



McLean CONNECTION

This is how you do it! Volunteers Robin Wulff and Amanda Baldwin demonstrate some Christmas selfie opportunities. In the same area there was even a real Photo Booth to help friends and families professionally memorialize their visit to the McLean Bible Church Christmas Village.



HOLIDAY CALENDAR

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McLean Bible Church Hosts Christmas Village

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Commission
Recommendations:
88 Percent Implemented

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Menorah Workshop Held
At the Home Depot

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PHOTO BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

DECEMBER 21-27, 2016

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The "Suite-Life": In-law Spaces Are Growing In Popularity



As the number of multi-generational households continues to rise, in-law suites provide the perfect living space for an aging parent or other relative. They offer all of the independence of living alone but with the luxury of having loved ones nearby. In-law suites typically include: a bedroom, bathroom, living area, and kitchenette and usually have a separate entrance.

There are many options for finding space to incorporate an in-law suite into a single-family home. Some of the most popular are redoing the basement or lower level, building an addition or bump out or adding a separate structure. In addition to the convenience they can provide for your family, in-law suites can also be great in terms of resale value.

Keeping accessibility in mind is key to building a functional space. Including features such as roll out drawers and task lighting in the kitchen, and curb-less showers and grab bars in the bathroom are important considerations. With the variety of options available today, accessible features not only provide functionality but beauty as well.

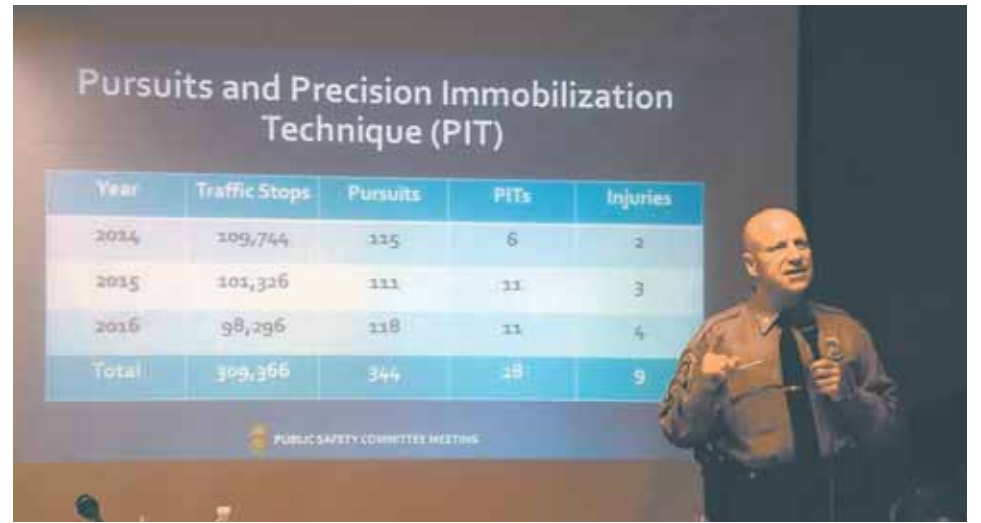


Russ Glickman, founder of Glickman Design Build, is a Master Certified Remodeler and Certified Aging in Place Specialist. The award-winning Glickman Design Build team has completed thousands of general remodeling and accessible design projects in the Metro DC area and is passionate about the work they do. Their work has been featured in a variety of publications.

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A Dec. 13 presentation from Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, Recruitment, Diversity and Vetting subcommittee chair Shirley Ginwright (right), marked the last subcommittee to be heard by the supervisors.



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Police Chief Edwin Roessler presents an update to the Public Safety Committee on the Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT) still allowed to be implemented by FCPD.

Ad Hoc Commission Recommendations: 88 Percent Implemented

Public Safety Committee hears from Recruitment, Diversity and Vetting subcommittee chair.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is well on its way to implementing all recommendations from the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission. At the Dec. 13 meeting of the board's Public Safety Committee, they announced 88 percent of the commission recommendations have been implemented or are soon to be so.

"I am proud that 178 of 202 recommendations have been approved in just over a year," Chairman Sharon Bulova said in a statement. "The Board of Supervisors, Police Department and county staff have been moving with deliberate speed to transform these recommendations into actionable policies. By launching Diversion First, establishing the Office of Police Auditor, creating a Civilian Review Panel, hiring a civilian FCPD Public Affairs Director and applying new standards regarding release of information, just to name a few, Fairfax County has made great strides toward enhancing trust in and increasing transparency of Fairfax County Government."

BULOVA LAUNCHED the commission in response to public concern and growing distrust of police over the 2013 shooting death of Springfield resident John Geer by Fairfax County Police officer Adam Torres.

Fairfax County Police and the supervisors didn't release case information for more than a year after Geer's death, even to his family. A wrongful death civil suit filed by the family and a court order finally forced the release of investigation files and Torres' name.

Torres was fired in July 2015 and indicted by a grand jury for murder in August 2015, an historic first charge of that kind for any Fairfax County officer. He pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter and was released in June of this year, after he received credit for time served for a 12-month sentence.

Status of Ad Hoc Commission Recommendations

Fairfax County released these totals, as of Dec. 12, 2016:

119 (58.9 percent) Recommendations are Implemented or Implemented as Modified

- ❖ 39 Communications
- ❖ 54 Use of Force
- ❖ 10 Diversity, Recruitment and Vetting
- ❖ 8 Mental Health and CIT
- ❖ 8 Independent Oversight and Investigations

59 (29.2 percent) Recommendations are In Progress (Recommendation accepted and in the implementation process)

- ❖ 11 Communications
- ❖ 3 Use of Force
- ❖ 4 Diversity, Recruitment and Vetting
- ❖ 13 Mental Health and CIT
- ❖ 28 Independent Oversight and Investigations

16 (7.9 percent) Recommendations are Under Review (Recommendation needs more review or approval by the Board of Supervisors before the implementation process can begin)

- ❖ 1 Communications
- ❖ 7 Use of Force
- ❖ 0 Diversity, Recruitment and Vetting
- ❖ 5 Mental Health and CIT
- ❖ 3 Independent Oversight and Investigations

8 (4 percent) Recommendations are Not Implemented

- ❖ 1 Communications
- ❖ 4 Use of Force
- ❖ 0 Diversity, Recruitment and Vetting
- ❖ 0 Mental Health and CIT
- ❖ 3 Independent Oversight and Investigations

The Public Safety Committee has been reviewing the recommendations from each subcommittee of the Ad Hoc Commission over the last several months, including Use of Force, Communications, Mental Health, Recruitment, Diversity and Vetting, and Independent Investigations and Oversight.

Michael Hershman, chair of the Ad Hoc Commission, said in a statement, "I not only look back on our work as very pertinent given today's national attention on policing and community relations, but am encouraged by the seriousness with which the Board of Supervisors have addressed our many recommendations. Through a series of committee meetings and hearings focusing on our recommendations, the board has displayed a professional and bipartisan effort to make a very good police department into a model for the rest of the country."

A presentation from Recruitment, Diversity and Vetting subcommittee chair Shirley Ginwright, president of the Fairfax County chapter of the NAACP, on Tuesday, Dec. 13, marked the last subcommittee to be heard by the supervisors.

"What I have seen is community members, leaders and police department working together."

— Shirley Ginwright

"In some fashion we've touched each one of them," said Public Safety committee chair supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock).

Ginwright gave brief updates on the status of the subcommittee's 14 recommendations with Fairfax County Police.

"I have to thank them for doing the most critical pieces of our recommendations first," Ginwright said.

Among those implemented are "collaborate and build recruitment-oriented partnerships" (number 5) and "establish a diversity goal for each commander" (number 10).

Less than half of that subcommittee's recommendations are still in progress, said Ginwright.

"We realize there is more that needs to be done, but we started," Ginwright said in a statement. "I applaud the Board of Supervisors for establishing the Ad Hoc Commission, listening to and understanding the cries of the community for changes, and taking some hard hits to get it done. What I have seen is community members, leaders and police department working together."

Cook acknowledged that a number of the Ad Hoc commission's recommendations were directed towards the Sheriff's Office and Commonwealth's Attorney, who don't report directly to the Board of Supervisors.

But, Cook said, the board is reaching out to them regarding those recommendations and inviting them to present and field questions related to the recommendations at the Public Safety Committee Meeting in March, 2017.

Among those recommendations still under review, a number relate to body cameras.

CHIEF EDWIN ROESSLER said the cost for cameras has been coming down as the number of vendors in the market increases.

