

Reston CONNECTION

Monika Jassal and her husband Brad Jordan, who live on Lake Thoreau on Harbor Court, enjoy a January day on the lake.

Enjoying a Day On Lake Thoreau

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PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

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WEEK IN RESTON

Accenture Pays \$1.7 Million to Settle Overcharged Government Contract

Accenture Federal Services LLC (Accenture), located in Reston, agreed to pay \$1,744,559 to settle overcharges billed to a General Services Administration multiple award schedule contract.

The resolution follows a disclosure by the company to the U.S. Army Contracting Command, which arose out of an internal investigation conducted by Accenture. Accenture reported to the government that overcharges had been caused by unauthorized purchases of copy toner that had been surreptitiously made by a subcontractor on the contract.

The disclosure by Accenture to the Army was made pursuant to the Contractor Code of Business Ethics and Conduct under the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR). Accenture provided assistance during the government's investigation.

The resolution obtained in this matter was the result of a coordinated effort between the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia and the Army Criminal Investigation Command.

The civil claims settled are allegations only; there has been no determination of civil liability.

Murder Suspect Held in Juvenile Detention Center

On Monday, Jan. 22, the suspect charged with murdering a Reston couple in December had his detention hearing via teleconference. The judge ordered that the 17-year-old be held at the Fairfax County Juvenile Detention Center (JDC). He was then taken to the JDC by Fugitive Unit, according to FCPD.

The petitions obtained in December for the 17-year-old Lorton boy accused of murdering a Reston couple in their home were served Jan. 19. He is still not being identified because of his age.

The suspect has been charged as a juvenile with two counts of murder after an investigation determined he shot and killed Scott Fricker and Buckley Kuhn-Fricker in the 2600 block of Black Fir Court the morning of Dec. 22. The suspect then shot himself, according to police.

The preliminary investigation determined the suspect, who knows the residents of the home, got inside and was then confronted by the couple.

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NEWS

'The Color Orange' Promotes Understanding and Friendship

A different way to look at race, racism, and ways we can get along.

By MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Reston Community Center (RCC) presented "The Color Orange," a hip-hop concert about friendship and multiculturalism featuring longtime friends rapper/poet Mohammed Bilal and hip-hop musician Josh "Boac" Goldstein. The afternoon performance was at the CenterStage in Reston, on Sunday, Jan. 21. The unlikely duo, who termed themselves "polar opposites" outlined 10 steps towards the path of cross-cultural communication and understanding through a fury of what RCC billed as "hip-hop, theatre, and sheer mayhem."

"THE COLOR ORANGE" was the final performance event in Reston Community Center's weeklong Reston Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, part of the center's current series, "Building Community: Equity Matters. In its marketing booklet, RCC heralded the experiences as "...opportunities for individuals and groups to convene and engage with the continuing issues of social justice and equity as they are lived."

Paul Douglas Michniewicz, director of Arts and Events Reston Community Center, welcomed the audience to "The Color Orange" and introduced Goldstein and Bilal who in 1997 formed the underground hip-hop group, "Orange Flash." Michniewicz spoke about how for Bilal and Goldstein the name epitomized the moment of a great idea, their orange light-bulb moment of innovation and creativity. The two used their unlikely friendship and combined their loves of theatre with hip-hop to actively challenge the American labels of "black and white," Jew and Muslim, "urban and suburban."

"The Color Orange" was an original rap concert based on their friendship and would provide the audience a different modality to look at race, racism, and ways individuals and groups can get along.

A stool, chair, and table supporting a laptop and sound system comprised the minimalist set design for "The Color Orange." It effectively focused the audience's full attention on Bilal and Goldstein as they outlined the 10 steps toward multicultural understanding beginning with Step One: Knowledge of Self. Goldstein initiated and rapped a description of himself as a short wealthy Jewish Caucasian from San Francisco with a passion for hip-hop and rap. Bilal rapped a portrait of himself as a large African male who hailed from a struggling Washington, D.C., neighborhood with similar passions.

In steps two and three, Try Not to Judge and Take a Chance, the pair stressed the importance of not generalizing biases, of saying hi to people one passes. They urged



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Josh Goldstein, hip-hop musician (left) and Mohammed Bilal, rapper-poet and award-winning producer of both music and film (right), performed in "The Color Orange," a hip-hop concert which detailed 10 steps to take toward true cross-cultural communication and understanding. The performance was held at the CenterStage, Reston, on Sunday, Jan. 21, 2018.

