

Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

Nathan Baker holds his nephew, Simon Baker, 2, as a model train makes its way by them at the 12th Annual Herndon Holiday Train Show. The two-day event, held Dec. 9-10, featured multiple train layouts in two buildings.

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AREA ROUNDUPS

Hunter Mill District Planning Commissioner Appointed

Supervisor Catherine Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill) has announced the appointment of John Carter as the Hunter Mill District Planning Commissioner, replacing Frank de la Fe.

Carter holds a Master of Planning degree from the University of Virginia; a Master of Architecture in Urban Design from Virginia Tech and a Bachelor of Architecture with Distinction from Arizona State University.

Carter has more than 35 years of experience as a

planner, urban designer and architect. He is a former Chief of Community-Based Planning in Montgomery County, and was responsible for overseeing the master plan and the development review processes for the largest geographic areas in Montgomery County. He has received numerous honors and awards over his career.

Carter has lived in the Hunter Mill District for more than 44 years and has extensive community involvement.

FAITH NOTES

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community, including special holiday services. Send to reston@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday.

Washington Plaza Baptist Church will hold Adult Bible Study at 9:30 a.m. Sundays at Lake Anne Village Center. The group is studying the Gospel of Mark. Services follow at 11 a.m.

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church needs knitters the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 7 p.m., at 432 Van Buren St., Herndon. The church's Prayer Shawl Ministry is offering free knitting instruction while providing shawls, blankets and other knitted items for people in need. No cost and yarn can be provided. Visit www.saint-timothys.org.

Nondenominational Christian businessmen meet for prayer, Biblical discussion and fellowship 7 p.m. Fridays at Anita's, 1051 Elden St., Herndon and

noon Thursdays at 555 Grove St., Suite 200, Herndon. Call 703-795-1257.

Trinity Presbyterian Church, 651 Dranesville Road, Herndon, has Sunday worship services at 10 a.m. during the summer. Nursery and childcare are provided starting at 8 a.m. until the end of the service. Call 703-437-5500 or visit www.trinityherndon.org.

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center, Unitarian Universalist Church, 1625 Wiehle Ave., Reston, holds weekly classes starting Sept. 12, Thursdays 7:30-8:30 p.m., for the general public which use Buddhist teachings to practice meditation. \$12 or \$6 for students, seniors and unemployed. Call 202-986-2257 or visit www.meditation-dc.org.

St. Anne's Episcopal Church, 1700 Wainwright Drive, Reston, holds Sunday services at 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and contemporary service at 5 p.m. during the summer. Nursery, Sunday school and adult education available. Call 703-437-

6530 or visit www.stannes-reston.org.

HAVEN of Northern Virginia offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. Call 703-941-7000 or visit www.havenofnova.org for schedules and registration information.

The Mount Pleasant Baptist Church of Herndon invites the community to join them for praise and worship followed by a stirring message from the Word of God on Sundays starting at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. (with Sunday school at 7:30 and 9:30 a.m.). Visit www.mtpleasantbaptist.org.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and the Jewish Outreach Institute offer the Mothers/Parents Circle, an umbrella of free educational events and resources. Jewish rituals, ethics and the creation of a Jewish home, regular meetings and group Shabbats and holidays. Visit ShalomDC.org.

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Members of the Sun Dance Singers directed by "C" Culpepper enthusiastically ring in the Christmas season performing a medley of classic holiday favorites during their concert gift to members of local Fairfax County Senior Centers.

PHOTOS BY
MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION



Sun Dance Gives Back

Local Senior Centers and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society benefit.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

For the fourth year, the Sun Dance Performance Company of Herndon presented two Holiday Song and Dance Shows as their gift to the community. Held at the Herndon Senior Center, 873 Grace St., the Friday, Dec. 8 and Saturday, Dec. 9, performance titled, "A Season of Hope," featured the joyous sounds and sights of cherished holiday tunes, music, and choreographed dance routines.

The company performed its first free show at 11 a.m. Friday for members of local Fairfax County Senior Centers and their second production Saturday at 7 p.m., open to the public to benefit The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's (LLS) National Capital Area chapter. LLS is the world's largest voluntary health agency dedicated to blood cancer.

According to Ruth Junkins, Director of the Herndon Senior Center more than 230 members of the Herndon, Lewinsville, Little River Glen, Sully, and Providence Senior Centers and the clients of Herndon Adult Day Health Care celebrated the holiday season with the Friday performance.

