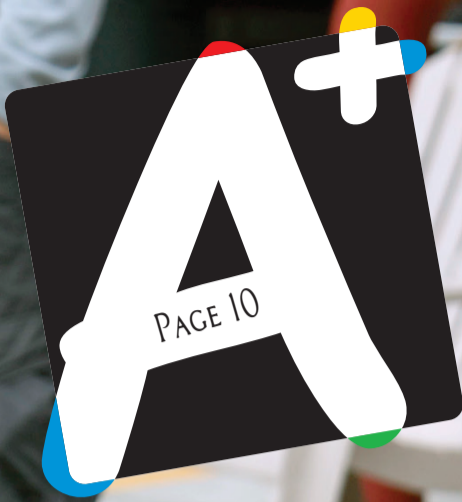


Great Falls CONNECTION



Kim Kramer of Vienna, a volunteer emergency medical technician with the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department, gave Gabriel James, 6, of Great Falls a turn to wield a small water hose during the open house.

Fire Station Opened Its Doors for A Day

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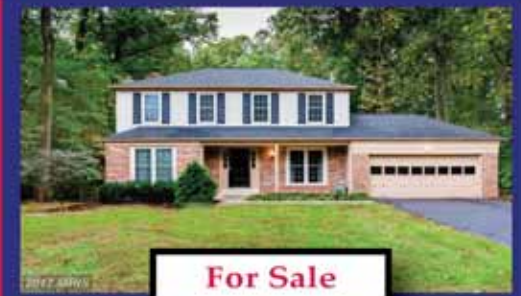
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FX9859062 - \$650,000 - Great Falls
11430 Seneca View Way: 2.4 Acre Lot
Lot located in Great Falls w/ Prior Approval for
5BR Home. Price to Sell Prior Perc Test Had
Been for 5BR Home.



Under Contract

FX9853078 - \$7,000,000 - Great Falls
Utterback Store Rd: Approximately 68 Acres of
Vacant Land w/ 2 Acre Zoning Located in
Great Falls. Breathtaking Views of Tysons Corner,
Bethesda, & the Washington Monument.



For Sale

FX10080790 - \$795,000 - Great Falls
1092 Loran Ct: 4 BR, 2.5 BA
Nicest Home in Great Falls at this Price! Spacious
& Light Filled Gourmet Ktchn w/ Skylight. Large
MB w/ Large Walk-In Closet adjoins a MBA.



Sold

FX9862498 - \$1,269,000 - Vienna
1284 Cobble Pond Way: 5 BR, 6 1/2, 2 1/2
Captivating Details Abound in this Updated/Renovated Home.
Master Suite Offers a Sitting Room w/ Fireplace, Spa Bathroom,
& Walk-in Closet. Minutes to Tyson's, Reston, & the Metro.



For Sale

FX9997116 - \$299,900 - Reston
1505 North Point Dr #1: 2 BR, 2 BA
Meticulously Maintained Condo near Reston Town Center.
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Granite Counters & SS Appliances. Walk-out Patio w/ View
of Private Wooded Area.



For Sale

FX10001560 - \$950,000 - Great Falls
748 Kentland Dr: 5 Acre Parcel of Land with Eas Access
to Route 7. Soil Eval Test in 1992 Showed Percolation
for a 3 BR Home. Must See Opportunity for Anyone
Looking to Build a Home in Great Falls.



Sold

LO9932796 - \$2,125,000 - Round Hill
35336 Appalachian Trail Rd: 3 BR, 1.5 BA
Nearly 280 Acres in 3 Parcels Farm House & Barns
Sited at the Base of Short Hill Mountains. Property
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For Sale

OR9932277 - \$625,000 - Lake of the Woods
248 Washington St: 5 BR, 3 BA
Fantastic Water Views Just the Beginning. You'll
Enjoy Sailing, Swimming, or Floating from a Private
Dock. Open Floor Plan Home is Immaculate!



Under Contract

OR9958296 - \$1,250,000 - Lake of the Woods
120 Lee Cir: 5 BR, 4.5 BA
Brand New Unique & Elegant Waterfront Property
Bright & Open Interior Flows to Deck for Lakeside
Entertainment & Private Dock. Oversized Garage.



For Sale

OR10035701 - \$675,000 - Lake of the Woods
542 Harrison Cir: 3 BR, 3.5 BA
Stunning Architecture Boasts 115' of Shoreline that's
Located in a Serene Area of the Lake w/ Gourmet
Kitchen & an Incredible Outdoor Living Space.

Join us on Monday, November 13th at our:

Military Appreciation Monday (MAM)

Event at The Old Brogue in Great Falls.

We will be raising funds for the group:

Patriot Point

and

Join me on Sunday, October 29th from 8:30 - 3:30 at

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House Of Delegates Candidates Square Off In Debate

BY FALLON FORBUSH
THE CONNECTION

There are only three weeks left until Election Day and the race for the area's representative in the House of Delegates is heating up.

The two candidates vying to represent District 34, which includes Great Falls, McLean and parts of Vienna, in the Virginia General Assembly debated at the Great Falls Grange on Thursday evening, Oct. 12. The event was hosted by the Great Falls Citizens Association, an organization that does not endorse candidates but encourages a well-informed community.

Incumbent Democrat Del. Kathleen Murphy of McLean was at ease throughout the event, prodding the debate moderator to make sure the debate started promptly at 7:30 and ended on time. A Washington Nationals game was scheduled to start at 8 o'clock and the debate was scheduled to end at 9 o'clock, and she was determined to catch the ending.

"I'm a very big baseball fan," she said, proud to represent several players on the team who live in the district.

In contrast, events like this were atypical for her Republican challenger, Cheryl Buford of Vienna.

"This is a new experience for me," Buford said before the debate. Unlike Murphy, she has not received any organizational endorsements.

Though the event ended on time, Murphy's team lost to the Chicago Cubs 8-9, undoing its chance of competing in the World Series.

However, Murphy cannot say she has gotten everything her way as a member of the minority party in the capitol. Murphy is chief patron of 12 bills this legislative session, three of which became law.

The first bill was an effort to combat Virginia's opioid overdose epidemic. Opioids are drugs that mimic the properties of opiates like morphine and codeine, and include illegal drugs like heroin and legal drugs like fentanyl and prescription painkillers.