"This was phenomenal. A different modality for discussing the sensitive issues of race, racism, cultural, and diversity issues."

— Lisa Sechrest-Ehrhardt, member of Reston Community Center Board of Governors

audience members to get out of their neighborhoods, away from where they frequent and experience something different. "Feel a little uncomfortable," they said.

Goldstein retold the story of when a friend invited him to his neighborhood in a ghetto and how when left alone for a moment, he was initially frightened and mistook what was a friendly encounter with a black stranger, as a danger. Not wanting to put anyone in real danger, the pair offered audience members an alternative to go out and volunteer instead. "Take a chance," they chimed.

In the fourth step, the performers talked about discovering their Common Interests, and how Bilal a Muslim joined Goldstein in rap at his Jewish Community Center.

Step Five: One on One appeared to hold much merit for both Goldstein and Bilal. They stressed that through friendly meet-ups and talking to individuals on a one to one basis, the cultural belief that if someone is different, it is wrong, can be broken. "It can happen in the smallest commonality and interaction," the duo sang. The best place to connect, they said, is at community centers, like the one in Reston.

While Step six placed value on Cultural Understanding, not cultural identity, in the seventh step, Time, Goldstein and Bilal professed a minimum of three weeks to look past genetics. Otherwise, as they affirmed, "You will miss a friendship."

For the eighth step, Boundaries, the pair told the story of singer Sam Cook and the cross-cultural appeal of his music in 1952. When Cook performed in the south, segregated audiences were common with a rope between the whites and the blacks. "Like everything is fine, separated by a twine," Bilal rapped. Ropes may be gone now physically, the pair explained, but the ropes re-

main in people's minds. According to the performers, "We create the boundaries; we decide not to connect."

For the ninth step, Show Some Humanity, the rappers urged audience members not to dehumanize each other by buying into the propaganda of community views but instead seek to learn about the individual, the person. Ending the performance, Goldstein and Bilal shared the 10th tool. Simply put, the rappers said, "Laugh and have fun. Enjoy life."

Audience reaction to the performance appeared very positive. Lisa Sechrest-Ehrhardt, Ph.D. Diversity Trainer/Consultant and a member of Reston Community Center Board of Governors said, "This was phenomenal. A different modality for discussing the sensitive issues of race, racism, cultural, and diversity issues."

Audience member, Antonio Baylor of Fairfax said, "Sameness is not always rightness."

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE, Goldstein and Bilal each named what they

considered the most two important steps out of the 10. "Take a Chance," Goldstein said.

"It's really simple," he explained. "When you step out of your comfort zone, interesting things can happen. One on One resonates with me too, being it brings up a bit about our friendship," he said glancing at Bilal.

For Bilal, Knowledge of Self is key. "You have to understand yourself first before you can understand others," he said.

"And Time," Bilal said. He explained, "The time frame of three weeks came from bell hooks, American author, feminist and social activist when she talked about civil rights trouble. In the '60s, you could only talk about how anti-racist you were by the amount of time that others in the community saw you spending with people who were different."

When asked to provide a "thought nugget," something the performers wanted audience members to recall, both Goldstein and Bilal hesitated. "Diversity, equality, and inclusion are not about Others," spoke up Bilal. "And that's with a capital 'O.' It's about you."

As part of the tour and as an outreach activity to youth, on Monday, Jan. 22, Goldstein and Bilal took "The Color Orange" to students at Hughes Middle and South Lakes High schools in Reston, because as the rappers said about working with youth, "We love it."

VOLUNTEER EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Fairfax County is offering a Free **Caring for You, Caring for Me** for caregivers of older adults. **Mondays, Feb. 26-March 26, 1-3 p.m.** at Insight Memory Care Center, 3955 Pender Dr., Ste. 100, Fairfax. Find out more at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults (under Hot Topics). Call 703-324-7577, TTY 711.

The **Fairfax Commission on Aging** meets on **Wednesday, Feb. 21, 1-3 p.m.** at the Mount Vernon Government Center, Rooms 2 & 3, 2511 Parkers Lane, Mount Vernon. The public is welcome to attend and join in the comment period that begins each session. Find out more at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/olderadults/fairfax-area-commission-on-aging. Call 703-324-5403, TTY 711 for meeting access needs.

