

Sisterhood of the Salaam Shalom Brings Communities Together

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**Sisterhood of the Salaam Shalom’s
unity vigil closes with the singing
of “This Land is Your Land.”**

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PHOTO BY TAREQ ABADIN



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE

Del. Peter Farrell (R-56) wanted lawmakers to force internet lenders to follow the same rules as other kinds of lenders in Virginia. Members of the Republican-led Commerce and Labor Committee rejected his bill but created a work group to look at that issue and other concerns about predatory lending in Virginia.

Lawmaker Work Group to Examine Predatory Lending

Panel to investigate internet loans, car-title loans and open-end lines of credit.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

The growing chorus of criticism about predatory lending in Virginia may not have prompted lawmakers to start passing laws to crack down on the industry. But it has accomplished one thing, formation of a work group.

"In this town, if you are in the minority party in a chamber that's two-thirds Republican, you take victories where you can," said Del. Mark Keam (D-35). "I'd like to think something good can come out of this if we can bring stakeholders together."

Lawmakers are concerned about several aspects of high-interest loans. One is the bait-and-switch nature of many of the businesses, where customers walk into a car-title business but walk out with an open-end line of credit instead. Another issue is the completely unregulated nature of open-end lines of credit, originally created for department stores but now used by car-title lenders and internet lenders. Regulators don't track them, and lenders don't need a license to offer them. Recent years have seen online lenders from around the world offer them with interest rates of up to 5,000 percent.

"If the work group doesn't deal with the open-end loans, it'll be a waste of time," said Jay Speer, executive director of the Virginia Poverty Law Center. "You can make rules about the Consumer Finance Act, and then all the internet lenders will just switch to open-end loans and it'll all just be a waste of time."

WORKING GROUPS are a common way for lawmakers to punt, essentially putting off making decisions and outsourcing solutions to a panel that makes recommendations. Sometimes the groups end up making recommendations that are adopted by the General Assembly. Recent years have seen successful working groups that made significant changes to energy policy and worker's compensation. Many lawmakers view them as an ideal way to consider difficult issues outside of the frenzied pace of the General Assembly sessions.

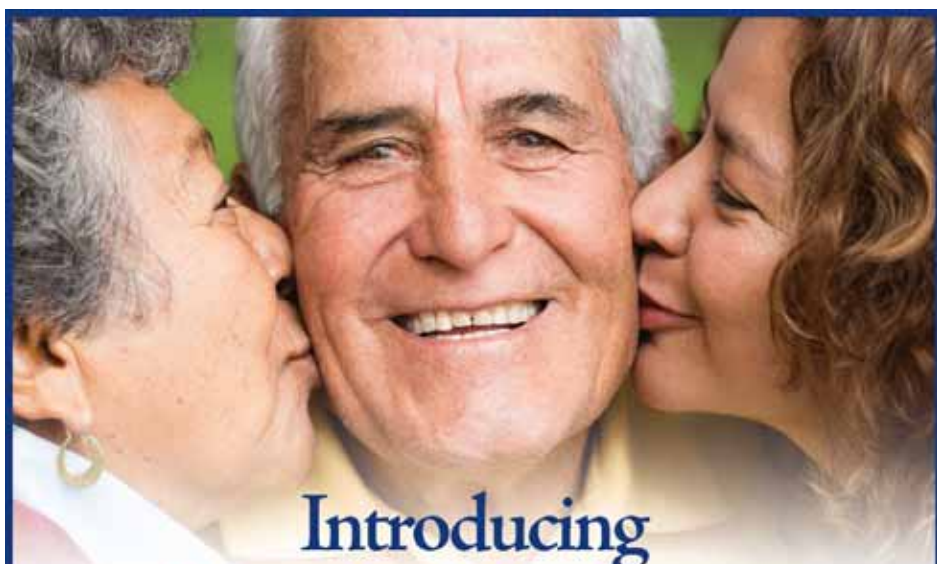
"There are what I believe to be plus sides to being a part-time legislature, and there are downsides to being a part-time legislature. One of the downsides is you can't keep working during one session in a short session," said Del. Peter Farrell (R-56). "Sometimes it takes a year."

For critics of predatory lending, the chief goal of the working group will be to regulate open-end lines of credit. These have become the tool of choice for car-title lenders and internet lenders to offer unlimited amounts of interest. And lawmakers don't know the scale of the problem because state regulators don't track them. That's a problem that critics say has an easy fix — require a license to offer open-end lines of credit, and make them abide by the same rules as car-title lenders or payday lenders.

"I hope that we see a path forward for all lenders to be licensed," said Dana Wiggins, who answers the Predatory Lending Hotline at the Virginia Poverty Law Center. "If they're operating in the state of Virginia, they should all be licensed and they should all have to follow the same rules."

THE SHADOWY WORLD of internet lending is also in the crosshairs of the work group. Some companies offer loans at interest rates from 600 percent to 5,000 percent. Some of these companies try to get around laws designed to protect consumers by claiming to have affiliations with Indian tribes, allowing them to take advantage of uncertainty surrounding a law from 1918 — long before the World Wide Web revolutionized modern American finance. Last month, Attorney General Mark Herring helped secure a \$15 million settlement against a California-based company that was using a fraudulent relationship to a North Dakota tribe to evade Virginia lending laws.

"In the absence of action, the internet becomes a lawless place that plays by different rules than traditional commerce," said Kevin Mauer, associate director of the Virginia Catholic Conference. "Without protective regulation, the commonwealth's vulnerable consumers may fall prey to more and more opportunistic lenders."



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Saturday, February 25 • 2-4pm • RSVP**



PHOTO PROVIDED BY McLEAN PROPERTIES

The shopping center is bordered by Beverly Road on the north, Old Dominion Drive to the east, Chain Bridge Road to the south and Ingleside Avenue to the west.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY McLEAN PROPERTIES

Redmond Drive, which runs through the shopping center, would be transformed into a two-lane main street. The buildings have not been designed, but are planned to be up to eight stories in height with retail on the first floor.

‘Main Street’ Idea Revitalized for Downtown

BY FALLON FORBUSH
THE CONNECTION

Property owners of the Old Dominion Shopping Center and the Chain Bridge Corner Shopping Center are working to redevelop the spaces into one combined mixed-use development.

Hundreds of community members attended a public meeting to learn about the preliminary designs at the McLean Community Center last Thursday night on Feb. 16.

The proposal is calling for a pedestrian-oriented mix of office, retail and residential uses and is based on a “Main Street” concept that is envisioned in the county’s comprehensive plan for McLean.

The Giant grocery store and its parking lot, the PNC Bank and the Old Firehouse Teen Center on Chain Bridge Road will remain in place. The rest will be redeveloped.

“We’re still early in the process, but we wanted to have this meeting tonight to share our vision for Main Street and start getting your feedback,” Vidal Sadaka, principal for McLean Properties, which represents the landowners, said during the meeting.

Sadaka told the audience that the landowners had four key principles guiding their design plans: fostering a sense of place; serving McLean residents; creating a pleasant walking and driving experience; and designing a high-quality built environment.