In February, Gov. Terry McAuliffe signed several bipartisan bills into law supporting needle-exchange programs, increased access to overdose-reversal drug naloxone, changes to opioid prescription policies and processes for providing care to infants exposed to opioids in utero.

MURPHY'S BILL required the Board of Pharmacy to develop guidelines for pharmacists in order to provide counseling and information to patients who are prescribed drugs regarding proper disposal of unused drugs.

The second bill, passed in March, prohibits postsecondary schools that are required to be certified by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia from enrolling students without first informing them whether their credits are transferrable and if the school is accredited.



Republican Candidate Cheryl Buford, 64 (left), squared off with Democrat incumbent Kathleen Murphy, 60 (right) during a debate hosted by the Great Falls Citizens Association.

PHOTOS BY FALLON FORBUSH/THE CONNECTION



Tim Thompson, Dranesville District representative on the 2017 Chamber of Commerce School Bond Committee, spoke before the debate and encouraged the audience to vote yes for the \$315 million school bond referendum that is on the ballot for the Nov. 7 general election.

The third bill, also passed in March, requires each school board in the commonwealth to publicize the actual public-teacher ratios of each middle and high school for the current school year.

Murphy was successful in passing these three bills this year because of their bipartisan support.

"I have to admit that it's a challenge being in the minority," Murphy said during the debate. "You do learn that you have to go and work together to get things done, and it is a little harder — for sure."

But it isn't a problem if she really wants to get it done.

"I am relentless when I see an issue that I believe we need to address and I go after a comrade on the other side; and so far, I've been very successful," she said.

However, her legislative scorecard was a point of attack for her opponent, who didn't let nerves get in the way of her performance.

"Over three sessions, she has gotten seven pieces of legislation passed," Buford said. "If you go to her website, it doesn't look all that much different from my website in the sense that it's very aspirational in terms of what she will do, what she hopes to do."

What Buford hopes to do has been encapsulated into an acronym that she has used to build her campaign, which she made sure to deliver to the crowd: SERVE. It stands for: "Shortening your commute, En-

ergizing the commonwealth's economy, Rebooting our public schools, Vanquishing the opioid epidemic and Ensuring our neighborhoods are safe."

The questions in the debate focused on transportation, education, economy and the opioid crisis.

Both candidates are focused on increasing funding for transportation infrastructure, both telling the crowd that work on the American Legion Bridge is a priority.

Both candidates are also focused on increasing funding for public schools with Buford dead set on changing commonwealth funding formulas so school districts that have larger populations of students who speak English as a second language receive more funding for ESL programs.

Murphy emphasized the need to increase teacher pay in Fairfax County because salaries are not competitive with neighboring counties, while Buford argued that above average pension benefits level the playing field.

"Of course, we want to be generous, but there is an issue with the pensions that really needs to be resolved," Buford said. "When you look at the total compensation for our teachers, it really is relatively the same with the other districts. The difference is that it is deferred into the pensions."

AS FAR AS THE ECONOMY GOES, the

Short Bios

Kathleen Murphy, 60, is a native of Chicago who spent her childhood moving around as a member of a military family. She graduated from high school in Phoenix and earned a bachelor's degree in political science and psychology. Professionally, she was a writer for a Nickelodeon show called "Beyond Belief" before working as a congressional aide on Capitol Hill for U.S. Rep. Charlie Wilson (D-Texas). During the Bill Clinton administration, she was appointed as a congressional liaison at the U.S. Agency for International Development, later serving as a senior advisor on international trade issues at the Department of Commerce. She is a member of the Finance and the Privileges and Elections committees and a member of the Virginia Board of Veterans Services.

Cheryl Buford is a native of Topeka, Kansas, who was raised in a suburb of Kansas City. She earned a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in family economics, both from Kansas State University. She also has a master's degree in public affairs from the University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs. Professionally, she started her career as a home economics teacher in Chicago. After that, she became a consultant for government agencies specializing in transportation and economic development. She is vice president of business development and marketing for Reston-based Social Capital Valuations, LLC. She says she was recruited to run for the House of Delegates by Jo Thoburn, chairwoman of the 10th Congressional District Republican Committee.

two candidates vastly differ.

"We have quite a maze of regulations, so I would propose that any regulations that we pass from the General Assembly has to pass an economic analysis first," said Buford, whose campaign platform calls for slashing regulations imposed on the business community, especially smaller businesses.

While Murphy's view of regulations differs, she was sure to strut her pro-business purview.

"I support and have supported cutting red tape on our local, small businesses," Murphy said. "I think that it's got to be easier for small businesses to have access to capital so they can continue to grow. That is one of the reasons that I've been endorsed by the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce because I work very hard with them to try and be helpful to our business community and to make sure that we're doing the right things to make it a welcoming economy for businesses."

The candidates seemed to agree in approach to handling the opioid epidemic.

"We are losing three Virginians a week to the opioid epidemic," Buford said. "That is unconscionable. And we cannot incarcerate our way out of the problem."

Murphy agreed.

"We need more funding for mental health programs, we need more treatment programs and I agree totally that drug addictions cannot be cured with prison," Murphy said.

ROUND TWO

The candidates will debate again on Monday, Oct. 23, at 7:30 p.m. at Longfellow Middle School, which will be hosted by the McLean Citizens Association.



Tom Styer of Great Falls, a volunteer emergency medical technician with the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department, shows Alexa Kondilas, 7, of Great Falls how to perform CPR during the open house.



Kim Kramer of Vienna, a volunteer emergency medical technician with the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department, gave Joe Kainec, 5, of Great Falls a turn to wield a small water hose during the open house.

Fire Station Opened Its Doors For A Day

BY FALLON FORBUSH
THE CONNECTION

In celebration of Fire Prevention Week Oct. 8-14, all Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department stations hosted open houses on Saturday, Oct. 14, where the public was invited to meet their local firefighters.

Great Falls Station No. 12 Fire Chief Douglas Wessel and his firefighters, paramedics and emergency medical technicians were on site to show off their vehicles and equipment and teach children and grownups alike about fire safety.

“Hopefully, the kids will be less afraid of it if they ever have to go,” Sarah McMichael, a volunteer EMT with the station, said of leading children through a tour of one of the ambulances. “And we make sure they know the number to call for emergencies.”