Roessler cautioned the board to learn from the mistakes of other jurisdictions around the United States

that have hastily implemented body camera programs without properly budgeting or planning to manage them.

Cook said the Jan. 31, 2017 Public Safety Committee meeting has already been reserved for a deeper discussion of body cameras.

A progress report of where different recommendations from the Ad Hoc Commission are in the process of implementation is available online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecommission/progressreport.htm. A copy of the commission's final report to the board of supervisors is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/chairman/pdf/adhoc-final-10.8.15.pdf.



From left: Caitlyn Shumadine, Christie Shumadine, Eleni Gianoplus and Lissa Perez all wore red T-shirts at the project's drop-off event.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY LISSA PEREZ



From left: Avery Perez, Alden McNulty and Brenna Smith work the "thank you" table that offered donors hot chocolate and cookies at the drop-off event.

Reach of The Wish List Project Grows

BY FALLON FORBUSH
THE CONNECTION

A group of 225 donors and 40 volunteers came together to make Christmas possible for more than 350 people who could not afford the luxury of celebrations this season.

The Wish List Project was started in 1999 to help make the holidays a little brighter for those in need. In its first year, the project helped 10 families, including 47 individuals staying at the Embury Rucker Community Shelter in Reston.

Now in its 17th year, the project has expanded to support those in need at Aldrin Elementary School in Reston and Herndon Elementary School and Hutchison Elementary School in Herndon, as well as seven other local charities.

"You wouldn't believe what people have done," says Christie Shumadine, co-chair of the project.

Donors paid the entire Christmas expenses for two families from the schools, including the family of a 9-year-old who has been hospitalized with leukemia since August, according to Shumadine.

For a little boy who asked for a baseball

glove, donors put together a gift basket with not only what he asked for, but also Washington Nationals tickets and team paraphernalia.

"It kind of grew and grew and grew," says Shumadine. "It was just a little community event where we went into the homeless shelters and said 'Give us your wish list,' and we've expanded."

THE PROJECT uses SignUpGenius, an online organization tool, to provide information to donors about who is wishing for what. Donors can then sign up to buy for a recipient.

All donations were then dropped off at The Wish List Project's Co-Chair Lissa Perez's home in Great Falls on Dec. 10. School counselors, social workers and shelter directors can then collect the gifts—tagged and wrapped—the following day.

"You know a little bit about the person you're buying for," says Shumadine. "You know their name and their age and they put out the things that they want."

Some of the wishes that are submitted are bare bones.

"It's like kids just saying, 'I just want shampoo and a winter coat,'" says

Shumadine. "And then we have to go back and we say, 'OK, that's a need, but you also have to give us some wants.' And they come back with the most humble requests."

While preparing for the projects drop off event this month, Shumadine received affirmation for helping organize the project.

When she was in line to check out with over \$500 worth of presents for this year's list using donor money, a cashier was curious who she was shopping for.

"When I tell her it's The Wish List Project," she goes, 'I know your charity,'" says Shumadine.

The 18-year-old cashier then told Shumadine how she was familiar with the project's work. In year's past, the cashier was taking refuge in a homeless shelter. She left by the time the holidays rolled around, but her roommate stayed behind in the shelter over Christmas. That year, the project gave presents to those in the shelter, including her roommate.

The cashier shared with Shumadine how the generosity made her friend's Christmas that year and how she couldn't believe that people cared for her.

The cashier then volunteered to buy clothes and toys for a baby who was on the list.

MORE MEMBERS of the community kept coming forward to help.

For a community service project, sixth graders from the Great Falls Elementary School built and assembled 21 bikes. The teachers reached out to Shumadine and asked if she could use the bikes to make some wishes come true. The students even delivered them to the recipients.

"Can you believe that?" says Shumadine. "It was amazing."

The Wish List Project had committed to make five "transition kits" for shelters to provide to families to help them prepare to move out of homeless shelters and into permanent housing.

"These kits are like \$300 to \$400 and have sheets, towels, bath mats, pots and pans, glassware ... all of the basics," Shumadine says.

In the end, the project funded 30 kits. "We kept upping the number because the community kept responding," she says.

Shumadine hopes to extend the project even further to do collections throughout the year and help those in need year-round.

"We hope to extend the Wish List Project and say it's not just for Christmas anymore," she says.

Large-Scale Photography Exhibit Opens at MPA@ChainBridge

The McLean Project for the Arts (MPA) officially opened its new location, MPA@ChainBridge, with its inaugural exhibit, *Moving Through: Works by David A. Douglas*. Showcasing large-scale landscape art, the exhibit opened Dec. 8, 2016 and runs through Jan. 21, 2017. The exhibit is open to the public Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. until 9:30 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. until 9:30 p.m.

Located in the Chain Bridge Corner Shopping Center in the space between CVS and Kazan Restaurant, MPA@ChainBridge features an exhibition gallery as well as an art education space. MPA, in residence at the McLean Community Center (MCC) for more than 25 years, must relocate temporarily while the MCC undergoes a major renovation in spring, 2017. Until then, MPA's existing galleries and DuVal Studio in the MCC



Moving Through: Works by David A. Douglas is the first exhibit featured at MPA's second location, MPA@ChainBridge.

(MPA@MCC) will remain open and active. Once the renovation begins, MPA@ChainBridge will serve as MPA's primary gallery, classroom and office space for

about two years.

Moving Through: Works by David A. Douglas is the first exhibit featured at MPA's second location, MPA@ChainBridge. Working

at the intersection of drawing, painting and photography, David A. Douglas creates large-scale works that explore the power of place. Depicting personally significant landscapes on a monumental scale, Douglas offers the viewer the opportunity to enter the works on their own terms and experience the highly charged potency that lies within the ordinary moment. To learn more about Douglas' work, visit <http://davidadouglas.com>.

McLean Project for the Arts (MPA) is one of the mid-Atlantic region's most respected contemporary visual arts organizations. MPA provides a number of high-quality educational programs, art classes, and exhibitions including: MPAartfest; art courses and a summer STEAM camp; various art exhibitions showcasing the work of emerging and accomplished artists; and ArtReach, an award-winning program serving students in grades K - 12, seniors, and people with special needs. For more information, visit www.mpaart.org

NEWS

Sheriff's Deputy Cleared in Fatal Shooting

Commonwealth's Attorney: homicide was justified self-defense.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

In a decision released Dec. 16, Commonwealth's Attorney Ray Morrogh cleared Fairfax County Master Deputy Sheriff P. McPartlin of any criminal wrongdoing in the fatal shooting of Yovani Amaya Gomez that took place Aug. 15 outside Inova Fairfax Hospital.

Morrogh's decision comes after receiving the results of the Fairfax County Police Department criminal investigation on Nov. 15.

McPartlin was one of the sheriff deputies involved in the death of inmate Natasha McKenna at the the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center. McKenna, a woman with a history of mental illness, died in February 2015, a few days after she was restrained, shackled, hooded and shocked with a taser four times in an attempt to move her to the Alexandria jail. Morrogh decided against any charges against the deputies, including McPartlin, in that case as well.

Police had previously released some details of the chain of events leading up to McPartlin shooting Gomez. Morrogh's report added further information to the timeline, which included Gomez being taken in for medical attention for possible dehydration and/or mental health episode, and his discharge with no diagnosis for either. After being escorted to the bus stop outside Inova by a security guard, another pair of guards responded to a report of Gomez wielding a weapon.

Gomez hurt one of the guards, Morrogh says, who also requested backup from law enforcement. MDS McPartlin was one of two deputies guarding a prisoner at the hospital and responded to the call for help.

Gomez charged at McPartlin, who Morrogh says attempted to back up and then began firing.

Morrogh's report quotes McPartlin as saying, "... before I shot I think I was trying to get back but he was too close so I had to shoot."

McPartlin did not remember giving Gomez any commands prior to shooting, Morrogh says, though other guards who were at the scene said the deputy did ask Gomez to calm down and stop

charging and put the apparent weapon down.

Earlier in the day, Gomez first approached Fairfax County Police officer K. Woodward in his cruiser on Little River Turnpike on what was an extremely hot afternoon. Morrogh said it was clear to Fairfax County Police officer K. Woodward that "Mr. Gomez did not speak English proficiently."

Woodward attempted to ask him if he wanted to hurt himself using the Google Translate cell phone app. Woodward had also summoned paramedics to check Gomez out physically.

Rescue determined Gomez's vital signs were within normal ranges, Morrogh reports.