“When you look at downtown McLean, it’s a lot of individual shopping centers separated by large seas of parking,” Sadaka said. “McLean lacks a central, connected, defining place and creating that is our top priority.”

THE PROJECT includes 425 residential units, approximately 470,000 square feet of office space and about 125,000 square feet of retail space, not including the existing Giant grocery store, according to Betsy Frantz, a spokesperson for McLean Properties.



PHOTOS BY FALLON FORBUSH/THE CONNECTION

Vidal Sadaka, principal for McLean Properties, kicks the information meeting off by telling the crowd that the property owners have four goals for the redevelopment: to foster a sense of place; serve McLean residents; create a pleasant walking and driving experience; and to deliver a high-quality built environment.

Everything would be connected by the “Main Street” that would run north-south through the development.

“We’re going to put retail on both sides of the street for the length of the street,” Ken Wiseman, design principal and architect for the CannonDesign firm, said during the meeting.

Wiseman, a McLean resident, has been hired to design the entire project.

Retail would also surround the site at ground level, he said. Office space and residential units would sit overtop the retail in buildings as high as eight stories. He also envisions designing underground parking areas beneath all areas of the project.

Wiseman has also included a small public plaza in the upper third of the site design that will feature restaurants, outdoor seating and a pedestrian connection between Main Street and Old Dominion Drive.

Many audience members liked what they



Ken Wiseman, design principal for CannonDesign who has been hired to lead the design work, answers some questions about his preliminary mockups of the re-envisioned mixed-used shopping center.

heard.

“This is a long time coming,” said Esther Lee of McLean. “I’ve lived here for about two years and we’ve been asking why we have to go to Tysons for a nice meal and to sit down and enjoy good weather. This is long overdue and I hope it will be the beginning of more [redevelopment].”

However, the meeting left many people wanting more answers.

“I have a lot of questions,” said Shalini Jain of McLean. “This meeting gave me more questions than answers. What will it cost to park? What is the timeline? Will there be residential condo units or apartments? Any bike paths? What about the small business owners? Will they be displaced? I’m not against the development, but they need to answer a lot of questions for us.”

The decision of whether the residential units will be apartments, condominiums or

a mix of both has not been decided, Frantz told the Connection via email after the meeting.

Zeynel Abidin Uzun, owner of the Kazan Restaurant which serves Turkish cuisine on Redmond Drive in the middle of all of the redevelopment, is not worried about being forced out when the terms of his lease are up for negotiation in two years.

“Honestly, I have no worries,” he said. “People are tired of chain restaurants. People want us to stay.”

The landowners have reassured him that local businesses are an important part of their vision. But it is clear the redevelopment will affect rent.

“We will continue to talk to our tenants throughout the process about their long-term goals and we are working with the county to provide options to keep these businesses in downtown McLean,” Frantz

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Robert Beatson II

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NEWS

Planning 20 Parks: Inside Tysons or Out?

Vienna and McLean affected by 30-year vision for Tysons; more debate Feb. 23.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

When creating a new city, county planners target a precise number of parks. Vienna and McLean are the most affected by Tysons planning.

Tysons needs 20 playing fields, a vision articulated in the 2010 Tysons Comprehensive Plan based on projections through 2050 ranging from demographics, office and residential use, transportation and more.

"If Tysons is to be a place where citizens live, work and play, then it must have adequate athletic fields within its borders," said Town of Vienna Mayor Laurie A. DiRocco.

The plan calls for one field for every 4.5 million square feet of mixed use development, according to Planning Commission documents.

"The availability of 20 athletic fields will most certainly make Tysons a more desirable location as against its competitors," said Rob Jackson, co-chair of the Greater Tysons Citizens Coalition and a member of the McLean Citizens Association.

"We have extreme concern about any attempt to weaken the requirement for the landowners to provide 20 fullsize-athletic fields to allow its residents, children, adolescents and adults to live, work, study and play in Tysons," Jackson said.

Residents and business owners of Tysons and surrounding jurisdictions testified before the county's Planning Commission Wednesday, Feb. 8 to respond to current reorganizing of the voluminous Tysons Comprehensive Plan.

Speakers, planners, developers and commissioners debated specifically a new sentence on page

Get Involved:

Tysons Comprehensive Plan Amendment

❖ **Planning Commission** decision only hearing
Thursday, Feb. 23, 8:15 p.m.

❖ **Board of Supervisors** public hearing
Tuesday, March 14, 2017, 4 p.m.

Fairfax County Government Center Building, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Va. 22035

The Tysons vision forecasts an urban center that include 200,000 jobs and 100,000 residents, 75 percent of development within a half-mile walk of four Metro stations, a sustained Tysons with restored streams, a network of public parks, open spaces and trails, and a redesigned transportation system with circular routes, community shuttles, feeder bus serve and improved pedestrian and bicycle routes and connections. The Tysons Comprehensive Plan Amendment proposes to update recommendations for the Tysons Urban Center to reconcile the text and maps with studies and planning activities that have been completed since 2010, such as grid and other transportation studies, urban design guidelines and a transportation funding plan.

See www.fairfaxcounty.gov/tysons/planamendments2013

112 of the plan:

"Some of the active recreation facility needs may be accommodated by adding or upgrading facilities at existing or future public school sites or in nearby existing parks surrounding Tysons," according to proposed edits to the Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

That "stands out significantly as it is more than a mere editorial change," said Mark Zetts, longtime planning and zoning chair of the McLean Citizens Association, who was recognized by the Planning Commissioners on Feb. 8 for his continuous service to McLean, Tysons and Fairfax County.

"This inserted language is problematic on multiple levels," said Zetts.

"The Town of Vienna, contiguous to Tysons, currently does not have adequate field space for its residents and youth. We don't want Tysons population growth to add to the shortage and negatively impact our quality of life,"

said DiRocco.

Sally Horn, McLean resident and co-chair of the MCA's Tysons Liaison Committee, said the "added language would increase the pressure to place athletic fields designed to serve Tysons in the surrounding communities, including McLean, which lack useable, suf-

ficient available land to meet both Tysons needs and the needs of their communities."

VIENNA AND McLEAN don't have enough fields for their own use, said Jackson.

"There simply is insufficient vacant land in Vienna and McLean that is suitable for athletic fields. If there were, existing volunteer sports groups would have laid claim to the vacant land years ago."

"McLean's athletic fields are already oversubscribed and ... we have our own separate needs for additional fields," said Horn.

Forcing Tysons residents and employees to "get into cars and drive elsewhere for field access defeats the vision for Tysons," said Jackson. "It also would add to traffic congestion, both inside and nearby Tysons."

"While Tysons is off to a good start, transportation failure is still on the radar screen," said Jackson.

But creating a grid of streets for Tysons makes planning for irregular shapes difficult, especially diamond-shaped fields needed for baseball and softball leagues, according to county planners.

Currently, they forecast need for approximately 11 diamond shaped fields and nine rectangular fields. But county planners reported last

Wednesday that developers have been more willing to proffer for rectangular fields.

Sol Glasner, interim president and executive director of the Tysons Partnership, said they are not advocating for fewer fields but flexibility in how fields are planned while Tysons takes shape.

"Proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan that limit flexibility will make it more challenging to meet the vision of Tysons that we all share," said Glasner.

Dranesville Planning Commissioner John Ulfelder asked DiRocco, "What if somebody showed up in Vienna and said, 'We're prepared to install turf and put up lights and upgrade your existing diamond fields.' How would you react?"

"If the county decided to do that, we'd be very happy for that to happen, yes," said DiRocco. "We are always looking for improving our fields and the use is needed tremendously."

COUNTY PLANNERS suggested that some developers could be willing to upgrade softball and baseball fields outside Tysons.

"I know that some have argued that since McLean and Vienna youth sports leagues currently are the predominant users of the fields in Tysons, it would make more sense for Tysons developers to upgrade those fields rather than to build the full comple-

ment of required fields in Tysons," said Horn.

"This argument misses the point," she said. "We are not planning for 2020 or even 2030; we are planning for the infrastructure required in 2050, when the demographics of Tysons — 200,000 employees and 100,000 residents — will require at least 20 urban fields in Tysons to meet the needs of youth and adults who live and or work in Tysons." Providence Planning Commission Phil Niedzielski-Eichner scheduled a decision-only meeting of the Planning Commission on Feb. 23.

Additional topics to be discussed include traffic demand management and transportation, initial development levels and forecasted growth, public facilities and environmental stewardship.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

"Forcing [Tysons residents] to get into cars and drive elsewhere for field access defeats the vision for Tysons."

— Rob Jackson, co-chair, Greater Tysons Citizens Coalition and member, McLean Citizens Association

"If Tysons is to be a place where citizens live, work and play, then it must have adequate athletic fields within its borders."

— Town of Vienna Mayor Laurie A. DiRocco

The home is owned by the government of the United Arab Emirates, Armed Forces General Headquarters, according to county property information.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ARLINGTON COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT



McLean Mansion Engulfed By Fire

A fire destroyed a mansion at 818 Turkey Run Road on Saturday, Feb. 18. Smoke alarms alerted the occupants to the fire and they all escaped unharmed, according to the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department.

Both the FCFRD and the Arlington County Fire Department responded to the scene to extinguish the blaze. The FCFRD posted a video of the fire on its Facebook page at 2:51 p.m. on Saturday, showing large and dark smoke clouds billowing into the sky

from the blazing home.

In the video, you can hear a spectator ask, "Do we need to back up, like is it going to explode more?"

The 6,175-square-foot, five-bedroom, seven-and-a-half bath home is owned by the government of the United Arab Emirates, Armed Forces General Headquarters, according to county property information. The home, which was built in 2003, was also valued at \$3.1 million, according to Zillow.

The fire is currently under investigation.

— FALLON FORBUSH

The home, which was built in 2003, was valued at \$3.1 million, according to Zillow.



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Budget Season in Fairfax County

Attend a town hall meeting and express your priorities.

Alexandria and Arlington each have a meals tax, both enacted without a referendum because as urban forms of government in Virginia, their local elected bodies were authorized to enact the tax legislatively.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors had to put the meals tax on the ballot for voters to decide, and after a heated campaign, the tax was voted down decisively.

Elections have consequences, a fact being affirmed on every level right now.

In Fairfax County, this means a more difficult budget process going forward than might otherwise have been the case. The vast majority of Fairfax County's \$3.99 billion budget is financed by property taxes, and the proposed budget is based on no property tax increase.

The meals tax would have provided about \$80 million for the schools; the current budget falls \$61 million short of the FCPS request.

While County Executive Ed Long has said there can be no new programs in the budget defined by no tax increase, we all know that some things could be cut to make room for new, needed programs. Long will conduct an online chat answer budget questions on Friday, Feb. 24, at 3 p.m. Submit questions here: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/AskFairfax/mobile/ActiveDiscussion.aspx?roomid=131

The county will hold a series of budget town hall meetings which will include a presentation, time for questions and feedback.

The Connection welcomes letters for publication on the budget, send to editors@connectionnewspapers.com

EDITORIAL

FAIRFAX COUNTY BUDGET

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Tuesday, Feb. 21 - 7:30 p.m., Great Falls Citizens Association, Great Falls Library - 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls

Saturday, March 4 - 9 a.m., Hunter Mill District Community Meeting, Frying Pan Park, Visitors Center - 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon

Wednesday, March 8 - 7 p.m., Providence Community Budget Meeting, Providence Community Center - 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax - First Floor Multi-Purpose Rooms

Wednesday, March 8 - 7 p.m., Sully District Budget

Town Hall Meeting, Rocky Run Middle School - 4400 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly

Thursday, March 9 - 7 p.m., Mason District Budget Town Hall Meeting, Mason District Government Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale - Main Community Room

Thursday, March 16 - 7:30 p.m., McLean Budget Public Meeting, McLean Community Center - 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean.

Monday, March 20 - 7 p.m., Springfield District Budget Town Hall Meeting, West Springfield Government Center - 6140 Rolling Road, Springfield - Community Room

Wednesday, March 22 - 7 p.m., Lee District Budget Town Hall Meeting, Franconia Governmental Center - 6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria

Monday, March 27 - 7:30 p.m., Braddock District Budget Town Hall Meeting, Robinson Secondary School - Recital Hall - 5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax.

Correction

Last week's editorial implied that in November 2017, the Virginia Senate will be on the ballot. The 40 seats in the Virginia Senate will next be on the ballot in November 2019. All 100 seats in the House of Delegates are on the ballot this November, 2017, along with Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Riding/Boarding Stable Definition Changes: Citizen Vigilance Now Necessary

To the Editor:

On Feb. 14, the Board of Supervisors voted to change the definition of riding/boarding stables and to add teaching horseback riding to the list of allowable Home Occupations not needing a Special Permit. Prior to the vote, lots containing two or more acres could have only three horses "by-right" (not exceeding a ratio of three horses per acre). "By-right" means no permits are necessary and no reporting to the County is required. If a lot had four or more horses, it was defined as a riding/boarding stable.

Now two-acre up to, but less than, five-acre lots are allowed a maximum of five horses or ponies to be boarded "by-right" and a maximum of eight horses to be boarded "by-right" on lots containing five or more acres, but the ratio of three horses per acre remains. Now, the definition of a riding/boarding stable for which a Special Permit is required is on a property that exceeds these numbers.

I opposed these changes at the Feb. 14 Board of Supervisors public hearing because of the impact on people; the environment; streams; and the horses themselves. Here are the arguments I made:

1. Horses need pasture. Pasture and trees are incompatible, but trees play a very important role in soil and water conservation and preservation. The Horse Farm Management section of our County's website says that even a single-horse stable in a backyard should have a Soil and Water Conservation Plan. Even though the County staff claims Soil and Water Conservation Plans would be required, that requirement is only if a Home Occupation permit to teach horseback riding is obtained. In other words, if lessons are not being given, no soil and water conservation plan is required. Even when required, County staff admitted that there would be no enforcement unless complaints were made to Code Enforcement. Complaints can only be made by persons "with standing", typically a neighbor.

