIOUS RENTAL APARTMENTS FARM-TO-TABLE RESTAURANT-STYLE CUISINE

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The Crossings at Chantilly is Fairfax County's state-of-the-art Senior Living Community, offering Independent Living, Assisted Living and Memory Care for older adults seeking the comforts of home, the care of professionals, and the energy of life.

Join Us For an Open House to Learn More: Saturday, April 23 1 to 3 pm Thursday, May 12 | 1 to 3 pm

#### Spring Brunch

SATURDAY, APRIL 30 2 TO 4 PM Welcome Center, 13921 Park Center Rd. Suite 355, Herndon, VA 20171 Space is limited so please RSVP by April 22nd



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### News

Oakton robotics team advances to world competition.



Photo contributed

### Oakton Cougar Robotics Advances to World Competition

the FIRST Chesapeake District Championship this past week at Maryland's Xfinity center, the Cougar Robotics team has earned a spot in the FIRST World Championship and will travel to St Louis, Mo. to compete on April 27-30.

The team is made up of students at Oakton High School and their star robot, Ricky Bobby.

Throughout the season, they have earned numerous awards including two Quality Awards

After battling it out in regional competitions and sponsored by Motorola Solutions Foundation and the Excellence in Engineering Award sponsored by Delphi.

> FIRST is an international youth organization that was developed to inspire students in engineering and technology fields while instilling their core tenets of gracious professionalism and cooperative competition. It combines the excitement of sport with the rigors of science and technology and has created the ultimate Sport of the Mind.

### MyEyeDr. Named Finalist in 10th Annual Helios Apollo Awards

MyEyeDr. has been named a finalist of the 10th Annual Helios Apollo Awards. It is one of 33 finalists and was selected in the Mentorship/Coaching category. The Apollo Awards, presented by Helios HR, honors human capital excellence in talent development.

Headquartered in Vienna, MyEyeDr. was founded in 2001 by a group of optometrists, along with co-founder Sue Healey Downes.

Today, MyEyeDr. is a network of over 200 local optometry practices located throughout the U.S.

"MyEyeDr. has set the standard in building a culture of intention by focusing on the growth and development of their people," said Kathy Albarado, Awards. "This award recognizes the progression, creativity and vision of our finalists in addressing the talent challenges employers face today."

"At MyEyeDr., our people make the difference in providing optimal vision care and unparalleled service to their local communities," said Downes. "We are honored to be recognized among other leaders for our work in developing the best people in our industry.'

MyEyeDr. will be honored at the Apollo Awards breakfast ceremony on Wednesday, June 1 at Hyatt Regency Reston, where category winners will also be announced. To register for the ceremony or view the full list of honorees, visit CEO of Helios HR and Founder of The Apollo www.helioshr.com/apollo-awards.



### Photo GALLERY!

### "Me and My Mom"

To honor Mom on Mother's Day, send us your favorite snapshots of you with your Mom and The Connection will publish them in our Mother's Day issue. Be sure to include some information about what's going on in the photo, plus your name and phone number and town of residence. To send digital photos, go to:

www.connectionnewspapers.com/mothersday

Or to mail photo prints, send to: The Vienna/Oakton Connection, "Me and My Mom Photo Gallery," 1606 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314

Photo prints will be returned to you if you include a stamped, self-addressed envelope, but please don't send us anything irreplaceable. ~Reminder: Father's Day is June 19~

# 16th Fairfax Civil War Day

### Saturday, April 30 ★ 10am – 5pm



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# **OPINION**

# On the Guilty Plea of Adam Torres

Geer's death exposed "obfuscation ... and a lack of public accountability."

dam Torres, charged with murder in the death of Springfield resident John Geer, was the first Fairfax County Police officer in the history of the department to be charged

in such a death. Monday, Torres entered a guilty plea to involuntary manslaughter, with a likely sentence of 12 months, most as ou of that already served. He has been in jail for from

Geer was a Springfield resident, a remodeling contractor and an involved father, always on the sidelines of his daughters' sports games. He was unarmed, standing in the doorway of his own home with his hands raised at the time he was killed.

The police and Fairfax County refused to release any information on the case for more than a year, and only then after repeated court orders. Public outrage over Geer's death was compounded by obfuscation and silence, the failure to communicate, and a lack of public accountability. Change is in the works, but there is much work to do.

There is still much to say about the death of John Geer and its aftermath.

But today, the wisdom of his two teenage daughters is well worth reading and sharing:

### APRIL 18, 2016 STATEMENT BY THE DAUGHTERS OF JOHN GEER

"Justice is rarely a simple matter, and it would be easy to vent our anger, our outrage, our sorrow, and voice opposition to the plea bargain struck between Adam Torres and the Commonwealth. Nobody would question the rawness of our emotions and our response to it;

we have lost a father, and there can be no substitute, no future moment of affection, no further opportunities to be close the man who should be present

as our greatest supporter. Torres took that away from us, the Fairfax Board of Supervisors and Fairfax County Police Department hid the truth of what happened to our dad for over a year, and there is no going back. ...

