

McLean CONNECTION

McLean Highlanders forward, Andrew Hale #55, junior, goes for a rebound against Langley Saxon defenders Friday night in a rivalry game at Langley High School. Langley won, 60-53.



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JANUARY 17-23, 2018

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Northern Virginia Lawmakers Push for Menstrual Equity

General Assembly to consider of bills providing feminine hygiene products in schools and prisons.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

When a City of Alexandria woman was booked into the Fairfax County jail, she wasn't wearing white underwear, the only color allowed. It's not like she packed a bag, and she didn't know that she would be arrested on a shoplifting charge. So when the deputies confiscated her underwear she started worrying about what would happen when she started menstruating.

"They give you these pads after they have not given you any underwear, so there's really no place to hold the pads," she said. "If you start a menstrual cycle while you are in there with no underwear, they don't give you anything to protect yourself."

While she was behind bars in 2015, inmates were limited to two pads a day. She says they were the cheapest kind available, which means they were very thin and more than two were often needed. She said she heard some of the other inmates begging

for more pads, but the deputies would not provide them.

"So I've had to sit on one pad for half of the day and then use the other pad to sleep through the night so that when I wake up in the morning I could get two more pads," she said. "It definitely makes you feel less than a person, like I'm not even worth a 50-cent pad."

HER EXPERIENCE in the Fairfax County jail is common say leaders of a nonprofit group known as Bringing Resources to Aid Women's Shelters — known by the acronym BRAWS. That's why they are pushing members of the General Assembly to pass a number of laws to provide "menstrual equity," a growing movement in state capitals across the country.

"It's not right to charge them, especially charging prisoners who really don't have much access to money at all," said Del. Kaye Kory (D-38), who has a bill that would require jails and prisons to provide feminine hygiene products on demand. "So it's

wrong. And we shouldn't do it."

Del. Jennifer Boysko (D-86) has two bills that work toward menstrual equity. One would add feminine hygiene products to the list of products that are exempted from sales tax during the annual back-to-school tax holiday. The other bill would eliminate the sales tax for these products altogether.

"It's an area that's probably been overlooked just because it's not a subject that people talk about often in public."

— State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34)

"A woman doesn't have a choice whether or not she wants to buy menstrual products," said Boysko. "And because she's taxed on it that's unfair and it's discrimination and so it's a parity issue and a fairness issue."

THE ISSUE HAS been gaining steam for several years, although lawmakers are still trying to get their bills out of committee and onto the floor. Del. Mark Keam (D-35)

has been working on this issue since 2016, and he says every year the effort gains more supporters. He's currently working on a bill that will require public schools to provide feminine hygiene products in restrooms.

"Boys may snicker and joke about it, but the reality is that these are serious psychological as well as physical problems that girls have to deal with," said Keam. "I've talked to many young women who said this has happened to them and it's so embarrassing, and they can't study or focus on what's happening in the classroom."

Keam acknowledges that his bill would be an unfunded mandate for school divisions across Virginia. That's one of the reasons state Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) is taking a different approach — a budget amendment that would provide funding for groups like BRAWS to distribute feminine hygiene products to prisons and homeless shelters.

"It's an area that's probably been overlooked just because it's not a subject that people talk about often in public," said Petersen. "Really what we are talking about is more matching funds for the community, and we are basically coming late to the party."

WEEK IN MCLEAN

Discussing Leadership of Women in Islam

The McLean American Association of University Women (AAUW) January program features a panel discussion on Leadership of Women in Islam presented by the Muslim Women's Coalition (MWC).

Uama Farooq, Director of the Greater Washington D.C. Area Office of MWC, will provide an overview on the work of MWC and moderate a panel of women who will share their experiences and perspectives on what Islam offers to Muslim women and how they incorporate their faith in their daily lives, professionally and personally. Panelists include Sabira Qureshi, a development consultant who focuses on poverty alleviation, gender equality, and human rights; Ambereen Shaffie, an environmental attorney; and Mehreen Farooq, vice president and senior fellow at the World Organization for Resource Development and Education.

All are invited to attend this program on Saturday, Jan. 20, at 10 a.m. at St. Luke Catholic Church, Parish Hall, 7001 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Snow date is Jan. 27, 10 a.m. at McLean House.

SCHOOL NOTES

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

Schuyler Tanous, an undergraduate student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has been selected as a recipient of the Phillips Ambassador scholarship to study abroad in Asia. A business administration major, Tanous will study through the Chulalongkorn Business School in Thailand this spring.

Christian Gilbert, of McLean, graduated with the Bachelor of Applied Science degree from Troy University (Troy, Ala.).

Kelsey Lambert, of McLean, graduated with the Bachelor of Science degree from Troy University (Troy, Ala.).

Taylor V. Goldman, of McLean, is participating in an off-campus

study abroad program during the fall 2017 semester through St. Lawrence University (Canton, N.Y.). Goldman is a member of the class of 2019 and is majoring in biology. Goldman, who is studying abroad with St. Lawrence University's Kenya Semester Program, attended Georgetown Day School.

W. Spencer Hedge, of Great Falls, has been admitted to study at Oxford, UK. Hedge has attended Great Falls Elementary, Cooper Middle School, Langley High School and George Mason University.

Julia Stucky, of Great Falls, qualified for the fall 2017 dean's list at Belmont University (Nashville, Tenn.).

Paige Galiani, of Great Falls, was named to the fall 2017 dean's list at Lehigh University (Bethlehem, Pa.).

Brendan McDonough, of Oakton, a sophomore Intelligence Analysis major at York College of Pennsylvania, has been named to the dean's list for the fall 2017 semester.

Margaret V. Baule, of Oakton, was named to the dean's academic honor roll for the 2017 fall semester at Baylor University (Waco, Texas).

Adam Joseph Putch, of Oakton, was named to the dean's academic honor roll for the 2017 fall semester at Baylor University (Waco, Texas).

Blake Prather-Johnson, of Vienna, earned dean's list status for the fall 2017 semester at Lehigh University (Bethlehem, Pa.).

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Kofi Annan, president of the Fairfax County NAACP, moderates the Town Hall-style conversation with U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D), in a community room above Giardino Italian Restaurant in West Springfield.



U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D) speaks with Dr. Michelle Woody with the Fairfax County NAACP, the organization that hosted the Town Hall with the senator.

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Town Hall Told of 'Chaos-Causing Trump Effect'

Fairfax County NAACP hosts Town Hall gathering with Kaine.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D) spent almost two hours with area residents at a Town Hall-style gathering in West Springfield on the evening of Jan. 11, hosted by the Fairfax County NAACP and moderated by the organization's president, Kofi Annan.

Annan began: "From the outside, from our perspective, it looks like no one knows what's going on, it's chaos [on Capitol Hill]. How are things going in your view?"

The junior senator from Virginia since 2013, Kaine answered that in terms of the daily workings of the Senate, his response would be mostly unchanged from the last few years to this moment. "In our general work, more happens cooperatively than you think. A lot less happens than should. For example, Obama Care. We spent a year fighting to protect health care for 32 million Americans. Instead of repeal, we should have been working on improve, and we weren't."