But when Gomez appeared to answer in the affirmative with "Sí," he did want to harm himself, Woodward asked that he be taken to Inova Fairfax Hospital.

Morrogh says the medics described Gomez as non-combative, mumbling in Spanish and at one time pointing to his head and saying "voices."

Gomez was examined at the hospital by a physician and Spanish-speaking nurse, the report continues.

"They advised Officer Woodward that Mr. Gomez denied any mental health issues and further said that he did not want to hurt himself," Morrogh said. "They also told Officer Woodward that Mr. Gomez told them that he had a stomach ache and didn't feel well."

Gomez's diagnosis after a physical examination and mental condition assessment was that he was not in distress but suffering from "general weakness."

Old Dominion Security guard Ezra Carter found Gomez in the lobby after he was discharged some time between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. Carter used an interpreter to find that Gomez wanted to be taken to a homeless shelter. The guard then walked Gomez to the bus stop, Morrogh's report says.

In the conclusion of his seven-page investigation report, Morrogh reiterates Gomez charged at McPartlin with what appeared to be a sword but later turned out to be a sign post pulled from the ground.

"Reasonably perceiving himself

SEE DEPUTY, PAGE 13

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OPINION

Congress Coming Together To Find and Fund Faster Cures

BY BARBARA COMSTOCK
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE (R-IO)



On Dec. 8, I joined with a bipartisan group of House and Senate members, and the Speaker of the House, as the Speaker signed the 21st Century Cures Act. It was a joyful occasion as we concluded this year's session with what I believe is one of the most important and game-changing pieces of legislation passed this year. It was signed into law days later by the President and supported by more than 700 research, doctor and patient advocacy groups and provides \$4.8 billion in new research investments to the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

At the ceremony, Tennessee Senator Lamar Alexander recounted the testimony of Dr. Francis Collins, director of the NIH, who has highlighted the new, exciting cures possible within the next 10 years: an artificial pancreas to help people with diabetes; medicine to limit the effects of Alzheimer's; a vaccine for Zika; a vaccine for HIV; a vaccine for the flu; the use of regenerative medicine using our own cells to restore a damaged heart; and non-addictive pain medicines that will help curb opioid addiction.

Imagine how different our health care system could be with these innovations. It is no wonder that Dr. Collins calls NIH the "National Institute of Hope." In Loudoun County, so many of us have seen that hope in the inspirational advocacy work of families such as Mark and Ellyn Miller, who lost their daughter, Gabriella,

to cancer, and Chris and Roya Giordano, who lost their son, Mathias. The 21st Century Cures Act honors their efforts with \$1.8 billion for cancer research, which will support the Cancer Moonshot initiative.

Currently, there are only 500 treatments for 10,000 known diseases. With the mapping of the human genome and advances over the past several decades, we have more genetic clues about cancer and other diseases. But we still need to remove barriers to increase research collaboration, identify diseases earlier through personalized medicine, reform the FDA and modernize clinical trials, and remove unnecessary regulation for developing new medical apps. This legislation does this and streamlines the entire biomedical ecosystem.

COMMENTARY

With the 21st Century Cures Act now law, many of NIH's initiatives will be enhanced — such as the BRAIN Initiative that will help in fighting diseases like Alzheimer's. The bill will also concentrate funding on NIH's Precision Medicine Initiative that will focus research dollars on genetic, lifestyle and environmental variations of disease.

The Inova Schar Cancer Institute in Fairfax is one of the premier cancer centers in our region that can be part of this new era of innovation. Last month, they announced a new research partnership with the University of Virginia to develop the Global Genomics and Bioinformatics Research Institute, located at the Inova Center for Personalized Health in Fairfax.

I joined our private and public advocates at the announcement where they explained the mission: "The institute will recruit researchers, scientists and investigators who will engage in collaborative research focused on genomics, functional biology, bioinformatics, biologically driven engineering, precision medicine, translational research, development of targeted therapeutics and commercialization of new discoveries." This partnership will also work to achieve designation by the National Cancer Institute as a Comprehensive Cancer Center and establish a regional campus of the UVA School of Medicine at Inova. More partnerships are anticipated, as well as support from my former colleagues in the General Assembly, led by Speaker Bill Howell. As Todd Stottlmyer, CEO of the Inova Center for Personalized Health, said, "This new partnership will further expand Inova's ground-breaking research in precision medicine and help us to realize the promise of personalized health."

While the legislation advances research and medical breakthroughs and provides for reforms and investments for faster cures and treatments, it also incorporates provisions we had passed to reform our mental health system and fight against the heroin and the opioid epidemic, which was recently declared a Public Health Emergency in Virginia.

This is just the beginning of what will be a new chapter in medical innovation. Virginia can play a critical and lifesaving role in bringing faster cures and treatments to patients plagued with these cruel diseases. We in Congress must continue to be partners by seeking the best policies and investments that allow this innovation to soar.

Fairfax Police Reform Is Well Underway

BY PHILLIP NIEDZIELSKI-
EICHNER

I endorse the Connection Newspaper's recent editorial on the progress Fairfax County has made implementing the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, on which I had the honor of serving as chairman of the Use of Force Subcommittee. I have had the opportunity to interact with many members of the Fairfax Police Department, ranging from commanders to precinct-level supervisors and officers, all of whom I hold in high regard. We have a fine police department that we are fortunate to have protecting us day-in and day-out.

While the August 2013 shooting death of John Geer was the catalyst for the commission's forma-

tion, our charge was to assess the Department's performance against national best practices. As we executed against this charge, we identified both areas for improvement and mechanisms we believed would strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the department.

Forming a commission is a time-honored tool by public officials to delay action — or avoid it altogether — since there are always significant barriers to achieving change to deep-rooted organizational practices, traditions and culture. I commend both the Fairfax Board of Supervisors and the Police Department, particularly its chief and command leadership, with ensuring that the Police Commission's work is not sitting on the shelf gathering dust.

With my seven-month commission experience and a year's worth

of persistent focus on implementation alongside a dedicated subset of fellow commissioners, I can state without reservation that both the letter and spirit of the commission's recommendations have been embraced by Fairfax County.

Fairfax County is well on the way toward approving and implementing the preponderance of the commission's recommendations. Of note in this regard are the following:

- ❖ The two-pronged approach to independent Police Department oversight advocated by the commission and recently approved by the Board of Supervisors is significant in light of historical resistance to civilian review of police actions.

- ❖ The changes directed by the supervisors and Chief Roessler with regard to the Police

Department's openness and transparency are substantial and have already helped regain the public trust lost, in part, because of the dismal handling of the Geer case.

- ❖ The county's investment in Diversion First, which provides treatment rather than jail for non-violent people with mental illness, and broad-based police officer training in crisis intervention techniques, are already paying dividends. Those with mental illness are being treated with greater sensitivity to their affliction, easing the potential for unnecessary suffering, while also reducing the potential for officer injuries and the need for the use of force. Ultimately, this will also help insure a more effective use of tax dollars.

As important and forward lean

SEE POLICE REFORM, PAGE 7

McLean
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LETTERS

A Champion for Small Businesses

To the Editor:

Each year owning a small business becomes more burdensome. With government continuing to impose more regulation and red tape on businesses and with the skyrocketing costs of providing employees healthcare, the costs associated with operating a small business are simply exorbitant.

Fortunately in late November, Congress passed the 21st Century Cures Act, and it was signed into law this week. In addition to the immense benefits this bill will infuse into the medical field, the 21st Century Cures Act also includes the Small Business Health Care Relief Act. This component of this new law will allow many small busi-

nesses to help their workers and families pay for premiums and other medical expenses. As a result of this bill, small companies will have more flexibility and a simplified way of assisting their employees with soaring medical costs.

Thankfully, our Congresswoman, Barbara Comstock, cosponsored and voted to support the 21st Century Cures Act. Rep. Comstock has been a champion for small businesses and supports rolling back the Obama Administration's job-killing regulations. I am grateful for her leadership and advocacy on this important issue.

Nadia Ayoubi
McLean

Police Reform Underway

FROM PAGE 6

ing as these steps are, I believe the recrafting and rewriting of the Police Department's Use of Force policy, also known as General Order 540, warrants particular note. The new Use of Force policy encompasses the commission recommendations, which also incorporated use-of-force recommendations made by the independent Police Executive Research Forum. It gives emphasis to the sanctity of human life, dignity and liberty of all persons as its overarching value or driving theme; and it calls for de-escalation as the strategy of first resort when confronted with a threat rather than the use of deadly force.