"Much like Dad's murder has repercussions for his family and the community, locking Torres in a cell will have an effect on others. Whatever his faults, Torres' wife and children did not murder our father, and it would be wrong to hurt them just to allay our own anger and pain. Robbing other children of time with their father would only make us complicit in another wrong. ...

"Where Torres failed to show prudence and mercy, we will show him and his family both.

"As for the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Fairfax County Police Department, we remain appalled by their actions in cover-

ing up the truth and putting Torres in the position to decide life and death given what they knew about his background. Until such time that the ad hoc committee's recommendations are adopted and the policies of the FCPD are changed, we fear that these tragic events can occur again with different victims and different officers. We call upon the Board to immediately adopt and implement the Committee's recommendations without delay for the good of the FCPD and the citizens of Fairfax County.

"No family should have to suffer the loss of a mother, a father, or a loved one under circumstances like ours."

### Send in Mother's Day Photos

Mother's Day is May 8 this year and every year at this time this newspaper calls for submissions to our Mother's Day photo gallery.

Send photos of mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, with children or without children in the photos. Please name everyone in the photo, ages of children, the approximate date, describe what is happening in the photo and include your name, address, email address and phone number. (We will not print your contact information, just names and town of residence.) You can upload photos and information directly to www.connectionnewspapers .com/mothersday/ or email to north@connectionnewspapers.com.

### A Bipartisan Compromise To Unclog the Region

By Jim Corcoran,
President and CEO,
Northern Virginia Chamber of
Commerce

orthern Virginia's transportation crisis main tains a stranglehold on our regional economy and quality of life. It costs our region \$4.5 billion annually due to the countless hours we waste sitting in traffic, and has earned our region the dubious distinction as one of the most congested areas in the country. The Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce has long believed that unclogging our region's transportation grid requires a strategic, regional approach. We cannot expect to retain and attract business without implementing a 21st Century transportation infrastructure.

Thankfully, however, a significant compromise struck during the 2016 Virginia General Assembly Session has the potential to address the most serious choke point in our region: I-66 inside the Beltway. Improving travel along this important economic corridor is critical to maintaining our economic competitiveness and getting our region moving again.

#### COMMENTARY

The bipartisan compromise plan is the result of collaboration between the Commonwealth and localities that takes into account various jurisdictional transportation interests, creating a regionally balanced solution. Combined with the existing express lane network on I-495 and I-95 and in conjunction with new improvements to I-66 outside the Beltway, this project will provide reliable, enhanced travel options throughout the region by car, carpool, and transit. Each of these modes of travel will play a critical part in moving goods, services, and people to and from our region's key assets.

For those traveling along I-66 from points west of I-495, the scheduled improvements will contain enhancements and options including additional lanes, new bus service, and new commuter lots. Key to the plan is the ability of single-occupant drivers to use I-66 inside the Beltway during peak times for the first time in the road's history.

For those who reside inside of the Capital Beltway, this project will provide enhanced bus service, enhancements on parallel roads to better protect neighborhoods, pedestrian access, and Metro station access improvements all geared toward providing more transportation options for residents and businesses along I-66.

Addressing much needed congestion relief on I-66 by adding an additional eastbound lane has been a priority for the Northern Virginia Chamber and the Northern Virginia business community for decades. The Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce congratulates Governor McAuliffe and lead-

ers in the General Assembly for working across party lines to achieve this historic victory for the residents of the Commonwealth.

We will continue to advocate for dynamic, regional projects like this as the business community looks to maintain our status as the economic engine of the Commonwealth and a cradle of innovation in the United States. We look forward to more bipartisan successes in the years to come as we work together to enhance our regional transportation network.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Inappropriate Use of FEMA Relief Funds

To the Editor

Your recent article "Fairfax County Schools to Apply for FEMA Relief Funds" is another example of attempting to exploit the American taxpayers.

I visualize the typical American taxpayer as a middle class couple living in the heartland of our country. They have two children. They go to church every week. They don't smoke, don't use illegal drugs, and use alcohol in moderation. Their children go to school each school day. They vote in ev-

ery election. They must struggle financially even when the economy is strong, but they pay their bills, and they pay their taxes. They pay for their children's education, and they save for their retirement.

I don't feel that it is appropriate for the Federal government, which consists of millions of such middle class families, to pay for the removal of snow at Fairfax County Public Schools.

> **Dave Elmore** Great Falls

### CONFECTION

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### Week in Vienna

### Dine to Make a Difference

Culinaria Cooking School will hold a fundraising dinner on Friday, April 29 to honor the memory of Maxine Shelly Turner and to donate proceeds to her memorial scholarship fund with the Alpha Omega Epsilon Foundation.

Turner was a Vienna resident and James Madison High School graduate who was gunned down two weeks before graduating Magna Cum Laude with a degree in Chemical Engineering. She was a founding member of the A.O.E. Rho Chapter at Virginia Tech, the formation of which built a community for young women on campus in the engineering and technical science majors.

Chef Natalie, hosting the dinner, is a personal friend of the Turner family. She said, "Max was full of energy and had a great sense of humor. I'll never forget her stories of being taped to the wall for a demonstration on Physics Day. In the name of science, of course."

The menu for this dinner was crafted with Turner's love of tapas, inspired by a trip she took to Spain.