Members experienced the thrill of hearing carols and songs performed by the Sun Dance Singers directed by "C" Culpepper. Michele Koros, owner of Sun Dance Performance Company, and her students performed choreographed dance routines to season favorites including an original and energetic tap dance complete with high kicks, silvery vests, and black top hats.

Of course, Santa made a special guest appearance, not to sing but to pass out candy canes. The production culminated in a rousing dance-along as members of the company helped seniors to their feet and became their dance partners.

"Bravo, Bravo," exclaimed audience member Alam Atae from Reston as she clapped after the last set. "I loved it. It was very good," Atae said. Hararaen Kaur



Michele Koros, owner of Sun Dance Performance Company helps a member of a Fairfax County Senior Center up to dance during the culmination of the company's Holiday Song and Dance Show, "A Season of Hope" held at the Herndon Senior Center on Friday, Dec. 8.

of Herndon also attended. When asked what her favorite part of the show was, Kaur said, "Everything; everything was my favorite."

On Saturday evening, Sun Dance Performance Company took to the stage for their second show. An equally impressive crowd awaited them ready to enjoy holiday carols and seasonal classics.

Not only was the hall filled that night, but also the donation jar to benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of the National Capital Area chapter. By night's end, audience members had donated more than \$800 to the nonprofit organization. On hand to accept the donation on behalf of LLS was Heather Burneson who thanked those present for their generosity.

For more information about the company, Herndon Senior Center, and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, visit them online at sundanceperformance.com, herndonseniorcenter.org, and lls.org.

Two-year-old Simon Baker cannot believe his eyes. The best thing in life has come his way, TRAINS. According to Nathan Baker, Simon's uncle, the toddler's first words when he spoke were "choo, choo."

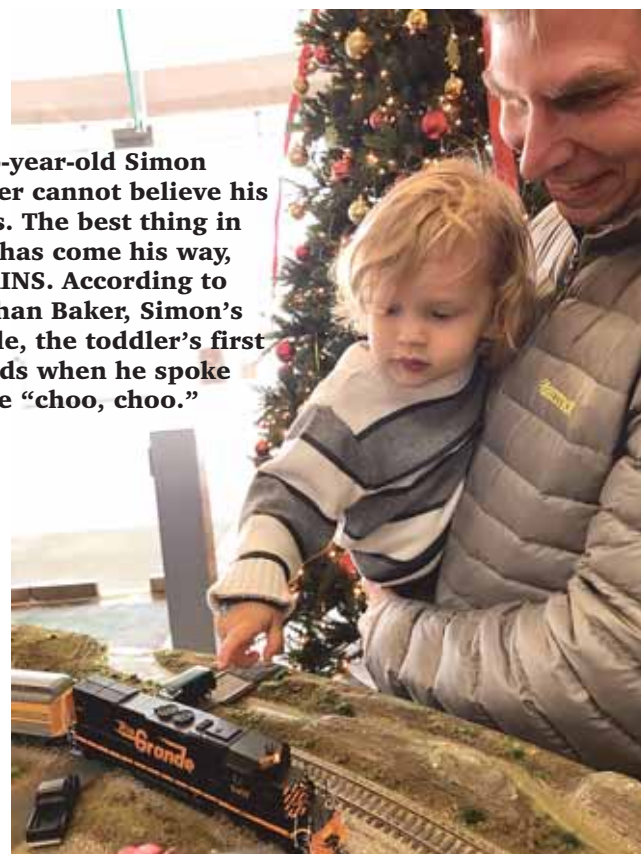


PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Holiday Model Train Show is a Hit in Herndon

Rail buffs young and old admire the scale layouts.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The lure of model trains holds no barriers for those who build them and those who come to admire them. Whether the entrancement is triggered by memories of the lonesome whistle or admiration of the new stainless express cars, the train is an icon of Herndon's history and future.

On Saturday, Dec. 9-Sunday, Dec. 10, the Herndon Chamber of Commerce, part of the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce, sponsored the 12th Annual Herndon Holiday Model Train Show at the Herndon Municipal Center (HMC), 777 Lynn St.

People from every generation made their way on the snowy days to help celebrate the magic of trains. This year's event at the HMC displayed two of the three featured scale layouts, the HO Scale layout, one of the most popular of scale railroads and the N Scale layout that takes up approximately half the space of the HO Scale.

Nathan Baker of Herndon arrived early. In his arms, Baker

held his nephew, Simon Baker, 2, of Rockville, Md. While Simon's parents, Sarah Robison and Nathan's brother Danny Baker looked on, Nathan tightly held Simon up to watch the mini trains barreling down the tracks, much to the delight of young Simon.