Every member of the Fairfax Police Department, from command leadership to police officer will receive training under General Order 540 by the end of January, 2017. Police officer performance will be assessed against the standards set in this policy, while recruitment and vetting of police officer candidates will focus on the abilities and temperament that comport with the values captured therein.

While the preponderance of our recommendations have been approved and are being implemented, there are exceptions. For example, we called for all officers being outfitted with body worn cameras, to complement the dashboard cameras now

mounted in each patrol vehicle. We believe such cameras will benefit both the public and the police officer. The supervisors delayed consideration of this recommendation for important matters of budget and privacy concerns, which I believe will ultimately be overcome.

I encourage everyone who is interested to review the Police Commission recommendations progress report at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecommission/progressreport.htm>. In summary, you will find that 178 of the 202 recommendations (88 percent) have been approved and are either in process of being implemented or have already been implemented; 15 (7.4 percent) are still under review; and 9 (4.5 percent) have been rejected.

The evidence so far is that the deep-rooted change of the nature and spirit advocated by the commission is more achievable now than even the most optimistic expected. This noted, I caution that the transformative progress I have observed can only be sustained over time with the continued county and Police Department leadership commitment, the active involvement of the police rank and file officers and most critically continued community participation, monitoring and oversight.

Phillip Niedzielski-Eichner served as chairman of the Use of Force Subcommittee of the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, and continues service on the Implementation Committee.

WEEK IN MCLEAN

Gift Shopping at Claude Moore Colonial Farm

The Claude Moore Colonial Farm's GateHouse Shop features a hand-picked selection of delightful and affordable gifts for the holidays. These include tree ornaments, Advent calendars, Christmas trays, holiday pins, candle holders, wine stoppers, coasters, tea towels, soaps and more. Browse jewelry, scarves, children's toys, pirate ships as well as fruit preserves, butters and jellies in glass jars of several sizes. The GateHouse also offers holiday gift baskets for busy patrons.

The GateHouse Shop's "Local Corner" showcases soaps from a lavender farm in Maryland, books written by the living his-

tory museum's volunteers, candles from a local artisan in Falls Church and colonial pewter figurines handcrafted by the Farm's very own former farmer.

The Shop is located at the entrance to the living history museum at 6310 Georgetown Pike in McLean. All sales proceeds benefit the programs and services of the privately operated and funded National Park. The GateHouse Shop welcomes visitors on Wednesdays through Sundays, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. through Saturday, Dec. 24. Free GateHouse Shop parking and directions at www.1771.org or 703-442-7557.

SELECT NIGHTS | 5PM - 9PM
NOV. 16 - JAN. 1
ROERS ZOO FARI - VIENNA, VA
(Formerly the Reston Zoo)

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UPCOMING SPECIAL EDITIONS

DECEMBER
2/28/2016.....Children's Connection 2016

JANUARY
1/4/2017.....Wellbeing, Renewal, Resolutions
1/11/2017.....HomeLifeStyle
1/18/2017.....A+ Camps & Schools
1/25/2017.....Community Guide
1/25/2017.....Winter Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment; Valentine's Preview

FEBRUARY
2/1/2017.....Valentine's Dining & Gifts I
2/1/2017.....Wellbeing - National Children's Dental Health Month
2/8/2017.....HomeLifeStyle
2/8/2017.....Valentine's Dining & Gifts II
Valentine's Day is February 14
2/15/2017.....A+ Camps & Schools

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- Mount Vernon Gazette
- Oak Hill/Henderson Connection
- Potomac Almanac
- Reston Connection
- Springfield Connection
- Vienna/Dakota Connection

HOLIDAY FUN

McLean Bible Church Hosts Spectacular Christmas Village

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

They said it was an inaugural event, their first go at putting together a free, family-friendly holiday happening for anyone and everyone to enjoy, but the activities, the sets, the quality and quantity of the entertainment and refreshments and the sheer scope of their efforts seemed anything but a novice production.

For six nights – Sunday, Dec. 11 through Friday, Dec. 16 – every inch of the Tysons Corner location of the McLean Bible Church (MBC) at 8925 Leesburg Pike in Vienna was transformed into a magical Christmas Village, inside and out. The organizers were hoping for a good turnout, wishing to spread the joy of the Season to as many as possible. The opening night numbers far exceeded even their optimistic expectations.

“I think we had close to 7,000 to get things started on Sunday night,” reported MBC Associate Senior Pastor Dale Sutherland. “That’s probably the most we have had any Sunday in the building at one time.”

The following weeknights saw crowds of over 2,000 each night, though everyone was preparing for the Friday night Grand Finale. “I have a feeling that will be a big one. But we’re ready,” declared Rosie Pinkerman, MBC Director of Host Teams, on Wednesday evening. Pinkerman was speaking from her post in the church’s upper level Main Lobby – or “Village Square” for this occasion – where she said she was “really just keeping out of the way of all our amazing volunteers. They’ve got this covered.”

According to Pinkerman the event was first discussed three years ago but really hit the design board about two years later. “It’s a true testament to the great McLean Bible Church spirit and about 800 volunteers!” Just about everything involved in the final product was the result of volunteer efforts. That includes building, the set up and supervision of a dizzying number of activities, most of the forest of decorated Christmas trees, food and beverage offerings and serving, vehicle traffic control and pedestrian flow.

OK. Back to the start of this adventure at the “Village Square” where dozens of costumed “elves” greeted, directed and generally spread plenty of Christmas cheer. They helped friends and families take photos in front of a massive tree and on either side of a polar display as the crowds made their way to a full-sized carousel for a quick spin before heading to the auditorium for the Christmas Show.

WITH THREE PERFORMANCES a night and featuring the MBC Worship Band that had the packed houses singing along, the Christmas Concert and Show included a humorous kid-narrated film about the “Story of Christmas.” When that laughter died down, there was interactive storytelling by church member Paul Cunningham who enthralled an audience



“It’s snowing!” And so it seemed to be during one of the MBC Worship Band’s performances. The group played to a packed house and had the audience signing right along to some of the time-honored traditional Christmas carols and rocking to some of the more modern numbers.



Round and round we go! The full-sized carousel brought lots of smiles and wide-eyed wonder to the guests at the MBC Christmas Village.

of youngsters surrounding him by the stage.

On the lower level it quickly became clear that there was so much to see and do that it was no wonder why some, like the Paulsen family from Springfield, decided that one trip to the MBC Christmas Village just wasn’t enough. “We were here on Sunday night,” said Howard Paulsen, with his two boys Michael and Brian in tow. “We found out we had missed the train ride and some of the other activities, so we came back for more.”

A train ride? Absolutely. And a good-sized one at that with room for the whole family to hop on board as they were driven at a pretty good speed through the “Christmas Tree Forest.” Further along the lower level “Main Street,” for those who hadn’t finished

their Christmas shopping, there was a “World Bazaar” featuring handcrafted gifts at booths decorated to call to mind the country of origin. Regions of Latin America, Asia and Africa were represented with their items being sold to benefit ministries around the world that focus on ending poverty.

The spirit of giving was not forgotten in this Winter Wonderland. “Operation Christmas Child” was set up next door to the Bazaar to garner donations for children who otherwise might not see a gift beneath the Christmas tree.

Across the “street” children were lined up in “Candyland” for some time in the Bouncing Christmas Castle, a bit of face-painting, and a few other interactive offerings. If that

wasn’t enough action to satisfy even the most energetic youngsters, there was still the “Polar Playground” complete with a variety of obstacles courses sure to have some of those little ones falling asleep on their rides home.

Shows. Markets. Carousel and train rides. Lots to eat and drink. Sounds complete, and then some. But what would a Christmas Village be without the chance to do a little “ice” skating? Not to worry. The MBC elves thought of that, as well, transforming one large room into an indoor skating rink, where the organizers kindly provided helpful portable hand rails for those most in danger of spending more time sitting on the rink, rather than skating around it.

Just like the Christmas Show and the Christmas Experience that started Village event, the MBC folks capped off their presentation with a reminder of what they are all about. “Our Village is for everyone, regardless of their beliefs. All are welcomed and will feel welcome,” said Pastor Sutherland, but their mission in what they do is to “communicate the story of Jesus and what He did for Mankind.” And so the last thing that guests encountered set up outside the church was a live Nativity scene complete with Holy Family, their visitors, quite a few sheep and even a donkey. Then it was back to their cars, with the calls of “Thanks for coming! Merry Christmas!” ringing in their ears.