2. Responsible manure management is imperative to protect the environment and streams, but there are no requirements in the Ordinance to use "Best Management Practices" on these properties where they can now have so many additional horses "by-right." The County's Horse Farm Management section says one horse produces nine tons of feces and urine per year. The increased number of

horses allowed "by-right" will have a major impact on the environment and streams without a responsible manure management plan, but that is not a requirement. The odor from these properties will be unpleasant. Runoff into streams is likely. The Chesapeake Bay will take a hit.

3. The drastic increase in the number of horses allowed "by-right" may result in animal abuse and we citizen neighbors need to be on the lookout for this. Pasture requirements for horses greatly exceed the number of acres that might be available with the higher intensity of use. There are differing opinions on minimum grazing acreage per horse, but the County's Horse Farm Management section recommends "that horses obtain 70-100 percent of their feed from pasture and/or hay. A significant reduction in feeding cost will be realized if horses get the bulk of their feed through grazing. The exercise they get while moving around during grazing is essential for their digestion. Horse farms with high density of animals per acre commonly have over-grazed pastures." Inadequate pasture is bad for the environment and the horses.

4. Before the changes to the definition to riding/boarding stables,

owners with more than three horses were required to obtain a Special Use Permit at a fee of over \$8,000. Their applications had to be presented to the Board of Zoning Appeals during a Public Hearing where neighbors and other "affected parties" would get the opportunity to explain any pros and cons about having this use in the neighborhood. The BZA normally imposes required conditions of their approval that reflect the concerns of neighbors and places limitations on the applicant.

Now, after the changes, you could wake up one day and find out all these additional horses are in your neighborhood with riding lessons going on from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. with lighting permitted in the evening; seven days per week; 365 days per year and there is nothing you can do about it because you have lost reasonable rights to restrict these activities.

* Teaching horseback riding lessons now falls in the class of Home Occupations by paying \$50 for a permit. Supposedly, a Soil and Water Conservation Plan would be required, but without inspections to enforce the plan, there is no recourse except complaints to Code Enforcement by parties "with standing." We usually think of pi

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Dance Instructor Arrested

Chase Clark Peklo, 19, of Sterling was arrested on Thursday, Feb. 16, for carnal knowledge of children between 13 and 15 years of age and five counts of possession, reproduction, distribution, solicitation and facilitation of child pornography, according to police.

He was an instructor at the Stage Door studio in Manassas and the Adrenaline Dance Studio on Tyco Road in McLean. The McLean studio contacted police on Feb. 6 to report an alleged sexual offense between Peklo and one of its students.



Chase Clark Peklo, 19, of Sterling.

The preliminary investigation determined that Peklo was inappropriately communicating with a 13-year-old and two 14-year-old girls from December 2015 to November 2016. It is also alleged that he had a sexual relationship with one of the girls while she was 14 years old, according to police.

Detectives believe that there may be other victims. Anyone who may be concerned that their child might have had inappropriate contact with Peklo may contact Detective McCoy at 703-246-7898.

—FALLON FORBUSH

WEEK IN MCLEAN

'Trevor' Extends 1st Stage Production

1st Stage, Tysons Corner's award-winning professional theater, announces the extension of their production of "Trevor" by Nick Jones, directed by 1st Stage Artistic Director, Alex Levy until March 5.

The 1st Stage production of "Trevor" features Doug Wilder (returning to 1st Stage following his Helen Hayes Award-winning appearance in "One Man, Two Guvnors"), Aaron Bliden, Sun King Davis, Amanda Forstrom, Leigh Jameson, and Jacob Yeh.

"Trevor" will now run until March 5, Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. The run time is approximately 90 minutes with one intermission.

General admission tickets are \$30. Senior (65+) tickets are \$27. Student and military tickets are \$15.

Tickets, subscriptions, and flex passes can be purchased online at www.1stStage.org or by calling the 1st Stage box office at 703-854-1856.

Pancake Supper at Redeemer Lutheran Church

Redeemer Lutheran Church's Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be held Tuesday, Feb. 28. Pancakes will be served starting at 6 p.m., everyone is welcome. All donations will support youth mission work.

Redeemer Lutheran Church is located at 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Bring friends and neighbors, enjoy pancakes hot off the griddle, and support youth mission work.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

SATURDAY/FEB. 25

Community Tax Assistance Day. Deloitte presents its 10th annual Community Tax Assistance Day or Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Day (VITA) to serve qualified individuals and families. Deloitte employee/volunteers will assist families with 2016 Federal and state tax returns for households with a total income of \$54,000 or less. Translations services in Spanish, Korean and Vietnamese will be provided. In addition, American Sign Language interpreters will be available. Location is Fairfax SkillSource Center, Heritage Center, 7611 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Appointments are recommended: e-mail taxday@volunteerfairfax.org or call 703-246-3896. Walk ins are welcome. Visit www.nvacash.org. On tax preparation day, clients should bring all pertinent documentation. For a complete list, visit www.volunteerfairfax.org.

SUNDAY/FEB. 26

Jazz Sunday. The 9 and 11:15 a.m. services at St. John's Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Visit www.stjohnsmclean.org or call 703-356-4902 for more.

Guest Preacher. 10:15 a.m. at Church of the Good Shepherd, 2351 Hunter Mill Road. Rev. Jay M. Hanke will be the guest preacher. Visit www.GoodShepherdVA.com for more.

MONDAY/FEB. 27

Town Council Meeting. 8-10:30 p.m. at Town Hall, 127 Center St. S. Individuals are invited to attend and provide their input. Go to www.viennava.gov for more.

THURSDAY/MARCH 2

Caregivers' Support Group. 10-11:30 a.m. at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax (UUCF) - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Contact Jack Tarr at 703-821-6838 or jtarr5@verizon.net.

TUESDAY/MARCH 7

Application Deadline. The U.S. Small Business Administration is reminding businesses in Virginia that working capital loans are still available to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and private nonprofit organizations affected by the severe storms and tornadoes on Feb. 24, 2016. Deadline to file is March 7, 2017. <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>. Visit www.sba.gov/disaster or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov.



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PET CONNECTION

Morning Walk in McLean

My pets and the young man who walks them every morning: He ties their leashes together in a knot and lets them walk themselves with him along side. It is so cute to see the three pets trying to keep up with each other every morning. In this photo are Adrian Carrasco, and my three Blenheim cavalier King Charles Spaniels., from left: Holly, Ginger and Noella. Ginger and Noella are rescues.

— RACHEL GEORGELAS, McLEAN



A Bundle of Love

Shadow is a 9-month-old Lab mix, rescued from Homeward Trails in May. The photo is of the day we brought her home. She is with my children, Michaela and Nathan. Shadow has since grown into a 45-pound bundle of love. She adores other dogs and children. Adults are acceptable if the other two groups are not around (but they're not nearly as much fun!). Her favorite activities include chewing and chasing all the wild animals in our yard.

— ALEXIS PEARCE, McLEAN



Alexandra Cooker of Great Falls cuddling with her favorite pet cat "Bells."