But the real change today in Kaine's view is "the Trump Effect, not knowing, quite frankly what new surprise will come along."

Kaine spoke of the alleged vulgar remarks made by President Trump earlier in the day about immigrants and some of the countries from which they came. "I mean, you hear that and you just don't know what to say."

THIS LATEST CONTROVERSY, according to Kaine, makes the work being done to address the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Act (DACA) and immigrants in the country under Temporary Protection Status (TPS) that much more difficult.

"And then we didn't know that last week

was going to be 'open season for offshore drilling week' around the country," Kaine added, saying that this decision was followed this week by an exception for the state of Florida. "Why Florida? Because we listen to Floridians and the Governor there opposed it. Well, so do we in Virginia."

Kaine admitted that the "Trump Effect" was chaos-causing and frustrating when there "is so much critical work on the table, like hurricane emergency relief and avoiding a government shutdown," but instead, he says, that work gets side-tracked. "Every week it's left hooks, curve balls and surprises."

Annan also asked the senator his opinion of racism in America, including "Why isn't the Ku Klux Klan categorized as a terrorist organization?"

"I don't know," replied Kaine. "To me, it is. I am not sure of the process, but you know, I now plan to find out."

Racism has long been a societal scourge, Kaine said, but that it was the election of Donald Trump and the actions and comments made by the Trump administration that "gave permission to express those racist views" basically with impunity. But he still sees good that may come from this new attitude of "taking off the mask."

"You know who and what you are up against. To really deal with a problem you have to know its dimensions." It is Kaine's belief that the exposure of the depth and breadth to which racism continues to exist will help bring focus to the issue and aid in the fight against it.

The attendees questioned Kaine and the topics were wide-ranging.

Nayely Lopez is a field employment specialist with CASA, an organization that works with low-income immigrant commu-



Yasmeen Durrani and Naila Alan, both of Herndon, came to the meeting to ask what U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D) would do about the Trump travel bans. "Keep up the fight, work with those who oppose them," replied the senator.

nities. She attended the session with Sookyung Oh, area director for the National Korean American Service and Education Consortium (NAKASEC), and Jung Bin Cho, also with NAKASEC. "Will you vote to approve the continuing resolution [to fund the government] if there is not a clean DACA bill before then?" she asked.

Kaine was unwilling to commit to her request. Despite being a "passionate advocate" for immigrants, he also said "I am an anti-shutdown person" and cited the damage done to the Virginia economy and many of its citizens because of the government shutdown in 2013. "I need to see the details of the bills being put forth before I can make a decision. I think we are really close."

THE QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS kept coming — environmental protections

and the effects of climate change, LGBT rights and the status of transgender persons in the military, protection against voter suppression, advancing opportunities for minorities at Governors Schools in Virginia (a program started in 1973 by then-Governor Linwood Holton who would later become Kaine's father-in-law), even the possibility of promoting programs like Fairfax County's Diversion First (aimed at diverting individuals with mental health issues to medical care versus the criminal justice system) on the national level.

Jorel Sabado of Springfield wanted to know how the senator's Catholic faith affected his political actions. "Of course, your values inform your decisions," replied Kaine, but added that it was not his job to make everyone follow the rules of his church. "That is not why we are elected."

Naila Alam from Herndon, and a member of the All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) worries about the travel bans that have been in and out of effect and in the courts since President Trump first introduced them as an Executive Order January last year. Kaine vowed to continue to fight against them.

Asked to comment on the election of more Democrats to the Virginia Legislature, Kaine responded that it gave him a level of energy and confidence for his own chances in Virginia, it bode well for the expansion of Medicaid in the state, and that as a member of the Senate Health and Education Committee there was a synergy that could result.

Kaine is seeking re-election in November, and has already made campaign stops "in some areas of our state that are really suffering," but said that the Town Hall meeting wasn't about campaigning, but about keeping up a dialogue with all Virginians. "Hearing what the concerns are, and keeping people informed — that's practicing democracy."

OPINION

First Week in Richmond

BY BARBARA FAVOLA
STATE SENATOR (D-31)



It is always exhilarating and humbling to sit in the Chamber as the President of the Senate gavel an unruly body of 40 senators into order. On Jan. 10, Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam did just that. The next day, Lt. Gov. Northam presided over the Senate for the last time. We wished him well and sent him off to be inaugurated as the 72nd Governor of Virginia.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY WEEK

Transparency: Committee votes will now be recorded and live-streamed, so Virginians can hear the substantive debates on bills as they work their way through the process. Most bills, especially controversial ones, face their defeat

COMMENTARY

in committee meetings. This long overdue bit of sunshine will enable Virginians to see for themselves how seriously lawmakers are tackling issues important to them. The link to view meetings can be found under the "Members and Session" tab of the viriniageneralassembly.gov website.

Education: Option for Four-Year Teaching Degree: I am proud to say that my bill SB 76 to enable prospective teachers to potentially gain a teaching degree in four years, rather than five, passed out of the Senate Health & Education Committee unanimously. This will reduce the opportunity cost of becoming a teacher, a factor that weighs heavily on prospective teachers who have incurred a large school debt, yet they have the desire to enter

an important but low-paying profession.

Children & Families: Kinship Care Bill — My bill (SB 44) provides support payments to relatives who are willing to offer kin in foster care a permanent home. It passed out of the Rehab and Social Services Committee but was referred to Finance. More than 75 percent of the cost of this kingship program, called "Fostering Futures" is born by the Federal Government. I really hope the money committees can find the \$45,000 to start this program.

On a lighter note, my bill to help small business that bake alcohol infused confectionery products obtain an ABC license, so they may continue to grow their businesses, passed out of committee, as well.

Your emails and support are crucial to the legislative process. It is an honor to represent you and to fight for our values.

The state senator represents parts of Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun.

Mr. speaker — Not Mr. Speaker

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



One of the first tasks in a new session of the Virginia General Assembly is to decide who is going to run the show. In the Senate of Virginia, the decision is made by the voters of the Commonwealth when they elect the Lieutenant Governor whose principal duty is to preside over the Senate.

In the House, the Speaker of the House is the presiding officer who is elected by the members of the House. The political party with the most members has control of the House and elects the Speaker. Republicans control of the House is 51 to 49 this session, a sharp drop in the 66-34 control of recent years. The closeness of the balance of power led to some meaningful discussions that should result in more transparency in the operation of the House.

My interest in becoming the presiding officer of the House by being elected Speaker was well known. Once the two disputed delegate elections were decided in favor of the

COMMENTARY

Republicans there was no way I could reasonably expect to win. Only the Republican who had worked in his party and in the legislature for decades was nominated, and he was elected unanimously. That helped the session get underway in a cooperative spirit. There will be ample opportunity for debate when the many bills that reflect the issues before the General Assembly are considered.