Asked why he came with Simon, Nathan said, "The first thing Simon recognized growing up were trains. His first words were, 'Choo, choo.' When I saw the Model Train Show on the Events Calendar, he was the first person I thought of."

Bill Jacobs of Fairfax was one of the railway modelers at the HMC. He has been coming for eight years. "It's quite a tradition of ours, and this is one show I try not to miss. It's the Christmas season," said Jacobs.

A short walk from the HMC, in the Herndon Depot Museum, the Herndon Historical Society hosted a train layout by Northern Virginia NTRAK. They had set up their N-Scale layout in the Old Freight Room of the historic depot.

According to NVTRAK, the N-Scale layouts are flexible since their modular design allows for tailoring to the individual space, ease of transport, and storage.

In all, the weekend event was great fun for everyone from rail buffs to rail modelers.

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT



Ukulele Concerts

In the Reston Town Center, the Northern Virginia Ukulele Society will be holding Ukulele Concert at noon on Saturday, Dec. 17 at 11900 Market St., Reston. Call 703-476-4500 or visit restoncommunitycenter.com for more.

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

ONGOING

Willy Wonka on Stage. Through Dec. 18, various times at NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. NextStop's professional company on stage for Charlie Bucket's visit to Willy Wonka's mysterious chocolate factory. \$25; family (4+) and group (10+) discounts available. Call 866-811-4111 or visit www.nextstoptheatre.org.

Gingerbread Village. Through Jan. 4, various times at the Hyatt Regency Reston, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. See the annual display in the hotel lobby. Call 703-709-1234 or visit reston.hyatt.com.

All-comers' Group Fun Run at Potomac River Running. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. For beginners or competitive runners, come out for a fun, low-key run that is safe and social. Call 703-689-0999 potomacriverrunning.com.

Over-40 Softball League. A Fairfax-based league is looking for enough players to form another team. Players must be at least 40 years of age to be eligible. All games are doubleheaders - played on Sundays at Bready Park in Herndon between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. If interested, email skeduman@aol.com.

Art Exhibit through Jan. 8 at Artsights, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. "Drag, Disney, Art Insights and Art Outsiders: The Art of Tennessee Loveless," see the new collection by Tennessee Loveless including his retrospective book 10x10x10 and images from his projects. Call 703-709-6720 or visit restontowncenter.com.

THROUGH FEB. 17

Artist Exhibit. Various times at the Greater Reston Arts Center, 11900 Market St. Featuring the work of Paulina Peavy, namesake of "Paulina Peavy: A Message to Paulina," the first exhibition to bring together a selection of Peavy's works across disciplines including works on paper, paintings, films, texts, and numerous mixed media masks. Visit www.restonarts.org.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 13

Herndon Holiday Shoppe. 10 a.m.

at Herndon Elementary School, 630 Dranesville Road. Shop for gifts or volunteer to work for volunteer hours. Call 703-326-3100.

Sunrise Valley Elementary School Chorus Concert. 6:30 p.m. at Fountain Square, 11900 Market St., Reston. Call 703-476-4500 or visit restoncommunitycenter.com.

Gingerbread Friends. 7 p.m. at the Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Family stories of sparkle and spice and Christmas delight. Call 703-689-2700.

College Funding Workshop. 7-9 p.m. at South Lakes High School, Lecture Hall, 11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston. Hosted by the College Funding Coach, learn strategies to qualify for financial aid, sources for scholarships, and strategies for maximizing your wealth and minimizing tax exposure. Free. Email slhssteam@gmail.com.

THURSDAY/DEC. 14

Toddler Yoga. 10:30 a.m. at the Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Yoga through stories and songs. Wear comfy clothes. Cosponsored by the Friends of Reston Library. Age 18-24 months with adult. Call 703-689-2700.

Apostolic Faith Church Concert. 6:30 p.m. at Fountain Square, 11900 Market St., Reston. Call 703-476-4500 or visit restoncommunitycenter.com.

FRIDAY/DEC. 15

Games with the Author. 6 p.m. at Scrawl Books, Reston Town Center, 11862 Market St. Challenge 5 young adult authors are coming to the store for a game night. They will be playing Mad Libs, Pictionary etc with them. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com.

Grace Covenant Church Concert. 6:30 p.m. at Fountain Square, 11900 Market St., Reston. Call 703-476-4500 or visit restoncommunitycenter.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 16

Holiday Open House. 11 a.m. at the Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Join staff to celebrate the holiday season with light refreshment, music, and entertainment for all ages. Age 18-24 months with adult. Call 703-689-2700.

