

Vienna Enjoys Concerts on The Green

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Construction Eyesore
= Art-portunity

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Oakton Otters
Start Summer Season

SPORTS, PAGE 12

William Tozier, 2, Moira Tozier, and Jimmy Tozier, four months. "This is our first time coming to Concert on the Green. We are new to Vienna, and we try to take advantage of all the family-friendly activities," Moira Tozier said.

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- 15 The Pietasters (Ska)
- 22 Eddie from Ohio (Folk)
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AUGUST

- 5 The Winstons (Motown)
- 12 Yo Mama's Big Fat Booty Band (Funk)
- 19 Black Masala (Gypsy Fusion)



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PET Connection

Publishes: July 26, 2017 • Ads close: July 19, 2017

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PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Concertgoers filled the Town Green as they enjoyed Americana music by Shenandoah Run performed during the Vienna Summer on the Green Concert Series held Friday, June 30. The event, part of 13 Friday evening concerts for the season, is produced by Vienna Parks and Recreation and supported by Rotary Club of Vienna.



Pamela Ferguson, fiddle, Renee Moyer, vocal, Joe Dickey, banjo, Carolyn Eyerly Sagatov, vocals, percussion, Bob Melissinos, guitar, vocals, John Wertz, bass, Jim Thorne, guitar, flute, vocals, Henry Milne, guitar, vocals, and Robert Burleson, guitar, are members of Shenandoah Run. They blended traditional and contemporary folk music during the June 30 performance for the Vienna Summer on the Green Concert Series.

Vienna Enjoys Concerts on the Green

Shenandoah Run performs Americana music 'with a kick.'

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

For residents of the Town of Vienna and surrounding communities, summertime fun takes off every Friday evening, 6:30 p.m. on the Town Green, 144 Maple Avenue East, when Vienna Parks and Recreation and its sponsors present their Summer on the Green Concert Series.

On Friday night, June 30, families and friends prepared for the fifth out of the thirteen weekly performances. Concertgoers anxiously awaited the perfect genre of music to get them in the mood for the upcoming 4th of July celebration - spirited sounds of Americana performed by Shenandoah Run, a folk ensemble from the Washington D.C. area.

Well before the concert began, families and friends gathered on the Town Green. They laid out blankets and set up lawn chairs covering the slight slope downwards toward the pavilion. The natural u-shaped setting, mostly shady and in harmony with its surroundings, formed a mini amphitheater with the wooden pavilion centered below. Every seat was a good seat.

CONCERTGOERS opened picnic baskets and coolers. While the older children ran to the fringes of the Green and played Frisbee before the concert began, the little



From left, Lisa Davis, CJ Davis, 2, and Colin Davis. "In comparison to Wolf Trap, it's easy getting in and out. And it's free," said Lisa Davis of Reston.

ones kept close to their parents.

Jim Thorne from Arlington is a classical guitar and jazz flute player for Shenandoah Run. When asked what he thought about the gathered crowd he said, "It feels like family here ... very intimate. It's nice to see it fill up across the green."

Bob Melissinos is the founder of Shenandoah Run. He commented about differences he noted in the crowd and the venue now, compared to when the ensemble



From left, Jay Erwin, Stephanie Erwin, 9 months, Caroline Erwin, and Amelia Erwin, 3. "It's great to come on the weekend, enjoy the weather and great music in a family-friendly environment," said Caroline Erwin of Vienna.

first performed there in 2013. "This is our fifth time at Concert on the Green," Melissinos said. "The size of the crowd is different, it's larger [now than before], and there is the Pavilion."

For arriving concertgoers not only was the event free and open the public but there was plenty of free parking on the street, in the lot across from the Historic Freeman

Store and Museum located at 131 Church Street NE and in the lot adjacent to the W&OD Trail. No alcoholic beverages were permitted though, and the town recommended leaving pets at home. Although food and beverage service was not available, Whole Foods was across the street, and there were plenty of nearby restaurants for take out.

According to the town website, up next on the 2017 Concert Line Up scheduled for Friday, July 7, is the Richard Walton Group. The Maryland Music Awards nominated them Best Jazz Artist, and they received a WAMMIE nomination for Best Jazz Recording for their new studio CD, "Under The Current."

The Friday Night 6:30 p.m. Line Up continues with July 14- Nitehawks Swing Band; sponsored by the Michael Dandreea Group at Morgan Stanley; July 21- Chillin' On the Church, Special Event, Harlen Simple-Rock/Funk/Blues; and July 28-Wayne Tymanick Quartet-Jazz/Dixieland. Aug. 4- US Navy Sea Chanters-Choral; Aug. 11- The Rockits-Classical Rock; and August 18- Chillin' on Church Street, Special Event, Mudlark-Rock and Blues. The series wraps up its 2017 season with the Sept. 15 Chillin' on Church Street, Special Event, Chump Change-Classical Rock.

After the evening performance, Vince Krevinas of Chantilly summed up the concert best, "Great performance. Perfect sound. Great set list. Ten plus on a scale of one to ten. It is the Best Show all summer."

FOR MORE INFORMATION about Vienna Summer on the Green Concert Series, visit viennava.gov or call 703-255-6300.