What does a Speaker wannabe do when his party does not gain control of the legislative body? I have decided for myself that if I cannot be the formal Mr. Speaker of the House of Delegates then I can return to my role as Mr. speaker (small "s") speaking out on tough issues that some may want to duck, and I can speak out on institutional practices that are not transparent or fair. In this way, I can best serve my constituents and the long-term interest of the Commonwealth. I can also serve as a mentor to the many new exciting members that are joining the House of Delegates, and I can

help to reduce any feelings of intimidation they might be experiencing. Certainly the legislature provides experiences that are not replicated in any other role in life.

The techniques of mass communication through phone calls, postcards, rallies, opinion writings, and other practices that were so successful in helping to get candidates elected can be utilized in the legislative process to help influence the outcome of legislation. I have already been seeing groups shifting from advocacy for individual candidates to advocacy for issues. On issues like expansion of health care and independent redistricting, a strong public voice and advocacy are necessary for success.

There will be more opportunities for the public to follow the legislature in real-time this year than ever before. Video streams of meetings of House Full Committees can be accessed online. Download an instruction sheet at https://publications.viriniageneralassembly.gov/display_publication/209.

You can contact me in Richmond by using regular email, kenplum@aol.com or by calling my local telephone number 703-758-9733, which will ring in my Richmond office.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Preserving Character of McLean

To the Editor:

Downtown McLean is being invaded by prospective developers looking for tiny pockets of land to build high density buildings. The current proposed six-story condo with a parking garage, to be built on the existing parking lot behind Chipotle is the most imminent.

The notion that a small parking area can be torn down and redeveloped into a huge condo complex sets a precedent for others to follow.

We have already been negatively impacted

by the Tysons development, which is causing relentless traffic, and is slowly changing the character of our town.

McLean residents, before we lose our downtown McLean to Urban Sprawl and become another Clarendon or Reston Town Center, write your Supervisor and say No to the proposed condo behind Chipotle in McLean.

Lynn O'Looney
McLean

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.

By email: north@connectionnewspapers.com

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New Year, New Order Local organizers teach methods for streamlining a space.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

With the holidays now a memory, local organizers are getting requests from those with overflowing buckets of ambition to create and maintain a clutter-free space.

“One of the first things to learn is that a few minutes spent on a few tasks each day can go a long way in maintaining order,” said Jodie Jacobs of SOUPerior Organizing. “Decide how important a clean, clutter-free space is to you and follow through on keeping it that way. Prioritize it like other important things in your life.”

One habit that Susan Unger of ClutterSOS teachers her clients to focus on simple things that can be done easily and frequently. “In general, I recommend keeping up with household duties on a daily basis so none of them become a bigger project,” said Unger. “For example, don’t leave dishes in the sink. Load the dishwasher after every meal and put all cooking and food prep items away so the counters are clear.”

Establishing a daily routine so that tidying becomes second nature is a technique that Unger uses in her own life and teaches to her clients. “I always make my bed first thing in the morning,” she said. “Having a neat bedroom is a great way to start the



Teaching children to put away toys at the end of the day can create a peaceful environment.

day.”

Also on her recommended list of daily tasks: apparel. “Be sure to put all clothes away on a daily basis rather than leaving them on a chair or the floor,” said Unger. “Clean clothes should be hung up or put in drawers and dirty clothes in the laundry basket.”

In fact, Unger tells clients to gather the entire family at the end of each day and spend 10 minutes tidying as a group. “Make a sweep of your house and determine which items need to be put in their proper place,” she said. “It makes for a less stressful and



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JODIE JACOBS

Small tasks such as putting away clothes each day can lead to an organized space.

more pleasant morning when you’re not waking up to clutter sitting around,” said Unger.

Deal with mail on a daily basis so it doesn’t pile up, advises Unger. “Immediately recycle or shred the junk mail and put bills, items to file and reading in an appropriate place.”

Whether it’s a small basket by the front door or storage boxes placed under a bed, one technique for tidiness is having a designated space for items. “Kids’ homework should have a landing place like a backpack,” said Jacobs. “The backpack should

go in a particular place, like on a hook. You have to figure out what works for your family.”

Keep bathrooms in order by adding over-the-door hooks to hold towels, suggested Todd Martz, Home on Cameron in Alexandria. “This might make the room appear smaller, but it [offers] a place to put towels,” he said. “Include a decorative bag on the door hook for toiletries so they’re out of the way.”

“Add an ottoman or coffee table with storage,” continued Martz. “Maximize the space next to a utility or laundry room by adding a ... shelf to hold blankets.”

Whether it’s once a week or once a month, schedule time to spend on organization projects and record it on a calendar, advises Jacobs. “Tie it to something that you already do and select a time that won’t be overrun by other events, she said. “If you know that every Sunday at nine o’clock, you always watch a television show, set aside that time to go through mail, pay bills and respond to invitations while you’re watching. That way, your time won’t get bumped for a soccer game or business meeting.”

One caveat that Jacobs offers her clients is, “Maintaining a routine doesn’t mean that you won’t slip up at times,” she said. “You have to hold yourself to realistic standards or you’ll get discouraged.”

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McLean Highlanders guard, Robert Leggett, junior, holds the ball from being stolen by two Langley defenders Friday night in a rivalry game at Langley High School.

PHOTOS BY COLIN STOECKER/THE CONNECTION



Langley High School fans rush the court after the Langley Saxons Boys Varsity Basketball team wins against the McLean Highlanders Friday night in a rivalry game at Langley High School.

In Packed House, Langley Beats McLean

Saxons win tenth consecutive rivalry game.

BY COLIN STOECKER
THE CONNECTION

In a crowded gym at Langley High School Friday night, the Saxons Boys Varsity Basketball team defeated the McLean Highlanders for the tenth straight time, 60-53.

Both teams were squarely matched until the fourth period when the Langley Saxons powered through to win with just five fouls. The McLean Highlanders struggled to reclaim the ball in a full court press down to the final seconds of the game.

The rivalry between McLean and Langley has always been a friendly one. But between both sections of cheering students the gym was sweaty and the rivalry was stronger than ever.

"The gym will be sold out. We will play in front of a packed house. It's always a nail biter, and that's the way a high school game should be," said Mike O'Brien, McLean's Head Coach.

"Mike O'Brien and I are good buddies. I love the rivalry game when both teams are good. Tonight is going to be one of the best Langley-McLean games in a while. There's a buzz around the rivalry," said Langley Head Coach Scott Newman.

Langley's five-man squad is led by two seniors, Chase Beckett and Colter Carton. Beckett, small forward for the Saxons, had 21 points and seven rebounds.

"There were ups and downs and we started out slow, but we proved we

could play hard and we did," said Beckett. McLean's 5-7 record this season had them optimistic going into the game, Especially with a close win against Herndon on Tuesday, 81-62.

"We've started playing pretty well. We didn't win a game last year and we needed to get the kids used to winning games," said O'Brien. "The kids have a lot of belief right now, to understand that they can win games and take that momentum into tonight."

But Langley proved the better team even without Tre Vasiliadis, Langley's sophomore starting point guard who spent Friday's game on the bench from a previous concussion. He missed the last six games, but according to Newman, he will be playing again soon.

Mike Redding, a senior at McLean High School, was keeping score at Friday night's game. "Both teams played hard and it came down to the best one. It came down to the end and they put out a good effort," said Redding.