Tim McKee Concert. Noon at the Promenade, 11900 Market St., Reston. Music by Tenor Tim McKee. Call 703-476-4500 or visit



Ice Skating

The ice rink at the Reston Town Center is open for the season. Call 703-709-6300 or visit www.restontowncenter.com.

restoncommunitycenter.com.
The Reston Chorale Concert. 1 p.m. at the Promenade, 11900 Market St., Reston. 45-minute performances presented by Reston Community Center. Call 703-476-4500 or visit restoncommunitycenter.com.

Horse-drawn Carriage Rides. 4-9 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. \$5 per person; children 5 and under ride free with adult. Proceeds go to local charities. Call 703-709-6720 or visit restontowncenter.com.

SUNDAY/DEC. 17

Mini-Train Rides. noon-4 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. Proceeds go to local charities. Call 703-709-6720 or visit restontowncenter.com.

Ukulele Concert. noon at the Promenade, 11900 Market St., Reston. Music by the Northern Virginia Ukulele Society. Call 703-476-4500 or visit restoncommunitycenter.com.

Catchin' Toads Concert. 2-3 p.m. at the Promenade, 11900 Market St., Reston. Music by Catchin' Toads. Call 703-476-4500 or visit restoncommunitycenter.com.

THURSDAY/DEC. 21

Puppet Snow Show. 10 and 11:30 a.m. at Frying Pan Farm Park's



Concert

Catchin' Toads will be in concert with Tim McKee on Saturday, Dec. 23 at noon at the Promenade, 11900 Market St., Reston. 45-minute performances presented by Reston Community Center. Call 703-476-4500 or visit restoncommunitycenter.com for more.

Visitor Center, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Puppet master Bob Brown brings this special holiday puppet show to the park. \$5. Call 703-437-9101 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

SATURDAY/DEC. 23

Catchin' Toads and Tim McKee in Concert. noon at the Promenade, 11900 Market St., Reston. 45-minute performances presented by Reston Community Center. Visit restoncommunitycenter.com.

Horse-drawn Carriage Rides. 4-9 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. \$5 per person; children 5 and under ride free with adult. Proceeds go to local charities. Call 703-709-6720 or visit restontowncenter.com.

SUNDAY/DEC. 31

New Year's Eve Golf Tournament. 10 a.m. at Herndon Centennial Golf Course, 909 Ferndale Ave. Annual four-person scramble. Entry fee includes green fee, cart fee, range balls and prizes. Call 703-471-5769 visit www.herdongolf.com.

MONDAY/JAN. 1

New Year's Day 5K. 10 a.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. music, food, awards, and fun celebration following the race.

Presented by Potomac River Running. Call 703-709-6720 or visit restontowncenter.com.

DEADLINE JAN. 5, 2018

2018 Fine Art Photography Competition. Fine Art Photography of any subject is welcome; there is no required theme for entries. Call 703-956-9560 or visit www.artspaceherndon.com.

THROUGH JAN. 8

Art Exhibit. Various hours at Artsights, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. "Drag, Disney, Art Insights and Art Outsiders: The Art of Tennessee Loveless," see the new collection by Tennessee Loveless including his retrospective book 10x10x10 and images from his projects. Call 703-709-6720 or visit restontowncenter.com.

MONDAY/JAN. 15

Social Justice Advocate Speech. noon at at Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Tamika D. Mallory keynote address is at noon, followed by a community lunch. \$5 for Reston residents and employees, and \$10 for all others. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Creating a Free-Flowing Kitchen

Remodel yields brighter space.

When Alexis and Jason Sabloff decided it was time to remodel their kitchen, the Herndon homeowners set out with a goal of creating a modern space, improving the lighting and replacing appliances.

They enlisted the help of Winn Design + Build. The team, which consisted of owner Michael Winn, architect Amy Finch, designer Jennifer Hall and carpenter Diego Cabrera, was tasked with creating a free-flowing and aesthetically appealing space without changing the existing footprint.

The 302-square-foot kitchen was long, narrow, dark and accessorized with “too-tall soffits,” said Hall.

The family wanted to redesign the space so that it flowed seamlessly into the family room to allow for easy entertaining. Hall says that the homeowners also wanted to relocate the existing pantry, create a mudroom and generally improve the circulation, utility and aesthetics of the kitchen and surrounding areas.