Send in Pet Photos Now

The Pet Connection, a twice-yearly special edition, will publish the last week of July, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by July 20.

We invite you to send us stories about your pets, photos of you and your family with your cats, dogs, llamas, alpacas, ponies, hamsters, snakes, lizards, frogs, rabbits, or whatever other creatures share your life with you.

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EDITORIAL

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Please tell us a little bit about your creature, identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description what is happening in the photo, and include address and phone number (we

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Email editors@connectionnewspapers.com or submit online at www.connectionnewspapers.com/pets. For advertising information, email sales@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9431.

Timing Is Everything

This week's paper went to press on Monday, July 3, and as a result does not include coverage of Independence Day events from the Fourth of July. Please see next week's paper.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Withholding Funds Hurts WMATA

To the Editor:

The following open letter was addressed to Secretary U.S. Department of Transportation.

Dear Secretary Chao,

As representatives of public transit customers in the Commonwealth of Virginia, we write to express our concerns regarding the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Feb. 10, 2017 decision to withhold federal transit grant money in response to incomplete efforts to establish a new State Safety Oversight Program (SSOP) for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

On Feb. 8, 2016, the FTA gave notice that the Metropolitan Safety Commission (MSC), a new SSOP to succeed WMATA's Tri-State Oversight Commission, must be in place and certified by the FTA on or before Feb. 9, 2017. On Feb. 10, 2017, with no new SSOP certified, the FTA announced it would exercise its authority to withhold five percent of federal funds authorized in fiscal year 2017 under the Urbanized Area Apportionments Program (49 U.S.C. 5307). The initial withholding equated to \$8.9 million, and is expected to total \$15 million if the withholding continues to the end of the current fiscal year. This withholding will not just impact funding for WMATA, but for broader infrastructure maintenance throughout Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.

The decision to withhold these federal funds has created significant uncertainty amongst state and local governments in terms of budget planning and stability. Should the withholding of funds continue throughout the remainder of the fiscal year, the governments and their transit systems will be faced with a number of difficult decisions about the manner in which they allocate their limited

resources. Under a worst-case scenario, they would be forced to make cuts to good repair efforts or reduce service to their respective communities, either of which would be harmful to our constituents. We agree safety must be a top priority, but eliminating funding for infrastructure repair would directly contradict a SSOP's stated goal.

Given the FTA must engage in this process with 29 other transit agencies nationwide by 2019, we appreciate the complexity of the issues that were considered in making the decision to withhold these funds. However, we must emphasize — as many of us have expressed previously either directly to you, your predecessor, or the FTA — that the timing of both the notice and the deadline set by FTA were arbitrary in that there seemed to be little or no consideration of the legislative calendars of the Virginia General Assembly or the General Assembly of Maryland.

The FTA timetable effectively gave Virginia and Maryland less than one full legislative session to negotiate amongst each other and the District, draft the proposal, navigate it through the respective lawmaking bodies, and sign it into law. The unreasonable requirements FTA put forth were not simply for the SSOP to have a legal foundation by the February 2017 deadline, but to have the program fully certified by FTA, which necessitates months of work after passing legislation, including, but not limited to, appointing commissioners, hiring staff, and leasing office space. We are therefore led to believe that FTA either set their requirements without providing fair consideration to the unique institutional challenges that exist

within the jurisdictions, or the FTA set them with a deadline so unrealistic that failure was unavoidable.

Given the concerns we have raised in this letter regarding FTA's shortsighted approach to this matter, and in light of the demonstrated progress which has been made, we respectfully request that your office work with the FTA to explore a compromise in which part of these withheld funds can be released as a show of good faith, as the jurisdictions continue their work to construct a stable SSOP. Lending further justification for this request is the real progress that has been made with respect to organizing the MSC. At the time this is written:

- ❖ Virginia, Maryland, and the District (the jurisdictions) have each enacted legislation to enter into an interstate compact to form the MSC;

- ❖ The jurisdictions have submitted a detailed draft certification plan to FTA for review (though FTA has not yet provided formal feedback on the plan);

- ❖ Joint resolutions have been introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to grant Congressional approval to the MSC compact;

- ❖ The Senate has passed its ver-

sion of the joint resolution;

- ❖ The House Judiciary Committee, which has sole jurisdiction over the joint resolution, has ordered the House's parallel version of the resolution to be reported favorably to the full House; and

- ❖ We are requesting that the measure be taken up for consideration as soon as possible.

We appreciate the FTA's important safety work, especially its temporary safety oversight role with respect to WMATA. Without FTA's diligence, more harm may have come to WMATA's customers. But we must find an equitable solution to this matter.

We look forward to partnering with you, Madam Secretary, as well as the FTA to ensure safety remains the top priority in all transit systems and that reforms are made to accomplish a transit agency that provides safe, reliable service to our constituents. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request.

U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock,
U.S. Rep. Bob Goodlatte,
U.S. Rep. Robert J. Wittman,
U.S. Rep. Scott Taylor,
U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine, and
U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

Letters to the Editor
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Alexandria VA 22314
Call: 703-917-6444.

