



Fairfax CONNECTION

HomeLifeStyle

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From left: Mayor David Meyer presents the house keys to Teresa and Mike Oliver. A huge volunteer effort helped repair the family's house and return the family home.

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



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David Meyer cuts the ribbon on the Olivers' rebuilt home in Fairfax.



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS

From left: "Superstar volunteers" Steve Schoepke and Jim Dillon are recognized by Rebuilding Together's Marcy Bartlett.

'Love Your Neighbor Made Manifest'

Huge, volunteer effort repairs house and returns family home.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Ironically, when Teresa Oliver's modest, two-bedroom, one-bathroom home was built in 1949, it was one of the model homes for her City of Fairfax neighborhood. But by 2015, it had sustained serious water and termite damage, so Oliver – now a senior citizen with mobility issues – hired a contractor to do the repairs.

Instead, he and a cohort gutted her house, left it uninhabitable, took her money and disappeared. As a result, the home was condemned and she and her son had to rent a basement apartment elsewhere – for nearly two years – while still paying the mortgage in Fairfax.

So a year ago, the City's Human Services Coordinator, Louise Armitage, contacted Rebuilding Together Arlington/Fairfax/Falls Church. She explained Oliver's plight and asked the nonprofit organization to help – which it did. And on June 29, everyone involved gathered in Oliver's backyard to celebrate the extraordinary collaboration making it possible for her home to be repaired and renovated so she and her son could return.

"This is as close as we've ever come to a complete home makeover," said Rebuilding Together Executive Director Patti Klein. "The entire community stepped up to save this family's home – more than 60 volunteers, local contractors and suppliers, our funders, partners and City leaders and staff."

And they pretty much started from scratch. "When we got to the house, it was bare," said Klein. "No bathroom, kitchen,

furnace – nothing. It then took six months to get the funding partners and vendors in place. Once the Wells Fargo Housing Foundation provided a \$15,000 grant, we were able to pull together other vendors to do in-kind donations."

THE CITY OF FAIRFAX also played a significant role. "Louise helped us see how important it was to get this family back in their home," said Klein. "The City came out and told us what work needed to be done and also provided a \$5,000 grant. And Fairfax United Methodist Church provided funds for new flooring."

Ultimately, some 3,000 hours of volunteer labor – worth about \$146,000 – went into the Woodland Drive house, as well as \$30,000 in materials and labor donated by local contractors and suppliers.

C.B. Lucas provided the heating and air-conditional system and got Trane to donate the unit. Walsh Electric upgraded the home's electrical system, and Mid South Building Supply Inc. provided and installed the kitchen and bathroom cabinets and countertops. And F.J. Hooks Inc. donated the labor to fix the plumbing.

"We had to move walls to make the bathroom accessible, and Hooks moved the bathroom pipes and did the gas hookup in the kitchen," said Klein. "It also installed a hot-water heater and prepared the kitchen and bathroom for the plumbing installation,



With son Mike, homeowner Teresa Oliver holds a poem explaining what her redone house means to them.

which it did, as well."

The volunteer workers included 17 Wells Fargo employees, various community residents and even City Planning Office employee Tommy Scibilia, who put insulation in the home's crawl space. Organizing all the volunteers were Rebuilding Together's Programs Director Marcy Bartlett and Partnerships Director Don Ryan, plus resident Jim Dillon.

"Jim put in nearly 1,000 volunteer hours," said Klein. "He's been volunteering with us for more than 15 years and is our star volunteer. He and the other volunteers were there, day after day, week after week, month after month, and several others put in at least 500 hours each."

"This was really a community effort," she continued. "It took so many different people and partners to pull this all together, and the Olivers have been there all the time. Son Mike Oliver has put in his share of sweat equity. Most volunteers worked a few days a week, mostly weekdays."

Normally, Rebuilding Together doesn't have to repair an entire house. So, said Klein, "This was the largest, most complex project we'd ever undertaken. We focus on healthy and safe housing, with 25 priorities, including functioning smoke alarms, carbon-monoxide detectors and safe egress and ingress. Homes must also be free of large cracks to prevent pests and airflow from getting inside, plus free of active water leaks and serious moisture problems."

Much of what the workers did was behind the walls to make it a safe environment where Teresa

Oliver may age in place. Toward that end, they also widened the bathroom doors and added grab bars, plus a railing leading into the home.