The design team removed the soffits and replaced



PHOTO BY STACY ZARN GOLDBERG

Black granite countertops and white cabinetry help modernize this Herndon kitchen by Winn Design + Build.

dark wood cabinets with Hanover door style cabinetry in Glacier White to create a light and airy feel. The Winn team replaced the green tile with a hardwood that matches the flooring in the rest of the home. They also rearranged the appliances and breakfast table to make the kitchen appear more spacious.

— MARILYN CAMPBELL

A Kitchen for the Ages

When empty nesters Mike Rogan and Sue Shaffer decided to move out of the Arlington home where they had lived for 27 years, they embarked on a two-year search for a new abode. They were looking for a home where they could age in place and have space for live-in caretakers if needed.

They settled on a McLean home and hired Rill Architects to redesign it, creating an open floor plan that allowed for entertaining. The design team created a space that connects the kitchen to the family room, dining room, rear patio and garage.

The Rogans wanted the kitchen to have an island, multiple workstations, clean lines with Victorian detailing and enough space for multiple cooks.

The design team incorporated the Rogan's love of casual and modern. “The painted wood ceiling and traditional casing with an arched pass-



PHOTO BY MICHAEL K. WILKINSON

This McLean kitchen by Rill Architects includes maplewood, furniture-style cabinets with brushed nickel hardware, classic millwork and granite countertops.

through play off the more contemporary cabinets and glass tile backsplash, creating both a sleek and casual inviting space for family gathering and team cooking,” said Jim Rill.

— MARILYN CAMPBELL



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NEWS

Reston Hospital Center Receives Level II Trauma Designation

The designation provides the surrounding communities additional access to lifesaving trauma care.

HCA Virginia's Reston Hospital Center has achieved designation as a Level II Trauma Center by the Virginia Department of Health's State Health Commissioner.

Reston Hospital Center is the first Level II Trauma Center serving Northern Virginia to open in over a decade. In October 2016, the team received its provisional designation to serve in a Level II Trauma Center capacity providing trauma care to more than 1,200 patients needing higher levels of care.

Reston Hospital Center's Level II designation provides the surrounding communities of more than 3 million people additional access to lifesaving trauma care, allowing emergency responders a new location to transfer patients to for immediate trauma care within the critical "golden hour" during which treatment is most effective.

"This designation is a direct result of our team's focus on enhancing the level of care that we are able to provide to our community. Every resident in Northern Virginia needs and deserves local access to quality trauma care, particularly when minutes may make the difference between life and death," said Dr. Ranjit Pullarkat, Medical Director of Reston Hospital Center's Trauma Services. "Expanding our services into a trauma program enables us to deliver a higher level of care to injured patients, close to their homes and families."

ACCORDING TO MINDY CARTER, director of Trauma Services, as a Level II Trauma Center, the facility is able to initiate definitive trauma care for all patients by providing 24/7 on-site trauma surgeons.

"It's exciting to be part of such a dedicated team of people who are ready to provide a higher level of care for the injured person and their family," said Carter. "As our communities grow, and in uncertain times of potential tragedy, it is vital that more hospitals are prepared for both individual and large-scale disasters."

In addition to having trauma surgeons on-site, around the clock, trauma experts specializing in orthopedics, neurosurgery, anesthesiology, plastic and

facial trauma, thoracic, gynecological/obstetrical, cardiac, and other surgical specialties are on call and immediately available 24/7.

"Trauma designation is a natural progression for Reston Hospital Center. As a tertiary provider in the region, we're able to leverage the expertise of our ORs, ICUs, ED, and surgeons to care for the acutely injured trauma patient during that critical care window," said John Deardorff, president and CEO of Reston Hospital Center.

"With the rapid growth in Northern Virginia, it's our job to ensure that Reston can provide the higher levels of necessary care in a more accessible manner for our EMS partners and our patients," he continued. "Every minute counts, and our ability to provide this level of care – without transfer and close to home – would not be possible without the partnership between our skilled medical staff and hospital employees."

Dr. Ranjit Pullarkat, medical director of trauma services; Dr. Jae Lim, trauma lead for neurosurgery; and Dr. Robert Beer, trauma lead for orthopedics; oversee a comprehensive surgical trauma team in the following specialties: trauma surgery; vascular surgery; thoracic surgery; neurological surgery; orthopedic surgery; hand surgery; plastic surgery; maxillofacial surgery; ear, nose and throat surgery; oral surgery; ophthalmic surgery; gynecological surgery/obstetrical surgery, and urological surgery.