The National Fire Protection Association, a global nonprofit organization that develops fire, sprinkler and electrical codes and standards, has a goal of eliminating death and injuries from fire, electrical and related hazards. In that effort, it develops educational programs to inform the public about



Sarah McMichael of McLean and Robin Rauh of Herndon, volunteer emergency medical technicians with the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department, give a tour of one of the station’s ambulances to the Vilpors family of Great Falls during the open house. From left: Monica Vilpors, Jonathan Vilpors, 3, EMT Sarah McMichael, EMT Robin Rauh, David Vilpors, Olivia Vilpors, 1, and Andrea Vilpors, 21.

the adoption of codes and safety issues.

NFPA has advertised Fire Prevention Week since 1922. This year’s theme was, “Every

Second Counts: Plan 2 Ways Out!”

“If your first exit is blocked, you have a backup plan,” Wessel said. “Depending on where the

fire is, the second may be safer,” which he said he has seen in practice “many times.”

Evacuees could have less than two minutes to escape to safety after smoke alarms sound, according to the NFPA. Here are the key messages to the NFPA’s annual campaign for preparing an escape plan:

- ❖ Draw a map of your home with all members of your household, marking two exits from each room and a path to the outside from each exit.

- ❖ Practice your home fire drill twice a year. Conduct one at night and one during the day with everyone in your home, and practice using different ways out.

- ❖ Teach children how to escape on their own in case you can’t help them.

- ❖ Make sure the number of your home is clearly marked and easy for the fire department to find.

- ❖ Close doors behind you as you leave — this may slow the spread of smoke, heat and fire.

- ❖ Once you get outside, stay outside. Never go back inside a burning building.

A “Plan Your Home Fire Escape” mini-lesson can be downloaded from the NFPA’s website at www.FirePreventionWeek.org.

WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

Great Falls Author Will Discuss Early Potomac River Valley

The public is invited to hear local historian, Mike High, discuss the early era of the Potomac River, including the first European explorers, early colonial settlement, the migrations of the Shawnee, Tuscarora, and Piscataway Indians, and the building of canals for commerce and transportation along its banks.

High, a technical researcher and editor by profession, became enamored with the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal in 1990 when he visited Cumberland, Md., 186 miles northwest of its start in Georgetown, and saw the stone locks of the old canal basin. During subsequent bike trips along the trail, he became intrigued by its many

historical and cultural assets, resulting in his research and writing of “The C&O Canal Companion: A Journey through Potomac History” (published by The Johns Hopkins University Press).

In his lecture, High will explore the early development of the Great Falls area in the context of regional and national history, including the challenges of the early American frontier, George Washington’s investment in Potomac navigation, and the construction of the C&O Canal beginning in the 1820s. For anyone who has taken a stroll through Seneca Regional Park or visited the Great Falls National Park, this is a program not to be missed.

This free event will be held on Saturday, Oct. 28 at Smith Chapel — the oldest church building in Great Falls — at 11321 Beach Mill Road, starting at 10:30 a.m. with registration and refreshments. High will speak and take questions from 11 a.m. until noon. Pre-registration is recommended as seating is limited. To register, go to

www.smithchapelumc.com.

Comment Sought on Proposed Fee Increases at Great Falls Park

The National Park Service proposes increasing entrance fees at both Great Falls Park, Va. and Great Falls, Md. This proposal also reinstates a reciprocal agreement, which would allow entry to parks on both sides of the Potomac River by presenting a valid pass or receipt purchased at either park.

Proposed fees, which would be effective Jan. 1, 2018, are as follows:

SEE WEEK, PAGE 13

OBITUARY

Marjorie Williams of Great Falls Dies at 105

Marjorie Davies Williams, born Nov. 9, 1911, died on Oct. 7, 2017, in Great Falls. She died peacefully at home, surrounded by family. Marjorie grew up in New York City, where she eventually met and married Fred Williams.

After Fred's untimely death in 1945, Marjorie worked fulltime, in multiple jobs, while raising her two daughters: Barbara, who grew up to be a schoolteacher; and Carol, who grew up to be a lawyer.

During her career, Marjorie was recruited to move to D.C. to serve as the administrative assistant first to the Deputy Attorney General of the United States, and later to the Director of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

Following her retirement in 1980, Marjorie filled her life with her family, world travel, and her church. She was an active member of St. Barnabas in Annandale, where she served a term on the vestry, led



the Women of St. Barnabas, and volunteered regularly with numerous charities. She was also tremendously involved in the lives of her four beloved grandchildren.

Marjorie is survived by daughter Barbara Moore (Herman), of Charlotte, N.C.; daughter Carol Bernstein, with whom Marjorie lived in Great Falls; granddaughter Sharon Bernstein (John), of Portland, Ore.; granddaughter Bobbi Bernstein (Donna), of Annandale;

granddaughter Christy Walencyk (Jeff), of Charlotte, N.C.; grandson Russell Moore (Courtney), of Richmond; six great-grandchildren; and countless friends and admirers.

Marjorie will be honored at a memorial service on Friday, Nov. 3, 2017, at 11 a.m. at St. Barnabas Church in Annandale. Marjorie's family would welcome donations to the St. Barnabas Memorial Fund or to the Humane Society.

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What To Do Against the ‘Nightmare Scenario’?

BY STEPHEN R. RUTH
SCHAR SCHOOL OF POLICY AND GOVERNMENT
PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC POLICY
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

We should fear Artificial Intelligence. Not in the future but now. Ask Sheryl Sandberg, chief operating officer of Facebook. She announced that her company, with its over 2 billion users, built software it cannot fully control. “We never intended or anticipated this functionality being used this way,” Sandberg said, “— and that is on us.” Facebook’s operating systems had allowed Russian operatives to create accounts and ads aimed at influencing the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The gigantic network seems to have created systems that are ungovernable.

Facebook’s problem hints at the extreme dangers lurking within Artificial Intelligence as it grows throughout the world. AI Experts are already talking about a “nightmare scenario,” where nations’ AI systems could ignite real-time conflicts. Consider, hair-trigger AI systems could eventually control several nations’ military responses’ and some error in any one algorithm could possibly lead to a nuclear catastrophe.