MOST SATISFYING, said Klein, was "Just watching the incredible commitment of everybody involved. We asked the community

SEE VOLUNTEERS, PAGE 5

‘A Magical, Electric, High-Energy Musical’

CFTC presents ‘Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.’

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Featuring a cast and crew of 45, the City of Fairfax Theatre Co. (CFTC) presents “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.” The exuberant musical will burst upon the stage, July 21-29, at Lanier Middle School, 3801 Jermantown Road in Fairfax.

“It retells the Biblical story of Israel’s favorite son, Joseph,” said Producer and CFTC Artistic Director Kirsten Boyd. “Eleven brothers and one coat of many colors form a magical musical filled with unforgettable songs and high-energy dance numbers.”

The show follows what happens to Joseph after his brothers sell him into slavery in Egypt. “He makes the best of it and demonstrates how good can come out of a bad situation,” said Boyd. “It’s a classic, well-loved musical written by Andrew Lloyd Webber.”

“We thought it would be perfect for CFTC’s summer season because it involves a big, multi-age cast and has lots of songs and dances,” she continued. “And we’re thrilled to have [Fairfax High Theater Director] Erich DiCenzi as our director and choreographer.”

THE STORY TRAVELS from Biblical times through several different eras, including the 1960s and ’70s, so there’s a wide range of costumes. “There are even western costumes,” said Boyd. “And each time period and person slowly gets more colorful as the show unfolds.” The set is designed to feature the choreography and multicolored lighting. And it also changes shapes and levels to create the various locations.

“We’ve taken this show and given it a new, electric energy,” said Boyd. “People will love the story, the entire ensemble and Elijah King as Joseph. He’s extremely talented and spent the past year as a freshman at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music – one of the top five, musical-theater schools in the country.”

A 2016 Fairfax High grad, King is majoring in musical theater and hopes to make it his career. He played the lead in Fairfax’s production of “The Wedding Singer” and is happy to be working again with his friends and mentors from high school.

King describes Joseph as “outgoing, loving and kindhearted. He’s the centerpiece for the show’s theme of hope and is considered a dreamer. His brothers are jealous of him and the attention he gets from their father, so they sell him into slavery. It’s fun and challenging to play him because he carries a lot of the plot and keeps the show’s morals and themes present and strong.”

“Joseph has to show hope at all times,” said King. “But I like that he’s goofy and over-the-top and has many, comedic moments that he shares with the other characters. This cast is so easy to work with that



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Wearing the musical’s iconic coat, Elijah King poses with “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” narrators (from left) Bruni Herring, Peyton Avery, Allyson Jacob and Tatiane Jones.

the humor, big song-and-dance numbers and the acting, itself, come very naturally.”

King’s favorite song is “One More Angel in Heaven,” a group number. “Their energy and acting really make it stand out,” he said. “It’s fast-paced and they take the dance to a higher level and make it their own. And the show is so uplifting and positive that everyone who sees it will have a smile on their face.”

Portraying Pharaoh is Fairfax resident Joey Olson. “He’s in the 1950s realm in Egypt and is almost an Elvis-type character,” said Olson. “He needs Joseph’s help interpreting his bad dreams. He’s big, loud and over-the-top. He loves his people but, more so, needs them to love him; he’s like a rock narcissist, but a kind one.”

Loving his role, Olson said, “I’m a rock-and-roll singer [in real life], so I get to be more me. I also get to do my own choreog-

raphy and freestyle it, and Elijah does the moves with me. I really like the number, ‘Song of the King,’ because it’s fun and I sing it with doo-wop singers in the background. It’s rock-and-roll, Elvis, loud and funny. It celebrates Pharaoh getting freed from his bad dreams and rewarding Joseph, as a result.”

Olson said all ages will enjoy this musical. “We have people from 7-70 in the show, so it’s a melting pot,” he said. “We’re all having fun together on stage, and it’ll be infectious to the audience. This show is unique because it’s mainly music, instead of spoken lines. And there are so many, different genres of music that everyone will find something to like and will have their own, favorite numbers.”

Fairfax High Spanish teacher Bruni Herring is one of four narrators in a musical that normally just has one. “We tell the story

To Go

Show times are:

Friday, July 21 and July 28, at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, July 22 and July 29, at 2 and 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 23, at 3 p.m.

Thursday, July 27, at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$15, ages 13-adult; \$10, children, via

www.fairfaxcitytheatre.org, or \$18 and \$13, respectively, at the door.