INAUGURAL EVENT, remember? That means there are already plans in the works for next year’s Village. A word to the wise? Don’t miss it if you did this year, and if you were part of this year’s fun, who knows what new adventures await you at the 2017 McLean Bible Church Christmas Village?

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION



The Richards family of Reston pause for a photo opportunity while enjoying the delights of the McLean Bible Church Christmas Village. “Something for everyone” they said, with kids ranging from 2 to 11.

NEWS

Oak Hill Herndon Fantasy Flight 2016: Children with life-challenging illnesses and their families board Sleigh Ride One, nonstop service to the North Pole, for a day of holiday cheer and a private visit with Santa Clause. United Airlines hosted the day with the support of hundreds of volunteers and regional businesses.

PHOTOS BY ANTHONY C. TSANTRIZOS



Taking a Fantasy Flight to the North Pole

In spirit of season, community organizations and businesses donate hundreds of service hours and supplies.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

One hundred twenty-five children with life-challenging illnesses, their families and a support team of doctors, nurses and volunteers, for a total of 216 people, arrived at Gate 7, Terminal D at Dulles International Airport, Dec. 3, and headed for the hottest destination of the season.

Children's Hospice International, located in Alexandria, in partnership with United Airlines had invited children and their families to experience a special trip. Earlier that morning each person had checked in at the United Airlines counter and received a complimentary ticket aboard Flight 2135, IAD-NTP, non-stop service from Washington to the North Pole, aboard Fantasy Flight 2016, call sign Sleigh Ride One.

They lined up at the boarding gate shortly before 8:30 a.m., awaiting an adventure so many families had anticipated for months. Going down the jet bridge, parents lifted their children out of wheelchairs leaving the chairs behind for the support crew. Others held the hands of their ill child and the hands of their other children as the line moved forward to enter the plane.

The flight crew greeted the passengers as they boarded the plane for their all-expense paid trip to the North Pole and personal visits with Santa Claus.

Sparkling garland hung on the overhead compartments and cut out snowflakes dangled from the ceiling.

HOLIDAY MAGIC, a mix of community spirit and care, fueled this year's United Airlines Fantasy Flight 2016, a program in its 27th year of operation. Through the support of United Airlines, its partnership with Children's Hospice International, the giving of dozens of local and regional corporations and hundreds of volunteers including United employees who donated their time and talent, United's Flight to the North Pole prepared to depart.

Francis Parker and her husband had eagerly anticipated this day since May when the youngest of their four sons, Case, age 2, was diagnosed with can-

cer. While waiting to board Fantasy Flight 2016, Parker's boys had crayoned letters to Santa and mailed them with the help from members of Herndon Rotary Club. Paul Williams, Rotarian, said, "It's a happy time here today, to celebrate with the families."

As the boys colored, Parker said, "Case is receiving treatment at Walter Reed. His nurses told us about the flight when Case was diagnosed. We woke them up this morning, put them in the car and didn't tell them where they were going until we got to the airport. Everybody's been wonderful." Looking around, she added: "What a great opportunity this is."

Although Case's brothers had flown before, this was to be Case's first flight, as it was for many children aboard Fantasy Flight 2016. While the flight attendants helped the families settle in, United Airline's Captain "Bubba" welcomed everyone aboard. He explained that there were some very special rules on the nonstop flight to the North Pole.

"Window blinds have to remain down," he said, adding that the plane uses a very special fuel, making it travel so fast it'll be extremely bright outside. "And everyone knows, where Santa lives," Captain Bubba said, "is a secret, only United has clearance from Santa Claus" to land at the North Pole.

The flight is real and so is the destination. Sandy Steinmeyer, a United Airlines flight attendant and key organizer of the Dulles Fantasy Flights said: "All Fantasy Flights across the United States and Guam, a total of 14 flights, will really take off this year."

According to Randy Cox, managing director United Airlines, United Airlines donates the fuel for the flights while employees, flight attendants, crews and support teams donate their time.

Julia Wislocka, United Airlines staff representative corporate communication, commented that there is no doubt in her mind Fantasy Flight is the most amazing event of United Airlines. She said, "It's a great example of employees and the community coming together. The event, takes hundreds of volunteers, and the concourse where the families will arrive, really is transformed to be the North Pole."

Terry Edwards, a United employee for 27 years, was Mrs. Santa. Before the plane departed, she agreed and said, "In their mindset, the children are at the North Pole. They buy into it 100 percent."

While Sleigh Ride One traveled at near warp speed, it made quick time to the North Pole but not before flight attendants could treat everyone to apple slices and sweets. As Fantasy Flight 2016 prepared to land, Captain Bubba came on the intercom one last time. To everyone on board, he wished: "Fill your days with laughter; fill them with peace and with joy. Welcome to the North Pole."

SEE DESTINATION, PAGE 13

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Holiday Grief

Workshop helps others deal with loss.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

The holiday season is bittersweet for Jeanne Rorke. The days leading up to Christmas are filled with memories of her parents. Her mother committed suicide when Rorke was 12, and her father died on Christmas Eve eight years ago.

"No one really helped me through the grieving process," said Rorke, recalling her mother's death. "My family was like, 'Don't talk about it.' ... My Christmases have always been kind of sad ... even though I put on a happy face for my family."

Roarke joined about two dozen others at a workshop on handling grief during the holidays called, "Facing the Empty Chair: Surviving the Holidays after Losing a Loved One" at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church in Alexandria. From those who are preparing to celebrate a first Christmas without a loved one to those who've been grieving for decades, participants shared experiences, supported each other and gained tools for surviving the season while facing the reality of the empty chair in which their loved one once sat.

"The holidays can be time of longing for those who've lost someone," said Carey Gauzens, a licensed clinical social worker at the Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia in McLean. "The holidays are a time when you reflect on family, and it's hard for someone who's aware that that person isn't there."

At the workshop, Gauzens clarified some of the misinformation surrounding grief, especially during the holidays. "First and most important, is that normal grieving is really hard for most people. Some people believe the myth that grief lasts only for a few months, but it's hard to measure your healing because it's an up and down process, not a smooth, straight line."

Throughout the process, and particularly during the holidays, being able to tap into a source of strength other than oneself is a factor that Gauzen underscores: "It's important to have a support group, friends, a therapist."

Finding someone who is also grieving can



PHOTO COURTESY OF CAREY GAUZENS

Carey Gauzens of the the Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia in McLean, led a workshop on grieving during the holidays at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church in Alexandria.

be particularly helpful. For example, when Beverly Bell's husband died nine years ago following an extended illness, she found strength and comfort in a friendship with another widow.

"[We] had a wonderful relationship ... for several years following my husband's death," said Bell, who attended the workshop. "We had a regular lunch date and also shared a number of holidays. She also died a couple of years ago, and I realized that I am particularly missing her presence."

Earlier this year, Bell's brother died as well. "I found myself re-experiencing many of the feelings I had had when my husband died, [but feeling] particularly helpless to comfort my sister-in-law," she said. "Perhaps [my] presence is the most important thing I can ... offer my sister-in-law."

Some of the workshop attendees wanted to learn how to better support others. "I am a member of the Community of Hope International, a group of lay pastoral caregivers whose ministry is to visit those who are experiencing sickness, trauma, tragedy or loss of a loved one," said Caroline

McCormack, one of the participants. "I wanted to have a better understanding of the grieving process, so I might be a more compassionate listener."

She and Bell learned that process is different for everyone. "My husband's death was preceded by a long illness. My brother's death was sudden," said Bell. "I wondered if something about the timing made a difference in how we experience and cope with grief. I learned that it really does not."

"The holidays are a time when you reflect on family, and it's hard for someone who's aware that that person isn't there."

— Carey Gauzens, LCSW

"... We all experience grief in different ways and it can show up at unexpected times and places and so we need to be gentle with ourselves and find ways that we can express our grief in ways that feel healing and safe for us," added Revered Elizabeth Rees, Associate Rector, St. Aidan's Episcopal Church.

This is a point Gauzens tried to underscore: Grieving is an individual process and there is no one-size-fits-all method for coping. Even people who are grieving for the same person can experience it differently and have different needs. "For example, one person might want to talk about the loss, but others might not," she said. "It's important to be sensitive to family members who grieve differently and compromise so that each person feels emotionally safe."

Cultivating self-awareness and knowing what is normal to expect while one is grieving is important. "Sometimes the symptoms are so intense it makes people feel like they're going crazy and frightens them sometimes," said Gauzens. "They might cry at the drop of a hat, get angry or feel unable to control their emotions. There could become deeply distracted or confused like get lost going someplace they know well."