More information about the Maxine Shelly Turner Memorial Scholarship Fund can be found at http://aoefoundation.org/MSTdonation.php.

To register to attend the dinner, go to http://www.culinariacookingschool.com/culinaria-class/maxine-shelly-turner-memorial-scholarship-fund-dinner-95-per-person/.

### Volunteers Needed

The Auxiliary to the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department (VVFD) is growing and looking for community- and service-minded individuals to volunteer a few hours each month.

The Auxiliary organizes fundraising events to help the VVFD meet its mission to bring fire and rescue services to the Town of Vienna and Fairfax County residents.

Auxiliary members staff pancake breakfasts, spaghetti dinners, craft shows, bazaars, and bake sales. You will serve on a bingo team to prepare/serve food to our bingo patrons approximately once a month. Members can staff the VVFD Canteen unit, a rehabilitation unit sent to serve fire and medical personnel on incidents, or participate at the Mayor's Holiday Reception, Vienna Halloween Parade, Viva Vienna, July Fourth festivities, Santa Runs or Turkey Trot.

Membership is not limited to Vienna residents only. New members from around Northern Virginia are welcome.

To apply, visit www.vvfd.org and click become a Volunteer, then click the Auxiliary link and Request Information. For questions, email Lauren Kirby at Lauren.Kirby@vvfd.org or call 703-216-2085.

#### CRIME

From Page 4

**Police Service** - Cameo Coins, 444 Maple Ave., East. April 8, 1:06 p.m. Pennsylvania State Police requested assistance in recovering property that had been stolen from a burglary in their jurisdiction and had been pawned at Cameo Coins. An employee with Cameo Coins readily assisted the property owner and the officer in identifying the stolen property and returning it to the owner.

**Assist EMS** - 160 Maple Ave., West. April 8, 1:22 p.m. An officer responded to assist rescue with an elderly man who had collapsed in the parking lot. Fairfax County Rescue Personnel transported the man to an area hospital for treatment.

**Petit Larceny** - Outback Steakhouse, 315 Maple Ave., East. April 8 between 4:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. An employee reported a customer leaving without paying for his bill.

**Grand Larceny** - 500 Block Brentwood Court, NW. Between April 8 at 4:39 p.m. and April 11 at 6:30 a.m. A resident reported the theft of a package that was delivered to his home from Amazon.

**Arrest – Petit Larceny** - 1200 Block Cottage Street, SW. April 9, 6:15 p.m. A cab driver reported a fare who was unable to pay his bill. The fare, a 36-year-old man from Cottage Street, SW in Vienna, was issued a summons for Petit Larceny. He was released after signing the summons.

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# Removing a Barrier to Pomp and Circumstance

Gowns for Grads program at George Mason provides regalia for needy graduates.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL THE CONNECTION

hen Muntaha across the stage during George Mason University's graduation ceremony this May she will celebrate not only her bachelor's degree, which has been eight years in the making, but also the fact that she is the first person in her family to graduate from college.

Her financial circumstances could have put a damper on her graduation plans, however. She was not sure that she could afford the cost of purchasing a cap and gown, a requirement to participate in the graduation ceremony.

"Some people might say, '\$67, that's not a big deal,' but it is in my family," said Choudhary. "We're always on edge when it comes to money. My dad is a four-time time heart attack survivor, and any money that my family saves goes to medical bills or something. That's why it has taken me so long to graduate. I've had to pay my own tuition and help my family pay

Choudhary and many other George Mason University graduates in need will have one less barrier to their graduation ceremony thanks to a new program at the university called Gowns for Grads.

Through the program, recent Mason alumni donate caps and gowns to students who can't afford the \$60-\$120 price tag for graduation regalia. The program was founded by Amanda Myers, a Mason alumna and an academic adviser in the College of Humanities

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Amanda Myers started a program to provide donated caps and gowns to George Mason graduates who cannot

"It was heartbreaking that something like not being able to afford a cap and gown would stand in the way of her graduation. When students have worked so hard to graduate, they deserve to be cut a break."

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The idea for the program was sparked when Myers was counseling a student who was nearing graduation, and had tapped out all of her financial resources to buy textbooks to complete her last semester. In fact, says Myers, the student's situation was so dire that she was on the brink of homelessness, and wasn't planning to participate in the graduation ceremony because she didn't have money to spend on the required clothing for graduation.

"I waited until the student left my office, and then I started crying," said Myers. "It was heartbreaking that something like not being able to afford a cap and gown would stand in the way of her graduation. When students have worked so hard to graduate. they deserve to be cut a break."

Since the program's inception in February, Myers has been able to meet the cap and gown needs of nearly 150 students through the generosity of Mason alumni from Northern Virginia but as far away as North Carolina and New Jersey.

Jumana Kamal graduated last year with a master's degree in Middle East and Islamic Studies. She chose to donate her graduation wear to the Gowns for Grads

"I very simply wanted to make it easier for at least one person who worked really hard to get to this one day," said Kamal. "If you're wondering about sentimental value, making someone else's day is much more rewarding to me than holding on to something for a keepsake.'

#### SCHOOL NOTES

Send school notes vienna@connectionnewspapers.com by noon on Friday.