By e-mail: Vienna@connectionnewspapers.com

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PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED BY TOWN OF VIENNA

Construction Eyesore = Art-portunity

The Vienna Public Art Commission (VPAC) invited local students to create their own artistic posters to be used as creative band-aids to help brighten a local construction site. The students' colorful creations painted on pieces of plywood line the fences along Park Street, Cherry Street and Caffi Field, providing a visual diversion from the growing pains of the Town's community center, which is being renovated and expanded.

The idea arose when VPAC Chair Midge Biles noted how the up-and-coming Mosaic District is using art in construction areas, and she applied the problem-turned-opportunity strategy to Vienna.

"VPAC's goal is to deploy both permanent and temporary art in Vienna to show its character," says Biles. "We are already

underway with a permanent 'Taking Flight' statue at the community center in memory of former Mayor Jane Seeman and in honor of all volunteers, but in the meantime we can temporarily use art to alleviate the current situation until the center's opening."

Students from Cedar Lane, Flint Hill, James Madison High School, Louise Archer and Vienna Elementary painted more than 15 wood panels currently on display around the community center construction zone. In addition to sprucing up the construction area, the project also gives a voice to the Town's youth, allowing them to share through art what's beautiful to them, what hurts them, how the Town looks to them, and what they want themselves and Vienna to be now and in the future.



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News

Detectives Release Photos Of Bank Robbery Suspect

Detectives from the Fairfax County Police and the FBI released images of a man who is suspected of robbing a bank in the Tysons Corner area of Vienna on Thursday, June 22.

The police are asking for the public's help to identify the man.

The robbery happened shortly after 2 p.m. when the suspect entered the bank, approached a teller and demanded money, according to the police. While no one was hurt, the suspect escaped with an undisclosed amount of cash, according to police.

The suspect is described as black, in his 40s, about 5-feet-10-inches tall, and approximately 180 pounds with no facial hair.

The FBI is offering a reward of up to \$5,000 for information that leads to the identification, arrest and conviction of this bank robber.

The public may contact the police with any information about the suspect by call-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE
FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

The suspect is described as black, in his 40s, about 5-feet-10-inches tall, and approximately 180 pounds with no facial hair, according to police.

ing the FCPD at 703-691-2131 or the FBI at 202-278-2000.



Flint Hill Robotics Team, June 2017.

Flint Hill Robotics Team Wins Best High School, Fifth Overall in International Competition

For the second year in a row, Flint Hill School's Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Robotics team won the Best High School award at the Association for Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Systems International Student Unmanned Aerial Systems (AUASI SUAS) Competition, which was held June 14-17 at the Patuxent River Naval Air Station in Maryland. In only its third year participating, the team significantly improved from 21st overall last year to fifth this year, placing behind Universite de Sherbrooke (Quebec, Canada); Cornell University; Technion Israel Institute of Technology and Istanbul Technical University.

The international competition comprised predominantly teams from uni-

versities — 59 teams registered and 44 made it to the final flight demonstration portion. Other competitors included: California State University, Fullerton; Harvard University; Munich University of Applied Sciences; Penn State; Rutgers University; U.S. Naval Academy; The University of Texas at Austin; and University of Toronto.

The team also earned \$3,550 in prize money. "No high school team has placed above 17th place in the competition's 15-year history," said the team's faculty advisor Mike Snyder, a robotics and computer science teacher with Flint Hill's Upper School. "As the Flint Hill students walked up to receive their award, they were given the only standing ovation. I am so proud of this team."

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Meditation as Medicine

Practice linked to improvements in health.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

In her dimly lit basement in Great Falls, Mary Beth Kogod sounds a meditation bell that echoes through the room. The 12 people sitting on cushions in a circle around her close their eyes and listen to the gentle sounds of her voice.

"If your mind begins to wander, gently guide it back to the sound of my voice," said Kogod, as she leads the group in a mindfulness meditation session.

The practice of meditating to aid with ills running the gamut from stress and anxiety to pain and depression is on the rise. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), 18 million people practiced some form of meditation in 2015, and the number of Americans who engage in the practice has doubled over the last 15 years.

"We have more smartphones and other electronics that consume us and give us constant access to stressful events we see on the news," said Kate Love, who runs the Open Mind-Open Heart meditation group in Bethesda. "There is the expectation that we need to be available and informed all the time. This expectation wasn't in place 10 years ago."

Love says that while scientific research

to back up these claims is limited, it is growing. For example, a study funded by the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health at NIH shows that mindfulness practices have a positive impact on insomnia.

"There is the expectation that we need to be available and informed all the time. This expectation wasn't in place 10 years ago."

— Kate Love

Meditation usually entails sitting relatively still and quiet, as in Kogod's meditation session, and focusing on one thing, such as a sound, an image or one's own breath.

"I teach clients concentrative meditation where they focus on one thing," she said. "I also teach mindful meditation where people try to cultivate a sense of awareness of what is happening in their body. For example, what thoughts pass through your mind as



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Kate Love of the Open Mind-Open Heart meditation group in Bethesda says that meditation can help reduce stress.

you sit quietly? What sounds do you hear? What emotions do you feel? The work comes when you notice these sensations and then let them go."

A 2011 study by the Association for Psychological Science showed that meditation can be effective in boosting memory and

concentration. Settings for this mind-body practice now range from workplaces to classrooms.