Between the Facebook case and the nightmare scenario is the immediate problem of millions of people losing jobs. Around the globe, programmable machines — including robots, cars and factory robots — are replac-

ing humans in the workplace. Automation threatens 80 percent of today’s 3.7 million transportation jobs, one U.S. government report estimated, including truck and school bus drivers, taxi drivers and Uber and Lyft drivers. Another report indicates AI is threatening aspects of the many different jobs, including call center operators, surgeons, farmers, security guards, retail assistants, fast food workers and journalists. A 2015 study of robots in 17 countries found that they accounted for over 10 percent of the countries’ gross domestic product growth between 1993 and 2007. Consider, a major supplier for Apple and Samsung cell phones and computers, China’s Foxconn Technology Group, is planning to automate 60,000 factory jobs with robots, replacing its existing employees. Meanwhile, Ford’s factory in Cologne, Germany, not only replaced human workers with robots but also on some jobs stations position robots beside human workers — they are called cobots.

But these employment issues, as troubling as they are, cannot compare to the dangers envisioned by Elon Musk and Stephen Hawking. They are among the dozens of thought leaders who signed a letter harshly condemning governments’ increasing reliance on AI for military use. Their chief concern is autonomous weapons, another example of AI. The U.S. military is already developing armaments that do not require humans to operate them. These weapons are being created to offer battlefield support for human troops. Autonomous arms

are dramatically easier to develop and mass-produce than nuclear weapons. They will likely to soon appear on black markets around the world, certain to be favored by terrorist groups. To quote from the open letter, the new autonomous weapons would be ideal for dark actions including “assassinations, destabilizing nations, subduing populations and selectively killing a particular ethnic group.”

There are some economic optimists like MIT’s Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee, who feel that AI will eventually bring long term prosperity to the world, but even they admit that finding common ground among, economists, technologists and politicians is daunting. Obviously, it will be very difficult to craft legislation about AI without more agreement about its potential effects.

We should definitely be fearful of artificial intelligence, not just because it is clearly destined to affect the number of available jobs, including those in middle and even upper middle class domains, but because its potential military use can lead to a perilous future, if not controlled. As the open letter signed by Musk and Hawking concluded, “Starting a military AI arms race is a bad idea, and should be prevented by a ban on offensive autonomous weapons beyond meaningful human control.”

The author is director of the International Center for Applied Studies in Information Technology (ICASIT) <http://policy-icasit.gmu.edu/>

COMMENTARY

Shades of the Old South **It is always important to vote, but it is more important than ever this year.**

BY KENNETH R. “KEN” PLUM
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)

Just when you think things are changing you can be shocked to realize just how much they stay the same. Politics in Virginia are a prime example.

For more than a century after the Civil War the consistent factor in politics was race baiting. The then-called Democrats in the South, who later became known as Dixiecrats and today are the conservative wing of the Republican Party, were successful with a variety of laws that disenfranchised African Americans.

Even with the few African Americans who could get through the labyrinth of laws that included blank sheet registration forms, literacy tests and poll taxes the scare tactic employed by too many candidates was to suggest that their opponent was a lover of black people — but using a derogatory term. That fear of black people has its roots back to the centuries where black people were enslaved and brutal enforcement and fear were used to keep them that way.

The Civil War did not resolve the feeling between blacks and whites, and slave codes were replaced with Jim Crow laws that whites could use to assert supremacy over black people.



COMMENTARY

For a candidate to take a position that could be interpreted as being favorable to African Americans would mean almost certain defeat at the polls. Only Supreme Court decisions and federal laws like the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act created a more level political playing field between the races. Continued efforts

to suppress the votes of minorities and to unnecessarily complicate the voting process are still employed by some trying to maintain a structured society of white supremacy.

More recently those who want to keep or expand their political power have swept immigrants — whatever their status — into the realm of those who are to be feared and suppressed from participating in the democratic process.

Many strive to gain maximum political advantage through whatever means while at the same time wanting to keep the appearance of respect and patriotism. The recent television ad with scary images and references to fear and the MS 13 gang intends to scare voters into rejecting a compassionate medical doctor with an ad that fact checkers have found to be untruthful.

Another concern from the current campaign

is the suggestion from a white female candidate for lieutenant governor that her black male opponent does not understand the issues well enough to discuss them “intelligently.” Disregarding the excellent academic credentials of her opponent, her comments had the tone of the past that one observer said seemed more appropriate for 1957 than 2017.

At the national level, there are daily statements and actions that hearken back to the racial climate of the Old South. This year in Virginia, we have a unique opportunity on Nov. 7 to make a statement with our votes that we reject the discrimination of the past. It is always important to vote, but it is more important than ever this year. Despite efforts to romanticize the Old South and the Confederacy, we need to learn the truth and understand why we need to move on.

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:

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com

Kemal Kurspahic
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

Fallon Forbush
Reporter
fforbush@connectionnewspapers.com

Andrea Worker
Reporter
aworker@connectionnewspapers.com

Mike Salmon
Editorial Assistant
greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Salome Howard-Gaibler
Display Advertising
703-415-5394
salome@connectionnewspapers.com

Debbie Funk
National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
[@MaryKimm](https://twitter.com/MaryKimm)

Executive Vice President
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor in Chief
Steven Mauren
Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic
Art/Design:
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
Ali Khaligh
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

Special Assistant to the Publisher
Jeanne Theismann
jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com
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3. Preview Exhibit now open at Great Falls Library through end of month (9830 Georgetown Pike)
4. Starting October 20, the Tour Information Center will be open for questions at Great Falls Library

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PHOTOS BY COLIN STOECKER/THE CONNECTION

Friends and family of past gym owner Joe Cassella gathered for the re-opening of Elite Fitness in Great Falls on Saturday.



Margiee Cacciabeve, who works in administration and Frank Cassella at the re-opening of Elite Fitness in Great Falls. Frank's brother Joe Cassella used to be a co-owner of the gym and trainer before passing away in 2009 of lung cancer.

Great Falls Gym Re-opening Honors Joe Cassella

BY COLIN STOECKER
THE CONNECTION

When you ask people who Joe Cassella was, they tell you stories of how much more he was than just a personal trainer who co-owned Elite Fitness Concepts in Great Falls.

Cassella passed away in 2009 after a battle with lung cancer at age 40. Many remember him as “the mayor of Great Falls.” Along with Scott Ackerman, Joe co-owned the gym in Great Falls that just re-opened its doors as Elite Fitness.