Kelsey Waddill, of Vienna, was named to the dean's list for academic excellence for the fall 2015 semester at Johns Hopkins University. Waddill is the daughter of Charles and Deborah Waddill and attended James Madison High School.

**Sarah Boyle from Marshall** High School, Razan Elbaba from Oakton High School, and Rosy Molina from Fairfax **High School** were recognized at the annual Scholastic Art Awards ceremony with a 2016 Uphoff Scholarship from the Arts Council of Fairfax County.

After receiving her master's degree in Emergency Management and Homeland Security in 2013, Regina Yun kept her cap and gown and looked for a way to donate it, but didn't find one until she learned about Gowns for Grads. "I'm saving the environment by recycling and reusing and helping out a fellow student," said Yun. "I had my cap and gown packed up and ready to go. I hope a few students can get a few uses out of it."

Students who want to be considered for a cap and gown donation must complete an application and describe their financial constraints.

"Their stories are compelling," said Myers. "One student wrote, 'Eventually I became the first person in the family to earn a college degree; however, I have never been able to participate in any of the graduation ceremonies for the various levels of my academic journey due to financial constraints. I would humbly like to impress on your good offices to grant me the opportunity to rent a cap and gown to enable me to finally participate in my first ever graduation cer-

# information

Contact Gowns4grad@gmail.com or visit: Facebook.com/GMUcapandgown.

"Another student stated, 'I have had to pay for school out of my own pocket for years. Graduating will be the happiest day of my life, not only because I will no longer have to pay an arm and a leg, but also because I will be able to devote more time and money to helping my parents.'

Myers designed the program to make it as easy as possible for alumni to donate. "All they have to do is send it to me and I can take care of the rest," she said. "I dewrinkle them and use a cleaning spray to get them ready to be

Mason alumni who are interested in donating and graduating a cap and gown are encouraged to send Gowns4grad@gmail.com or visit: Facebook.com/GMUcapandgown.









### Can't Vote at McLean Day or Just Want a Head Start on Voting?

#### Vote by Absentee Ballot through May 18 at either:

McLean Community Center (MCC) 1234 Ingleside Avenue McLean, VA 22101 (703) 790-0123/TTY 711 Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m. - 11 p.m. Sunday, noon to 6 p.m.

Old Firehouse Teen Center (OFTC) 1440 Chain Bridge Road McLean, VA 22101 (703) 448-8336/TTY 711 Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. (closed on weekends)

#### Requesting Absentee Ballots:

You can pick up absentee ballot packages and vote at MCC or OFTC. You can also request absentee ballot packages by e-mail at elections@mcleancenter.org or by telephone at 703-790-0123.

#### Returning Completed Applications and Ballots:

You can return your application and ballot to the front desk at either MCC or OFTC. Or, you can mail your application and ballot using the pre-addressed envelope enclosed in the absentee ballot package.

Absentee voting ends promptly at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 18. Hand-delivered applications and ballots must be received at either MCC or OFTC by that time. Absentee applications and ballots returned by mail must be received at MCC on May 18.

#### If you have questions:

Please call 703-790-0123 or e-mail elections@mcleancenter.org



The McLean Community Center 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean VA 22101 703-790-0123/TTY: 711

www.mcleancenter.org

### CALENDAR

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

#### **ONGOING**

"Slice of Life" and The National Gallery of Art Copyists Exhibits.

Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. May 3-28. Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Two exhibits by the Vienna Arts Society

Free. viennaartssociety.org.

Six Artists: What Matters Most.

April 2-May 14. The Frame Factory Gallery, 212 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. An exhibition and sale of artwork by local artists. Open Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. theframefactory1.com. 703-281-

Spring Delights. Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. April 4-May 2. Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant St. NW, Vienna. Exhibition of Vienna Arts Society members.

viennaartssociety.org. 703-319-3971. Time Traveler Tuesdays. 4:30 p.m. March 29-June 7. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. This weekly series will take participants on an interactive journey through time, focusing on a different period in Virginia history each week. Register at http:// www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/

colvinrunmill/events.htm. 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,



PHOTO COURTESY OF NOVA PARKS

#### See the sunrise and enjoy a peaceful walk at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens on Sunday, May 1.

reduce your stress. Ravi Kaur has 15 years experience teaching yoga. \$15 per session. www.edimprovement.org. 571-213-

THURSDAY/APRIL 21

3192.

Penny University Event. 7 p.m. Caffe Amouri, 107 Church St. NE, Vienna. Try Tap with Kayla Moore, who has 18 years' experience tapping. Free. nicki@caffeamouri.com.

**Opening Exhibition Reception**. 7 p.m. McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Teacher's exhibition. Free. mpaart.org.

#### THURSDAY-SATURDAY/ **APRIL 21-23**

"Loserville." 7:30 p.m. George C. Marshall High School, 7731 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. It's 1971 and geeks shall inherit the Earth in this

high-octane, pop-rock, feel-great musical. \$15/\$10. Statesmentheatre.org. 703-714-5450.

#### FRIDAY/APRIL 22

Bev Ress. 10 a.m.-noon. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. McLean Art Society with artist who does 3D nature drawings. 703-790-0123.