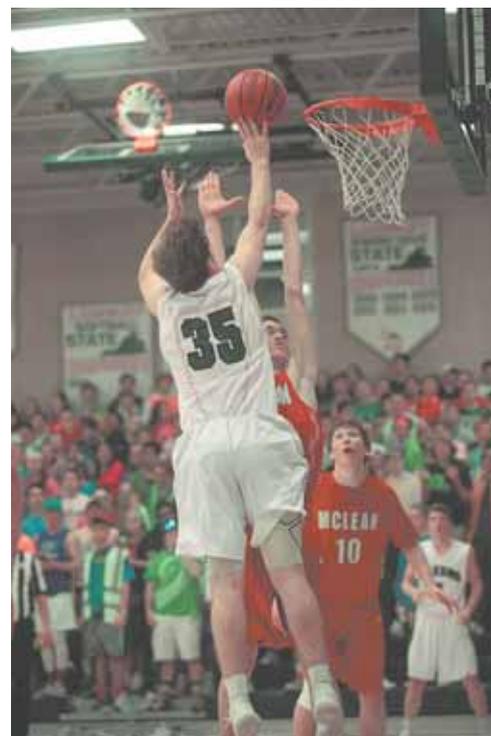
Supporting Rise Against Hunger

Rise Against Hunger was accepting cash donations at the game in large black buckets carried by Langley High School seniors, both from Great Falls, Chris Obolensky and Grace Roemer.

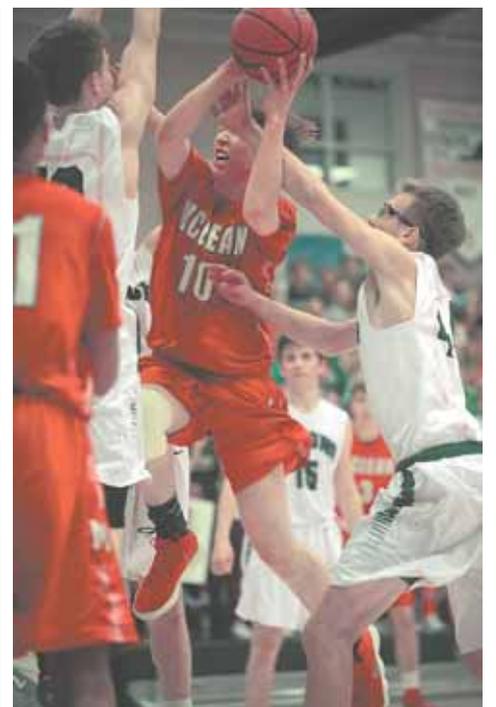
Rise Against Hunger's goal in partnership with Langley High School is to raise \$29,000 this year to package 100,000 meals to be air-dropped in countries affected by hunger around the globe. They are accepting donations at Langley High School through Jan. 19.



Langley High School seniors, Grace Roemer and Chris Obolensky, both from Great Falls, collected money for Rise Against Hunger Friday night at a McLean rivalry game at Langley High School.



McLean Highlanders guard, Evan Stout, junior, defends the hoop Friday night in a rivalry game at Langley High School.



McLean Highlanders point guard, Matias Prock #10, junior, goes up for a layup against Langley's defense Friday night in a rivalry game at Langley High School.

Activist Athletes Discussed in McLean

William C. Rhoden presentation a part of Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration at Old Firehouse in McLean.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

As part of the McLean Community Center's 2018 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, William C. Rhoden gave a two-hour talk to a few dozen people on the subject of Activist Athletes on Sunday, Jan. 14, 2018, at the Old Firehouse on Chain Bridge Road in McLean.

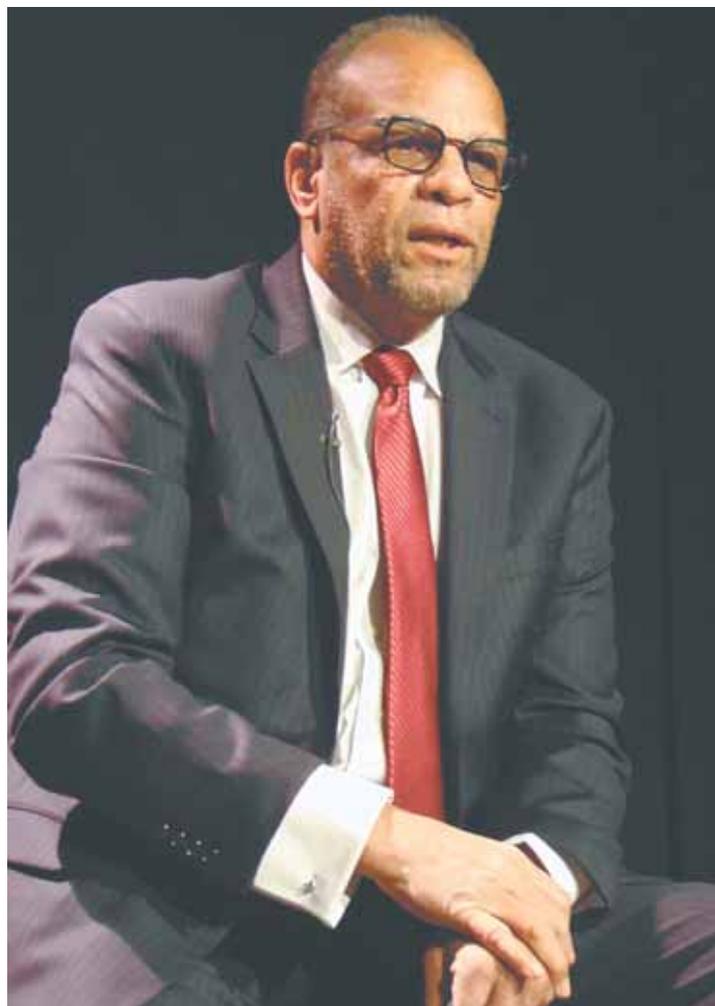
The columnist and editor-at-large for ESPN's *The Undeclared* – a website about sports, race, and culture – spoke about Martin Luther King Jr. as well as current athletic controversies involving Colin Kaepernick; former 1968 Olympians Tommie Smith and John Carlos; as well as 1936 Olympian Jesse Owens.

THE YEAR 1968, when Dr. King was killed, was a transformative year, he said. He was 17 and a senior in high school in Chicago at the time of the assassination. "I remember there was this gasp; I couldn't believe it. I was so stunned," said Rhoden, a former sports columnist for the *New York Times*, of the shooting. "I remember the next day my instructors had been crying all night. It was the Prince of Peace who had been assassinated."

The Morgan State University English major offered another memory: "I remember when I was 5 [in 1955], that Emmett Till was killed. He was from Chicago. His mother left his casket open so everyone could see what they did to this kid. A group of white men came to his house, tortured him, shot him in the head, beat him, and dumped his body in a river. That's the kind of stuff that happened in the home of the brave and the land of the free."

He said what awakened him was the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. "As a black athlete, you were trying to figure out where you fit in with the activism that was going on," said the former football player for the Morgan State Bears.