Chippewa is now 10 pounds with an even bigger personality.

Finding Chippewa

I walked into the Potomac Yard PetsMart in Alexandria with my partner on a Saturday morning in 2012 expecting to quickly go in to grab some cat litter and get out. After all, we were both preoccupied with knocking out our list of errands so we could move on to better things. That's when a six-pound puppy stole my heart. We walked right into a pet adoption event.

Chipp is a Chihuahua-Shiba Inu mixed breed that was underweight, riddled with kennel cough and left alone after her brother was adopted without her. How could I say no to that little, sesame-colored face?

Here we are five years later, happy and healthy, cuddling by a campfire and walking in Oakland Park in Arlington. Thank you Last Chance Animal Rescue!

Last Chance Animal Rescue, Inc. is a nonprofit organization with a mission to minimize the euthanasia of homeless pets through both adoption and providing low-cost, high-quality spay/neuter for both dogs and cats. It partners with more than 30 PetSmart and Petco stores in the region to provide full-service, in-store adoptions. Adopt a pet today: www.lastchanceanimalrescue.org.

— FALLON FORBUSH



Here we are cuddling by a campfire last fall.

School Board Punts Highlander Deal Down The Field

BY FALLON FORBUSH
THE CONNECTION

The McLean High School Athletic Boosters is leading an effort to approve a \$250,000 deal that would pay for three new scoreboards for the high school's football, baseball and softball fields.

Manassas-based F.H. Furr Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning, Inc., agreed to pay McLean High School \$25,000 per year for the next 10 years in exchange for naming rights to its stadium and fields. This deal would pay for all the estimated expenses to replace the aging scoreboards, according to Greg Miller, the school's director of student activities.

"They are outdated and run down," Miller said of the scoreboards, which were installed in 1989. "Truthfully, I hold my breath every Friday night football game hoping the scoreboard will function for four full quarters."

He emailed parents and the school community on Tuesday, Jan. 24, asking them to support the deal by attending the FCPS Board meeting on Thursday night, Jan. 26. The board was to vote on whether to approve the deal. The email also asked supporters to show up and "Rock the Red" to support the school.

The McLean High School Parent-Teacher-Student Association also sent an email on behalf of the boosters the following day, Wednesday, Jan. 25, urging the community to email FCPS board members. The email included a list of board members' emails and a template message of support. A reminder to attend the school board meeting the next day was also included.

AT 4 P.M. just three hours before the 7 p.m. meeting was to begin, more emails were

sent. Only this time, they informed recipients that the FCPS Board had removed the school's naming deal vote and discussion from its agenda.

"Postponing the item will allow the board members to have further discussion about the policy going forward," Sandy Evans, chairperson of the FCPS, said during the meeting. "We welcome additional input on the naming policy that underpins the proposal as the board continues its discussion on this policy."

The FCPS policy states that the school board may consider a change in the name of a school or facility "for reasons where there exists some compelling need." The process and guidelines for this consideration include conducting public meetings and al-

lowing households to vote. The policy also states that a name change would take effect at the beginning of the next school year following the board's vote.

While the deal was removed from the agenda, the school board still allowed public testimony on the matter. Miller and two men from the booster club showed up to testify in favor of the deal. There was no testimony opposing the deal.

"Bottom line is, McLean High School needs three new scoreboards," Jeffrey Grammes, father of a senior at the school, said during his testimony. "The current scoreboards are almost 30 years old and there are no replacement parts that exist anymore."

Grammes has been a board member of

the school's booster club for the past four years and was its president for the first three.

"If you elect not to vote yes for the agreement, I urge you to include additional funding for the McLean High School scoreboards in next year's annual budget," he said.

Miller took to the lectern next.

"FCPS pays for game officials, coaching stipends and transportation, but outside of that, the schools are responsible to come up with the money to pay for most of our athletic needs," he said.

RUNNING THE SCHOOLS' yearly athletic program costs approximately \$95,000, Miller said. Ticket sales to games, which the school uses to fund most of its athletic program expenses, generated \$65,000 last year, leaving the school with a \$30,000 gap, he continued.

"This financial gap is supported through the hard work of our boosters club and through relationships we build through local businesses," he said.

Glenn Goldenhorn, a single father of a senior at the school and a booster participant, was the final person to testify and urge the board to approve the deal.

It is unclear when the board will discuss and vote on the deal, but it is certain that a debate is forthcoming.

"I'm very proud of [the McLean community's] advocacy and it is important that our schools, our parents and our faculty come to the board to let us know of your needs as you search for a solution to your problems," Jane Strauss, the school board's vice chair and Dranesville District representative, said during the meeting.



Greg Miller, McLean High School director of student activities, testifies in support of the naming deal before the Fairfax County Public School Board in Falls Church on Thursday, Jan. 26.

PHOTO BY FALLON FORBUSH/THE CONNECTION

Job Fairs Match Teens, Employees

Supervisor Pat Herry's (R-Springfield) office, along with a variety of business and community organizations, hosted two teen job fairs and resume building workshops last year. These events focused on students and younger job seekers looking for a variety of employment opportunities; full time, after-school, seasonal positions, internship opportunities, and volunteer positions. These two job fairs provided hundreds of teenagers the opportunity

to get in front of employers and for employers to find talented Fairfax County students to fill their positions. More than 600 students and more than 70 employers attended both events combined.

This year, Herry is teaming up with the Supervisors Kathy Smith (D-Sully District), Linda Smyth (D-Providence), and Daniel Storck (D-Mount Vernon) to bring our community four Fairfax County Teen Job Fairs and Resume Building Workshops. It is open to all teens in Fairfax County looking for employ-

ment or tips to build their resume. Free booth space will be provided to any business or organization to advertise their available positions. Both teenagers and businesses/organizations may register to attend by visiting <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/springfield/teenjobfair.htm>

2017 Schedule

❖ Saturday, March 18, 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Chantilly High School
Co-sponsored by Supervisor Kathy Smith,

Chantilly HS STEM Academy, and Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce

❖ Saturday, March 18, 1 to 3 p.m., Oakton High School
Co-sponsored by Supervisor Linda Smyth and Oakton HS Marketing Department

❖ Saturday, April 1, 12 to 2 p.m., West Springfield High School
Co-sponsored by West Springfield HS Student Government Association and Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce

❖ Saturday, April 29, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., South County Secondary School Co-sponsored by Supervisor Dan Storck, South Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, South County Federation, and South County Secondary School



Young greeters to the Vigil.



PHOTOS BY FRANK KOHN

Reston and Northern Virginia Chapter leads: Rumana Abedin, Susan Kohn, Leina Wahba and Nancy Bloch.

Sisterhood of the Salaam Shalom Brings Communities Together

Local Unity Vigil Draws Crowd from all over Metro Area.

BY JOAN BRADY

America the Beautiful greeted all who entered the Sisterhood of the Salaam Shalom Unity Vigil on Feb. 16, 2017, at Temple Rodef Shalom in McLean.

The event was co-hosted by the Northern Virginia and Reston Chapters of the Sisterhood.