Group (10+) pricing is available for Thursday evening, plus Saturday and Sunday matinees.

as it happens, interact with the audience and blend in with the actors,” she said. “We each bring our individual vibe and type of musical voice – rock, soul, Gospel and classic – but at the same time, our harmonies blend well together.”

The narrators also comment on the action, and Herring likes interacting with everyone. Her favorite number is “Those Canaan Days,” sung by the brothers. “It’s at the story’s climax where they realize things aren’t what they thought they’d be without Joseph,” she explained. “They’re regretting it and missing him, so the song’s both funny and sad.”

She said the audience will love all the musical numbers and will even learn something about their own character. “Joseph possesses characteristics everyone should have – honesty and perseverance,” said Herring. “It’s a story about hope when it seems like there is no more hope. The message is that, even when it seems darkest, there’s always a light at the end of the tunnel.”

Playing Reuben, the oldest brother, is Joshua McCreary. “He’s the most self-assured, strong-willed, authoritative one, trying to watch over and keep his brothers in line,” said McCreary. “He’s nostalgic and yearning for the past before a drought hit Canaan and things went south for them.”

Since he’s 11 years older than the other brothers, he says they “give me lots of energy and keep me on my toes. The dancing numbers are tough, but that’s what makes it exciting. I don’t like to be the pushy one in real life, but it’s fun to puff out my chest on stage and make people afraid of me. And I always wanted to play one of these brothers because they’re so cartoonishly evil in the beginning before they turn around and learn humility.”

McCreary really likes the song, “Jacob in Egypt,” because, although short, “It’s a powerful choral number that everyone sings, and the harmonies are just beautiful.”

Regarding the show, he said, “In general, people have a lot of cynicism and distrust of each other today. But this musical promotes the idea that – if you give your brother a break and trust people not in your immediate family – they can pleasantly surprise you and do miraculous things.”

Volunteers Return Family Home

FROM PAGE 3

for help and they responded overwhelmingly. And what's really neat is that we're introducing a whole, new group of people to Rebuilding Together and what we do. It's been great watching them work together and pull this off."

At the June 29 celebration and ribbon-cutting, Teresa Oliver couldn't have been happier. "They didn't build me a house," she said. "They built me a home." Now, when she sees each improvement, she also "sees" each person responsible for it. For example, she knows Tim and Quinton installed the furnace and Justin put in the bathroom tile, and she had them sign these things so she can always remember who did what.

"I get to live with these people for the rest of my life," said Oliver. "When I turn on the water, I say, 'Thank you, Nino.' And when I turn on the lights, I say, 'Cesar, you are a darling.' The volunteers even put my washer and dryer behind doors in the kitchen so I look elegant in here."

As for the original contractors she hired, she said, "The evil and pure viciousness those men did – tearing this house up – put a hole in this house and a hole in my heart. They were good con men, and it hurt so bad." But in light of all the good things that happened since then, she's now focusing on the positive. "I'm floating about 4 inches

off the floor," said Oliver. "I'm just overwhelmed with the kindness and love from everyone."

Addressing the crowd of the project's participants, plus local dignitaries, Klein thanked everyone for "demonstrating what community truly means." And Bartlett acknowledged all the contributors and volunteers, singling out plumber Nino Rocca of F.J. Hooks, as well as individual volunteers Jim Dillon and Steve Schoepke. She also praised Fairfax County for redoing the home's gutters to solve the water problem and Merrifield Garden Center for helping with the landscaping.

Fairfax City Mayor David Meyer also saluted the volunteers and contractors and thanked Rebuilding Together for "tackling this tough project and mobilizing the resources needed to save this family's home." To the Olivers, he said, "On behalf of all the volunteers and citizens who made this happen, welcome home and welcome back."

"When Louise Armitage first asked me to talk with Rebuilding Together, I told her I didn't want charity," said Teresa Oliver. "But she told me it wasn't charity. And I watched the community volunteers and the business community all get together. They got dirty, sweaty and tired, but his synergy took over – and I saw 'love your neighbor' made manifest. You all have done such a wonderful job; thank you so much. I am so very grateful."

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- Lobster Roll with Grilled Corn



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Problems for Public Health

Increasing the number of uninsured is bad for the rest of us, and the economy.

The proposed plan in the U.S. Senate to give the wealthiest Americans massive tax cuts by cutting health coverage for people who are poor, have disabilities and elders, would also affect the rest of the population, and the economy.

People without health insurance face economic uncertainty. When they do incur medical bills, they often cannot pay them in full. This increases costs to providers and decreases the ability to participate in the economy.