#### SATURDAY-SUNDAY/APRIL 23-24

Community Art Show. Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, noon-4 p.m. Vinson Hall Retirement Community, 6251 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. Community residents show off their works. Free. 703-970-3694.

#### **SUNDAY/APRIL 24**

Vienna 5K and One-Mile "Run for Fun." Starting at 8:10 a.m. 128 Center St. S, Vienna. Sponsored by the Vienna Elementary School PTA. \$15-\$30. www.vienna5krun.org.

703-282-0084. Oakton Elementary Family 5K. 8:30 a.m. Centennial Park, 131 Church St., Vienna. Proceeds benefit enrichment program at Oakton

Elementary. \$12-\$35. **Love Worth Fighting** For. 5 p.m. McLean Bible Church, 8925 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. National marriage event featuring actor Kirk Cameron.

www.loveworthfightingfor.com. Spring Fashion Show. 10 a.m.-noon. Bloomingdale's Tysons Corner, 8100 Tysons Corner Center, McLean. By the Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Scholarship Fund, Inc. Proceeds will go toward schoarlships to postcollege aged Virginia women. Champagne brunch, raffle, silent auction. Channel 9 news anchor Andrea Roane emcees.

#### **TUESDAY/APRIL 26**

www.GFFNSF.org.

\$20-\$50.

**Creed Bratton**. 6:30 p.m. Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. "The Office's" Creed Bratton headlines an evening of music and comedy. \$20-\$30. www.jamminjava.com.

#### THURSDAY/APRIL 28

Penny University Event. 7 p.m. Caffe Amouri, 107 Church St. NE. Vienna. Basis Independent School wants to hear your thoughts on "Creating A Positive School Culture." With Head of School Sean Aiken. Free. To signup, nicki@caffeamouri.com.

Spring Cocktail Dinner. 7-9 p.m Ruth's Chris Steak House Tysons Corner, 8521 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. Five-course meals. \$95. 703-848-

#### FRIDAY-SUNDAY/APRIL 29-MAY 1

SEE CALENDAR. PAGE 11

**Visit These Houses of Worship** 

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**EPISCOPAL CHURCH • Reston 7:45 a.m.** Holy Eucharist, Rite I

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II Sunday School: preschool - grade 2 Music: grades 3 - 7 **10:25 a.m.** Sunday School Grades 3 to 6

Music 4 years to 2nd grade 11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

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FRIENDS OF THE MCLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER INVITES YOU!

"Meet the Candidates" in the **2016 McLean Community Center Governing Board elections.** 

#### When:

Sunday, May 1, 2-4 p.m.

Nine adult candidates, three teens from the McLean High School boundary area, and four teens from the Langley High School boundary area.

#### Where:

McLean Community Center 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean, VA 22101

#### Format:

Informal Reception

Nine adults are vying for adult votes to fill three seats on the Governing Board. Three teens from the McLean High School boundary area and four teens from the Langley High School boundary area are vying for teen votes to fill one board seat from each high school boundary area.

Refreshments will be served. For planning purposes, please let us know if you will attend by emailing elections@mcleancenter.org. See you there!



The McLean Community Center 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean VA 22101

703-790-0123/TTY: 711 www.mcleancenter.org



### CALENDAR

From Page 10

"Kaleidoscope" Vale Arts Spring Art Show. Friday, 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Vale Schoolhouse, 3124 Fox Mill Road, Oakton. Nine Local artists exhibit more than 150 fine art paintings and collages. info@valearts.com. 703-860-1888.

#### SATURDAY/APRIL 30

Bad Bugs! 10:30-11:30 a.m. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Discover how to find and destroy bugs that are bad news for your plants. Preregistration required. \$2.50-\$5. Register at NOVAparks.com.

Planet Art for Kids. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Vienna Art Center, 114 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Children will create mobiles from these items, and funds raised for this event will be shared with NIH Children's Inn. 5-8-years old, 10-11 a.m. 9-12 years old, 1-2 p.m. \$10. 703-319-3971.

Bike Collection. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Chesterbrook Elementary, 1753 Kirby Road, McLean. The class is partnering with Bikes for the World to collect all size bikes to refurbish to donate to the needy in third world countries and here in the US. \$10 donation. htanpaa6@gmail.com.

Church Rummage Sale. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. UM Church of the Good Shepherd, 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. All proceeds donated to local charities. Sale items include clothing for women, men & kids, accessories jewelry, linens, house wares. small appliances, furniture, books, collectibles, toys and games, sporting goods, etc. 703-281-1151.

#### SUNDAY/MAY 1

Sunrise Garden Opening. 6-10 a.m. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Photographers, birders, strollers, and anyone who enjoys a peaceful morning walk are invited to visit during special hours. \$2.50-\$5. novaparks.com.

Audubon Bird Walk. 7:30-9:30 a.m. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Join leader Ray Smith from the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia. \$2.50-\$5. novaparks.com.

#### TUESDAY/MAY 3

Small Standard Flower Show. 1-2:30 p.m. Vinson Hall Retirement Community, 6251 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. Presented by The Gardeners of the Junior League of Washington. Free. 703-970-3712. fredj@vinsonhall.org.