Amber Wilson, a fourth grade teacher, guides her students in mindfulness meditation practices most afternoons during the school year. "A lot of my students have difficult home environments which affects their ability to concentrate in school," she said. "When I stop them between subjects and let them chill out a little bit, it really makes a difference in their performance, even after just five minutes."

Meditation can also help with addiction treatment, says Warren Schelter, Ph.D., a psychologist with a practice in Alexandria. "It can instill a sense of calm and overall wellbeing," he said. "Anxiety and depression often go hand-in hand with addiction, which is why a calming meditation practice might be effective for some people."

Schelter underscores the fact that meditation should not replace traditional medicine. "I would recommend that anyone experiencing symptoms of mental or physical illness see a medical doctor first," she said. "Mediation should work in conjunction with traditional medicine, not in place of it."

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CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Art at the Library. Various Vienna artists work on display in June at the Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Reno Number Eleven Steam Locomotive is one of five pictures supplied by the Vienna Arts Center. Visit www.ViennaArtsSociety.org for more.

Julie Cochran Photography. Various times through July 29 at the Vienna Arts Gallery, 513 Maple Ave. W. Exhibit called "Lotus-Palooza." Call 703-319-3971 or visit www.ViennaArtsSociety.org for more.

Sunny Days Art. Artists exhibition through July 29 at the Vienna Arts Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW. Sunny Days exhibition. Call 703-319-3971 or visit www.ViennaArtsSociety.org for more.

"Summer in the City" Art Show. Normal business hours through August 15 at Brightview, 10200 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Members of Great Falls Studios will exhibit their work in a show. Call 703-759-2513 for more.

Free Tai Chi. Every Saturday, from 7:55-9 a.m., Introduction and Beginners' Practice, meet on the outdoor basketball court located directly behind the Dolley Madison Public Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave. in McLean Central Park, McLean. Call 703-759-9141 or visit www.FreeTaiChi.org for more.

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.

First Sunday Jazz Brunch 11-2 p.m. Recurring monthly on the 1st Sunday at Bazin's on Church 111 Church St N.W., Vienna. Enjoy brunch accompanied by the soft jazz sounds of Virginia Music Adventure. Visit www.fxva.com/listing/bazins-on-church/1686/

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.

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



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Driftwood in Concert, Thursday, July 13 at 7:30 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$15-25. Visit www.jamminjava.com for more.

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. Admission to park is free except for some special events.

WEDNESDAYS THROUGH AUG. 2

Stories and Sprinklers. 1:30 p.m. at 144 Maple Ave. E., Vienna (behind the Freeman Store). Hear a story. Visit www.viennava.gov or call 703-255-6360.

FRIDAY/JULY 7

Summer on the Green Concert. 6:30 p.m. at 144 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Featuring Richard Walton Group. Free. Visit www.viennava.gov or call 703-255-6360.

Danny Gokey Concert. 6:30-8 p.m. at the The Tysons Corner Metro Station Plaza, 1961 Chain Bridge Road. Part of the Tyson's Concert Series. Visit www.tysonscornercenter.com or call 703-893-9401 for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 9

Trio Caliente Concert. 5 p.m. at McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd. Set to a wide array of Latin grooves with vocals in Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan and English. Part of The Alden at the McLean Community Center's 2017 Summer Sunday Concerts in the Park. Call the Center at 703-790-0123 or visit www.aldentheatre.org.

JULY 10-14

Vacation Bible School. 6-8 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Vienna, 450 Orchard St., NW. Dinner is served each night, followed by an engaging opening worship rally at 6:30pm. There are classes for the entire family. Free. Call 703-938-8525 or visit fbcv.org for more.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 12

"Dining with Dorothy". 12:30 p.m. at Pan Am Family Restaurant, Pan Am Shopping Center, 3051 Nutley St. SW, Fairfax. Join your friends or make new ones at this socializing/dining event. Call 703-281-0538 or visit www.scov.org for more.

THURSDAY/JULY 13

Driftwood in Concert. 7:30 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$15-25. Visit www.jamminjava.com for more.

JULY 14-30

Summer Musical. 8-10:30 p.m. or Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. at Vinson Hall Retirement Community, Community Building Ballroom, 1735 Kirby Road, McLean. McLean players present "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee." \$23-25. Email publicity@McLeanPlayers.org, call 703-304-3176 or visit www.McLeanPlayers.org.

JULY 15-16

Summer Colonial Market Fair. 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at The Claude Moore Colonial Farm, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Games, children's activities, music and educational demonstrations such as the blacksmith, spinning, candle-making and splitting rails. Children and Seniors: \$4; Adults: \$8; children under 3 complimentary admission; directions and more information at www.1771.org.

SUNDAY/JULY 16

Da Capo Barbershop Quartet. 5 p.m. at McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd. Barbershop quartet style music with various music styles. Part of The Alden at the McLean Community Center's 2017 Summer Sunday Concerts in the Park. Call the Center at 703-790-0123 or visit www.aldentheatre.org.

MONDAY/JULY 17

JD Eicher Concert. 7:30 p.m. at Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave., Vienna. Call 877-987-6487 or visit www.jamminjava.com for more.