Fairfax County's **Family Caregiver Tele-**

phone Support Group meets by phone on **Tuesday, Feb. 13, 7-8 p.m.** This month's topic is Maintaining Relationships While Caregiving. Call 703-324-5484, TTY 711 to register.

Volunteer Opportunities at Senior Centers and Adult Day Health Care Centers
Reston/Herndon

❖ The Herndon Senior Center is looking for an experienced Yoga Breathing Instructor and SAIL Instructors. Apply online at volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov.

❖ The Herndon Adult Day Health Care Center is looking for a Spanish Instructor to teach simple Spanish words to a small group of seniors, Monday, Wednesday or Friday, 10-11 a.m. once a month. Apply online at volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov.

OPINION

What's Wrong with This Picture?

Male, 60 percent; female 40 percent;
less than 2 percent poor; less than 2 percent
African American; less than 2 percent Latino.

If these are the demographics to something, you know it needs to be fixed, no matter what "it" is. Especially something paid for with public dollars.

Male, 60 percent; female 40 percent.
Less than 2 percent poor.
Less than 2 percent African American.

Less than 2 percent Latino.

These are the demographics of this year's freshman class at our Governor's school, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, known as TJ.

We also know that there are geographic disparities (some middle schools have many more students admitted than others; some have none).

State Sen. Scott Surovell represents a part of the county that tends to be under represented at Thomas Jefferson, and he is kicking off what no doubt will be a lively discussion

EDITORIAL

by introducing SB787, Governor's Schools; enrollment, which would use both economics and geography to change the admissions dynamics at Jefferson.

Summary:
"Requires any academic school Governor's School that has a focus on math, science, and technology and that has an overall enrollment of over 1,000 students to accept for enrollment (i) a sufficient number of students eligible to receive free or reduced price meals such that the total of such students is at least 50 percent of the weighted average of the participating divisions' percentage of such students in the previous school year and (ii) at least five students but no more than 15 students from each middle school in each school division eligible to matriculate students to such Governor's school who have completed at least two full years at such middle school."

The school divisions currently participating

in TJHSST are: Arlington County, Fairfax County (includes City of Fairfax), Falls Church City, Loudoun County, Prince William County.

We've said this before, because these demographics have been trending in this direction for more than a decade.

Fairfax County Public Schools has a single elite magnet school, Thomas Jefferson, and TJ is frequently referred to as the top high school in the country. Dramatic disparity in the makeup of admissions at TJ is an indicator of disparity in early identification of students as gifted and talented, of access to advanced classes and enrichment, and in the basic education that the Fairfax County Public school system offers to all of its students.

School leadership can't continue to act like there are things they can't do anything about. Surovell deserves credit for giving an incentive to get started.

Learn about the referral and screening and selection process for full-time (Level IV) and school-based (Levels II-III) Advanced Academic Programs at www.fcps.edu/registration/advanced-academics-identification-and-placement.

— MARY KIMM
KIMM.MARY@GMAIL.COM

LETTERS

Our American Story

To the Editor:

One hundred years ago, my grandparents left eastern Europe to take a chance in making it in America. They were poor, spoke no English, had little formal education and were probably not seen as particularly desirable immigrants.

They worked hard and started small businesses, a laundry and a candy store. Their sons fought in WWII and then they, our parents, got mostly blue-collar jobs. They, in turn worked hard, made sure we studied hard and we all got college educations.

Now, three and four (and beginning five!) generations into our American Story, we are teachers, social workers, engineers, counselors, and business people, working to improve our country and our communities.

Our family story has been repeated millions of times over. It may be your story, too.

All because America saw the value of allowing a large, diverse influx of people who were willing to work hard for the American Dream. The value of continuing that diversity is as true today as it was 100 years ago.

Mark Menzer
Reston

A Matter of Style

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

The experiences of the Virginia colonists with King George III taught them a lesson not forgotten even until today. Executive authorities are not to be trusted. Monarchies are likely to try to take away the people's rights and property.

The assertions of the Declaration of Independence were to make it clear that the people of America had sworn off monarchical government. They were not about to replace a king with a president or a government who might try to exert the kind of absolute executive power they had under the king.

Instead, controls were incorporated in the U.S. Constitution as well as state constitutions to keep the executive authority in check. Virginia's limitations on the governor were especially limiting. For example, the governor's term was one year. He could run for re-election more than once, but likewise he could be turned out after just one year.