More than 130 women, men and children of many faiths gathered from Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties, even drawing attendees from Maryland and D.C. for the interfaith service which included the musical stylings of Rachel Schreiman and Rob Weissman.

"We are here tonight to join our fellow Sisterhood chapters across the country who are right now holding similar Unity Vigils in the face of deepening concerns over hate speech and discriminatory policies in our country. We are here to share our hopes for a world where we live together in harmony and with respect for one another, no matter our religion, our nationality, our skin color or our sexual orientation... We are here to support and care for each other and for the stranger and for the refugee. We are here to show our children how we work together for a better world — one which they will inherit..." Susan Kohn, co-lead for the Northern Virginia Sisterhood of the Salaam Shalom chapter kicked off the event.

"We gather here together to continue our learning process, because ignorance of each other's traditions leads to divisiveness, while knowledge of the other encourages understanding."

❖ The Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom (SOSS) is a national organization, whose primary goal is to build trust, respect and sustainable relationships between Muslim and Jewish women.

There are more than 140 chapters across the United States. The chapters are



Reston and Northern Virginia Chapters of the Sisterhood of the Salaam Shalom.



Bob Murro, member of Board of Trustees and chair of Government Relations & Interfaith for Adams Center.



Dan Spiro, Jewish Islamic Dialogue Society

grounded in the practice of dialogue, breaking bread, and community service. We focus on our commonalities, learn to respect our differences, and pursue friendship, peace and justice. We speak out against all forms of prejudice, hatred, and discrimination, in an effort support and elevate each other. To learn more go to the website at: sosspeace.org or the Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/516079245151121/>

❖ If you are interested in getting involved: Jewish Islamic Dialogue Society (JIDS) has

been conducting monthly dialogues since 2009 that bring together dozens of Jews and Muslims for friendly, yet frank, encounters. We encourage participants to speak their minds, but to do so respectfully. We believe that if participants cannot find a way to make a point with love in their hearts, it is better saved for another day."

❖ Alliance for an Indivisible America 2020: (AIA) wants all Americans to perceive, and connect with, Muslims as they are: People who see America as a beacon of freedom, of hope for the future, of healthy

and stable communities, and of prosperity for families; and people who commit to America and its values, as have their fellow immigrants throughout American history. We wish all other Americans to recognize their Muslim neighbors as industrious, inclusive, and often highly educated contributors to the nation from its very earliest days, and to welcome American Muslim friends, neighbors and colleagues who share fundamental values and our uniquely American inclusiveness, and concern about the threat of violent extremism worldwide."

'Main Street' Idea Debated

FROM PAGE 3

told the Connection via email. "I'm not going to leave unless rent skyrockets," Uzun said. "They're nice people. I'm not worried."

OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS were not as trusting and were worried about the congestion it could cause and whether there was enough room for all the mixed uses.

"I can't imagine residential there," said Carole Herrick, McLean resident and chair of the Fairfax County History Commission. "I can't imagine eight stories. This would be the heart of McLean and it is not what I envision. I can't imagine there's enough room."

"I asked how many parking spaces are in the site and the revised site and they didn't know," said Ed Horahan of McLean. "It's an outrage they don't know this fundamental information."

In addition to Giant's parking lot, there will be surface parking along the Main Street. Most of the parking for the project, however, will be structured, both above and below ground, according to Frantz.

"One of our goals is to create a pleasant experience for pedestrians and drivers, and part of that means providing desirable parking, so our plan is to offer free public parking," she told the Connection via email after the meeting.

The landowners have commissioned a traffic study of the area, including intersections.

"It's over 25 intersections," Chris Tacinelli, principal of Gorove/Slade, a transportation engineering and planning firm, said during the meeting.

"We're at that phase of documenting and evaluating," he said.

The study will be shared with the Fairfax County Department of Transportation and the Virginia Department of Transportation.

"It's hard to believe how far back in time we go with this project," Supervisor John Foust, who represents the Dranesville District on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, said at the meeting.

It's been over 20 years since the "Main Street" idea was first proposed, Foust said. The long period of "nothing really substantive happening" was primarily because the land needed to create the development was split amongst many owners, he said. These parcels have since been consolidated.

It will take several more years to bring the plan to life.

First, the landowners will need to file a proposal for a comprehensive plan amendment and rezoning with the Fairfax County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

"If everything goes well, I think they can get their decision [from the county] this year," said Foust, who conceptually supports the redevelopment.

Site plans would then take another 18 months. It would then take about two years to complete construction of the first phase, according to Foust.

"You're talking four to four-and-a-half years, probably," he said.

More public meetings will be held in the future, according to Frantz. For now, landowners are collecting feedback on the initial design at www.mainstreetmclean.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

“Around the World” Arts. Through March 6, various time at Vienna Arts Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Members paintings. Free. Visit www.ViennaArtsSociety.org or call 703-319-3971.

The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia, a senior women's softball league, is looking for players. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. Play on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna. Visit www.goldengirls.org.

The Freeman Store & Museum Wednesday through Sunday noon-4 p.m. 131 Church St. NE, Vienna. The Freeman Store & Museum is dedicated to Preserving and promoting Vienna's heritage through the identification, preservation, and interpretation of history significant places, events, and persons. Historicviennainc.org

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

Bingo Night. Sundays. 4 p.m. Flame Room, Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center St. S, Vienna. \$10. www.vvfd.org/bingo.html.

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 flexibility, improve breathing and health, reduce stress. Ravi Kaur has 15 years experience teaching yoga. \$15 per session. www.edimprovement.org. 571-213-3192.

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.

Fishing Rod Rentals 8700 Potomac Hills St.,

Great Falls. Rentals available during visitor center hours. Fishing tackle and live bait are available for purchase. Reservations required for group rentals. \$6/rental (2 hour max). Valid driver's license required. Rod/reel combinations are perfect for beginners and children. A Virginia or Maryland freshwater fishing license is required for those 16 years or older. The park does not sell fishing licenses.

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/
Colvin Run Mill open 11 - 4 p.m. daily, closed Tuesday. 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Fairfax County's operational 19th century water powered gristmill, offers recreational and educational activities for all ages through daily tours, school programs and special events. Fees: \$7/adult, \$6 students 16+ with ID, \$5 children & seniors. January and February hours: 11 a.m.-4 p.m., last tour 3 p.m. Admission to park is free except for some special events.

THROUGH FEB. 28

FPA Television Series. Various times on Verizon FiOS TV and Cox Communications in Fairfax County, and by Comcast in Reston. The specials will air on FPA CHANNEL 10, FPA INTERNATIONAL CABLE 30, and FPA SPIRITUAL TV 36. Fairfax Public Access (FPA), will premiere a special series of new movies and documentaries throughout February, in recognition of Black History Month.

FRIDAY/FEB. 24

Unruly Theater Project. 7-9 p.m. at the The Old Firehouse Teen Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Professional teen improvisation company offers a night of comedy, and more. Free. Visit www.mcleancenter.org/teens.

FEB. 24-25

Scrapbooking Weekend. 6 p.m.-midnight at the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary, 400 Center St. S., Vienna. Snacks included, vendors on-site so you can purchase supplies or get expert advice. \$60. Contact Lisa Emerson at



lisaemerson3@verizon.net or 703-981-4504.