FRIDAY/JULY 21

Chillin' on Church. 6:30 p.m. at Church St., Vienna. Water games, Harlen Simple band playing rock/funk/blues. Visit www.viennava.gov or call 703-255-6360.

Delta Spur Concert. 6:30-8 p.m. at the The Tysons Corner Metro Station Plaza, 1961 Chain Bridge Road. Part of the Tyson's Concert Series. Visit www.tysonscornercenter.com or call 703-893-9401 for more.

SUNDAY/JULY 23

Summer on the Green Concert. 6:30 p.m. at 144 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Featuring Nitehawks Swing Band. Free. Visit www.viennava.gov or call 703-255-6360.



PHOTO BY IRISH EYES PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOBY COURTESY McLEAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS

"The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" — Three of the spellers (Sidney Davis, Sierra Hoffman, and William Jeffreys) are given instructions by Rona Lisa Peretti (Sara Watson).

Summertime Theater Fun McLean Community Players presents "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee."

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Get ready for a chipper musical with great heart. It's the McLean Community Players (MCP) production of "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee." The show is about "an eclectic mix of quirky characters. Both the 'kids' participating in the Bee and the adults in charge of running it have eccentricities that come to seem endearing, as well as hilarious," said co-director Kevin McCormack.

The "Bee" is set in a fictional Putnam County middle school, but it could be anywhere. There are awkward adolescents (played by adults) trying to win the contest. As they work their way through the competition they begin to develop a sense of belonging.

What is special about "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" is that at each performance, four audience members will be invited to participate as spellers. They get to go up on stage with its nine member cast and be part of the show. On stage these audience spellers will be given actual words to spell and will remain on stage until they misspell a word. All is for good fun. The Tony Award winning musical has a book by Rachel Sheinkin with score by William Finn.

Sarah Watson plays Rona Lisa Peretti. Peretti is the only female "adult" in the show; and hostess of the event. "For Rona, this 'Spelling Bee' is as big as The Oscars or The Olympics. She crosses the days off her calendar until the Bee is finally here. She can't sleep the night before because she's so excited. Rona won the 3rd Annual Putnam Spelling Bee. She

Where & When

McLean Community Players present "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" at Community Building Ballroom, Vinson Hall, 1735 Kirby Road, McLean. Performances run July 14-30, 2017. Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m. Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$23-\$25. Visit www.McLeanPlayers.org, or call Brown Paper Tickets at 1-800-838-3006. Group rates are available. Audio description for the visually-impaired will be offered by the Metropolitan Washington Ear at the matinee performance on Sunday, July 23, 2017. NOTE: Adult situations, this show is most suitable for ages 13 and older. Recruiting for audience volunteers to become part of the production process will begin in the lobby at a sign up table. Prior to the start of the show those selected will be interviewed by the producer, director and the actors involved.

won't let the audience forget it."

Sidney Davis plays Leaf Coneybear; one of the youngest contestants. "He's basically there by default because the actual winners couldn't participate, and that reflects on one of his scenes in the show with his family. He's homeschooled with the rest of his brothers and sisters, so there's a lot of sibling rivalry." Sierra Hoffman plays Logainne Schwartz and Grubenierre. She is the daughter of two dads. She is "put under a lot of pressure to succeed. She's a political activist and the youngest competitor at the bee."

"Putnam" is more than a show about a spelling competition. It delves into friendships, family relationships, the pressure to succeed, sportsmanship, and ultimately, embracing who you are. These are things many of us have faced during our lives," added co-producers Annie O'Neill Galvin and Diane Sams.

News



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Girl Scouts Observe World Refugee Day

Girl Scouts from Troop 3173 at Waples Mills Elementary School in Oakton and Hunters Woods Elementary School in Reston are holding the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees flag with a message for scouts overseas to raise local awareness of World Refugee Day, which was Tuesday, June 20.

SCHOOL NOTES

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

Six University of Virginia students have received grants from the University Award for Projects in the Arts program, allowing them to follow their artistic muses this summer. They include **Wesley Diener** of Vienna, a third-year music major focusing on opera. Diener plans to direct and produce a fully staged production of Jean-Jacque Rousseau's opera, "Le Devin du Village," in Old Cabell Hall planned for April

2018. A Miller Arts Scholar, Diener directed "Viewing Pleasure," a play in the UVA Department of Drama's New Works Festival, and was assistant director of "Blood Wedding" as part of the department's mainstage season. He was on the production staff of the First Year Players and has performed roles with the UVA Department of Drama, Virginia Players, Spectrum Theatre and First Year Players. He concentrates on performance in the McIntire Department of Music and was a member of Student Council's Student Arts Committee. He has performed at the Bethesda

Music Festival, an opera festival; the Franco-American Vocal Academy, an opera program in France; Charlottesville Opera; Victory Hall Opera; and will be attending Bel Canto in Tuscany this summer. He has been a private voice teacher in Charlottesville and director and music director at the Charlottesville children's theater, DMR Adventures. He has received Miller Arts Scholars grants, including rising third- and fourth-year awards; the Charlottesville Wednesday Music Club Award; and numerous vocal competition awards at the state, regional and national levels.