During the Olympics, he was watching the 200-metre race, and Tommie Smith won and broke a record; Peter Norman from Australia came in second; and John Carlos was third. "My favorite moment was when the athletes stand at the victory stand. It's always an emotional thing. They were playing the 'National Anthem,' and these guys, Smith and Carlos, they raised their fists... That was the longest two minutes. You knew instinctively these guys had basically ruined their lives. You sensed they were doing something out of the ordinary. They didn't



William C. Rhoden speaks on Activist Athletes at the Old Firehouse in McLean on Sunday, Jan. 14, 2018 as part of the Martin Luther King Jr. presentation.



A group gathers around William C. Rhoden after his talk on Activist Athletes at the Old Firehouse in McLean on Sunday, Jan. 14, 2018.



A few dozen people attended the talk by William C. Rhoden on Activist Athletes at the Old Firehouse in McLean on Sunday, Jan. 14, 2018.

say anything. That has become the most iconic sports photograph made possibly in sports history," he said.

The incident had a major impact on him, he said. "It began to transform in my mind the roles that athletes could play," he said, adding that the 1968 Olympics had the largest contingent of black athletes ever. They won more medals than any other group of athletes before them.

He also mentioned how from the 18th century to the beginning of the 20th century, that black jockeys dominated the field

of horse racing. "Black athletes dominated every sector of the industry – from jockeys to trainers. But eventually white track owners got tired of it, and by 1915, they were gone," said Rhoden, the author of "Forty Million Dollar Slaves: The Rise, Fall and Redemption of the Black Athlete."

THE FAST FORWARD TO 2016-2017, when Kaepernick started to kneel during the National Anthem as a form of protest for the oppression of people of color and the issue of police brutality. Other athletes

joined him and it really blossomed, he said. "With Kaepernick, the rule was you stand at attention during the National Anthem," he said. "What had happened in the sports arena was white fans had gotten used to black athletes basically being silent."

He said Kaepernick, who was quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, then became a free agent but could not get a job. "It was clear it was a blackball. I thought the tragedy was it became a labor issue," he said. "The issue is here's one of your members who is clearly being blackballed."

So then Donald Trump chimed in on the issue, urging NFL owners to fire players who kneel or engage in silent acts of political protest. "With this administration, everything is a reality show. And the attention shifted to the NFL," he said.

"All of a sudden, Kaepernick isn't invited to some of the meetings. And now they want to start negotiating with the owners. So Kaepernick said 'no,' we're not going to stop. The owners consistently kill the players in negotiation. They said we'll give you \$89 million. [Eagles Safety and leader of the NFL Players Coalition] Malcolm Jenkins said, 'I will not protest anymore.' So what happened? They stopped. What happened was the protests ended. That was basically the end," he said.

He added, "It all boils down to money. That's where we are as a nation. Money has become our highest value now."

SCHOOLS

The kindergarteners at Pine Springs Elementary in Falls Church put their heads down waiting to see what will be in front of them once they open their eyes. Every child got a gift and they were very excited once they opened their eyes.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Kindergartner Kiara gives Eleanor Lavin a hug once she sees her gift. Lindsay Bovenzi's advanced journalism students at Cooper Middle School went to Pine Springs Elementary to decorate cookies and give gifts to the kindergarteners.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Langley's competition included 10 students in grades 4-8 who were chosen based on their scores on a qualifying test.

Fifth-Grader Wins The Langley School Geography Bee

On Jan. 11, fifth-grader Lucas Flaherty won The Langley School's National Geographic Bee, moving him one step closer to the national championship and a \$50,000 college scholarship. Langley's Bee marked the first round in the 30th annual National Geographic Bee, a geography competition held in thousands of schools across the country which is designed to inspire and reward students' curiosity about the world.

Langley's competition included 10 students in grades 4-8 who were chosen based on their scores on a qualifying test. During the Jan. 11 school-wide Bee, contestants were challenged with oral and written geography questions, ranging from the locations of mountain ranges and rivers to the

names of cities and countries. Students not only displayed their knowledge of world geography, but also showed confidence and poise as they competed on stage in front of the entire school. All grade levels cheered on the competitors with support and encouragement.

As Langley's winner, Lucas will take a qualifying test to determine state competitors. Up to 100 of the top scorers on this written exam from each state will then face each other in their statewide Geographic Bee in April. In May 2018, state champions will participate in the national competition in Washington, DC, with the winner earning the national title, a \$50,000 college scholarship, and an all-expenses-paid expedition to the Galapagos Islands.

Cooper Middle Students Experience Joy of Giving

On Dec. 15, Lindsay Bovenzi's advanced journalism students at Cooper Middle School went to Pine Springs Elementary in Falls Church to decorate cookies and give gifts to the kindergarteners.

There were approximately 100 children and the gifts came from Bovenzi's students, their parents and Cooper faculty.

The kindergarteners had their eyes closed while the gifts were being placed in front of them and were excited and surprised once they opened their eyes and saw

what was in front of them.

When asked what she liked most about the trip, advanced journalism student Rachael Stahl said, "I loved seeing all the kids faces light up when they got their presents."

Bovenzi said that she had started this trip because she think it's a good way to give back at the holidays. This has been going on for nine years and will be making more children happy for many more years.

— NIKHITA RASTOGI



Children were so happy with all their gifts that they held onto them tightly, thankful for what was in front of them.

BASIS Independent McLean Showcases Global Cultures

BASIS Independent McLean's (BIM) Parent Community Association (PCA) hosted its Second Annual International Day to celebrate cultures around the world and in the school community. The PCA transformed BASIS Independent McLean's cafeteria, the Great Hall, into five continents: Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America. The event brought together students, parents and faculty to celebrate the school's diverse community.

"This is a great first community event of the new year because it brings families from all grades together in celebration of the diversity of our families and different cultural traditions," said Ron Kim, head of school of BASIS Independent McLean in McLean.

International Day began with a parade of 22 international flags carried by students and families from all divisions. Students, parents and faculty traveled the world by visiting tables that families prepared. Eleven different countries were represented through traditional food, dress, artifacts and presentations about the country. Countries represented included: Australia, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, Greece,



PHOTOS BY MARY CUNNINGHAM

Angelika Utagawa, BASIS Independent McLean sixth grader, represents Russia at International Day.

India, Iran, Poland, Russia and Ukraine.

In addition, preschool through fourth grade students collected passport stamps after visiting and learning about each country. Students who collected all 11 stamps received a prize, while Upper School students volunteered throughout the event. Students and families also showcased cultural performances including traditional dress, dramatic reading, singing and dancing.

For more information about BASIS Independent McLean, go to mclean.basisindependent.com/.

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

The 2018 Eclectic Essentials

production features four plays that focus on relationships: For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls, Death Be Not Loud, Capsmittment and One Click Away. Eclectic Essentials: Relationships will be performed at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Jan. 19-20, 26-27, Feb. 2-3, as well as at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 28, and 2 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 4. Tickets are general admission and available for \$14 at the Vienna Community Center, online at viennava.gov/webtrac, or at the door, if still available. Visit viennatheatrecompany.org or e-mail vtcshows@yahoo.com for more information.