We have loosened up somewhat in modern times by extending the term to four years, but there is a limitation of one consecutive term. The governor can run for an additional term, but it cannot be consecutive with the first. I think the one-term limitation is unnecessarily restrictive and have voted on more than one time to allow the governor to run for a second consecutive term. One term may keep a governor under control, but it can also limit his or her effectiveness.

Governor Terry McAuliffe was a high-energy, strongly motivated, hard-charging governor whose accomplishments exceeded those of his predecessors. He accepted the fact he had just one term, and he



worked energetically to get all he could done in the relatively short four-year term.

He pushed the legislature to get things done, and he did not hesitate to use executive authority when necessary. He was taken to court by the Republicans for restoring citizenship rights to those who had been incarcerated, but he won and restored citizenship rights to 172,000 ex-felons. He brought about a New Virginia Economy of high employment, job growth, and attractiveness to those seeking to locate a company here.

Governor Ralph Northam who served under the shadow of Governor McAuliffe as lieutenant governor was always recognized as being extremely able but without the show of high-energy and flair of the Governor. No one questioned his ability, but it was widely concluded that he would bring a different style to the governorship. Most expected a mild-mannered, cordial leader who would govern more by consensus.

Clearly the styles are different, but there may have been a bit of selling short Governor Northam because of his easy Eastern Shore manner. His inauguration speech as well his first speech to the General Assembly was anything but mild or equivocal. It was as strong and as direct as any that Governor McAuliffe delivered.

Calling upon his background as a physician, he built a hard case for the expansion of health services to the people in need in the Commonwealth. He is as direct as anyone I have heard speak about the need for common-sense gun control measures. He is emphatic in his defense of women's reproductive rights.

We may not have a second term for the governor in Virginia, but we have a governor taking over who is going to continue the policies of the first. The difference in the two will simply be a matter of style.

Reston CONNECTION

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PEOPLE



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From left: Brad Jordan with friends Serge Dvoretzky and Greg Alfeo.

Enjoying a Day On Lake Thoreau

Monika Jassal and her husband Brad Jordan, who live on Lake Thoreau on Harbor Court, enjoy a January day on the lake. The lake hasn't frozen over in more than a decade and they were out having as much fun as possible skating, sliding around, playing hockey, and enjoying the beautiful ice — trapped bubbles, and weird sounds as it shifted. Jassel and Jordan moved to Reston six months ago. Jordan grew up in Reston from 1976 through 1991 and then left for more than 20 years. He just returned, married Jassel and is happy to be back in Reston after so many years away.



Monika Jassal on the lake.

POETRY CORNER

Lake Song

You sing to me in the winter
But I cannot place the tune,
I know you sing to others too,
As you shimmer with the moon.

Do you lament the season's loss
Of autumn's grace and beauty?

Are you afraid of winter's dark
And winds that blow so cruelly?

I hear you moan, or do you sigh,
Or are you saying "Life goes By."
Or do you want to say to me
"Just listen with intensity."

— RICHARD EARL
RESTON

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Reston Camp Expo To Be Held Jan. 27

It is not too early to think about summer. The fifth annual Reston Camp Expo will bring together dozens of nonprofit groups to showcase summer opportunities for children and teens. The free event takes place at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road on Jan. 27 from 9 a.m. to noon.

Community organizations such as Fairfax County Public Schools, Reston Association, Fairfax County Park Authority, Reston Community Center, Cornerstones/Reston Opportunity Neighborhood, Reston Soccer, Fairfax County Office for Children/SACC, Boy Scouts of America, Herndon/Reston Youth Softball, NOVA Labs, Herndon High Drama Boosters, YMCA Fairfax County Reston and more will be on hand.

"It really is one-stop shopping," said Eileen Boone, RCC's Leisure and Learning Director. "This event is super convenient for parents and caregivers to meet with dozens of camp and out-of-school providers."

The agencies are offering a wide variety of camps this summer. Among them: all-day general interest camps, STEM/STEAM camps, sports camps, nature camps and themed camps. The expo is also a good chance for teens and college students to inquire with camp providers about summer job opportunities.

Because only nonprofit camp providers are represented at the Reston Camp Expo, the camp options are also highly affordable. Most organizations offer benefits such as resident discounts, subsidies, fee waivers and other financial assistance.