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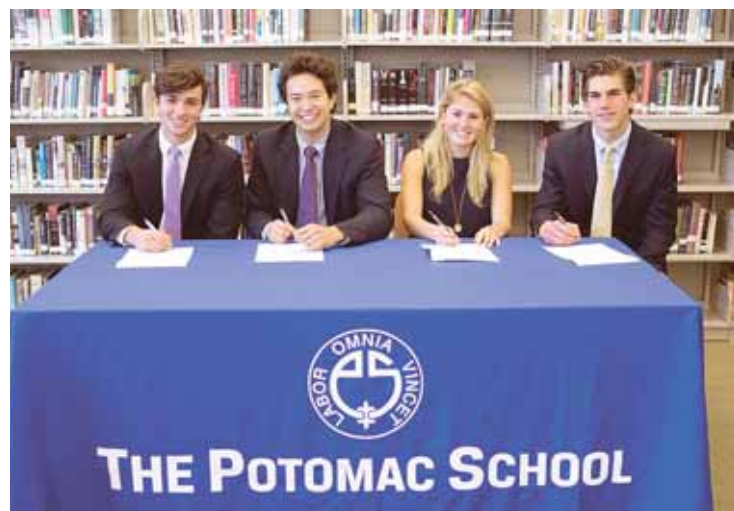


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

From left: Alex Kitt, Jacob Lazris, Lyla Jones, and Harrison Osborne will all be playing lacrosse in the NESCAC next year.

Four Potomac School Seniors To Play Division III Lacrosse

Four varsity lacrosse players from The Potomac School will play the sport in the New England Small College Athletic Conference, a Division III league. Alex Kitt and Jacob Lazris will play men's lacrosse for Williams College, Harrison Osborne will play men's lacrosse for Amherst College, and Lyla Jones will play women's lacrosse for Colby College.

Lazris is a four-year member of Potomac's boys varsity lacrosse team and was a four-year starter at defense. He also was a member of the school's varsity football team and played club lacrosse for Madlax. "Williams is the perfect combination of great athletics and great academics," Lazris said. "Coach McCormack played a big role in my decision to attend the school. He's very supportive and seems like he will push me to the best of my ability and care about my success both on and off the field." Lazris is considering a major in either history or economics and may minor in Chinese.

Midfielder Kitt, a two-time boys varsity lacrosse captain, finished his senior season earning All-Conference honors and was named to the All-State first team as a face-off midfielder. He secured nearly 75 percent of his face-offs and registered 12 goals and 13 assists. Like Lazris, Kitt also played club lacrosse for Madlax. As a senior, he captained the varsity football team at Potomac. Kitt said, "A strong academic program was my priority during the college search, and Williams has an outstanding academic reputation. I also appreciated the school's small, friendly community." He adds, "Meeting Coach McCormack sealed the deal." Kitt hopes to study economics or math at Williams.

A four-year member of Potomac's boys varsity lacrosse team, midfielder Osborne received both All-Conference honors and an All-Met Honorable Mention during his junior year. As a senior, he once again received All-Conference honors, finishing the season with 34 goals and 20 assists. Osborne played for the Virginia Lacrosse Club outside of school and was also a member of Potomac's varsity boys soccer team. He said, "Amherst is a great school, academically and in every way. Their lacrosse team has improved each season since the new coaching staff arrived, and they make the NCAA tournament almost every year. So this is a really exciting opportunity." Osborne is interested in pursuing an economics major.

As a senior, Jones captained Potomac's girls varsity lacrosse team, on which she played for all four years of her Upper School career. This year, she scored 22 goals and made 15 assists. Outside of school, Jones played for the Capital Lacrosse Club, competed for the DC Metro Team 2 at the 2016 Women's National Tournament, and was selected to showcase her skills at the Under Armour All-America Weekend at Towson University last summer. Jones has also been a member of Potomac's varsity indoor track and soccer teams.

In college, she hopes to major in either computer science or economics. Jones said, "Colby's environment reminded me a lot of Potomac; I know I'll receive one-on-one attention and benefit from small class sizes and caring professors there. And I look forward to being a member of the lacrosse team and benefiting from the guidance and support of their great coaching staff."

BULLETIN

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

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Free Sober Rides. Tuesday, July 4, 7 p.m. through Wednesday, July 5, 2 a.m. Area residents, 21 and older, may download Lyft to their phones, then enter the code SOBERJULY4 in the app's "Promo" section to receive a no cost (up to \$15) safe ride home. The SoberRide code is valid for the first 1,500 Lyft users who enter the code. Visit www.soberride.com.

THROUGH JULY 31

Backpacks for Students. Various times at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 10550 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Christ the King's Team Service is collaborating with Reston's aid to families organization Cornerstones and school supplies collection organization Kids R First to help youngsters in the community. Collections will run through July; drop off in the church lobby. Visit www.gflutheran.org or call 703-759-6068.

SUNDAY/JULY 16

Intro to Connection Practice. 4:30 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Learn simple, science-based tools for feeling and expressing peace, responding with empathy and insight, and building resiliency to life's ups and downs. \$20. Call 703-281-1767 or visit unityoffairfax.org for more.