New owner of the gym and Ace Physical

Therapy and Sports Medicine Institute, Michael Ercole, dedicated a brand-new spin room to Joe Cassella’s memory.

“We heard that it went up for sale, and we’ve done a lot in a year,” said Ercole.

The renovations to the gym have been massive, the old blue carpet is gone and shining mirrors and brand new equipment smile back at gym-goers as they enter. It is bright and clean.

“We are glad that it stayed a gym,” said Joe’s younger brother, Frank Cassella, an optometrist from Leesburg. “I met my wife in the gym. My brother owned a gym on Walker road and moved here, and I would stay here for Christmas. I got to see this

place go from an empty room full of boxes to a booming business.”

Despite the new look and management, many of the old employees have stayed with the gym through the business’s change of hands.

Chat Grosvenor, 33, is a trainer and works at the front desk, started working at the gym as a junior in high school. “What’s great about this gym is the community, the people, they are all easy to talk to. They are very caring and it’s a small community. It’s a real family matter, everybody knows everybody we support each other and it’s very positive,” said Grosvenor.

This positive attitude as a training style

remains along with Joe Cassella’s legacy as many of the people in attendance Saturday at the re-opening shared fond memories of him. “Joe was a sounding board for most people, and very connected to the Great Falls community,” said Frank Cassella.

David Lynch, a Great Falls resident and member of the gym was proud to talk about how the gym has positively impacted his health. “It’s convenient to the community here, they really focus on your physical needs. I’ve lost 60 pounds in the last 15 months,” said Lynch.

“You could go to Reston, but this place caters to the needs of the community,” he said.



A new spin room was dedicated to the past owner of the gym, Joe Cassella who died of lung cancer in 2009. The re-opening of Elite Fitness took place Saturday in Great Falls.



Elaine Lynch, a marketing professional from Great Falls and her husband David Lynch, a gym member at the re-opening of Elite Fitness Saturday in Great Falls.



New gym owner, Michael Ercole and past owner Scott Ackerman shake hands outside of Elite Fitness for the re-opening of the gym in Great Falls on Saturday.

PEOPLE



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Mike Strang climbing down from a tower near Kruger National Park during wide area network testing.

Saving Rhinos in South Africa

Great Falls resident using game-changing technology boosts rhino protection.

The rhino is an iconic mammal famed — and poached — for its horn, but in South Africa moves are afoot to beef up its protection.

Thanks to a project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) that began in 2013, rhinos are safer from poaching in South Africa today than they have been for a long time.

Great Falls resident Mike Strang is the program manager for a \$30 million program titled Strengthening Law Enforcement Capabilities to Combat Wildlife Crime for Conservation and Sustainable Use of Species in South Africa (target: Rhinoceros), the program uses the latest technology to track poachers and improve rhino crime scene management.

“The biggest challenge has been the consistent and relentless efforts of poachers,” said Strang, Great Falls resident and one of those leading the UN Environment-GEF rhino enforcement programme. “Despite many arrests, organized crime syndicates



Mike Strang at a rhino crime scene using one of the GEF-funded forensic trailers for South Africa’s protected areas.

are continuing their activities. The toll on the men and women who fight this scourge is incalculable.”

THE AIM of the project, according to Strang, is “improved forensic technologies and capacity, strengthened data gathering, shar-

SEE SAVING RHINOS, PAGE 11

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Boosting a Child's Self-Esteem

A positive self image is a lifelong gift.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

One of the greatest gifts that a parent can give a child is a healthy self-esteem. Positive feelings about oneself can lead to success in a gamut of situations ranging from school to social circles, say child development experts.

"Self-esteem plays an important role at all stages of our lives," said psychologist Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D. "As adults, it can affect how one approaches situations and interacts with other people. When self-esteem is low, it may, for example, affect work performance or one's ability to recognize and enjoy accomplishments."

Parents play an essential part in the development of their child's self-esteem, advises Cheryl Giacomelli, who teaches psychology at Northern Virginia Community College. "Parents foster self-esteem in many ways including leading by example, being emotionally available, engaging with their children, and providing a loving and supportive environment that allows children to succeed and fail," she said.

Parents can model this behavior in everyday tasks. "For example, while helping a child with a math assignment and not understanding the math problem, the parent

who says 'I can't believe I don't understand this, I was always terrible at math' is sending a different message than the parent who says, 'I'm not sure about this one. Let's ask your teacher to explain it to us in a different way,'" said Isenberg. "Parents can benefit themselves and their children by learning to describe situations according to the specific circumstances and resisting putting a generalized label on the situation or their behavior."

Since children learn by observation, modeling healthy relationships and habits is a vital component of developing a healthy self-esteem, suggests Giacomelli. "Choose an activity once a day in which you are fully engaged with your child," she said. "This may sound like common sense, however in today's busy world, it's sometimes difficult to devote all of your attention to one task. This means playing a game or reading a book and ensuring your cell phone is nowhere in sight."

"Experiences that may negatively impact the development of a strong sense of self occur when we do not fully engage with our children, when we do not allow our children to fail, and when we do not acknowledge our own faults," continued Giacomelli

Avoid harsh criticisms and display expressions of love, warmth and affection, advises Joanne Bagshaw, PhD, LCPC, professor of psychology at Montgomery College-Germantown.

"Children's self-esteem develops based on how well their parents love them," she said. "The best thing parents can do is to openly and unconditionally love and accept their child. Parents ... can do so verbally, by telling their children often that they love them and by being openly affectionate, with hugs, for example. Parents can also communicate warmth through their tone of voice, and eye contact."

PRAISING CHILDREN is important, but it must be sincere. Even setbacks can offer opportunities for developing a healthy self-esteem, suggests Isenberg. "Children feel good about themselves when they have received genuine, positive reinforcement from people and situations," she said. "Praising a child's efforts is one of the best things parents can reinforce, because a child can control his effort, whereas outcome isn't always within one's control."

One example that Isenberg offers is saying something like, "I'm so proud of how hard you studied for that science test. You

spent a lot of time reviewing the material and were really dedicated to being prepared."

Allowing children to learn to do things on their own and even experience a setback within a supportive environment may increase feelings of confidence and competence, says Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at George Mason University.

"Parents may do too much for children or protect them from failure so that children do not learn to cope with difficult situations and soothe themselves," he said. "Children should believe that they have worth for being a unique person."