People without health insurance are sicker than people with insurance, but they also often can't afford to stay home from work, often exposing others to preventable illnesses. They are less likely to have flu shots and other routine immunizations that protect all of us, including those with the weakest immune systems and those who cannot be vaccinated.

U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine was in Springfield this week talking to people who depend on Medicaid coverage. He and U.S. Sen. Mark Warner have been active in opposing these major cuts to health care.

This bears repeating — here are some other consequences of proposals in the Senate bill:

- ❖ Millions of people lose their health insurance — 22 million fewer would have health insurance by 2026 according to the Congressional Budget Office analysis.

- ❖ In Virginia, more than 14,000 veterans could lose coverage under Medicaid.

- ❖ States could opt out of the law's essential health benefits measure, which requires insurers to cover 10 main benefits, including hospitalization, prescription drugs and other services. That is, companies could sell health insurance that wouldn't actually be health insurance. Would Virginia be a state that opts out? Quite likely.

- ❖ Loss of coverage for pre-existing conditions, including cancer survivors, people who had transplants, people with asthma, arthritis, high cholesterol, hypertension, obesity, mental health issues, ADD, etc.

- ❖ Ending annual and lifetime coverage caps would also impact people who get health insurance from their employers and the private insurance market. For example, a serious accident or an illness that requires repeated surgeries or bone marrow transplants could put any one of us over the coverage cap.

- ❖ Medicaid pays public schools for many services for special education students, but the Senate bill removes schools from eligible Medicaid providers, costing Virginia an estimated \$40 million annually; \$3 million in Fairfax County; \$2 million in the City of Alexandria.

- ❖ \$800 billion plus in cuts to Medicaid puts the funding for most people who are currently in nursing homes at risk. Many of these are people who were middle class but outlived

their savings and coverage.

- ❖ In Virginia, the proposed changes to Medicaid would cost the state \$1.4 billion over seven years.

- ❖ Medicaid pays for much of the fight against opioid addiction, including treatment. Cuts would be devastating to efforts to counter the wave of overdose deaths and other effects of addiction.

- ❖ Coverage for mental health treatment, including addiction treatment, is threatened both by cuts to Medicaid and by changes in the private insurance market.

- ❖ There will be greater need for Medicaid over time. More seniors will be poor, as fewer people who are retiring have pensions or adequate retirement savings. The demand for nursing home beds will be increasing as the population ages.

Read last week's editorial, "Killing the Poor to Pay Millionaires," here: www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/jun/27/opinion-editorial-killing-poor-pay-millionaires/

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS

Send in Your 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.

Tell us the story of a special bond between a child and a dog, the story of how you came to adopt your pet, or examples of amazing feats of your creatures.

Do you volunteer at an animal shelter or therapeutic riding center or take your pet to visit people in a nursing home? Does your business have a pet? Is your business about pets?

Have you helped to train an assistance dog? Do you or someone in your family depend on an assistance dog?

Or take this opportunity to memorialize a beloved pet you have lost.

Just a cute photo is fine too. Our favorite pictures include both pets and humans.

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 will not publish your address or phone number, just your town name).

Email to editors@connectionnewspapers.com or submit online at www.connectionnewspapers.com/pets.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Girl Scouts Need Help

To the Editor:

Hi! My name is Ella. I'm 9, and I'm from Girl Scout Troop 54029. This year we are participating in the 2017 Girl Scout Bronze Award. The Girl Scout Bronze Award is what junior Girl Scouts do to make a difference in the world. These are the steps we do for the Bronze Award:

- Step 1: Make a team
- Step 2: Get together
- Step 3: Pick a project
- Step 4: Plan
- Step 5: Make a difference

We are making a difference by saving a life! Not a human life, a

life at the animal shelters. We are making donation boxes for toys, beds, anything for pets, really.

The thing my troop needs to tell you is that we have a problem. We need your help to spread the word. We have put out donation boxes around town

and need people to know about them. Also, we hope people will save a life at the animal shelter and make a difference in the world by giving these animals a real home, a place to make them feel loved.

Thank you for reading this letter and know that if you do this huge favor for us, you'll save many lives at the animal shelter.