#### THURSDAY/MAY 5

Jennifer Knapp. 7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave., E, Vienna. Knapp will perform songs from her new album Set Me Free. \$80. www.jamminjava.com.

#### SATURDAY/MAY 7

**Document Shredding**. 9 a.m.-noon. Long and Foster, 1355 Beverly Road, McLean. Free, secure paper shredding for the community. Here's your opportunity to clear your home or office of paper clutter! Spring clean your office and shred outdated documents.703-903-8643.

#### FRIDAY-SATURDAY/MAY 13-14

Annie, Jr. Great Falls Elementary School, 701 Walker Road, Great Falls. 571-512-2760. Wall, run, strollers welcome. Music, raffles, cake and food. \$30 adults; \$15 for 12 and under till April 7. wolftrappta.org.

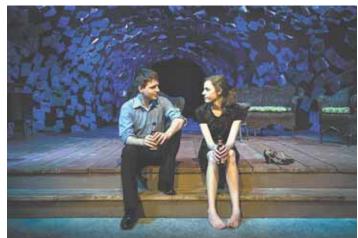


Photo by Teresa Castracane/Courtesy of 1st Stage

Sam Ludwig and Katrina Clark in "Proof" at 1st Stage in Tysons Corner.

### A Disarming Production

### 1st Stage's presents "Proof." 1st Stage presents "Proof" performed at 1524 Spring Hill

n a satisfying character driven play about the fragility of the mind, rich with intriguing dialogue about genius and fears of mental illness, 1st Stage has created a disarming production of "Proof." Written by David Auburn, "Proof" is a Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize winning play.

The title "Proof" refers to questions raised in the play including how one can know what true love is.

Directed by Alex Levy, "Proof" is a fertile drama of unanticipated puzzles that will stick with audiences after the final curtain. Even after playwright Auburn lays bare one of the show's major mysteries at the midpoint of Act I, the 1st Stage production holds audience attention.

"Proof" progresses with candid conversations between a father and his daughter told in flashbacks and in the imagination. Ray Ficca is noteworthy in the role of the mathematical genius father Robert, who has struggled with mental illness. Katrina Clark is top-notch as Catherine, Robert's care-taker, enabler daughter who clearly fears she may well share her father's mental health issues.

Added to "Proof's" mix of attracting characters are Sam Ludwig as a befuddled, but ultimately likeable grad student duction by the award-winning who finds an astonishing mathematical "proof" in a locked desk drawer. His discovery leads to the gradual unraveling of family secrets as the play moves to its final curtain. Liz

### Where and When

Road, Tysons Corner.

Performances through May 8, Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets \$30 (adults) \$26 (seniors) and \$15 (students and military). Call 703-854-1856 or visit

 $www.1stStageTysons.org.\ Note:$ Free Parking. Wheelchair acces-

Osborne adds bite and patronizing authority each time she appears on stage as Robert's second daughter.

"I'm outside a house, trying to find my way in," these are keywords in "Proof." The team of Kathryn Kawecki's scenic and costume design, lighting design by Robbie Hayes, with sound design by Neil McFadden have created a visual other-worldly space befitting these words and the storyline of a play set deeply into the minds of its characters. The moment the audience walks into the stage area, they will know they are in for a unique evening as they notice beyond a wooden porch with outdoor furniture scattered here-and-there a visual display that comes alive with electric

Patrons of the 1st Stage venue can also avail themselves of a display of over 20 works of art from a juried show of the Vienna Arts Society that accompanies the stage production

"Proof" is another well accomplished, thoughtful pro-1st Stage in the energized "new" Tysons area. 1st Stage continues its growing list of accomplishments that also includes recently enlarged theatrical space.



### Here's What's Happening at MCC

**Onstage @ The Alden** 

Mermaid Theatre of Nova Scotia's

"Goodnight Moon and The Runaway **Bunny**"



Saturday, Apr. 23, 2 p.m.

**The Old Firehouse Double Feature at AMC Tysons Corner** 

Friday, Apr. 29, 3:30-10 p.m. **Insider Knowledge Series** 

"Jazz Masters with John Eaton"

The Music of Hoagy Carmichael Saturday, Apr. 30, 1 p.m.

### **Jammin' Juniors Concerts**

**McLean Central Park** Free admission

**Roger Day** 

Wednesday, May 4, 12:30 p.m.

**SteveSongs** Wednesday May 11, 12:30 p.m.

> 5th and 6th Grader Party @ The Old Firehouse **Spring Fling**

Friday, May 6, 7-9 p.m.

Onstage @ The Alden ArtsPower's

> "Chicken **Dance**"

Saturday, May 14, 2 p.m.



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



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# Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Fairfax County and Prince William County Public Hearings

All hearing times are 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
A brief presentation at each hearing will begin at 7:00 p.m.

#### Monday, May 23, 2016

Oakton High School Cafeteria (Entrance #1 or #14) 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna, VA 22181

#### \*Tuesday, May 24, 2016

VDOT Northern Virginia District Office 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030

\*Visit Transform66.org to view a live stream of this hearing at 7:00 p.m.