Correction

There were two errors in the last week's report on Dr. Martin Luther King Birthday celebrations in Reston.

In a report on a keynote speech by Tamika D. Mallory ("Activism in Action") it should have been noted that she was quoting Dr. King by saying "...we will not remember the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends."

Supervisor Catherine Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill) could not attend the community lunch served on the occasion.

THE CONNECTION Newspapers & Online

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NEWS

Fairfax-Loudoun Site Makes First Cut for Amazon HQ2

A site straddling Fairfax and Loudoun counties is one of the locations that has been selected for further consideration as Amazon's second headquarters. Fewer than 10 percent of the 238 sites proposed for "HQ2" are on the short list of locations that Amazon announced last week.

As part of the northern Virginia proposal, Loudoun and Fairfax counties collaborated with developer Open-Rebees to submit the largest non-developed site on Metro that checks all of the boxes that Amazon and other corporate users want and need. As home to a major backbone of the Internet, a top-notch workforce and Washington Dulles international Airport, the two counties are convinced that northern Virginia has all of the assets needed to merit serious consideration.

"We are very excited that northern Virginia is included on the short list as a potential location for Amazon's second headquarters. Fairfax and Loudoun counties are able to offer a great quality of life coupled with an innovative and business friendly culture for future Amazon corporate neighbors and employees. With our highly educated and talented workforce and a location close to Dulles International Airport and a new Silver Line train station, we hope we will have the opportunity to welcome Amazon HQ2 to Virginia," said Sharon Bulova, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

Phyllis Randall, the chair of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, said, "This is a great example of how a region working together can tell a powerful story. The partnership between Loudoun and Fairfax County on a metro accessible site highlights our commitment to provide the best solution where Amazon and their employees can live, work, learn and play."

Gerald L. Gordon, Ph.D., president and CEO of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority, noted that Amazon already has chosen Fairfax County for an east coast campus of Amazon Web Services (AWS). "We are excited to learn that Fairfax and Loudoun counties made the short list of sites that Amazon will consider for HQ2," Gordon said. "The Economic Development Authority, Loudoun County and partners stand ready to demonstrate to the company why our combination of business and quality-of-life assets make this a great location for HQ2 in addition to the mission-critical services AWS provides to the private and public sectors."

Buddy Rizer, executive director of Loudoun Economic Development, explained, "The site Amazon is considering is near Loudoun's Data Center Alley – the largest and fastest-growing data center market in the world. It will be more than fitting for an international e-commerce corporation of Amazon's stature to locate its second headquarters here."



PHOTO BY ROB PAINE/RSVP NORTHERN VIRGINIA/VOLUNTEER FAIRFAX

Peter Beeman of Oakton and his daughters Charlotte, a sixth grader at Waples Mill Elementary School and Grace, a senior at Oakton High School (and a Waples Mill alumni) make Valentine's Day cards during Volunteer Fairfax's Give Together 2018 event, held Monday, Jan. 15, 2018 at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia in Annandale. The deadline for nominations for the 26th annual Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards presented by Volunteer Fairfax is Thursday, Feb. 1, 2018, at 5 p.m.

Deadline Nears for Volunteer Service Awards Nominations

The deadline for nominations for the 26th annual Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards presented by Volunteer Fairfax is Thursday, Feb. 1, at 5 p.m.

If you know of a deserving volunteer or volunteer group that has made a positive impact on the Fairfax County community you are encouraged to visit www.volunteerfairfax.org and complete a service award nomination form today. The Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards is a community-wide celebration of volunteerism that culminates in a breakfast hosted by Volunteer Fairfax, Friday, April 27, 2018, at The Waterford at Springfield.

There are now more than a dozen competitive categories open for nominations including for awards that recognize the top adult and youth volunteer groups; a lifetime achievement honor that recognizes an individual for his or her entire body of volunteer work and the RSVP Volunteer of the Year award that recognizes an outstanding RSVP Northern Virginia senior volunteer.

For a complete list of categories and guidelines and to access a short podcast that includes helpful tips on how to make a nomination shine, visit www.volunteerfairfax.org or call Kristen Moore at Volunteer Fairfax at 703-246-3531.

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.

THROUGH JAN. 26

Coat Drive to Benefit Cornerstones.