Fostering opportunities for positive social interaction with their peers can lead to a healthy self-esteem, says Short. "Children who have close friendships and reciprocal sharing with friends tend to have higher self-esteem," he said. "Children's successful accomplishment of goals also boosts self-esteem."

Establishing boundaries and setting limits with children can instill a sense of safety and security, advises Short. "Authoritative parenting that is high in support and high in structure and expectations contributes to children's positive sense of self," he said.

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PEOPLE

Saving Rhinos in South Africa

FROM PAGE 9

ing and analysis systems at national level, and enhanced cooperation structures and mechanisms at international level to support law enforcement efforts along the whole trafficking chain.”

The project has adapted to the changing techniques and tactics used by poachers.

“The introduction of hi-tech equipment has proven to be the best way to maximize scarce human resources in the protected areas where the rhinos roam. The days of just driving around or walking a perimeter are gone,” said Strang.

Strang is working with partners to introduce sensors, the internet of things (IoT), cyber security and LoRa wide area networks to stay ahead of syndicated crime networks.

The University of Pretoria’s Veterinary Genetics Laboratory is the centre for rhino forensic work in the country.

The GEF project provided some of the funding for horn DNA analysis from stockpiles and live rhinos, while the Department of Environmental Affairs funded forensic work related to illegal rhino killings. This enabled the purchase of things like refrigerators, forensic kits, and a new laboratory. Most importantly, the project enabled the training of additional lab technicians who will be an asset for many years to come.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Crime Scene Training at actual poaching incident.

The training of biodiversity investigators and crime scene management experts, the production of training videos, the development of an Advanced Course for rangers, the carrying out of prosecutor training, and the setting up of a magistrates’ colloquium, as well as a regional magistrates’ colloquium (including South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia and Lesotho).

PARTNERING with the Environmental Wildlife Trust (EWT), a local non-governmental organization (and thanks to funding from the United States of America), enabled the project to increase the number of personnel taking the advanced ranger training course from 500 to 1,400. “Training is nearing completion now and, judging from the feedback we’ve received, it has been a huge success,” said Strang.

“The project has also recently partnered with Peace Parks Foundation to focus on another pilot project which uses Smart City technology, long range wide area networks, and Internet of Things protocols and promises to completely change the way rhinos are protected,” said Strang.

Visit www.unep.org/stories/story/rhino-love.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday.

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 18

Dining with Dorothy. 12:30 p.m. at Legal Seafoods, Tysons Galleria, 2001 International Drive, McLean. This socializing/dining event is hosted by the Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna. Email dflood1706@gmail.com.

Tree Talks. 7-9:30 p.m. at Churchill Road Elementary School Cafeteria, 7100 Churchill Road, McLean. Topic: "Trees in McLean's Changing Landscape—Planting and Protecting." Visit www.mcleancitizens.org.

FRIDAY/OCT. 20

Lunch and Learn. noon at The Providence Community Center, 3001 Vaden Drive. RSVP lecture on the value of volunteering. Email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org.

Drumming and Drum Circle Workshop. 3:30-10 p.m. at The Old Firehouse Teen Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Teens can get in the Halloween spirit and spend a Friday night with the Old Firehouse. Only the brave-hearted are invited on this journey. The night will start with a group dinner \$60/\$50 MCC district residents. Visit www.mcleancenter.org.

An Evening Service of Song, Scripture and Prayer. Holy Comforter will welcome two visiting choirs from Delaware: Immanuel Church on the Green, Newcastle, and St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Lewes. Under the direction of Chormasters T. J. Thomas and Jack Warren Burnam, the combined choirs will present an evening service of song, scripture, and prayer. This liturgy will be followed by a festive reception.

OCT. 20-22

Vienna Theatre Company Production. Various times at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. SE. Upcoming production "In Living Sound - Back Home!," live radio drama directed by Patricia Boswell Kallman. \$14. Visit www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

Great Falls Studios Tour. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at various venues in Great Falls. A self-guided driving tour of local artists in their personal studios. This three-day event is family-friendly, free, and offers the opportunity to see art being made in the community. Artists will be available 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday, rain or shine. Visit www.greatfallsstudios.com.

SATURDAY/OCT. 21

Damselwings Art Show. 3-6 p.m. at the Home of Martha Brettschneider, 2203 Abbotsford Drive, Vienna. Exhibit and sale of Martha Brettschneider's floral metal prints and notecards. Portion of sales will support Metavivor's breast cancer advocacy. Free. Visit bit.ly/DamselwingsArtShow or call 703-919-4230.

Astronomy Campfire. 6-7 p.m. at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Hear tales about the constellations and make s'mores over the campfire's embers. Ages 4 and up. \$8. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/.

OCT. 21-22

18th Century Autumn Market Fair. 11-4:30 p.m. at the Claude Moore Colonial Farm, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Learn to dip candles and watch the blacksmith and rope



Great Falls Studio Tour

See work by local artists and tour their studios on the Great Falls Studios Tour, Oct. 20-22, at various venues in Great Falls. A self-guided driving tour of local artists in their personal studios. This three-day event is family-friendly, free, and offers the opportunity to see art being made in the community. Artists will be available 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday, rain or shine. Visit greatfallsstudios.com.

"Eyeliner" by Linda Jones

maker at work. Children's games, puppet theater and live music. Meet staff and volunteers in costume and character. \$8; children and seniors: \$4; children under 3 free. Visit www.1771.org.

Cocktail reception and silent auction, which includes getaways, art and photography, sports items, and much more. \$300. Visit www.gala.arlingtonfreeclinic.org.

Ellis Paul in Concert. 7:30 p.m. at Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Ellis Paul with Sophie B. Hawkins in celebration of 25 years of touring. Visit www.jamminjava.com.

SUNDAY/OCT. 22

Capitol Steps Comedy Troupe. 3 p.m. at Oakton High School, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna. A singing, dancing, satirical show that focuses on politics, proceeds go to the Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna. \$35. Visit www.scov.org/fundraiser-tickets or call 703-281-0538.

Bonis Ensemble. 4 p.m. at Saint Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Playing Mozart, Mahler and Bonis. Visit www.amadeusconcerts.com.

The Music of Simon and Garfunkel. 7:30 at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E. The Music of Simon & Garfunkel performed by Americana-folk duo Swearingen and Kelli. \$20. Visit www.themusicofsimonandgarfunkel.com.