THROUGH SUMMER

Vienna Street-sweeping Program. The Town of Vienna began its annual street-sweeping program beginning March 20. The Town is divided into eight sections for purposes of the sweeping program. During the first pass through Town, the Public Works Department asks that residents not park on the street. Find the "sweeping" sections at viennava.gov/sweeping. Additionally, signs will be placed on streets marking a window of 7-10 days during which the truck will come through. Contact public works at 703-255-6380.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Are You A Caregiver? Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna Caregivers' Support Group takes place first & third Thursday of each month. February 2nd and 16th, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Join us at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax (UUFC) - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Rd, Oakton, VA. For more info contact facilitator, Jack Tarr, 703-821-6838 jtarr5@verizon.net.

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, www.havenofnova.org or havenofnova@verizon.net.

Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group Meets from 1:30 - 3 p.m. the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean continues to have an urgent need for new volunteers to help area senior citizens get to and from their medical and therapy appointments. To find out more about the Shepherd's Center and how you can volunteer to provide transportation and other services, call the Center at 703-506-2199 or e-mail the Center at info@scmafc.org. The Center's website is www.scmafc.org.

Master Gardener Training. The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit fairfaxgardening.org or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

Volunteers Needed. PRS is looking for empathetic and caring volunteers to make phone calls to older adults who may be feeling socially isolated.

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Not An Auto-Matic Fix



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

But a fix nonetheless, of our 17-year-old back-up car, a 2000 model year Honda Accord. On balance, since inheriting it from mother in 2008, it has been an exceptionally reliable and reasonably-priced second car and one which I'm happy to own. I drive it approximately 7,000 miles per year and not over long stretches. In effect, it is our local car. And considering there is no monthly car payment and the insurance/maintenance costs are low, as a non-car guy who only wants to get from point "A" to point "B", I can live with it "Big time," to quote our current President.

Now I'm at a bit of a crossroads, however. (And not that this is a "cancer" column per se, but it is a column affected by yours truly being a cancer "diagnosee.") I am dropping the car off at my local mechanic, Tony, later today because there are some warning signs and idiot lights suggesting I do so. First, the infamous "check engine" light is illuminated. Its yellow which Tony said is not as bad/urgent as if it were red. Nevertheless, to turn it off/fix the underlying problem (since it doesn't appear to be the gas cap) will likely cost hundreds. The preliminary assessment is that the fault is emission related.

The second area of concern is temperature, specifically how poorly my car's air conditioner is cooling and how loud the fan controlling it is when engaged even when one/low is selected. Adding insult to summertime discomfort, the passenger-side window doesn't slide down, either when using its own power-window switch or the master control on the driver's side. To summarize, I have one window (the driver's side) that can go down and extremely limited air conditioning. I wouldn't say it's hot in the car, but I'm sure any normal person would. Having had previous conversations with Tony about these repairs, I know the dollars needed to right these wrongs might not make any sense given the age and mileage on the car and the diagnosis of its owner. Yet here I am trying think long term, not cancer term. What to do?

I don't want to be miserable driving the Honda anymore (and it is me who's driving it). But I only need the air conditioning for another six to eight weeks or so - and not every day, and rarely at night. I do need to open the windows though for eight to 10 months, not so much during the winter and rarely on cold nights, but opportunities do present themselves. Spending the hundreds/possibly thousands of dollars for all repairs now however might make me miserable, too. The question persists then for any of us who own/want to maintain older cars: when are you throwing good money after bad? Ergo: when is enough, enough? (I sound like Carrie Bradshaw from "Sex and the City.")

Would I be better off spending the repair money on a newer car and enjoy whatever warranty protection I could muster and thus minimize future repair bills or not? The only problem with buying that "newer car: it's likely (heck, there's no 'likely' about it) there will be a monthly car payment which at present I do not have, and in so having one will definitely make me miserable.

Factor in my health status and I can't stop asking myself: do I solve a problem that affects the quality of my life today at the expense of tomorrow (pun intended) or do I plan/repair for tomorrow and suffer the consequences of having done so today?

As a stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer patient originally characterized by my oncologist as "terminal" and given a "13-month to two-year" prognosis to boot back in late Feb., 2009, I've always tried to live my life and make decisions as if I had a future beyond what I was told.

And for the past eight years and four months, I have pretty consistently maintained that approach. Still, the longer I live, the more my underlying medical diagnosis impacts my thinking/judgment. Unfortunately, worlds sometimes collide and reality is up for grabs. And occasionally decisions are made in a "bizarro" kind of way where topsy is turvy and vice versa. Welcome to my whirled.

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

Now 2 years old, baby Audrey Bryan of Vienna is a happy little girl who will soon begin ballet lessons as she returns to her normal life.

PHOTO BY
JESSICA TAPSCOTT
PHOTOGRAPHY



A 2-Year-Old's Fight for Life

Perfect strangers made it possible for Audrey Bryan to return to normal life.

BY MIRACLE PARISH
THE CONNECTION

It started out as just another normal day for the Bryan family of Vienna as they enjoyed spending time with their beautiful 1-year-old daughter, Audrey Bryan. But, it wasn't long before they realized that this day would soon become the beginning of a nightmare.

"She was this happy, healthy baby, and suddenly, she's not," said Jennifer Bryan, Audrey's mother.