"Give yourself permission to make careful decisions about how you'll spend your time," she added. "It's helpful to discern within yourself what feels right. Decide whether to maintain holiday traditions or do something completely different."

Avoiding all festive, social activities might do more harm than good, however. "A person who's grieving might end up isolating because they won't go to places they once went to with the person they've lost," said Gauzens.

Instead, Gauzens suggests planning "something to look forward to after the holiday to reward yourself for getting through the holidays."

She also stressed the need for self-care, including exercising, eating healthy and staying hydrated. "It's important to minimize your use of mood altering substances like alcohol," said Gauzens. "It's tempting to try to numb the pain, but it comes back."

Changing customs can make holidays less painful, says Dr. Linda Gulyn, Ph.D., professor of psychology, Marymount University in Arlington. "I like to break with traditions that are familiar and that remind us of the loved one we lost," she said. "Sometimes it's good to shake it up and start a new tradition, so you're looking forward instead of behind you."

"The days are darker and colder, which exacerbates any sadness that we might be feeling anyway," said Gulyn. "Hang in there. It will feel better and you will get through it. The holidays will go by and we'll get back into our routine and productive lives that help with healing."

There is a point however, when assistance from a mental health professional is a necessary, Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology, George Mason University in Fairfax. "People should seek professional help if they have significant distress and difficulty in daily self-care and functioning at home or work that has lasted more than two weeks without improvement," he said. "Common symptoms for depression are low mood, lack of pleasure in previously enjoyable activities, social isolation, and thoughts of hopelessness and helplessness."

Free Holiday Cab Rides Help Prevent Drunk Driving

Combating that holiday period which the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says is a "dangerous time to be on the road due to a high number of drunk drivers behind the wheel," a local nonprofit organization will offer free cab rides to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during the winter holidays.

Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), operates the annual Holiday SoberRide program between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. each evening between Friday, Dec. 16, 2016 and Sunday, Jan. 1, 2017 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period.

During the evening hours, between Dec. 16 and Jan. 1, Washington-metropolitan area residents celebrating with alcohol

may call the toll-free SoberRide phone number 1-800-200-TAXI and be afforded a no-cost (up to \$30 fare), safe way home.

"Last December, nearly 1,500 (1,456) Greater Washington residents did the right thing and availed themselves of this lifesaving service rather than possibly driving home impaired," said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP's president. "For SoberRide's hours of operation during just

last New Year's Eve, alone, such ridership (580) translated into the removal of a would-be drunk driver from our shared roadways every 49-seconds."

Since 1993, WRAP's SoberRide program has provided 65,385 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

More information about WRAP's SoberRide initiative can be found at www.soberride.com.

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Ongoing Contemplative Candlelight Service St. John's Episcopal Church, located at 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. One mile east of Beltway Exit 44. Experience God in word, chant, and silence and pray by lighting a candle. No evening services on December 25 or January 1. www.stjohnsmclean.org

Winter Walk of Lights at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens open every day beginning on Friday, Nov. 18, 2016, through Jan. 8, 2017. Open Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's, too. The walk of lights runs daily from 5:30 - 10 p.m. Last tickets sold at 9:30 p.m. This family-friendly six-week winter wonderland of spectacle is only a few years old but has garnered a loyal following from throughout the Northern Virginia area, particularly Vienna and its environs. To buy timed tickets online: <https://www.novaparks.com/events/winter-walk-of-lights>

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

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.

SATURDAY/DEC. 24

Children's Christmas Eve Service 5 p.m. The Church of the Good Shepherd, United Methodist Church 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. The Children's Christmas Eve Service includes a giant felt board. As children come in, we will pass out pieces of the Nativity story and will do the felt board together with music, said pastor Eric Song. Communion and candlelight services will be held at 7:30 and 10:30 p.m. Child care will be provided for the 7:30 p.m. service.

Family Christmas Eve Service 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. Come enjoy a family-friendly Christmas Eve worship service that includes our children's nativity pageant and the congregational singing of many wonderful carols. AndrewChapelUMC.org

SUNDAY/DEC. 25

Christmas Morning Service 10:15 a.m. The Church of the Good



On Wednesday Dec. 28 there will be a Romanian holiday traditions celebration from 7 - 9 p.m. at The Patriot Hall - American Legion Post 180, 330 Central Street North, in Vienna. Caroling on Christmas and New Year is the most wonderful and colorful manifestation of the Romanian folk traditions. This is a time of year filled with unique and ancient rituals and customs celebrating the birth of Christ and the arrival of a new year. This show will highlight the traditional carols, dances, songs and wishes for prosperity and rich harvest, one could hear in Romania's towns and villages and will also include the famous Goat and Bear dances. www.youcaring.com

Shepherd, United Methodist Church 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. The Church of the Good Shepherd will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2017. www.GoodShepherdVA.com

www.youcaring.com/ionel-popescul.

SATURDAY/DEC. 31

New Years Eve 2017 10 - 2 a.m. at Greenhouse Bistro 2070 Chain Bridge

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 28

Romanian Holiday Traditions 7 - 9 p.m. The Patriot Hall - American Legion Post 180, 330 Central Street North, Vienna. Admission: \$10 - 35. Caroling on Christmas and New Year is the most wonderful and colorful manifestation of the Romanian folk traditions. This is a time of year filled with unique and ancient rituals and customs celebrating the birth of Christ and the arrival of a new year. This show will highlight the traditional carols, dances, songs and wishes for prosperity and rich harvest, one could hear in Romania's towns and villages and will also include the famous Goat and Bear dances. This is a charitable event. All proceeds from this event will be donated to Mr. Ionel Popescul, a member of the group "Folclor," who was diagnosed two months ago with colon cancer. Since the doctors gave Nelu the terrible diagnosis he has not been able to work, leaving his five-month pregnant wife, as the only source of income in the family. For more information or to make a direct donation please visit: <https://www.youcaring.com/ionel-popescul>

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—John Wooden

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Plan Ahead McLean

SATURDAY/JAN. 7

The Capitol Steps at The Alden 8 p.m. 1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean, VA 22101. To recover from this off-the-wall election cycle, remain calm and walk, do not run, to The Alden and shelter-in-place with these master political satirists. \$50/\$35 MCC tax district residents. Visit: www.aldentheatre.org.

SUNDAY/JAN. 8

Concert: Opera Celebration 4 - 6 p.m. Saint Francis Episcopal Church 9220 Georgetown Pike Great Falls VA 22066. The new year is the traditional time to revel in the beauty of the voice. Beloved Amadeus pianist-in-residence Frank Conlon brings together spectacular talent in solos and ensembles, as well as his incomparable storytelling. Cost: Season pass \$150 or \$30 at the door. Visit: <http://amadeusconcerts.com/>

SUNDAY/JAN. 15

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration at The Alden
Center: Chuck D 2 p.m. 1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean, VA 22101. Best known as leader and co-founder of the legendary rap group, Public Enemy, Chuck D redefined rap music and hip hop culture with the release of Public Enemy's explosive debut album, "Yo Bum Rush The Show," in 1987. Speaker subject to change. Cost: \$20/\$10 MCC tax district residents. Visit: www.aldentheatre.org.

FAITH

Menorah Workshop Held at the Home Depot

Calendar of other Hanukkah events in the area.

About 80 members of the Chabad Tysons Jewish Center and the Chabad of Northern Virginia attended a Menorah Workshop at the Home Depot in Merrifield on Sunday, Dec. 18, 2016.

"We're here to bring the excitement of Hanukkah to the children with a hands-on event where children build a menorah. The kids worked at their own pace. We have latkes, dreidels and chocolate gelt," said Rabbi Chessy Deitsch of the Chabad Tysons Jewish Center. "We're also doing an olive oil press demonstration."

"We are very excited about the turnout of all of the families," said Rabbi Sholom Deitsch, Director of the Chabad of Northern Virginia. "If we could add to their excitement during the holiday, then we have accomplished what we wanted to. We want each child to feel pride in their holidays."

Mike Anderson, Assistant Store Manager for Home Depot, said they do all sorts of different workshops for different groups, birthday parties, and Wounded Warriors; just different ways to bring the community together. "It's part of our values in being able to give back to the community," he said.