SATURDAY/FEB. 25

Cars & Coffee. 6-9 a.m. at Katie's Coffee House, Village Centre, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Antique, classic, and new cars are on display, share stories over morning coffee with car owners, neighbors, and friends Visit katiecarsandcoffee.com/ for more.

Meet Me in Paris. 8 p.m. at The Alden in McLean, 1234 Ingleside Ave. The Hot Club of San Francisco's "Meet Me in Paris" brings an evening of gypsy jazz. \$35 for the general public; \$20 for McLean tax district residents. Visit mcleancenter.org/alden-theatre or call 703-790-9223 for more.

SUNDAY/FEB. 26

Pasty Preview. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Pure Pasty Company, 128 Church St. NW, Vienna. Pure Pasty will be competing in the World Pasty Championships in March. Come preview the six entries they will be taking along — 20 percent off, limit 2 per customer. Visit www.purepasty.com for more.

Grand George Washington Ball. 1-4 p.m. at Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center 11710 MacArthur Blvd., Potomac, Md. The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park hosts Dr. Larry Keener Farley and his 19th-century dance ensemble for an afternoon of Civil War-era dance. Free but there is a fee to enter the park, currently \$10 per vehicle for a single visit, unless a passenger has an applicable park pass. For more visit www.nps.gov/choh or call 301-767-3714.

Southern Avenue Concert. 8 p.m. at Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave E. \$12-\$20. Go to www.southernavenueband.com for more.

TUESDAY/FEB. 28

Pancake Supper. 6 p.m. at Redeemer Lutheran Church, 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Pancake dinner in support of Support Youth Mission Work. Visit redeermcman.org/ for more.

FRIDAY/MARCH 3

Friday Fun Storytime. 11:30 a.m. at the Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Stories and activities about Dr. Seuss's Birthday. Age 2-5 with adult. Free. Call 703-356-0770.

SATURDAY/MARCH 4

Wine Tasting River Bend Country Club 7 - 10

‘Art Around the World’

The Carpet Weaver, Turkey, by Patricia Deege is part of the “Art Around the World,” exhibit at the Vienna Arts Society show running from through March 6 at 115 Pleasant St. NW in Vienna.

p.m. There will be a delicious selection of Hors d'oeuvres, cheeses and fine wines and mingling with long-time and new Great Falls neighbors.

TUESDAY/MARCH 7

Lecture and Book Signing. Noon at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Sandra Grimes, former CIA officer who helped unmask Aldrich Ames and co-wrote 2012 book “Circle of Treason” on the subject. Free. Visit www.mcleanwomensclub.org. or call 703-556-0197.

Mobile Tech Tuesday. 2 p.m. at the Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave. McLean. Bring a smart phone or tablet and learn about basic mobile device functions, or move beyond the basics.

THURSDAY/MARCH 9

LEGO Club (S.T.E.A.M.). 4:30 p.m. at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Have fun, use the imagination and keep the engineering and problem-solving skills flowing with lots of LEGO® bricks. Age 5-12. Free. Call 703-757-8560 for more.

SATURDAY/MARCH 11

Essential Oils for Spring. 1 p.m. at the Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Learn about the benefits of essential oils and the many reasons to use them. Adults. Call 703-356-0770 for more.

Effective Communication Workshop. 1-3 p.m. at Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Tom Pfeifer, the author of “Write it, Speak it: Writing a Speech They'll APPLAUD!” presents tools for a more effective communicator and leader. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library or call 703-938-0405 for more.

SUNDAY/MARCH 12

Chantilly Egg Hunt. Saturdays and Sundays. 26469 Ticonderoga Road, Chantilly. Join the Easter Bunny and search for candy and toy-filled eggs. Visit www.ticonderoga.com/about.

MONDAY/MARCH 13

Lunch N' Life. Noon at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 2589 Chain Bridge Road. Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna's first Lunch N' Life event of the year, with “Scandals in the City” Alice Roosevelt Longworth as portrayed by entertainer, Elaine Flynn. \$10, prepayment required by Wednesday, March 8. No refunds. Visit www.scov.org or call call 703-281-0538 .

Supervisor Herryty and Connection Newspapers' 2017 Fairfax County Teen Job Fairs and Resume Building Workshops



- Full time employment
- After-school employment
- Seasonal positions

Chantilly High School
Saturday, March 18
10 am to 12 pm

Co-sponsored by Supervisor Kathy Smith, Chantilly HS STEM Academy, and Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce

Oakton High School
Saturday, March 18
1 pm to 3 pm

Co-sponsored by Supervisor Linda Smyth and Oakton HS Marketing Department

- Internship opportunities
- Volunteer experiences
- and more!

West Springfield High School
Saturday, April 1
12 pm to 2 pm

Co-sponsored by West Springfield HS Student Government and Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce

South County Secondary School
Saturday, April 29
11 am to 1 pm

Co-sponsored by Supervisor Dan Storck, South Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, South County Federation, and South County Secondary School

To register as an employer or student, or for more information, please visit
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/springfield/teenjobfair.htm

FOOD

Wildfire's Chef Enjoys Creativity of His New Job

Meet Wildfire's new sous chef Jeffrey Katz.

BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY
THE CONNECTION

Seriously ready to tackle just about any cooking challenge or recipe calamity, Wildfire's new sous chef Jeffrey Katz comes to this Tysons Galleria hot destination, Wildfire. Busy from lunch to the end of dinner service, this third-floor restaurant offers a robust menu of basically American standards, with a dinnertime focus on hefty beef dishes. Who could really turn down a 22-ounce prime rib cut, rubbed with garlic, salt, and coarse-ground black pepper?

Fortunately for Wildfire, Katz knows a thing or two about cooking, especially putting out high-end meals. "I have been passionate about cooking since my childhood in New York," he said, telling how his mother and grandmother were always in the kitchen. "I wanted to be a veterinarian," he continued. "But I watched my mother and grandmother cook traditional Jewish holiday food for Passover and other events and I was interested in that, too. I was really conflicted because I enjoyed cooking."

To make his decision even more complicated, his family did not live near a farm, but participated in the 4-H Club. Animals such as goats, ducks, and even snakes, became part of the household. "It seemed very rural," said Katz. "I came to respect all kinds of life. I just didn't always want to get up at 6 a.m. to feed the chickens."

Consequently, as a junior in high school, Katz took a vocation class in cooking. Then, in his last few years of high school, he attended a culinary vocational school. "I thought I would give it a shot," he said, "and 30 years later, I am still doing it."

After high school, Katz spent several years working in area kitchens to get some hands-on experience, noting that gaining that work know-how is great preparation for a future culinary career. "You have to be dedicated and really enjoy cooking," he said. "You have to learn about team spirit with other staff members, so you will all be on the same page."

With several years of culinary work under his belt, Katz attended the Culinary Institute of America (CIA), and in his final year, did an externship with



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Chef Jeff Katz

the Kettle House Inn in Mt. Kisco, N.Y., under then-chef Mark Kaplan. For Katz, that was a real turning point, for Kaplan not only taught him how to read cookbooks and experiment in new recipes, he became and has remained Katz's mentor. "Today, he is still my best friend," Katz said.