ONE OF ONLY 19 trauma centers in the state, Reston Hospital Center plays a critical role in emergency care in Northern Virginia. Reston Hospital Center also has advanced primary stroke and chest pain accreditations and is recognized as a top performer in heart attack, heart failure, and surgical care. Offering both adult and pediatric emergency services, staffed 24/7 by pediatric-trained emergency nurses and physician specialists, Reston Hospital Center is prepared to serve as an access point for immediate care with timely and improved access to life-saving measures for patients in need of trauma care.

For more information visit RestonHospital.com/Trauma.

South Lakes Swimmers Split Win with Langley

South Lakes High School's Varsity Swim and Dive teams came out strong in their opening meet, qualifying a relay and several individuals for the regional and state meets as they faced Langley High School on Friday, Dec. 1, at the Herndon Community Center. The girls team won with 161 points over Langley's 151. The South Lakes boys lost with 134 points to Langley's 181.

For the girls, the 200-yard medley relay team of Anna Redican, Emily Fritz, Claudia Reverte, and Sophia Landeryou qualified for regionals with a time of 1:53.29. Redican also qualified with individual times in the 200-yard freestyle and 100-yard backstroke. Landeryou qualified in the 100-yard freestyle. For the boys, Ben Barbee made a regionals cut in the 500-yard freestyle, and Jack Edgemond qualified for the state meet in both the 200-yard

individual medley and the 500-yard freestyle.

Other highlights included:

❖ A sweep of the 50-yard freestyle for Landeryou (first), Katie Nguyen (second) and Megan Slater (third).

❖ A sweep of girls diving for Devon Alessandrino (first), Aggie Alessandrino (second), and SJ Brown (third).

❖ A one-two finish for Edgemond (first) and Barbee (second) in the 500-yard freestyle.

❖ A first place finish for the 400-yard freestyle relay team of Edgemond, Matthew Fritz, Matthew Beach, and Hunter Ellis

❖ A first place finish for Emily Fritz in the 100-yard breaststroke.

❖ A first place finish for Solomon Blackmon in the 50-yard freestyle.

BULLETIN

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

SOBER-RIDE FOR WINTER HOLIDAYS

Free Sober Rides. The annual Holiday SoberRider program will operate 8 p.m.-4 a.m. each night from Friday, Dec. 15, 2017-Monday, Jan. 1, 2018. area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download Lyft to their phones, then enter the code in the app's "Promo" section to receive their no cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's weekly Holiday SoberRide promo codes will be posted at 2:00 pm on Dec. 15, Dec. 23 and Dec. 31 on www.SoberRide.com.

ORNAMENT FUNDRAISER

White House Ornaments Sale. Through Dec. 15, 2017 White House Ornaments available for purchase from Assistance League of Northern Virginia for \$22 per ornament. Proceeds benefit the nonprofit's children's programs. Local delivery can be arranged. Visit www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 16

Application Deadline. The Reston Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Committee is seeking volunteers to serve on the committee. All residents of Reston, over 18 years of age are eligible to serve. The committee consists of fifteen (15) members with five (5) positions expiring each year, and three (3) associate members that serve one year terms. To serve on the Reston P&Z Committee, find the application at rpz.myreston.org and return it with your resume, as per the instructions on the application.

TUESDAY/DEC. 19

Land Use Committee Meeting. 7:30 p.m. at the North County Governmental Building, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. The Hunter Mill District Land Use Committee meets. Agenda items include Virginia Electric and Power Company. The Land Use Committee will NOT meet in November. Contact Goldie Harrison at 703-478-0283.

TUESDAY/DEC. 26

Inova Blood Drive, noon-7 p.m., at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston, beside the Pavilion. Schedule appointments at 1-866-256-6372 or inova.org/donateblood.

ONGOING

Herndon High School Library needs volunteers. Training available to help with re-shelving books, pulling books for teacher use, helping to check passes, or other special projects. To learn more, email hhs_library@fcps.edu.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Sunrise at Reston Town Center offers a monthly Caregiver Support Group on the fourth Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8 p.m. Monthly support group offers a safe place for family caregivers, to meet and develop a mutual support system and to exchange practical information and possible solutions. Learn about resources available in the community and how to manage caregiver related stress. Call 703-956-8930 or email Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com to RSVP.