#### Wednesday, May 25, 2016

Piney Branch Elementary School Cafeteria/Gym (Entrance #1) 8301 Linton Hall Road, Bristow, VA 20136

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), in partnership with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), will host hearings, pursuant to § 33.2-1820(B) of the Code of Virginia, to present the complete set of draft Request for Proposals (RFP) documents for the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway project and provide an opportunity for public comment on the draft comprehensive agreement. In addition, VDOT will provide information and receive comments from the public regarding its intent to change the existing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) designation on Interstate 66 from HOV-2 to High Occupancy Toll (HOT-3) when construction on I-66 Outside the Beltway is opened to traffic in late 2020.

Stop by to learn more about the project, discuss your questions with VDOT staff, and attend the formal presentation.

Review the latest project information and schedule at www.Transform66.org or at the hearings.

Give your written or oral comments at the hearings or submit them to Susan Shaw, Megaprojects Director, at the VDOT District Office address above. You may also e-mail comments at any time to Transform66@VDOT.Virginia.gov. Please reference "Transform 66 Outside the Beltway" in the subject line. Comments must be postmarked, emailed or delivered to VDOT by June 10, 2016 to be included in the public hearing record.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT's Civil Rights at 703-259-1775 or TTY/TDD 711.

State Project: 0066-96A-297,P101 Federal Project: NH-066-1(300) UPC: 105500

### SPORTS



Shannon Condon, seen earlier this season, and the Madison girls' lacrosse team improved to 7-1 with a 10-9 overtime win over McLean on April 15.

Photo by **Craig Sterbutzel**/
The Connection

### Madison Girls' Lax Improves to 7-1

The Madison girls' lacrosse team defeated McLean 10-9 in overtime on April 15, improving its record to 7-1

The Warhawks' lone loss came against Oakton on April 2.

Madison, which improved to 5-0 in Conference 6, will host Langley at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 26. The Saxons won their first 11 games.

### Langley Girls' Lax Improves to 11-0

The Langley girls' lacrosse team has a new head coach, one of its top players is in her first season back after suffering a major knee injury and its leading goal-scorer in a recent game against South Lakes is in her first season with the program.

Through 11 games, however, the Saxons have squashed any potential growing pains in impeccable fashion.

Langley defeated South Lakes 17-3 on April 14. Two days later, the Saxons beat Battlefield, 15-10, and Chantilly, 17-6, to improve their record to 11-0. Ten of Langley's victories came by a margin of at least five goals, and six of their wins came by double digits.

### Madison Baseball Wins Seventh Straight

The Madison baseball team won its seventh straight game since returning from a spring break trip to Florida, beating Hayfield 11-1 on April 15.

The Warhawks improved to 12-2 overall and 8-0 in Conference 6.

Defending state champion Madison was scheduled to face Yorktown on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. The Warhawks will travel to face Fairfax at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 21.

### Madison Girls' Soccer Remains Undefeated

The Madison girls' soccer team defeated Yorktown 1-0 on Monday, improving its record to 7-0-1.

The Warhawks will host McLean at 7:15 p.m. on Monday, April 25.

### Oakton Boys' Soccer Improves to 7-0-1

The Oakton boys' soccer team defeated Robinson 4-1 on Monday, improving its record to 7-0-1 overall and 4-0 in Conference 5.

The Cougars will host Briar Woods at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 20 and will close conference play with a home match against Westfield at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday, April 28.

### Oakton Girls' Soccer Wins Seventh Straight

After opening the season with a 1-0 loss to Madison, the Oakton girls' soccer team has yet to lose.

The Cougars improved to 7-1 with a 4-2 win over Robinson on Monday. Oakton is 4-0 in Conference 5

The Cougars will host Briar Woods at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 20.

Pete Nielsen and the Madison baseball team won their first seven games after returning from a spring break trip to Florida.



Photo by **Craig Sterbutzel**/
The Connection

### Profile

### Tasting Pleasures of the härth

### Meet Luc Dendievel, the executive chef at the Hilton McLean Tysons Corner härth restaurant.

BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY The Connection

hen you first enter Hilton McLean Tysons Corner restaurant, härth, you are greeted by cordial staff and an upscale casual setting, marked off by a glass wine cellar, a tapas bar and a large dining area skirted by an outdoor patio. Then when you get your orders, you will enjoy how the executive chef, Luc Dendievel, has assembled all the delightful textures and flavors on your plate. He can even elevate the humble hamburger into a gastronomic treat by filling a patty with bacon jam.

Understanding his lifelong passion for cooking and fine foods explains how he comes up with such elegant fare. A native of Belgium, Dendievel asked his mother when he was only 8 years old about becoming a chef, and at the



#### **Luc Dendievel**

age of 14, he enrolled in a culinary program at l'Ecole Hoteliere de Libramont. "I grew up around the table," he said, and his intense passion for fine food explains his adult success.

Then after serving in the military and gaining further culinary training, Dendievel headed to Paris to work in a three-star restaurant called Lucas Carton under chef Alain Senderens. There his

boss taught him the importance of precision, from cleaning lettuce to roasting meats.