Collection in building lobbies. Help us help those in need in our community stay warm this winter. Reston Town Center will be accepting new or gently used winter coats (in good condition and cleaned), and new hats, gloves and scarves. Items will be collected in boxes located in building lobbies for donation to Cornerstones.

Visit restontowncenter.com.

FY 2019 SCHOOLS BUDGET

FCPS Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand presented 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.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 24

DMV2Go at the Pavilion. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Pavilion at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston The wireless office on wheels offers all DMV services: driver's license and ID card applications and renewals, driving records, vehicle titles, license plates, decals, order disabled plates, and more. Information on all services available at dmv.virginia.gov/general/#dmv_2go.

Public Hearing - Planning Commission. 7:30 p.m. in the Board Auditorium of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. The Board of Supervisors authorized the consideration of a Comprehensive Plan amendment for the Sunset Hills Road realignment. The adopted plan for this area recommends three different options for how the intersection of Sunset Hills Road and Hunter Mill Road could be modified. The Board of Supervisors requested that staff consider a realignment of Sunset Hills Road to Crowell Road as a replacement to these three options. The proposed Plan Amendment recommends that Sunset Hills Road be realigned to Crowell Road and that a roundabout be considered as the intersection control. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-zoning/plan-amendments/current/sunset-hills-realignment or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planningcommission/.

FRIDAY/JAN. 26

Nomination Deadline. Nominations are being accepted by the Virginia Department of Transportation for Virginia's 2017 Outstanding Crossing Guard of the Year. Parents, students, and teachers are welcome to submit a nomination and photo online. Visit www.fcps.edu/news/nominations-open-2017-virginia-outstanding-crossing-guard for more.

SUNDAY/JAN. 28

Preschool Information Sessions. 8:45 a.m., 10:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. at St. John Neumann Catholic Church - room B1, 11900 Lawyers Road, Reston. St. John Neumann Catholic Church will be opening a half-day Preschool in the fall of 2018. Attend an information session to learn about classes offered, tuition, and curriculum. Free. Email Preschool@saintjn.org, call 703-860-6158 or visit www.saintjn.org/preschool.

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Lost in Space



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not a reference to the iconic television series of my youth, but there was “danger,” Ken Lourie, and it wasn’t caused by Dr. Zachary Smith nor by “robot,” (Robbie) either. And it wasn’t a conspiracy. It was simply a confluence of absenteeism by my health care providers. Both my oncologist and internal medicine doctor were absent with leave and yours truly was caught in the crossfire, so to speak. Let me provide some context to help you appreciate my dilemma.

I have chemotherapy every six weeks. Accordingly, I have lab work the Wednesday before the Friday to check for anomalies – anomalies which over the years have occasionally delayed my infusion by up to two weeks waiting for my body to settle. In the early days of treatment, my white blood cell count was crucial; too low and no treatment; too high, it was never too high. No treatment and the cancer was left unchecked. An incredibly stressful occurrence when your treatment is stopped. Whether or not a week or two delay ultimately mattered in checking the cancer, it certainly mattered – emotionally, to the patient. You feel adrift, sort of, which is exactly how I felt during the first two weeks of January.

Typically, what my current lab work presents is my creatinine level and the associated glomerular filtration rate, measuring kidney function/efficiency. After nearly nine years of infused toxicity, I have suffered some collateral damage to a major organ. My oncologist and internal medicine doctor are incredibly sensitive and concerned about this damage. Per these results, every medical decision made concerning me; from prescriptions approved to “normal” internal medicine stuff to whether I get “contrast” when I have my scans and MRIs to what chemotherapy drug I infuse and how frequently its infused, is decided with my kidneys in mind. Nothing happens medically until my kidneys sign off on it, if you know what I mean?

As it happened, my creatinine level for my Jan. 12 infusion was higher than usual. When this measure occurs, I know to call the Infusion Center and ask the head nurse if I should come in for treatment. She will contact my oncologist and with his direction, will advise me what to do, except for this week. My oncologist was away and though another oncologist – whom I’ve never met – was covering, I’m not really sure she knows enough about my situation. Specifically that I’m a bit of a special case, per my oncologist’s own characterization of me, and I’ve never gone seven weeks, let alone eight weeks without treatment. Delaying my infusion would break a multi-year precedent. In fact, around the holidays when I asked my oncologist if I could extend my infusion interval from six to seven weeks (to accommodate life), he emphatically said “No.” Moreover (to complicate a covering physician’s decision), my oncologist has also told me that if I were a new patient with creatinine levels as chronically high as mine, he wouldn’t/couldn’t treat me until those levels reduced.