Donation boxes are located here until July 21:

- ❖ Giant - University Plaza
- ❖ Safeway - Burke Center
- ❖ South Run Regency Pool and Racquet Club
- ❖ Lake Braddock Community Center Office

Thank you,

Ella Osborne & Troop #54029
(Victoria Wood, Erin Anderson, Lilly Berry, Carys Clayton, and Radha Samuel)

Trumpcare Is a Very Bad Idea

To the Editor:

Health insurance is more than a

policy, it's peace of mind. It's knowing your family will be cared for and not having to worry about going broke when you get sick. That's why I strongly oppose the Senate healthcare bill.

The more I learn about it, the less I like. Robbing health care from millions of Americans to give yet another tax cut to the rich and powerful is just plain cruel.

Our healthcare system needs to be improved — we all agree on that. But this bill would do exactly the opposite — for no other reason than greed. I urge Senators Kaine and Warner to vote no on the Senate healthcare bill.

Sara Gann
Fairfax



ENTERTAINMENT

Send entertainment notes to the Connection at connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ or call 703-778-9416. The deadline is the Friday prior to the next paper's publication at noon. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

ONGOING

Snoopy and Belle in Fashion.

Various times through July 18 in Fair Oaks Mall, 11750 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. A celebration of Washington D.C.'s political style, dolls will feature presidential outfits. Visit www.shopfairfaxmall.com/ for more.

Senior Line Dancing 1-2 p.m. Little River Glen Senior Center 4001 Barker Court, Fairfax. Line Dancing is a gentle, social form of aerobic activity. Studies have shown it aids in warding off Alzheimer's disease. No previous experience needed. Cost: \$5 per 8 week session. barbriba@hotmail.com 703-524-3739

Carolina Shag. Wednesdays. 6:30-10 p.m. Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m. No partners needed. Dinner menu. \$8. Under 21 free. Visit nvshag.org.

Exercise Program Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 a.m. year-round at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. The exercises are for strength, balance and maintaining limberness. Contact SCFB office at 703-426-2824 for more information.

Cafe Ivrit (Hebrew Cafe).

Wednesdays. 8:15-9:15 a.m. Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Shalom (hello) Did you always want to converse in Hebrew? Join Na'ama each week for conversational Hebrew. You will learn and practice Hebrew in a fun and interactive way while learning more about Israel. Free, however we ask that you try to attend regularly. RSVP Naama.Gold@jccnv.org.

Smoke Free Bingo. 7 p.m. Every Friday. Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Free coffee, entertaining callers, \$1,000 jackpot (with breaks for smoking friends). www.fairfaxvd.com. 703-273-3638.

English Conversation Groups weekly at George Mason, Burke Centre, and Lorton Libraries Practice and improve your English. Day and start times vary. Visit: va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/eventcalendar.asp

Stories From Strawberry Park 10-11 a.m. Tuesdays in Mosaic, Strawberry Park, 2910 District Ave., Fairfax. Enjoy a live interactive performance each week. For ages 10 and under. Held outside in Strawberry Park. In inclement weather and October through April, storytime will be held in Angelika Film Center. Visit www.fxva.com/listing/mosaic-district/2326/.

Funday Monday 10:30 a.m., every Monday at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. There will be music, movement, storytelling, performances, crafts, and more. It is open to children of all ages, however especially for those who haven't yet started school. Programs are free and open to the public, donations are gratefully appreciated. There is ample free parking in the downtown area, and stroller access at the rear of Old Town Hall on Main St. 703-385-7858 www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts

Kingstowne Farmers Market opens. 4-7 p.m. every Friday through Oct. 27, at Kingstowne Giant Parking Lot, 5870 Kingstowne Center, Alexandria. Freshly picked, producer-only vegetables and fruit, from-scratch bread (including gluten free), baked goods, kettle corn, salsa,

hummus, cake pops, fruit popsicles, and ice cream. Email Chelsea.roseberry@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-642-0128.

THURSDAY/JULY 13

Draw/Paint Live Model. 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3990 University Drive, Fairfax. A clothed model will pose for artists to draw or paint for three hours at the Fairfax Art League's Art&Lunch. Bring art supplies and lunch or buy at local restaurants. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

Yoga. 7-9 p.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a mat, weather permitting. Free. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net or call 703-587-9481 for more.

Free Children's Concert. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Veteran's Amphitheater, 10485 Armstrong St., Fairfax. Free balloons and ice cream, concert featuring favorites from Disney and Loony Tunes, face painting, instrument petting zoo. Visit www.fairfaxband.org or call 571-265-6868 for more.

Summer Under the Stars Concert. 7:30 p.m. Veterans Amphitheater (adjacent to City Hall), 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax. Children's Concert - City of Fairfax Band. Visit www.fairfaxband.org or call 703-385-7855 for more.