From Paris to D.C., Dendievel ended up working as the chef de cuisine at the embassy of the European Economic Community before heading back to restaurant life working for celebrity chef Michel Richard at the now-closed Citronelle in the Latham Hotel in Georgetown. "I worked there for one-and-a-half years," he said. "This was an important step in my career...He taught me a lot."

After his stint there, Dendievel moved to New York and then to California to open various upscale restaurants, finally returning to the metro area to work as executive chef at the Willard InterContinental for five years, where its eateries earned awards for the outstanding food.

Now at härth, Dendievel is delighted to work closely with his crew in a basic and smaller

#### LUC DENDIEVEL'S STRAWBERRY RED WINE SOUP

- 1 pound strawberries, washed and hulled
- 1 bottle red wine
- 1/2 cup sugar 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 lemon, quartered

- 1 pint strawberries, hulled and sliced
- 1 pint raspberries
- 1/2 pint blackberries
- 1/2 pint blueberries
- 8 scoops vanilla ice cream Fresh mint sprigs for garnish

Cut strawberries into quarters and process them in a mixer until puréed. Combine the wine, sugar, cinnamon, lemon and vanilla bean in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to medium low, and cook for about 30 minutes. Add the strawberry purée and bring to a boil again. Strain through a fine mesh, and discard the cinnamon, vanilla bean, and lemon. Cool the soup.

To serve, display the fruit in large soup bowls, and pour the strawberry soup over top. Add the vanilla scoop, and garnish with a sprig of mint. Serve.

kitchen, where he can tend the restaurant's rooftop garden and beehives. He has also reshaped the menu, keeping its American character but adding a certain European edginess and adding a sophisticated children's menu.

"Most children's menu just offer fried chicken and pizza," he said. "I have two children and when they go out to eat, they must taste and try something new and different." Dendievel makes meatballs but made with a mix of ground pork and veal. He also does offer fish, but not fish sticks, but something that is "kid-friendly" and he offers different vegetables that children may not know or like.

"We should educate children to eat something they don't eat at home. That way we teach them the pleasures of the table," he said.

As he maps out upcoming menus, Dendievel noted that he always keeps seasonality in mind as he creates recipes. "The menu is constantly changing, depending on what is available," he said. "Right now, with our waffles we serve a rhubarb compote. I try to respect what nature gives you."

härth Restaurant, Hilton McLean Tysons Corner, 7920 Jones Branch Drive, McLean. 703-761-5131. Hours: breakfast and lunch Monday-Friday; dinner, Monday-Saturday; breakfast buffet, Saturday and Sunday.

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### Comparatively Speaking, It's All Relative



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not quite admitting to being any more of a drag than I already am, but having had cancer now for seven years and nearly two months, has been hard to ignore (believe me, I've tried), but easy to embrace. What I mean by that is: There seems to be a subconscious "governor" (have you ever rented a U-Haul? A "governor" is a device that keeps the engine under control, thereby preventing miles-per-hour from exceeding a certain speed) that keeps my emotions from bursting any seams. As much as I try to attempt it, I just don't/can't/won't get as excited and/or as passionate about things as I used to, pre-cancer. Oh, I still want the Red Sox to win and for Duke to lose, but I don't suffer as much when neither scenario plays

And while I'm admitting things, it's not only my subconscious that is acting out/controlling my behavior, it's also my conscious mind, as in when I'm in touch/aware of my emotions/actions (or lack thereof). As my oncologist once said to me about cancer, in reply to a question I asked him about blaming it for my hair turning prematurely gray: "You can blame the cancer for anything," he said, and so I shall. Nevertheless, having an extraordinarily convenient excuse: cancer, might explain most (but not all) of my behavior, and it doesn't bring me much comfort. And so I rationalize some of that unexplained behavior as self-preservation. It doesn't make me particularly proud, however. Still, having survived cancer for as long as I have certainly does, but it's not enough to put a bounce in my step. (Or maybe that's merely the neuropathy in my feet flattening

But it's probably not my actual steps that matter. It's more likely my attitude while I'm stepping. And though I'd much rather my feet not hurt, my reality is: I'm alive, quite unexpectedly (based on my original prognosis), so damn the neuropathy and full speed (more like half speed) ahead. And though I may not move as fast as I used to (who among us actually can?), I am still moving and breathing. I'm just not the man I used to be, and I can live with that because I'm still living. I just wish I could exercise a bit more control. But if I've learned anything during this cancer experience, it's that ceding control and accepting certain realities - within reason, and without giving in or giving up too much - is a prudent course of reaction to an incredibly difficult set of circumstances: diagnosed with a "terminal" form of cancer at age 54 and a half; and one for which there is no right or wrong pursuit. Any port in a storm I say, and stage IV non-small cell lung cancer certainly qualifies as a storm, as challenging as any Mother Nature could muster. The difference being, this storm never ends, it only changes in severity and frequency. Right now, the storm is constant. Either I learn to live with it or I die trying. And minimizing the bad and maximizing the good is part of that process.

If only there was a way to find some place (like "the vault" from "Seinfeld") where I could store my cancer diagnosis and only acknowledge it when absolutely necessary. Wishful thinking, but hardly rational. But what choice does one have, really? Unless you think outside the box, it may very well be a box (more like a rectangle, actually) where you'll soon find yourself not thinking at all.

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

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