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 25

71st Annual Halloween Parade. 7 p.m. on Maple Avenue, Vienna. Join friends and neighbors, ghouls and goblins for one of Vienna's traditions: the 71st annual Halloween Parade, hosted by the Vienna Business Association. Pre-registration is required for businesses and organizations who wish to march in the parade. No registration needed for children who want to wear costumes and walk in the parade; children must be accompanied by their mummy or another adult. Visit bit.ly/2huu6L0.

OCT. 27-28

Vienna Theatre Company Production. Various times at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. SE. Upcoming production "In Living Sound - Back Home!," live radio drama directed by Patricia Boswell Kallman. \$14. Visit www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

The Recital on Stage. 7:30 at 1st Stage Theatre, 1524 Spring Hill Road, McLean. Premiere of The Recital with live piano performed by MusicLink, Saturday's ticket includes access to the Post-Performance. \$30-50. Call 703-854-1856.

SATURDAY/OCT. 28

Arlington Free Clinic Annual Benefit Gala. 6 p.m.-midnight at Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner Tysons Galleria, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean.

SUNDAY/OCT. 29

Pumpkin Carving Lessons. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Wildfire, Tysons Galleria, 3rd floor, McLean. Executive Chef Edwin Amaya shares his best-kept secrets for carving pumpkins and Emma Choi, student representative to Real Food for Kids, will be the special guest followed by a costume contest. \$20.00 per child and a portion of the proceeds will be donated to "Real Food for Kids." Call 703-442-9110.

Spookappella Halloween Jam. 2 p.m. at Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Cover band rocking R&B, Hip-Hop, Funk, and soul hits of the last five decades. \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door. Visit www.jamminjava.com.

FRIDAY/NOV. 3

Scott Miller Concert. 2 p.m. at Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Rock singer/songwriter highlights his first full album in four years, "Ladies Auxiliary." Visit www.jamminjava.com.

NOV. 6-JAN. 7

Textures Exhibit. Various times at the Vienna Arts Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW. Call 703-319-3971 or visit www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 8

Astronomy Lecture. 7:30-9 p.m. at Turner Farm, 925 Springvale Road, Great Falls. Topics may include planets, open clusters, double stars, stellar color spectrum, globular clusters and galaxies. After class, view the objects that were discussed through the observatory's telescopes, if weather allows. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/turnerfarm/.

SATURDAY/NOV. 11

Fall Bazaar. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Vienna Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary, 400 Center St., South. The Vienna Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary is sponsoring this event with crafts, bake sale, holiday items. Email dancers1023@aol.com or call 703-309-3468.

WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

FROM PAGE 4

- Per Vehicle:
- ❖ Current: \$10/vehicle for 3 days. Valid only at park where fee was paid.
 - ❖ Proposed: \$15/vehicle for 3 days. Valid at both parks.
- Per Person (hikers/walkers, bicyclists):
- ❖ Current: \$5/person for 3 days. Valid only at park where pass was purchased.
 - ❖ Proposed: \$7/person for 3 days. Valid at both parks.
- Per Motorcycle:
- ❖ Current: \$10/motorcycle for 3 days. Valid only at park where

- pass was purchased.
- ❖ Proposed: \$10/motorcycle for 3 days. Valid at both parks.
- Park Annual Pass:
- ❖ Current: \$30. Valid at both parks.
 - ❖ Proposed: No change.
- To comment on the proposal, visit the following websites:
 C&O Canal, Great Falls, Md., parkplanning.nps.gov/cocanalfees2018
 George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP), Great Falls, VA., parkplanning.nps.gov/greatfallsfees
- The public comment period will remain open until Nov. 6, 2017.

FAITH NOTES

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

Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Sunday worship services are at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday School for young adults follows the 10:30 a.m. worship services and for children at 9:30 a.m. Youth Group for grades 7-12 meets Sundays at 5 p.m. A 20-minute service of Holy Communion is held each Wednesday at noon. 703-356-3312 or umtrinity.org.

Passages DivorceCare. For those experiencing the pain of separation or divorce, the caring

community at Vienna Presbyterian Church offers Passages DivorceCare. This 15-week program offers a path toward healing. Vienna Presbyterian Church is located on the corner of Maple Avenue (Rt. 123) and Park Street in Vienna. Cost to cover materials is \$20, scholarships available. For more information or to register call 703-938-9050, go to www.viennapres.org, or send an email to Passages@ViennaPres.org.

The S.P.O.T for Youth, Wednesday's at 7 p.m. A place where youth can come together and pray, ask questions about the faith and receive mentorship. The spot is a ministry of First Baptist Church of Vienna, 450 Orchard Street, NW Vienna.

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NEWS

Stephanie Lamoreau of Falls Church waves to children as Belle from Beauty and the Beast.



PHOTOS BY
ROBERT HEAL
THE CONNECTION

All-day Fun at Harvest Happenings

The autumn air was filled with joy as children smiled and laughed at this year's McLean Community Center Harvest Happenings. All of the activities were geared towards children 3-8 years old. From a speedy baby pig to a magician, children could have fun with other children.

Squeals on Wheels, based out of Maryland, had children petting goats, chickens, pigs and alpacas. The Amazing Kevin, a magician from Stafford, had children in stitches after he created the illusion that a child was pouring milk from her finger.

Little ones got to meet Belle from Disney's Beauty and the Beast in a bright yellow dress. They could also paint and make arts and crafts with

Abrakadoodle Inc. a children's painting class from Falls Church. An egg race, photo booth and pumpkin patch were also part of the Harvest Happenings.

With McLean Community Center under renovation, the event was held at St. Luke's School in McLean.

Julie Thatcher, from Fairfax Circle, said this event connects people in the community.

Lydia Keffer from McLean says she loves the event because it is inclusive to all people, no matter your age or ethnicity.

Sue Dorsey from McLean said she is proud to do the event each year because "she sees the joy in [the children's] faces."

— ROBERT HEALY

Francisco Castillejos and his daughter Lucy from McLean pet the goats.



Lydia Keffer of Langley High school cheers on the Egg Race participants.



Sarah Merchak of McLean and her daughter get a glimpse of the Alpaca.