So not only was I in the middle of an unprecedented one to possibly two-week delay in my infusion, but I also needed an oncologist – who I don’t know and who doesn’t know me – to decide/make an exception/maybe risk her medical license (if something were to happen to me), to authorize treatment for a patient whose creatinine levels fall outside of protocol, and me not having either of my two primary-care physicians available for consultation. And other than the default emails advising that both were out of town, I had nowhere to go and no one to turn to.

Heck, I might as well have been on another planet, given the limited choices I had.

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

WINTER FUN & ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

“45 Plays for 45 Presidents.” Through Feb. 4 at NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. NextStop Theatre Company opens a hysterical take on history with the play “45 Plays for 45 Presidents”. The play, which is already selling out performances, presents a series of 45 two-minute plays — one for each American President. In a female-forward twist to the amusing premise, NextStop’s production also casts five women as all the presidents. Performances are Thursdays through Sundays. General admission, \$20-\$55 at www.NextStopTheatre.org or by calling 866-811-4111.

Art Exhibit. Through Feb. 17, various times at the Greater Reston Arts Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. 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 for more.

The Elden Street Tea Shop. Saturdays in ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Sip tea and enjoy a variety of locally made snacks and pastries while enjoying the latest art installations in the gallery. Visit www.eldenstreettea.com.

Small Business Support Sundays. Visit independent stores and restaurants, and those that support small businesses at Reston Town Center, offering specials, discounts, tastings, and localized treats every Sunday. Visit SmallBusinessSupportSundays.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 for more information.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 24

Red Cross Blood Drive. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Call 703-689-2700 for more.

Meet Me at the Movies. 10 a.m. at at Bow Tie Cinemas, Reston Town Center, 11940 Market St. Reston Association presents “LBJ.” Refreshments and door prizes provided prior to movie. Free to 55+. Email Ashleigh@reston.org or call 703-435-6577.

THURSDAY/JAN. 25

Dollars and Sense. 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Monthly group discussion focuses on business leaders and markets. The discussion will focus on “Boomerang: Travels in the New Third World” by Michael Lewis. Call 703-689-2700 for more.

Creative Responses at GRACE. 7-8 p.m. at Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market St #103, Reston. Creative professionals respond to the work on view in the gallery. The short presentation will be followed by open conversation. Presenters may include poets, dancers, writers, musicians, visual artists, and more. All ages. Free and open to the public. Call 703-471-9242 or visit restonarts.org.

FRIDAY/JAN. 26

Harried Americans Roadshow. 7-9 p.m. at Cafe Montmartre, 1625 Washington Plaza N., Reston. The Harried Americans will present their newest variety show and smarty-pants brand of Americana, Jazz, Blues and original songs. The show will feature musical guests, The Aloha Boys and their acoustic down-home, backyard-style Hawai’ian music. The show also includes poet Rod Deacey and comedian Jon Yeager. \$10 at harriedamericans.com or the door.

Swing Dance. 8:30 at Hilton Washington Dulles Airport, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon. Swing Dance with King Teddy. 8:30-9 p.m. drop-in beginner swing lesson; 9-midnight dance. \$15. Visit www.gottaswing.com.

SATURDAY/JAN. 27

Reston Camp Expo. 9 a.m.-noon at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts

Harried Americans Roadshow

The Harried Americans will present their newest variety show and smarty-pants brand of Americana, Jazz, Blues and original songs, Friday, Jan. 26, 7-9 p.m. at Cafe Montmartre, 1625 Washington Plaza N., Reston.. The show will feature musical guests, The Aloha Boys and their acoustic down-home, backyard-style Hawai’ian music. The show also includes poet Rod Deacey and comedian Jon Yeager. \$10 at harriedamericans.com or the door.



The Harried Americans



Aloha Boys



The “45 Plays for 45 Presidents” ensemble includes Caroline Kashner, Brittany Martz, Chloe Mikala, Mary Myers, and Sarah Anne Sillers.