JULY 13-15

Fairfax Musical. 7 p.m. at Lorton Workhouse Art Center, 9518 Workhouse Road, Lorton. The Class Act Players Theatre Company presents "The Complete History of Fairfax: The Musical" as a part of

Fairfax County's 275th anniversary celebration. Visit www.workhousearts.org for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 15

Indoor Yard Sale. 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Indoor Gym, 4915 Ox Road, Fairfax. The Fairfax Salvation Army will be hosting an indoor yard sale. Various items are being collected and all proceeds benefit local Fairfax Salvation Army Youth Programs. Email nansi.canasayala@uss.salvationarmy.org or call 703-385-8700 for more.

Mount Vernon Nights Concert Series. 6 p.m. at Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Traditional country musical performance by Robin and Linda Williams. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/ performances or call 703-780-7518.

Topgolf and a DJ. 7 p.m. at Topgolf, 6625 S. Van Dorn St. Golf, music from Mike Krowe DJ, food and drink. Visit <https://topgolf.com/us/alexandria/> or call 703-924-2600.

SUNDAY/JULY 16

Battle of the Bands. 3-8 p.m. at Lakeside Park/Royal Lake, 5216 Pommeroy Drive, Fairfax. Braddock District's Battle of the Bands. Ten bands, three food trucks. Music, neighbors and food. If it rains, it's cancelled. Email Linda.Bufano@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-425-9300 for more.

FRIDAY/AUG. 18

Music on the Plaza. 7-8 p.m. at Old Town Plaza, 3955 Chain Bridge

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11


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Home LifeStyle

Redefining Space

Designer thinks outside the proverbial box.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

A local interior designer believes in thinking outside the box when it comes to making the best use of space in one's home.

"My advice to homeowners is to embrace spaces within their homes as if they were never assigned," said Joe Van Goethem of Joseph Van Goethem Interior Design in McLean. "Depending on location, a space previously designated as a walk-in closet can be purposefully transformed into an intimate guest bedroom, home office, or multipurpose wine cellar and bar."

Van Goethem followed his own advice when he transformed a walk-in foyer closet in his home into a multipurpose wine cellar, complete with a wine refrigerator, beer cooler, ice maker and cigar humidor. "Why a walk-in closet if it's seldom used, and only to become an open invitation for hidden clutter?" he asked. "Envision new, functional possibilities for every space within your home."

Van Goethem, who not only designed the space, but also completed the construction himself, believes that "playing with scale and attention to every detail are key when considering the transformation of a confined space such as a walk-in closet," he said. "[The] closet had a nondescript narrow solid door, glued-down wood veneer floor, shelving and hanging rods, and one light fixture."

In finishing the project, Van Goethem widened the door framing to accommodate a new French door and added storage space for a concealed television. He also installed an intercom to allow those in the cellar to communicate with those in the kitchen.

"I ripped up the old floor [and replaced it] with Spanish marble tile flooring," he said. "I added a baseboard and crown moulding, and created a grid of moulding on the walls which I painted with Farrow & Ball's Purbeck Stone. I installed Extra



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOE VAN GOETHEM

Interior designer Joe Van Goethem transformed a walk-in closet in his McLean home into a wine cellar.

Fine Arrowroot Grasscloth hand crafted wallcovering by Phillip Jeffries within the recesses of the grid."

Van Goethem said his goal was to make the design of the new cellar consistent with the aestheticS of

the rest of his home. The space includes a large drum light fixture and side lamps. An oversized cabinet holds the stemware and barware. He added a commissioned seascape painting by California artist Jonathan Koch and modern teapots by Washington, D.C. ceramicist Joe Hicks.

"Details are important in design, but they are everything ... when transforming a small space like the repurposing of a walk-in closet," said Van Goethem.

"My advice to homeowners is to embrace spaces within their homes as if they were never assigned."

— Joe Van Goethem of Joseph Van Goethem Interior Design

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Home LifeStyle



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MCENEARNEY

This Alexandria home has a monochromatic, gourmet kitchen and an abundance of natural light.

Small Home Gets Big Honor

Old Town home is finalist in national contest.

An abundance of windows and an open floor plan helped a local home garner some national attention. An Old Town Alexandria abode is a finalist in the Living Large in Small Spaces category for HGTV's Ultimate House Hunt 2017 contest. Homes in this category are recognized for a design that maximizes the use of a small space.