Sam Kooritzky, a retired lawyer from Oakton, said the menorah workshop was a good way to get kids interested in the Jewish holidays. "It's more than just a service. We want to give them good knowledge of the religion itself," he said. The congregation is relatively small compared to others in the area, he said. "Here, everybody's part of the family. It's family oriented; every couple of months we get an invitation to have dinner with the Rabbi. You don't have to be religious to belong; there's no pressure on anybody."

Some upcoming holiday programs from Chabad of Northern Virginia include:

❖ Hanukkah Wonderland from Dec. 25 to 30, 2016, daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at 226 W. Maple Ave., Vienna, VA.

❖ Flip Like a Latke at Flight Trampoline Park, Saturday, Dec. 24, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., at 7200 Fullerton Road, Springfield. Cost is \$10/person; \$25/family. Visit ChabadVA.org.

❖ Menorah Lighting on Wednesday, Dec. 28 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Springfield Mall. Includes giant menorah lighting, magic show, take a photo with Judah Maccabee and the Dreideal Man, Chanukah arts and crafts, and hot chocolate, latkes and doughnuts.

❖ Menorah Lighting on Sunday, Dec. 25 at 6:30 p.m. at Fairfax Square.

❖ Menorah Lighting on Saturday, Dec. 31 at 7:30 p.m. at The Greens in Vienna.

❖ Camp Gan Israel's Winter Camp 2016 from Dec. 19 through Dec. 30, daily from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. At 3939 Prince William Drive, Fairfax. Register online at www.CGINOVA.com.

— STEVE HIBBARD

Members of the Chabad Tysons Jewish Center and the Chabad of Northern Virginia participated in the menorah workshop.

PHOTOS BY
STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION



Zoe Hicks, age 9, of Vienna, makes her menorah.



Members of the Chabad Tysons Jewish Center and the Chabad of Northern Virginia participated in the menorah workshop.



Rabbi Sholom Deitsch, Director of the Chabad of Northern Virginia, with his family members.



Ali and Eli Kulman of Falls Church make a menorah at the Home Depot in Merrifield.



Nancy Gabriel, a Garden Associate at the Home Depot, serves latkes, a potato pancake.



Noah and Aden Mozar of Fairfax make their menorahs.

Destination: North Pole

FROM PAGE 9

The children, their families and the support teams deplaned. They headed up the jet bridge to the concourse. There, much to their surprise, with eyes wide open, storybook characters, Minions, Storm Troopers and hundreds of volunteers had formed a gauntlet, and were applauding their arrival. High fives were slapped; children hugged Minions and the Red, White and Blues band played. Even the Racing Presidents of the Washington Nationals stepped up to the children and gave out hugs.

Earlier, Cox described the effort it took to transform the concourse to be the North Pole; “We begin decorating the night before at 6 p.m. It takes 350 volunteers to decorate the North Pole. All the work and the decorations are donated.”

Jim Lynch from Michigan attended the event with his teenage daughter Emily. Lynch said, “Emily completed a weeklong research program at NIH. This is a fun day. And to just walk off that plane, we were blown away.”

Another element of the day is the impact the event has for the siblings of a challenged child. Wislocka said, “Today’s event is so important for the sick kids, but also for their siblings because their parents’ focus has been on the sick child. United Airline employees and our volunteers make sure the siblings get just as much attention and love.”

Xin Huang’s 3-year old daughter, Heidi, attends the Maryland School for the Deaf and Blind. While Heidi rested in her wheelchair, Huang said that this was the second time they had attended the event. She added, “It’s an important family event. Last year, every other month, Heidi’s brother, Leon, would ask about it. He absolutely believes we are at the North Pole.”

DURING THEIR VISIT to the North Pole, guests experienced an entertainment line up of 13 bands; various support groups such as Summit Therapy Animals and Red Door Salon and entertainers like Aerial Graffiti Jugglers, who all donated their time and talents for the cause.

But the event everyone waited for was his or her personal visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Each child had an extended time with Santa and received a bag full of age-appropriate toys or items, purchased specifically for that child.

At 21, Montel Flipping was the oldest invitee. He sat in his wheelchair, eyes alert. His mother, Sonja Flipping said, “Montel was diagnosed with pediatric brain cancer at Children’s Hospital. This has been a 4-year journey, and God is awesome.” She added that Montel, her only child, had been accepted into the Police Cadet Program one month prior to his diagnosis. “Where trust is, is what matters most,” she said as they left to get in line for Montel’s visit with Santa.

Ashtin Parker from West Springfield High School and Bryson McDaniels from Lake Braddock High School were two of the gift purchasers for the event. Parker said, “This year we got to buy 800 toys.”

PHOTOS BY ANTHONY C. TSANTRIZOS



Montel Flipping and Mrs. Minnesota, Morgan Bredde, enjoy a moment together during festivities sponsored by United Airlines at their Fantasy Flight celebration. Bredde is an Ambassador for Children’s Hospice International (CHI), a non-profit organization that partnered with United Airlines. CHI completes the circle of care and improves the quality of life for children with life-altering illnesses.



A child at United Airlines Fantasy Flight knows the best gift of any season, is a welcoming hug.

McDaniels added: “We got toys every child would like, from ages newborn to 21. If we can make a difference, we will do this any day.” Both Parker and McDaniels had formed gift and fund drives, Ashtin’s drive was named Ashtin’s Angels and McDaniel’s was Bryson’s Blessings.

McDaniel’s added: “We really put a lot of thought into what to buy, headphones, books, puzzles, then he added: “The headphones are for the 21-year old.”

For more information about Fantasy Flight, contact United Airlines. For more information about Children’s Hospice International that ensures medical, psychological, social, and spiritual support to all children with life-threatening conditions and their families, contact www.CHIONline.org.

SCHOOL NOTES

Send school notes to north@connectionnewspapers.com by noon on Friday.

U.S. Air Force Airman Eric J. Kim graduated from basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, San Antonio, Texas. The airman completed an intensive, eight-week program that included training in military discipline and studies, Air Force core values, physical fitness, and basic warfare principles and skills. Airmen who complete basic training also earn four credits toward an associate in applied science degree through the Community College of the Air Force. He is a 2014 graduate of Langley High School, McLean.

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) student journalists have been recognized by two national student journalism organizations for their outstanding work.

News publications from McLean High School and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) have been named Crown Award finalists by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA). They are The Highlander (High School News), McLean High School, Lindsay Benedict, adviser; and tjToday and tjtoday.org (High School News Hybrid for print and online), TJHSST, Erinn Harris, adviser. Both publications will receive either a Silver or Gold Crown at the CSPA award ceremony in March 2017. Five FCPS students have been named finalists in individual contests by the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA). These students are among just 10 finalists in their respective categories and were chosen from entries submitted nationwide.

NSPA finalists are:

- ❖ Sports Story: John Corvari, The Highlander newsmagazine, McLean High School.
- ❖ Sports Action Photo: Maggie Laird, The Clan yearbook, McLean High School.
- ❖ Newspaper Page One Design: Susie Hyland, Jodie Lee, The Hawk Talk, Madison High School.
- ❖ Illustration: Sam Willett, The Watchdog, Westfield High School.

Emma Leiken, a 2012 McLean High School graduate, earned Fulbright grant. She graduated from Oberlin College in May 2016.

Brandon Bast, of Great Falls, graduated from The University of Tampa on May 7. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in sport management and a minor in marketing.

Savannah Kathleen McBride was awarded an \$8,000 four-year Fraternal College Scholarship in a national competition by Modern Woodmen of America. She is the daughter of Stephen and Lezlie McBride, McLean. She plans to attend Reed College in Portland, Ore.

Brendan Mullen, Langley HS Class of 2011, was awarded a prestigious summer Research Fellowship by the Drexel University College of Medicine to study the effects of concussion on mice. Brendan will present his results at the College of Medicine’s annual research event, Discovery Day, in October 2016. Former Langley ice hockey goalie, continues his support of children’s special hockey by volunteering for the Philadelphia Flyer’s youth special hockey team.

Dov Cohen, of Vienna, received a bachelor of arts degree from The College of Wooster during commencement exercises in May 2016.

Deputy Cleared in Fatal Shooting

FROM PAGE 5

to be in imminent danger of death or great bodily harm, MDS McPartlin, while retreating, discharged his weapon until the threat was abated,” Morrogh says in the report. “In my legal opinion, this is a case of justifiable homicide and no individual is criminally responsible for the death of Yovani A. Gomez.”

In a response statement, Sheriff Stacey Kincaid said, “Our condolences go to Mr. Gomez’s family. Now that Commonwealth’s Attorney Ray Morrogh has released his findings that no criminal charges are warranted, the Sheriff’s Office will conduct an administrative investigation.”