In fact, Kaplan went on to open his own restaurant, the New American Bistro in Mamaroneck, N.Y., and took Katz with him. After four years, he gave Katz some invaluable yet tough advice: go out into the world and learn from other chefs, other restaurants. That he did, and ultimately Katz has worked as executive chef and chef all over the Northeast, gaining needed experience and expertise. As a result, Katz said that he loves all kinds of cuisines, and doesn't specialize in any one. So when a boss says to him, "Jeffrey, make this," he takes the basic recipe, but gives it his own special twist. "I love the creativity part of my job," he said, "and I love the camaraderie here at Wildfire."

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A Date With Destiny



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I suppose, given that Feb. 27, 2017 is the eight-year anniversary of my original non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV diagnosis, followed up almost immediately with my "13 month to two-year" prognosis, I should make mention of it. Not that I need any reminding, but perhaps you regular readers who don't exactly know my history, might be curious as to how long I've been droning on about cancer. Strictly speaking, it was June 2009 when my first cancer-type (it was the diagnostic process, actually) column was published: "Dying to Find Out, Sort Of." And I've been self-indulging myself ever since save for the odd occasion when my mind wanders elsewhere and I'm able to write outside the cancer bubble.

Which is probably a good thing, as is venting every week about the good, bad and the ugly, concerning my having cancer and learning how to live with it. Not that the content is particularly informative, factually, but it is an honest description of the anxieties and fears a patient experiences. Occasionally, I will include a few facts, but as a sports- and chocolate-person, medicine/science and my knowledge and understanding, and ability to explain them are mutually exclusive at best and an oxymoron at worst, with yours truly being the moron. What kind of moron you ask? As Curly Howard of The Three Stooges answered in a long-ago "two-reeler": "Why? Are there more than one kind?"

Nonetheless, in spite of myself, life has gone on as I'm proud and extremely fortunate to say. As to where I am in the cancer-survivor scheme of things? Somewhere between slim and none. When I was first diagnosed, my oncologist said the survival rate for similarly staged patients (stage IV) after five years was in the low single digits (as in 1 to 2 percent). When my wife, Dina, asked him why aren't there any parades for lung cancer survivors (as is so often the case with breast cancer survivors), he answered quite succinctly: "Because there aren't any," (survivors, that is). I appreciated his honesty and told him so. I was clueless however, as to what my immediate future would really be like. I would know soon enough as it was recommended that I start chemotherapy as soon as possible. I remember my brother, Richard, asking the oncologist what would he do if it was his brother diagnosed with lung cancer; his answer was to begin infusions without delay and so a week later, we began.

And so here I am, nearly eight years later, still minding my own business and sharing it with you all every week. My infusions now occur every five weeks, CT Scans every three months. My face-to-face appointments with my oncologist occur quarterly as well, a week or so after the scan to discuss the results. So far, mostly so good. Oh sure, I've had my moments (tumor growth, fluid build-up in both lungs followed by a week-long stay in the hospital, ongoing kidney concerns, no surgery though), but for the most part, I've been incredibly lucky (my oncologist calls me his "third miracle").

As to what I'm doing to help myself and hurt the cancer? Not nothing. In addition to the standard fare offered by my oncologist, I have supplemented my treatment with a variety of non-Western alternatives, many of which I've mentioned in previous columns. Are they working? They're not hurting, I can tell you that. Could I do more? Probably. Should I do more? Absolutely! Am I doing more or less than I used to? Less, I'm afraid. But as Popeye the Sailor Man said so often: "I 'yam what I 'yam." And come Monday, Feb. 27, 2017, I'll have "yamed" myself into an eight-year lung cancer survivor. Do I hear nine? Hopefully, I hear a lot more than that. From my pen to God's ears.

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

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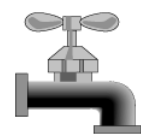
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COMMUNITY

**Chris Boullire
welcomes
fundraisers
from around
the area to the
Wall of Hope
reception,
handing out
awards for
fundraising
“champions.”**



PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

A Record Year

**Alzheimer's Association of the National
Capital Region honors its supporters.**

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

Megan Newman told her story at the Alzheimer's Association "Wall of Hope" reception at Tyson's Corner on Feb. 9. She was only 18, a senior in high school, when her mother started to ask the same question more than once. They both attributed it to stress. They laughed about it. A few months later, it became clear to Meghan that what was wrong with her mother was more than stress. She convinced her to see a doctor, but it took many tests and many neurologists later before she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

It came at a difficult time for Megan, as she was headed off to college. She was supposed to be at the "best years of your life" stage. She laughs about it now, but switching roles with her parent at that point in her life was anything but funny. When she went to college, her mother went with her. When she moved off campus, she moved with her mother. The long days of caregiving, studying and managing the lives of two people took a toll on Megan. Her mother didn't really appreciate being told she had to brush her teeth or that she wasn't going to be able to drive her car any longer. Alzheimer's patients don't always exhibit a good-natured response to having children tell them what to do. Megan wasn't always patient and forbearing. And that bothered her. When it became time for her to hold down a job, Megan couldn't manage both

tasks anymore. That is why she was so grateful to find the Alzheimer's Association, and why she will always give back to this organization: they helped her manage her mother and supported her, she said. The reception on Feb. 9 recognized event participants and supporters who distinguished themselves through leadership and exemplary fundraising during the year. Supporters were able to see the unveiling of new plaques on the Wall of Hope, which honors those who suffered from the disease and their friends and family who gave in their name. Attendees at the event made up 2 percent of the fundraisers and sponsors who raised over 45 percent of total funds from events. In 2016, 7,700 participants raised a record \$1.78 million. And they had a good time doing it. Chris Boullire, the CEO of the National Capital Area Alzheimer's Association chapter, honored the 29 cyclists who created the "Ride to Remember," riding 100 miles and raising more than \$20,000; the 260 Longest Day participants who raised over \$118,000 participating in creative activities; the "Blondes v. Brunettes" (a flag football game for women,) which had 80 participants and raised over \$85,173; and the biggest event for 2016 in this area: the Walk to End Alzheimer's had 7,300 participants at seven walks throughout the region who raised \$1.53 million.

The Alzheimer's Association in the area is always looking for additional Walk volunteers and teams for 2017. Interested people can visit www.alznca.org/walk.

Letters

FROM PAGE 6

...ano lessons or language lessons as Home Occupations. There is almost no impact from those Home Occupations. Those teachers aren't "required" to have a Soil and Water Conservation Plan.

Be sure to familiarize yourself with new ordinance language if you have horse properties in your area so you can sound the alarm to protect the environment, your neighborhood, and horses by complaining to Code Enforcement and

the Board of Supervisors. If problems come with this increased intensity of land use, perhaps the Board of Supervisors will have to re-visit this drastic expansion in the number of horses permitted "by-right" and the enormous amount of time lessons can be taught, which will probably spoil your outdoor time on the weekends.

Ann Huffman
Great Falls



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