"The open design ... gives this small space an airy feel," said Sue Goodhart, The Goodhart Group at McEneaney Associates.

The light-filled home features modern renovations that include a gourmet kitchen, a living room with built-in cabinets and a steel

cable railing. The free-flowing floor plan includes large windows, while the fenced in back yard was designed to be a sanctuary in the middle of city bustle.

"Sleek kitchen cabinetry and a stone table with seating for 12 allows for grand entertaining for the accomplished cook," said Goodhart.

The home is one of eight across the country to become a finalist in the category. Anyone can vote for the 119 Princess St. property online until July 18. See www.hgtv.com/design/ultimate-house-hunt/2017-ultimate-house-hunt/living-large-in-small-spaces.

— MARILYN CAMPBELL



The patio of this Old Town home was designed to be a backyard oasis.

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Person of Interest in Murder in Fairfax Found Dead in Vietnam

Detectives have identified a person of interest whom they believe was responsible for the April murder of an elderly man at a retirement community, 77-year-old Cong Huu Nguyen who was killed April 20 at his home at the Little River Glen Senior Retirement Community in Fairfax. The investigation shows the person of interest was someone Nguyen knew well, and the only person believed to be involved in this murder.

According to police, detectives learned, with the assistance of the Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations, the suspect flew to Vietnam the day after the homicide and was later found dead.

Forensic examinations continue. Once completed, police will confirm the person of interest's identity, as well as the cause and manner of that person's death. Detectives are looking into the possibility the motive involved financial gain.

Scout on the Circle Meeting

The Fairfax City Council will hold a public meeting, Thursday, July 20, at 7 p.m., on the Scout on the Circle project. Already approved were 400 apartments, 28,000 square feet of retail and a 54,000-square-foot grocery store. Two parking garages are also planned. However, the project has stalled, so developers will attend to discuss things with the Council. The meeting will be in the work-session room of the City Hall annex, 10455 Armstrong St.

Rock the Block after Dark

Thousands of people attend the City's Rock the Block concerts on the fourth Fridays of the month during the summer. To promote local restaurants, Fairfax is offering Rock the Block after Dark to retain concertgoers after the music ends. Beginning with the July 28 event, participating City restaurants and pubs will offer 15-percent-discount coupons good for that night, from 7:30-11 p.m. Printed coupons must be presented to take advantage of the discount. Go to facebook.com/FairfaxCityEDA for event dates and a list of participating restaurants.

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 7

Road, Fairfax. Grab dinner at one of the many restaurants in downtown, and listen to great music. Free. Weather permitting. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

Family Fun Movie Nights. 7 p.m. at Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Watch “Sing,” each movie is rated PG. An adult must accompany anyone under the age of 14. Call 703-385-7858.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 19

Pop Up Adventure Playground. 10 a.m.-noon at Thaiss Park, 3401 Pickett Road, Fairfax. LEGO, Games, Crafts, Coding and more! This program is free, no registration required, and all ages welcome. Child care is not provided. Parents or guardians are required to attend with children not old enough to walk to and play in the park on their own. Call 703-385-7858 or email karen.lussier@fairfaxva.gov for more.

THURSDAY/JULY 20

Summer Under the Stars concert. 8 p.m. Veterans Amphitheater (adjacent to City Hall), 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax. Alte Kameraden band. Visit www.fairfaxband.org or call 703-385-7855 for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 22

Civil War Amputees. 2 p.m. at the Civil War Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. “Artificial Limbs in the Civil War” with Guy R. Hasegawa, Pharm D. Learn about the wartime provisions made for amputees and the stark differences between the resources and capabilities of the North and the South. Free. Call 703-591-0560.

Mount Vernon Nights Concert Series. 6 p.m. at Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Free old-time musical performance by the Sheets Family. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances or call 703-780-7518.

SUNDAY/JULY 23

Z Scale Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Z scale is the smallest mass-marketed model train available anywhere. Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2; ages 16 and older, \$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, or call 703-425-9225 for more.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 26

Pop Up Adventure Playground. 10 a.m.-noon at Kutner Park, 3901 Jermantown Rd, Fairfax. LEGO, Games, Crafts, Coding and more! Child care is not provided. Parents or guardians are required to attend with children not old enough to walk to and play in the park on their own. Call 703-385-7858 or email karen.lussier@fairfaxva.gov for more.