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

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As Good As It Gets



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Five weeks of blissful ignorance. (Speak for yourself. I am.) No 24-hour urine collection. No pre-chemotherapy lab work. No chemotherapy infusion. No CT scan. No follow-up appointment with my oncologist – or any other doctor for that matter. No brain MRI. No fasting. No emailing. No prescription-drug refilling. No vitals. No weight check. No taste/eating side effects. No anything. Other than pretending and presuming that all is not wrong in my “whirled” (my underlying diagnosis), life is for the living, and I’m living proof, random though it may be, that an incredibly grim/surreal prognosis: “13 months to two years,” was not all it was cracked up to be.

Forgive me if I unleash my pent-up inner demons. As a cancer patient, there’s just so much to worry about; daily, weekly, monthly and always, that when you get a break/brake in the action, it becomes a moment in time to celebrate and cherish.

Good things may come in small packages, but great things come in five-week intervals. And though the minor deficits I have as a result of nearly nine years of chemotherapy have not dissipated; in the scheme of things, in the midst of two-fortnights-and-a-half of “uncumbrances,” to quote my late father, I am “untethered,” to once again quote my father. This time however, quoting the late, great Sid Caesar for a skit he performed (involving “an elephant,” my father always said) on “The Show of Shows” back in the early 50s.

And so for the next month and change, I am almost normal (or a reasonable facsimile thereof); other than following my daily anti-cancer, non-Western routine which I have long ago assimilated into my dos and don’ts, that is. A routine which, though it can always be enhanced, is a direct result of the advice I’ve received from my certified Holistic Health Coach. And despite the fact that I may not exactly be on the straight and narrow – more like the squiggly and wiggly, I certainly am not on the path I was when my cancer cells activated after I slid into my first PET scan back in early February 2009, and “lit it up like a Christmas tree,” according to my thoracic surgeon. An indication/confirmation which led to a surgical biopsy a week or so later which then led to the last nine years of my life.

Still, it’s been a life worth living and one for which I have few regrets. I have lived so far beyond my original prognosis, it’s not even funny; it’s ridiculous. Sure, I’m doing more of the right things than I ever did, but hardly am I the poster boy for “see what happens when you” If I’m the poster boy for anything, it’s more likely “how to maintain and even increase your weight while being treated for stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer.”

Not that I won’t savor the moments ahead, but I am mindful, which led to the substance of this column, of what happens after this semi-party is over: Jan. 2, 2018 – 24-hour urine collection; Jan. 3, 2018 – pre-chemotherapy lab work; Jan. 5, 2018 – chemotherapy infusion; Jan. 17, 2018 – CT scan; and finally, Jan. 26. 2018 – follow-up appointment with my oncologist to discuss the results of my scan, and then maybe another emotional honeymoon or, God forbid, a nightmare that diagnosis to date has rarely raised its ugly head.

That possibility roams my head, constantly; compartmentalized – yes; “in the vault” – yes, but unfortunately, “the cancer,” (as “Forrest, Forrest Gump” said) still in my body and, medically speaking, not yet something one can flush out with treatment. But there’s always hope.

In the past few years, the FDA has approved half-a-dozen new lung cancer drugs, more than during the preceding decade. I don’t think medical professionals would say they have lung cancer on the run; they might say however, they have it on the trot. Which is good for me because I can’t run, but I can trot.

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

OPINION

Save Healthcare for Children Right Now

If U.S. Senate fails to act soon, 69,000 children and pregnant women in Virginia, more than 8 million nationally, will lose health coverage.

The Children's Health Insurance Program, CHIP, provides health coverage to low-income, children with family incomes too high to qualify for Medicaid, up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level in Virginia, up to \$49,200 for a family of four. In Virginia, coverage under CHIP is called Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS) and covers more than 69,000 children and pregnant women. More than 8.4 million children are covered nationally under CHIP.

Ironically, families with children covered under FAMIS (note that the S stands for "security") will receive letters this week letting them know that their medical insurance security ends in January unless the U.S. Senate acts to reauthorize (fund) CHIP by the end of the year. The House of Representatives passed a bill to reauthorize CHIP in November, funding it mostly through cuts to programs in the Affordable Care Act.

The letter to Virginia FAMIS participants reads:

"We are sending you this letter because these people in your family are enrolled in FAMIS or FAMIS MOMS:

"FAMIS and FAMIS MOMS are paid for by state and federal funds through the Children's Health Insurance Program known as CHIP. For

20 years CHIP has had the strong support of Congress and has been renewed many times. We are hopeful that Congress will once again provide the funding to continue this program. However, because Congress has not acted yet, we need to let you know that there is a chance the FAMIS programs may have to shut down.