BULLETIN

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 18

McLean Newcomers Luncheon. 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Mylo's Grill, 6238 Old Dominion Drive. Nancy Harvey Steorts, a former Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, will discuss "How Safe is Your Home?". \$30. Visit www.McLeanNewcomers.org or email McLeanNewcomers@yahoo.com.

Tree Lecture. 7-9:30 p.m. at Churchill Road Elementary School Cafeteria, 7100 Churchill Road, McLean. Introduction by Supervisor John Foust. Hear from county staff about infill development and tree protection rules, from the McLean Trees Foundation on how to plant to best kinds of trees for your yard, and from local developers in the area. Exhibits. Visit www.McLeanCitizens.org for more.

FRIDAY/OCT. 20

Retailer Job Fair. 1-8 p.m. at Tysons Corner Center-Fashion Court, 1961 Chain Bridge Road. Tysons Corner Center will be hosting a multi-retailer job fair showcasing over 30 retailers and restaurants. Come meet the brands, engage with potential coworkers, and come ready for on-the-spot interviews. Email becca.willcox@macerich.com or call 703-770-1123 for more.

SATURDAY/OCT. 21

Incarceration Lecture. 4-6 p.m. at Emmaus United Church of Christ, 900 Maple Ave E., Vienna. Dr. Vesla M. Weaver, Bloomberg, Associate Professor of Political Science and Sociology at Johns Hopkins University, will discuss how low-income Black and Latino communities experience policing and incarceration. Call 703-938-1555 for more.

SATURDAY/OCT. 28

Operation Medicine Cabinet Cleanout. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at McLean District Station, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean. Drop off unused or expired medications at a Fairfax County Police district station. Pills or liquids only, no pressurized canisters or needles. Safe disposal of unused or expired medications prevents drug abuse and misuse, accidental poisoning, and protects the environment. Disposal is free, convenient, confidential, and safe. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/stations/ or www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html for more.

MONDAY/NOV. 13

Community Meeting. 6-8:30 p.m. at the Oakton High School Cafeteria, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna. Design Public Hearings on the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Project regarding plans for the 22.5 mile corridor from I-495 to University Boulevard in Gainesville. Visit transform66.org for more.

MONDAY/DEC. 11

FCPS Community Conversations. 6:30-8 p.m. at Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Road, Falls Church, Cafeteria (Region 2). Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand will host Community Conversations to hear what students, parents, employees, and members of the community are thinking about and what issues are important to them. Brabrand welcomes citizens to attend and take part in any of the upcoming sessions that are convenient for them. Citizens needing a translator can make a request for services online. Visit www.fcps.edu/news/superintendent-brabrand-schedules-five-community-conversations-fall.

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 (UUCF) - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Rd, Oakton, VA. For more info contact facilitator, Jack Tarr, 703-821-6838 jtarr5@verizon.net.

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"Righty Tightly, Lefty Loosey"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

So I've been told mnemonically for years. But when you're home and automotive-repair challenged as I am, everything is much easier said than done, especially when the mnemonic device is easier to handle/figure out than whatever tool and/or schematic is necessary/advisable for the at-home/in-driveway repair. (We don't have a garage, or much of a basement for that matter. It's more of a cellar, actually. In fact, I call it "the dug out," so lack of spatial accommodations can exacerbate the problem).

And that's sort of how I feel whenever I attempt a home/car-owner-type repair. Soon after I organize whatever thoughts and tools I might need: within minutes of the initial effort, I will have likely complicated the repair and will be forced to dig myself out, sometimes literally. I'll spare you the details, but suffice to say, I am a man of my word and that word is disaster. To invoke the great and often-quoted Dirty Harry: "A man's got to know his limitations," (Magnum Force, 1973), and believe me, I do.

Granted, replacing bulbs in my house, as written in the final paragraph of last week's column: "What To 'Ware,'" ranks pretty low on the home owner's list of honey-can-you-do?. Nevertheless, challenges do present themselves, especially when height and a ladder - or a step stool, with no spotter, are involved. And when I'm looking up with arms outstretched attacking the problem: light fixture from multiple angles, sometimes, when I place my hand on the bulb, I begin to lose my orientation and am unsure where's 'Righty' and where's 'Lefty.' And even though I always remember 'Tightly and 'Loosey,' when 'Righty Tightly, Lefty Loosely' doesn't immediately bring results, I tend to lose patience - and confidence, and slowly retreat to lower ground to reassess.

Unfortunately, there's no one to call. I mean, when you fail at the most basic and fundamental responsibility a home/car owner has, it's difficult, even for someone with as little ego as me, to admit abject failure. Repairing a toilet, installing light fixtures and/or ceiling fans; sawing, sanding, measuring, leveling and drilling; lifting, balancing and carrying; and anything else involving plumbing, electrifying; and even hammering and screwing in general, are tasks I don't mind asking and/or paying for. Having been down this road many times before, I know it's a path that won't lead to my redemption.

So not wanting to make a bad situation worse, or create a problem where one or two previously didn't exist, I have to employ the simplest of solutions. And what's simpler than "a pithy observation that contains a general truth:" an aphorism (Dictionary.com), an aid to one's lack of memory and ability to perform even the most basic of tasks, particularly as it pertains to a home owner: bulb replacement.

Not that this inability is at all defensible. It's not. It's totally indefensible and one whose defense is not all explainable by the most offensive of terms: cancer. Which as you regular readers know has been the bane of my existence going back to late February 2009. That's when my Internal Medicine doctor called me at work to share the results of my previous week's surgical biopsy. His suggestion was that we meet in his office to discuss the results. I shook my head in disbelief. If he wants to meet me in person, the results must be bad, I thought. Otherwise, he'd just tell me, right? I asked him to hold on as I found a private office for us to talk (me to react) and braced myself. He told me the growth was malignant and suggested I see an oncologist as soon as possible. An appointment was set for the following Thursday.

Much has changed in my life ever since that fateful day, but not as it concerns this home/car owner's inability to handle the most mundane tasks. Might have actually gotten worse. As for "the cancer," as "Forrest, Forrest Gump" described the cause of his mother's death, not so bad. I am alive and reasonably well, eight years and nearly two months out, six years plus past the end date of my original "13 month to two year" prognosis. Of that I'm proud. As for the home and car repair deficiencies, I couldn't care less. I have to admit though, it is laughable - and pathetic.

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



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