THURSDAY/JULY 27

Summer Under the Stars Concert. 8 p.m. Veterans Amphitheater (adjacent to City Hall), 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax. City of Fairfax Band. Visit www.fairfaxband.org or call 703-385-7855 for more.

FRIDAY/JULY 28

Rock the Block. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. “The Reagan Years,” ’80’s band is featured. Food available, Bring lawn chairs or blankets to sit on, children can wear swim suits and bring towels to enjoy the spray pad! No pets allowed except service animals. For more details visit www.fairfaxva.gov/rocktheblock

SATURDAY/JULY 29

Taste of Springfield. noon-6 p.m. outdoors event at the Springfield Town Center, 6500 Springfield Mall Drive. Locally focused, family friendly ‘feast-ival’ with tastings, entertainments and activities for all ages. Weather dependent. Visit www.tasteofspringfield.com for more.

Mount Vernon Nights Concert Series. 6 p.m. at Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Free musical performance by Jarekus Singleton. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances or call 703-780-7518.

SUNDAY/JULY 30

Yoga on the Square. 10 a.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Bring a yoga mat and a water bottle. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

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A Near Catastrophe, Always

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



As I bring our two cat carriers up from the basement in order for “The Buff Boys” to acclimate in anticipation of their impending visit to the veterinarian, I can’t help but think back to the spring of 1976. That’s when an appointment to mend my male cat, Tillie, nearly went very wrong.

To this day, the circumstances still haunt me. Tillie had been a surprise birthday gift given to me in September 1975, along with a puppy I named Gus (both named after a W.C. Fields’ movie, “Tillie and Gus”).

Tillie was an all-black domestic short hair. Gus was a German Shepard/St. Bernard mix. He was beautiful. He had a white-ish beige coat, floppy ears and a curly tail.

Introduced to one another at 6 weeks old, Tillie and Gus were the best of friends/siblings. Though I made sure they spent their evenings inside, during the day, both were outside. (We had a fenced-in yard so Gus was confined. Tillie however, as you might imagine was not. He had the run of the neighborhood.)

Sure enough, one day, Tillie got into a cat fight. His tail had been bitten and was beginning to abscess. I knew I had to take him to the veterinarian. However, I was in college and had very little money to spare. Nor did I have a credit card either. (Those were the days before credit card companies solicited college students.) In a financial bind, I called my parents and asked for money (I did work in the dining hall all through college but lived in a house off campus and had the usual room and board-type expenses).

They sent me \$25. (In my mind, I can still see the check.) In addition to whatever other money I could scrape together, I guess it was enough so I took Tillie to the “vet” for repair. He stayed overnight. The next day, I got the call that he was ready for pick-up. That’s when the event occurred that has affected me/my animal-owning life going on – four decades plus.

I went by myself. I had a car; a 1970 Ford Maverick, but no cat carrier. I was, apparently, planning on simply holding Tillie in my arms as I had done the day before. However, the pick-up was not nearly as uneventful as the drop-off.

Once I got outside the building, Tillie began squirming (his tail had been shaved and had stitches where the abscess/bite had been inflicted) and broke free from my grasp. He ran off about 20 yards – or so to the rear of this modest one-story building and stopped just shy of a chain-link fence which separated where we all were to another neighborhood – beyond my reach. My fear: had Tillie climbed over that fence somehow, he likely would have been gone forever.

Slowly I approached Tillie, repeatedly calling his name as quietly and reassuringly as I could, trying not to rattle, startle or scare him in any way; presuming post-surgery, in an unfamiliar place, possibly in pain, it might not take much from his father to cause him to scamper off and disappear.

As I casually walked toward him, amazingly, Tillie sort of stood still, enough for me to scoop him up. Which I did and then carefully walked back to my car and drove us both home without any further ado – except for the rest of my taking-cats-to-the-“vet” life. And yes, that means now.

And though I’m not stupid enough to transport cats without cat carriers anymore, I am only at ease once we’re back home and have let the cats out of their boxes and released them into the house (all our cats are indoor cats). Throughout this process, I must check the latches on their carriers a half-a-dozen times; in the house, in the car, in the parking lot outside the “vet’s” office, in the waiting room, in the examining room and then again afterwards; back in the waiting room while I pay, in the car on the way home and finally in the driveway as I prepare to carry the carriers/cats across the yard and into the house. Once inside with the cats/carriers in hand, finally I can relax. Home at last.

Forty-one years ago; it seems like yesterday, or maybe tomorrow if the “vet” can see us. And that’s what worries me. Been there and unfortunately, have done that.

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



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