"If Congress does not act soon, the FAMIS programs will end on Jan. 31, 2018."

Having tens of thousands of uninsured children is bad health policy for every Virginian. It's better for all children in school to have all children be able to access health care, both preventative care and care when they are sick.

According to a recent publication in the New England Journal of Medicine:

"The body of evidence summarized here indicates that coverage expansions significantly increase patients' access to care and use of preventive care, primary care, chronic illness treatment, medications, and surgery. These increases appear to produce significant, multifaceted, and nuanced benefits to health.

"Some benefits may manifest in earlier detection of disease, some in better medication adherence and management of chronic conditions, and some in the psychological well-being born of knowing one can afford care when one gets sick. ... Some of these changes will ultimately help tens of thousands of people live longer lives.

"Conversely, the data suggest that policies reducing coverage will produce significant harms to health, particularly among people with lower incomes and chronic conditions."

Also, having health coverage leads to greater financial security, and that helps the economy. "There is abundant evidence that having health insurance improves financial security," according to the same study.

Virginia's U.S. Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine have repeatedly called for a vote to reauthorize CHIP.

Yesterday, they said, "Today is a scary day for a lot of families in Virginia, and it was completely preventable. We asked Senator McConnell multiple times to help us support the 66,000 children and 1,100 pregnant women in Virginia who receive their health care through the CHIP program, but Republican leadership still hasn't brought it forward for a vote. There is a bipartisan bill on the table, and it's critical that we pass it before Congress leaves for the holidays so we can give some peace of mind to Virginia parents who are worried about whether their children will have health insurance in the new year."

We wish everyone peace of mind in the New Year.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

COMMENTARY

A Matter of Perspective

BY JEAN JIANOS

In Washington, D.C. it is common to see a tourist posing for a photo, trying to create the illusion that they are holding one of the monuments in the palm of their hand. A similar kind of photo was prominently displayed as a party gag at a birthday party for a friend. The man celebrating his birthday was shown in the photo talking with his hands. In the background of the photo was a bikini-clad friend, creating the illusion that he was cupping her breast in his hand, in effect groping her. Hilarious, right?

The man being roasted by his friends acted sheepishly, but he was not really embarrassed. After all, he was depicted as being in control and the dominant figure in the photo.

The female friend who was also present at the party was mortified and left the room angry and close to tears. Overreacting, right? No sense of humor.

Perhaps another person would have

laughed it off in an attempt to regain equal footing with all the other party guests, but then none of us would have recognized this for what it was — one of "those situations."

She purposely had not been consulted about the use of the photo because it was suspected she would object to her body being used as the brunt of a sexist joke. Her friends, a group of men and women, thought she shouldn't mind too much because she looked good in her bikini, but that was not our decision to make.

In that moment when the photo was revealed she went from being a peer to a prop. We were using someone else's body for our own entertainment and satisfaction at the expense of their dignity. We had put that other person in a position where they couldn't object before the fact and would feel bullied into not objecting after the fact. There is a right and a wrong. The only matter of perspective is whether we see it.

Jean Jianos is a local freelance writer.

LETTERS

Armed as For a War Zone

To the Editor:

I have followed the gun control correspondence with dismay. I hope nobody is under the misapprehension that a few tweaks like better gun purchase checks, closing some loopholes and clamping down on some fast fire gadgetry — all in themselves desirable — will somehow make a significant difference to America's national disgrace. While every gun death reduced is good, we are still not even in the right ballpark in dealing with the scale of the problem.

The reason Britain has negligible gun deaths compared to America is that gun ownership is very low, about 7 percent of America's figure, and guns are heavily regulated. As a result, there is no arms race between potential attacker and attacked and no arms race between criminal and police.

Most of the recent gun control proposals have been, frankly, marginal fiddling and a sop to our consciences. If enacted, they would barely inconvenience the NRA.

Without drastic reduction in the number of guns — by say 80 percent — alongside very tight gun type and use restrictions, we will continue to live in a country where deer get far better protection than humans and where daily slaughter of children and adults is normal.

Wringing our hands and pretending, almost weekly, that we are still trying to understand the reasons for this global anomaly — gun deaths at 45 times the UK — may make us feel better but it falls way short of solving the problem. If the number of guns is not drastically reduced then we had better just hunker down and get used to another century of this madness.

But please, let's not wring our hands and ask why it happens. We know the answer to that. Per hundred people, we have twice the number of guns in Yemen! We are armed as for a war zone.

Ridley Nelson
Great Falls

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