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) chairs the Board of Su-

pervisors Public Safety Committee, which has recently voted to establish an office of independent police auditor to review all use of force cases, as well as a civilian review panel to look at complaints of police misconduct.

Cook’s office declined to comment on Morrogh’s decision. Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova did not respond to a request for comment before print time.

Cook previously commented that while the Sheriff’s office doesn’t fall under the administrative purview of the supervisors, they have been invited to present and field questions related to recommendations for policy changes from the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission at the Public Safety Committee Meeting in March 2017.

I Have Ca, Ca, Ca, Cancer



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Here I am thinking, believing, writing that I'm Mr. Well-Adjusted cancer patient and all it took was one conversation in a restaurant the other night at the Connection Christmas party to prove that I'm not. It was a casual, festive atmosphere with everybody enjoying food and drink. I was sitting in a booth with my wife, Dina, my co-worker, David, and his mother Sherry, who I had never met before, who was in-town visiting her sons and planning a drive downtown to see the National Christmas Tree. We were all exchanging pleasantries and getting on quite well when I remembered that David's mother is a nurse. I thought she would be the perfect person to ask about my oncology nurse. But to give the question some context, I thought I had to tell her I had cancer. And when I did, I could barely get the word out. After I stammered I asked, if there was any professional reason/advisory explaining why I haven't heard back from my long-time (seven years) oncology nurse who, I had learned four weeks earlier at my last infusion when he wasn't there to tend to me, retired early. He didn't exactly leave me adrift but a month later, he still hasn't returned my cellphone message (an email to his Verizon account bounced back and he hasn't posted anything current on Facebook).

Obviously he's entitled. Nevertheless, I'm perplexed. We were buddies. We were extremely compatible: sports, humor, from the Northeast, same age, Jewish and both spoke a little Yiddish. Heck, I had even been to his house for a Super Bowl party; plus we've been out to lunch a couple of times after my infusion, met locally for a medical follow up (not exactly a house call but he did come to me), and as I may have written in a previous column, he likely saved my life when I showed up at the Infusion Center with an oxygen level of 85. (Subsequent to that reading, he went into high gear making the necessary arrangements to get me transferred to on-site urgent care and ultimately "ambulance" to Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring where I spent the next week. Though he didn't visit me; he later explained that he rarely visited patients, he did call to check on me.) The short story is: our relationship went beyond patient-nurse. I wouldn't say I looked forward to my infusions, but because of him, I didn't dread them either.

It's not as if he has to do anything for me or acknowledge me or even stay in contact with me. He has his own life; he's made a change and presumably, his oncology patients are not part of it. I can understand that. In the medical specialty field, oncology is one of, if not the most, emotionally demanding/wrenching: patients with whom you've developed a relationship often die. I can imagine how there's only so much loss of life one can take. However, I thought our relationship went beyond that, in spite of the challenging demands that dealing with a "terminal" patient can exact.

Oddly enough, I'm not taking it personally. My feelings are not hurt, really. Until I know more of the circumstances surrounding his retirement (health, family, lifestyle, etc.), I'm not begrudging him at all. Moreover, he doesn't owe me an explanation. His retiring is not about me. It's about him and because of that, I want to know why he decided to leave and whether we can still stay in touch. So far, we haven't; he hasn't.

There's no doubt that he's been an important part of my cancer-patient life, and in a way, I thought — through my personality and survival, important to him also. Perhaps I was, professionally. Personally, I thought so as well. I just haven't heard any evidence of it in the last month. Still, I will always be grateful for his care and concern.

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

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ABC LICENSE
Thai Boys Inc. trading as Tom Yum Thai, 226 Maple Ave. W, Vienna, VA 22180. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer On Premises and Mixed Beverage Restaurant license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Tanitta Diwetragulchai, 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.

I believe the future is only the past again, entered through another gate.
-Arthur Wing Pinero

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Tyson's Race Raises More Than \$45,000 for Adaptive Athletes

The 13th Annual Super H 5K Run, Walk & Wheel held on Sunday, Sept. 18 at Sport & Health in Tysons Corner, raised more than \$45,000 which benefits the adaptive sports athletes with MedStar NRH Rehabilitation Network. Proceeds from the race assist the Network's sports teams which include wheelchair basketball, quad rugby, handcycling, sled hockey, adaptive rowing and more, in traveling to tournaments, purchasing new equipment and uniforms.

This year's race, attended by a record 310 runners, walkers and wheelers, helps former MedStar NRH patients and those in the community to participate in various adaptive sports, and also allows anyone with a disabling condition or disability to attend fitness classes held at MedStar National Rehabilitation Hospital in D.C., and in Northern Virginia. Those who attend the fitness classes can use the equipment that patients use for therapy in a wide open gym and take part in activities all in an effort to stay active, fit and healthy.

"We sincerely appreciate all of the generosity of our sponsors and those who attended this year's race," said Joan Joyce,

director of recreation therapy and community relations for MedStar NRH. "Our adaptive athletes are very grateful for all of the support they receive as well as those coming for our fitness classes. It really means a lot to everyone."

Super H 5K Run, Walk & Wheel, is an annual race which was started by Harry and Renie Freedman. Harry, a former patient with MedStar NRH, lost his leg in a workplace accident many years ago. An avid athlete, Harry wanted to give back and help those in the community stay active through adaptive sports programs such as the ones MedStar NRH offers.

Next year's race will take place on Sunday, Sept. 24, 2017, at Sport & Health in Tysons Corner. If you are interested in signing up now for the 14th Annual Super H 5K Run, Walk & Wheel go to: <http://superh5k.com/>

If you are interested in sponsoring next year's race contact Joan Joyce at 202-877-1420 or email joan.p.joyce@medstar.net.

For more information on the MedStar NRH Adaptive Sports Program, go to: medstarnrh.org/adaptivesports.

FAITH NOTES

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

Chabad Tysons Jewish Center is hosting a Chanukah Wonderland Dec. 25 till Dec. 30 in Vienna at 226 W. Maple Ave. from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. every day and a Menorah lighting at the first night Vienna.

Christmas Eve Service - Charles Wesley UMC, "The Hunger Church," 6817 Dean Dr., McLean is inviting community to join them in a service of carols and candlelight - something for the whole family, Dec. 24, 7 p.m. www.thehungerchurch.org

The Church of the Good Shepherd, a United Methodist church in Vienna, will celebrate Christmas Eve with three worship services on Saturday, Dec. 24 and one worship service on Christmas morning. The community is invited to all services at the church, located at 2351 Hunter Mill Road.

At 5 p.m. there will be the **Children's Christmas Eve Service** that includes a giant

felt board. As children come in, we will pass out pieces of the Nativity story and will do the felt board together with music, said pastor Eric Song. Communion and candlelight services will be held at 7:30 and 10:30 p.m. (child care provided for the 7:30 p.m. service). Christmas morning services with communion will be held at 10:15 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 25.

The Church of the Good Shepherd will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2017. For more information, visit the church website at www.GoodShepherdVA.com or at www.Facebook.com/GoodShepherdVienna or follow at www.twitter.com/goodshepherdva.

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church at the intersection of Lewinsville and Brook Roads in McLean, just a mile west of Tysons, invites you for a casual Saturday Service at 5 p.m., followed by conversation and fellowship or for Sunday Services at 8 a.m. or 10 a.m. Sunday School for Youth and Children takes place during the 10 a.m. Service. Look for our Pumpkin Patch this October, and check www.stthomasmcleanva.org for Special Events and Services through the year. St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, 8991 Brook Road, McLean, 703-442-0330.

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline for submissions is noon on Friday.

FEBRUARY

Free public service seminars -

- Decluttering: Feb. 2, McLean High School, 1633 Davidson Rd., McLean.
 - Aging in Place: Feb. 8, Falls Church H.S., 7521 Jaguar Trail, Falls Church.
 - Downsizing: Feb. 14, Marshall H.S. 7731 Leesburg Pk., Falls Church.
 - Retirement Communities Feb. 22, Madison H.S., 2500 James Madison Dr., Vienna.
- For more information and seminar registration go to RetireeRealEstate.org, or call 703-772-3033.

ONGOING

The **Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program** needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at

703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov. Also visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/.

Fairfax County needs volunteers to **drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs**. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Respite Care volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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BEST WASHINGTONIAN 2016



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**6420 Divine Street
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**2004 Friendship Lane
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FOR RENT \$3,300/month**



**1620 Forest Lane
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