‘45 Plays for 45 Presidents’

NextStop Theatre Company opens a hysterical take on history with the play “45 Plays for 45 Presidents.” The play, which is already selling out performances, presents a series of 45 two-minute plays — one for each American President. In a female-forward twist to the amusing premise,

Neck Road, Reston. The fifth annual Reston Camp Expo will bring together dozens of nonprofit groups to showcase summer opportunities for children and teens. The expo is also a good chance for teens and college students to inquire with camp providers about summer job opportunities. Free. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com or call 703-476-4500.

Post-Rock, Jazz Band . 7-9 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Featuring the Touch Combo band where pop, blues, and folk meld with classic melodies and rhythmic innovation. Visit www.artspaceherndon.org/ for more.

NextStop’s production also casts five women as all the presidents. Performances are Thursdays through Sundays from Jan. 11 to Feb. 4 at NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. General admission, \$20-\$55 at www.NextStopTheatre.org or by calling 866-811-4111.

SUNDAY/JAN. 28

Groundhog’s Day Out. 2-3:30 p.m. at Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Visit a groundhog burrow, learn cool groundhog facts, play games, make a groundhog friend to take home and enjoy some hot chocolate. This program is designed for family members age 2 to adult. \$8 per person, and children must be accompanied by a registered adult. Call 703-437-9101 or visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park>.

THURSDAY/FEB. 1

Millennials Book Club. 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive,

Reston. Title is “Life After life” by Kate Atkinson. Check out Library copy or pick up a copy of one’s own. Adults from early 20s to early 30s. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

FRIDAY/FEB. 2

Open Mic Poetry Night. 7-9 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Featured members of the Poetry Society of Virginia will be present to share their poetry. An open mic will follow, allowing for anyone attending to have a moment on stage. Free and open to the public. Visit www.artspaceherndon.org.

Swing Dance. 8:30-9 p.m. beginner swing lesson; 9 p.m.-midnight dance at Hilton Washington Dulles Airport, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon. The Hula Monsters have been performing since 1988. \$15. Visit www.gottaswing.com.

SATURDAY/FEB. 3

Book To Movie “The Color Purple.” 2 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

SUNDAY/FEB. 4

Soiree Chamber Music Series. 4-5:30 p.m. at UCP Reston, 11508 North Shore Drive, Reston. An intimate salon style performance by members of the Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Greater Washington featuring works by: Albinoni, Menotti, Piazzolla, Rossini and Saglietti. Special performance by Dr. Hai-En Tsai, trombone. Reception to follow the performance. Adults, \$30; seniors, \$25; students, \$20; and children 12 and younger, free. Visit bit.ly/2D2wEcL for tickets. Call 571-483-8444 or visit www.PACOdC.org for more.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 7

Embrace New Beginnings. 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Gerry Gorman will lead this meditation practice. Registration opens Jan. 24. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

Read and Sip. 6-8 p.m. Scrawl Books readers will meet at The Tasting Room in Reston Town Center to discuss books over a glass of wine. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com/event/wine-wednesday-book-chats.

SATURDAY/FEB. 10

Meet the Artists. 3-4 p.m. at the Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Members of the League of Reston Artists display paintings, drawings, mixed media, photographs and two-dimensional works suitable for wall hangings. Visit www.leagueofrestonartists.org for more.

SUNDAY/FEB. 11,

Author Event. 4-6 p.m. at Scrawl Books, 11862 Market St., Reston. Author C. V. Wyk will be at the store to discuss her new YA fantasy novel Blood and Sand. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com/event/blood-and-sand-c-v-wyk.

FRIDAY/FEB. 16

Application Deadline. Greater Reston Arts Center invites artists to submit a proposal for new artwork in response to the prompt, “If you could do anything, what would that be?” Five artists will be selected by Guest Curator Don Russell and GRACE Associate Curator Erica Harrison to participate in the 2018 Mary B. Howard Invitational: STRETCH. Selected artists will receive a \$250 honorarium and \$1,000 for materials. Call 703-471-9242 or visit restonarts.org.

MONDAY/FEB. 19

Children’s Performing Arts Series. 10:30-11:15 a.m. at Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Rocknoceros. Coach Cotton, Williebob, and Boogie Woogie Bennie perform wildly popular award-winning music for the whole family. Rocknoceros has dominated the DC children’s music scene for many years. Ages 1-10. \$4 in advance/\$5 at the door per person, per show. Children under the age of one are free. Call 703-787-7300 or visit herndon-va.gov.