Friday Night Telescopes. The Roll-Top observatory is available to the public for viewing the skies on Friday nights: Jan. 19 and 26, 7:30-9:30 p.m. The Analemma Society holds Friday Night Public Viewing Sessions at Turner Farm on Springvale Road in Great Falls. The public may use the newly mounted telescopes or bring their own telescope or binoculars to use outside. There is a lot to see in the night sky. Events are weather dependent. Please check the Analemma tweet page (or directly at @AnalemmaSociety) for updates on Friday viewing if the weather looks questionable. Visit www.analemma.org.

Art Exhibit. Through March 31 at Great Falls Library (Small Conference Room), 830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. View an exhibit of watercolors by Artist Betty Ganley featuring her love of nautical scenes. Visit bettyganley.com.

Great Falls Farmers Market. Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 778 Walker Road, Great Falls. Music, vendors, fresh produce, fresh prepared food, delightful bakery, spices from around the world, wild-caught fish, grass-fed, free-range meats, organic-fed poultry and eggs. Email kathleen@greatfallsfarmersmarket.org for more.

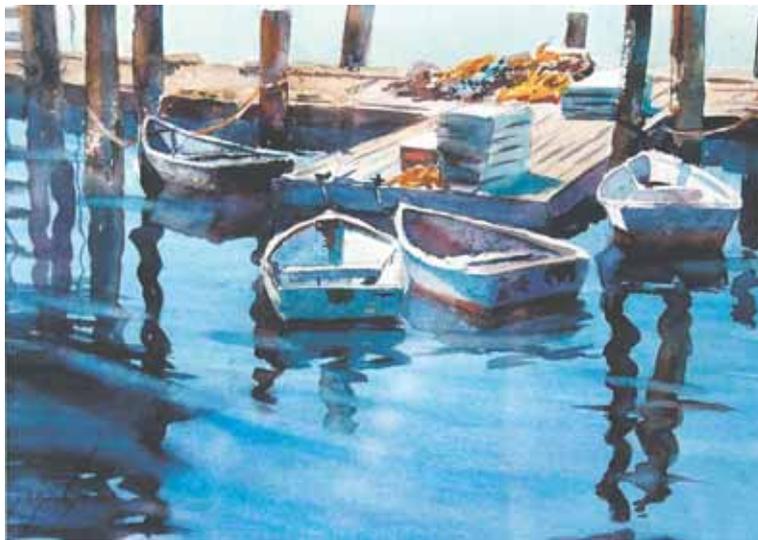
Free Tai Chi. Every Saturday, from 7:55-9 a.m., Introduction and Beginners' Practice, meet on the outdoor basketball court located directly behind the Dolley Madison Public Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave. in McLean Central Park, McLean. Call 703-759-9141 or visit www.FreeTaiChi.org for more.

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

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

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

The Arts of Great Falls School offers winter classes for adults and children of all skill levels. Visit www.greatfallsart.org for more.



Art Exhibit

Through March 31 at Great Falls Library (Small Conference Room), 830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. View an exhibit of watercolors by Artist Betty Ganley featuring her love of nautical scenes. Visit bettyganley.com.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 17

Art Workshop. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Vienna Arts Center, 115 Pleasant St. Artist Jacqueline Saunders is hosting a one day workshop. Call 703-319-3971 or visit www.ViennaArtsSociety.org for more.

McLean Newcomers and Neighbors Luncheon. 11:30 a.m. at the Kazan Restaurant, 6813 Redmond Drive, McLean. Deborah Kosciw, CPA, will discuss "Getting Info Ready for Tax Time". \$30. Visit www.McLeanNewcomers.org for more.

FRIDAY/JAN. 19

Improv-Extravaganza. 7 p.m. at Herndon ArtSpace, 750 Center St., Herndon. For one-night-only, The Alden's (the) Unruly Theatre Project and Loudoun County High School's Improvasaurus will bring their signature improv styles to ArtSpace Herndon. Visit www.artspaceherndon.org.

MONDAY-FRIDAY/JAN. 22-26

Wildfire's 10th Anniversary. Wildfire at Tysons Galleria, 3rd floor, McLean. Wildfire is celebrating 10 years and will offer special menus, and prize drawings. All week long, Wildfire will feature 10 Year Birthday Lunch and Dinner specials. Call 703-442-9110 or visit wildfirerestaurant.com/mclean.

THURSDAY/JAN. 25

Genealogy Meeting/Program. 7:30-9 p.m. at Kilmer Middle School, 8100 Wolftrap Road, Vienna. Fairfax Genealogical Society monthly member meeting and program. Librarian Leslie Anderson will discuss the Alexandria Library's resources and help available to family history and other researchers. Open to members and public. Snow date, Feb. 1. Free. Email education@fxgs.org, call 703-644-8185 or visit www.fxgs.org for more.

The Unruly Theatre. 7 p.m. at MPA@ChainBridge, 1446 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The area's hottest professional teen improv troupe will bring you a hilarious night of comedy. Come help them spread some joy while being wildly entertained. Sponsored by The Alden. Free admission. Visit mcleancenter.org.

FRIDAY/JAN. 26

Splitsville & Paragon Village. 8 a.m.-6 p.m. at The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The Old Firehouse teacher workday trip. Teens can experience glow-in-the-dark bowling with big screen video walls and a booming surround sound system that plays their favorite songs. It's a non-stop, high-fiving,

unforgettable good time. Following bowling, the group will unwind with a movie. \$65/\$55 MCC district residents. Fee includes bowling, shoes, lunch and movie tickets. Bring additional money for movie concessions as desired. Visit mcleancenter.org.

Artists Reception. 6-9 p.m. at Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic, 2905 District Ave, Suite 115, Fairfax. Artist Susan Gulick will be there discussing her show "Uncommon Visions," which will be on display Jan. 24-Feb. 25. Visit torpedofactory.org for more.

SATURDAY/JAN. 27

Genealogy Education Session. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Dunn Loring Volunteer Fire Station, 2149 Gallows Road, Vienna. Librarian Leslie Anderson presents "Private Live, Public Records, and the 'Free Negro' Dilemma in Virginia—a discussion of the history and records available on the US Colored Cavalry, as well as on the Free Black community in Virginia. Snow date, Feb 3. Email education@fxgs.org, call 703-644-8185 or visit www.fxgs.org for more.

Artists Reception. 4-6 p.m. at Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW. Jazz It Up! Exhibit open until March 3. Free and open to the public. Call 703-319-3971 or visit www.ViennaArtsSociety.org for more.

A Winter Serenade. 4 p.m. at Carderock Falls Manor, 1323 Calder Road, McLean. Tysons McLean Orchestra presents A Winter Serenade Programme Musicale, a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception with Carlos Ibay, pianist and tenor. With a special preview of Patrons' Gala 2018 "April in Paris." \$80 per person, \$150 per couple. RSVP by Saturday, Jan. 20 to 703-893-8646.

"Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy." 8 p.m. at The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. This 2004 comedy film starring Will Ferrell is a tongue-in-cheek take on the culture of the 1970s, particularly the new "action news" format. Join The Alden staff to quote along with the dialogue, recreating scenes with the help of props and onscreen subtitles and cues. Admission and popcorn are free. Prop bags are \$5 each. Visit www.mcleancenter.org or for Old Firehouse activities, call 703-448-8336.

Helping Hearts and Changing Lives. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Chi Beta Omega Chapter of Falls Church City is partnering with Lilly Pulitzer of Tysons Corner to elevate awareness of heart health. The Lilly Pulitzer store of Tysons Corner will host an all-day shopping event with 10 percent of retail sales for the day going directly to the American Heart Association. Visit www.chibetaomega-aka.com.



McLean
Community
Center
The Center of It All



Here's What's Happening at MCC

2018 MCC Governing Board Election Petition Forms for Candidates



Available Beginning Monday, Jan. 22
Is it your turn to serve your community?

Sponsored by The Alden The Unruly Theatre Project

Thursday, Jan. 25, 7 p.m.
MPA@ChainBridge
1446 Chain Bridge Rd.
Free admission



Teacher Workday Trip Splitsville & Paragon Village



Friday, Jan. 26, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.
The Old Firehouse
1440 Chain Bridge Rd.
\$65/\$55 MCC district residents

Presented by The Alden

ANCHORMAN Quote-Along Movie

Saturday, Jan. 27, 8 p.m.
The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd.
Admission and popcorn are free.
Prop bags are \$5 each.

Sponsored by The Alden

"Best Worst Thing That Ever Could Have Happened"

Sunday, Jan. 28, 2 p.m.
The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd.
Free admission

Open Auditions for The Alden Spring Production

"The Snow White Variety Show"

Mon. & Tue., Jan. 29 & 30, 7-9 p.m.
MCC Class Programs Office
6645 Old Dominion Dr.

The Old Firehouse Family Events Family Fun



Friday, Feb. 2, 7-9 p.m.
The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd.
\$10/\$5 MCC district residents



The McLean Community Center
www.mcleancenter.org
Home of the Alden Theatre
www.aldentheatre.org



Administrative Offices
6631 Old Dominion Dr.
McLean, VA 22101
703-790-0123, TTY: 711



Announcements

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VIEWPOINTS

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Living Dr. King's Dream

— MERCIA HOBSON



**Laura Warrington,
Student, Great Falls**

the march in Charlottesville. I think Reston, in particular, has maintained its welcoming position through difficult times in the past year and serves as an example of Dr. King's dream for other communities to follow."

Since Dr. King's time, there has been much progress in our society, especially in Northern Virginia, which has become a diverse and welcoming community. However, there are still instances that make me think my country is taking a step backward. Like

**Eliza Seigel, High
School Student,
McLean**



"With the increasingly polarized times that we live in, sometimes it feels like the differences between one another are becoming more decisive. With every political and social event that has happened these past years both locally and nationally that was meant to divide us or separate us, there have been reactions that brought all kinds of people from all walks of life together.

"With every event that happened in Charlottesville, where there was a group of people who were opposed to the livelihoods of people of certain religions, races, and identities, there was a community that came together to say that hatred and violence are intolerable and we must progress to make the world a better place.

"That community in the aftermath brought people together, and in that particular sense, Dr. King's dream is very much alive."

FAITH NOTES

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

Youth Activities at Wesley United Methodist Church. Activities are open to all 6th-12th graders. Youth Sunday School meets every Sunday at 10 a.m. in the upper room. Youth Bible Study will meet every Sunday at 4:30 p.m. off-site. Following bible study, ride together to the church for youth group. Email the Youth Ministry Staff for the address. The Anchor meets every Sunday from 6-8 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Join us for dinner, games, worship, and diving deeper into the Word. During the summer, Youth Sunday School meets most Sundays at 9 a.m. in the upper room.

To receive the newsletter or for more information contact youth@wesleyvienna.org.

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, at the intersection of Lewinsville and Brook roads in McLean, invites you for a casual Saturday Service at 5 p.m., followed by conversation and fellowship or for Sunday Services at 8 a.m. or 10 a.m. Sunday School for Youth and Children takes place during the 10 a.m. Service. Check www.stthomasmcleanva.org for special events and services through the year. St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, 8991 Brook Road, McLean, 703-442-0330.

Church of the Holy Comforter, 543 Beulah Road, NE, Vienna, offers a monthly Healing Eucharist with the Laying on of Hands and Anointing for Healing (first Sunday of the month, 5 p.m. at St. Mary's Chapel). The Healing Ministry is led by the Rev. Valerie Hayes and Alexandra MacCracken and includes a team of lay healers who have gone through intentional training and formation. Contact the Rev. Valerie Hayes at vhayes@holycorforter.com.

Yoga Class with a Christian Focus is held Saturdays, 3-4 p.m., McGill Hall or the Library at the Church of the Holy Comforter, 543 Beulah Road, NE, Vienna. This group is suitable for those with beginner and/or intermediate yoga experience. Dress comfortably and bring a mat. Feel free to bring a towel,

block(s) or strap. Contact the Church Office at 703-938-6521.

Mom's Group meets second and fourth Thursday of the Month, 9:30-11:30 a.m. at the Church of the Holy Comforter, 543 Beulah Road, NE, Vienna. Join the group for coffee and fellowship. The group meets in the Lillian Croy Room, near the Church Office. Childcare will be available just across the hall in the Childcare Center. If you are interested in joining the group, contact the Church Office at 703-938-6521 so that we can plan appropriately for materials and childcare.

St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, has Sunday services at 8 – Holy Eucharist Rite I and 10 a.m. – Holy Eucharist Rite II with music. 703-759-2082.

The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. www.jssa.org/growth-learning.

McLean Bible Church. Fitness Class at Body and Soul Fitness. Gain balance, energy and strength at 10 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Free childcare for registered students. Email bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org.

Haven of Northern Virginia provides support, compassion, information and resources to the bereaved and seriously ill. To become a Haven volunteer, please call 703-941-7000 to request an orientation. Volunteers must complete a 30-hour training and commit to one year of service answering Haven phones (2.5 hours weekly). Next training is scheduled for fall 2017.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton, offers the Religious Exploration program for all children, from pre-K toddlers through high school seniors, emphasizing exploration of all religious traditions while developing a personal spiritual path. The program offers classes on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings. 703-281-4230.

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.

First Baptist Church of Vienna located at 450 Orchard St., NW, Vienna. Sunday services are held at 7:45 and 10 a.m. weekly. Wednesday Night with the Family service is held at 6 p.m. followed by corporate singing at 7 p.m. Bible studies take place Tuesday's at noon.