Audrey was a very social baby, always smiling, going to swim lessons, or making her way to one of her many playgroups. But, out of nowhere, Audrey started getting very sick. She would start to get really pale, and low on energy as if it had been completely drained out of her. Just one week after Audrey's first birthday, she was diagnosed with hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis or HLH, a rare, life-threatening autoimmune disease. Audrey's body was attacking itself.

There are two types of HLH. One version is caused by environmental factors, and the other is genetically inherited. Unknowingly, both of Audrey's parents were carriers and passed down HLH traits to Audrey. The genetic form of HLH is triggered by an environmental factor, often a virus or infection. A child can live a healthy life until this gene is activated by illness, which is what happened to Audrey.

Audrey started receiving blood transfusions, which temporarily restored her color and her energy.

THE DIFFERENCE between Audrey before and after the transfusions was like night and day. But, it was becoming clear that the transfusions wouldn't be enough to cure her. Audrey's only chance for survival would be a bone marrow transplant.

In order to prepare for her transplant, Audrey had to be healthy enough to receive the new bone marrow. This meant Audrey's frail, young body being pumped full of harsh steroids, and drained by the invasiveness of chemotherapy. The family was put on house isolation to protect Audrey from acquiring

How to Donate Blood?

INOVA Hospital provides blood supplies to more than twenty hospitals in the Washington D.C. Metropolitan area. They require about 250 blood products per day, but the shelf life of blood is only five days. Once that blood expires, it can no longer be used, and a new blood product is needed to replace it. The only way to keep blood supply stocked is through regular donations. A person can donate up to six times per year.

People with O negative blood type are encouraged to donate as much as possible because Type O negative is the universal blood donor. This means that this blood will be a match for anyone, and the paramedics do not have to waste vital time matching blood types when trying to prevent someone from bleeding to death.

"There is no other type of volunteer activity where you can give one hour of your time and save up to three lives," said Julia Ward, marketing manager for INOVA blood donation services.

One of the main reasons people choose not to donate is fear. Fear of the unknown. Fear of needles. Donor of four years, Kristy Mastromichalis said she always meets first time donors who are so nervous before they donate, but they are always so surprised at how easy and quick it was.

"It's so easy, just go do it," said Mastromichalis.

To become a donor or volunteer to support local blood drives, you can contact INOVA blood donation services at 571-434-3632.

any illnesses. Even exposure to bacteria from a run to the grocery store could jeopardize Audrey's entire treatment.

The family moved to Cincinnati for the transplant. Jennifer lost her wedding planning business and Adam Bryan, Audrey's father, was forced to work remotely. After moving, Audrey was in the hospital for more than a month.

AFTER THE TRANSPLANT was complete, the Bryans waited anxiously to see if Audrey's exhausted little body accepted the foreign bone marrow. They were filled with anticipation waiting to hear from the doctor that the bone marrow was accepted. The Bryan family could finally breathe a little easier knowing that their toughest days were behind them.

Jennifer was more than grateful for the transplant, but acknowledges that it would not have been possible without the numerous blood transfusions from generous donors. Unfortunately, there are not always blood products available for those who need them.

Now 2 years old, baby Audrey is a happy little girl who will soon begin ballet lessons as she returns to her normal life because a stranger gave an hour of their time.



Jon Anthony Montel



Katie Vaughan

PHOTOS BY JEANNE MARIE CORRADO

Oakton Otters Start Summer Season

The Oakton Otters lost their first meet of the summer (NVSL Summer League Division 3) to Arlington Forest, with a final score of 30 to 42. Four Otter divers placed first in their respective categories: Katie Vaughan set a new pool record in Junior Girls with a score of 135.6; Jon Anthony Montel in Junior Boys with a score of 79.65; Spencer Dearman in Intermediate Boys with a score of 138; and Sarah Gurley in Senior Girls with a score of 171.1. The Otters also swept the category of Intermediate Boys (Josh Shipley, second; and Blaise Wuest, third). The other Otter divers who placed were: Ryan Shipley (Freshman Boys, third); Christina Angelicchio (Freshman Girls, third); Liam Klopfenstein (Senior Boys, second); and Brad Burgeson (Senior Boys, third). The next meet for the Otters is on Wednesday, July 5, 2017 vs. Sleepy Hollow at 6 p.m. at OSRC.

First Win of the Season

The Otters had their first win of the season on Saturday, July 1, against Cardinal Hill Pool. The final score was 235 Oakton - 185 Cardinal Hill. The weather was fantastic, there was a lot of team spirit, and the Otters had many best times.

Double winners were:

Gracie Whittington (8&under Free & Breast)

Beau Souders (9-10 Free & Breast)

Taryn Knepper (9-10 Free & Fly)

Burke Carroll (11-12 Free & Breast)

Leena Knepper (11-12 Free & Fly)

Evelyn Pickett (15-18 Free & Fly)

Avery Miller (8&under Back & Fly)

Ethan Piccolo (9-10 Back & Fly)

James Piccolo (11-12 Back & Fly)

Drew Weber (15-18 Back & Fly)

James Hayden (8&under Breast & Fly)

Single Winners were:

Gabriella Mancusi (9-10 Back)

Catherine Lim (11-12 Back)

Emerson Wilson (11-12 Breast)

Lindsey Kotarski (13-14 Breast)



Charlotte Lim, 9.



Landon Nelson, Age 8.