For those struggling physically or spiritually, on the first Sunday of each month, **Christ the King Lutheran Church** offers a rite of healing as part of worship; the opportunity to be anointed with oil and prayed over. During the healing rite, the pastor or another person says a short prayer while two people lay hands on the recipient. Then the pastor or helper anoints them with oil as a sign of God's healing and forgiveness. Christ the King Lutheran Church, 10550 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Call 703-759-6068 or visit www.gflutheran.org.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Child turning 5 years old by Sept.30? If so, contact your child's school to make arrangements for kindergarten enrollment. Most schools begin getting information together now for parents of incoming kindergartners, and many host an orientation or open house. All kindergarten programs are full-day and located in FCPS elementary schools. Check your school's webpage or contact the school directly for specific enrollment information and dates of orientation or visit www.fcps.edu/registration/kindergarten-registration.

FY 2019 SCHOOLS BUDGET

FCPS Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand will present the **2018-19 school year (FY 2019) Proposed Budget** at the School Board meeting on Thursday, Jan. 11, at Jackson Middle School at 7 p.m. The School Board plans to hold a budget work session on Jan. 22, and a public hearing on the Proposed Budget on Jan. 29, with additional hearings on Jan. 30 and Jan. 31, if needed. Get more information on the FCPS budget at www.fcps.edu/about-fcps/budget/fy2019.

GOVERNING BOARD CANDIDATES

The McLean Community Center (MCC) is seeking candidates to run for seats on its 2018-2019 Governing Board. A candidate must reside in the Center's tax district (Small District 1A-Dranesville). Three adult positions and two youth positions are open this year. Key Election Dates:

- Monday, Jan. 22: Petition Packets are available.
 - Friday, March 16: Completed Petition Packets are due at MCC by 5 p.m.
 - Monday, March 19: Candidates' Orientation, 7 p.m., The Old Firehouse Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd.
 - Monday, April 9: Absentee Voting begins at the MCC Administrative Office, 6631 Old Dominion Dr., and The Old Firehouse Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road.
 - Sunday, May 6: Candidates Meet and Greet, 2-4 p.m. Sponsored by the Friends of MCC, at the Old Firehouse Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road.
 - Wednesday, May 16: Absentee Voting ends at the MCC Administrative Office and the Old Firehouse Center at 5 p.m.
 - Saturday, May 19: Elections at McLean Day from 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Call the Center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, or visit the Center's website: <http://bit.ly/2ix7qc1>.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 17

Public Meeting. 7 p.m. in Room 106 of the Herrity Building located at 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. The Fairfax County Park Authority will hold its annual public comment meeting on the agency's proposed fee adjustments. The public meeting agenda includes a brief presentation on the fee process followed by an opportunity for public comment. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/feemeeting for more.

THURSDAY/JAN. 18

Economic Conference. 7:30-11:30 a.m. at the Fairview Park Marriott 3111 Fairview Park Drive, Falls Church. The Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce will host the 26th Annual Economic Conference — *One Region, One Future: Accelerating Economic Growth, TOGETHER*. \$100 for Northern Virginia Chamber members and \$125 for non-members. Visit www.novachamber.org for more.

Caregivers Support Group. 10-11:30 a.m. at UUCF Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. For caregivers to adult family members with dementia, meets first and third Thursdays of every month. Call 703-821-6838 or email jtarr5@verizon.net for more.

JAN. 18-MARCH 15

Winter Classes. The Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna continues its Adventures in Learning (ALL) line up of classes with their Winter 2018 semester schedule. Students may attend one or all of the classes for one \$45 fee and are encouraged to create their own

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Seasons Gratings



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As a baby-boomer, I've transitioned from black and white television to color to "H.D" - and of course now to "Smart Television," and within that evolution, so too has the variety, content and number of channels— and the "demand" that we consumers can make — from home, transitioned as well. And I don't suppose much of it could have happened without advertising and the revenue it has generated. Promoted by people, places and things. From sports heroes to celebrities to news makers to cartoon characters to puppets and on to anthropomorphic agents/avatars and other creative mouthpieces.

I grew up watching television — without a remote, not listening to the radio. I remember seeing "Mr. Clean," "The Jolly Green Giant," "Mr. Magoo," "Speedy" — from Alka Seltzer — among other iconic creatures of the creative, all of whom sent so many messages to so many consumers, ripe for the plucking. A brand new medium had arrived: television, and its audience was extra large and extra eager.

And even though these spokes-things were not exactly speaking from the heart (what heart?), they were speaking/symbolizing with conviction — and repetition. The impressions made on impressionable future consumers were incalculable. It launched a generation. Not the "Greatest Generation," mind you, but a generation nonetheless, prepped and ready to make its mark: in the drug store, the convenience store, the supermarket, the box store and now the on-line store. We are not merely what we buy, we are what and how we are advertised to.

Previously I had written a column about how I loathe the computer-generated characters which have been utilized on television in an attempt to capture consumers' interest. As soon as they appear on television, I switch rather than fight. For me, it's an immediate turn off, literally and figuratively. I am not listening to inanimate objects/creations tell an "animate" (yours truly) object what to do. And though I understand the humanity behind the message, as far as I'm concerned, the delivery system does not compute (an old-fashioned usage). Artificial spokes-things are not worth the computer screens they're drawn on.

What has brought this rant on is a new element in the artificially-intelligent world in which many of us are subjected: holiday greetings from a computer. Mass emails sent by manufacturers from whom as a customer we've emailed, inquired, bought, sold, etc., wishing me a "happy, healthy, prosperous holiday/New Year," yada, yada, yada; click/delete. As fast as I can. Are you kidding me? It's not bad enough that as consumers we are regularly watching/listening to fake spokes-things on television, I am now being directly interacted with through my personal emails too. No. That's where I draw the line/terminate my attention span.

However well-conceived, I am not getting involved with what is in effect, a thing. Pre-programmed messages of this kind are the unkindest cut of all; "Et tu, Brute?" If you/your company can only treat me like a number — and not as a person, don't treat me at all. Don't think for a nanosecond that a holiday missive to a massive holiday audience carries any substantial weight. It doesn't. It provides the exact opposite: a greater wait until I respond. It's akin to be weightless in outer space. It's for bemusement. It serves no functional purpose. And though I can certainly appreciate how getting into thousands/millions of personal email accounts with one keystroke has an appeal, you risk squandering a previously hard-earned resource: goodwill.

You want me as a customer? Don't email me feelings. Email me facts and figures. You really want me as a customer? Then speak to me, really. Save your greetings; and not for next year either.

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



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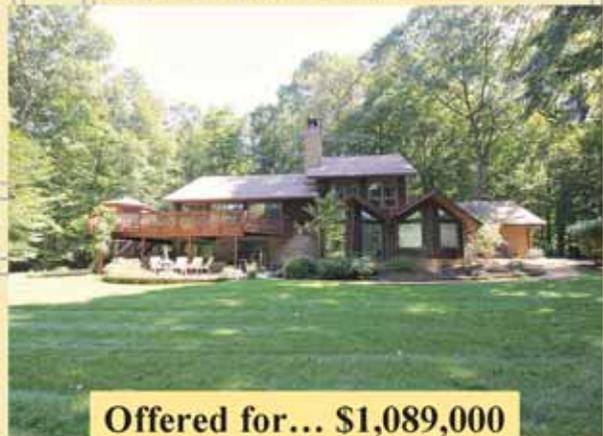


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