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# Great Falls CONNECTION

This giant tree fell away from the road and towards Jim and Joan Brady's house in Great Falls, landing on the vegetable garden and not the house. As a result of the significant wind event Northern Virginia experienced Friday, March 2, more than 130,000 residents lost power, trees have fallen including more than 50 trees on houses, and 2,343 traffic signals broken throughout the area.

## A Day of Falling Trees

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Requires Money  
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# Money on the Table Required

Board intends to keep options open for a full conversation by advertising tax increase.

BY KEN MOORE  
THE CONNECTION

**S**haron Bulova indicated that the Board of Supervisors will advertise the tax rate March 6 with the full 2.5-cent increase proposed in County Executive Bryan Hill's budget.

"That's not to say that's what we will end up with," she said during a joint budget meeting with the Board of Supervisors and School Board on Feb. 27. School Superintendent Scott Brabrand also attended.

Hill's proposed budget would fully fund the school's budget request, fully fund compensation increases for county employees, and many county priorities.

Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay heads the supervisors' budget committee. "I think we need to make sure we are able to have a full conversation with our community about the budget that's on the table and knowing that the budget funds our highest priorities, but the only way to do that is to implement a tax increase," he said.

Bulova said she understands the impact the tax rate would have. "We are concerned about that," she said.

"When we advertise the tax rate, that will become the ceiling for what the tax rate can be. It can be lower, it can be the same, but it cannot be higher than what we advertise

**"That's not to say that's what we'll end up with."**

**— Chairman Sharon Bulova on proposed rate increase**

on March 6," said Bulova.

The board will officially adopt the FY2019 budget on May 1 after a series of community meetings and public hearings on the \$4.29-billion budget.

If the Board of Supervisors were to adopt the full 2.5 cent tax rate increase, it would amount to an additional \$268 on the average homeowner's annual tax bill.

Sully Supervisor Kathy Smith said she fears talking about an average increase when all homeowners will have different property bills and property assessments.

"When talking about averages, I also think it's useful to talk about medians," she said.

Hill came on board as county executive on Jan. 2, 2018.

"We cannot sustain what we are doing. In my view, this is a one year deal that al-

lows us to have a five year strategic look forward," he said.

"It is key that we become a prioritized county so we can effectuate the change that we need to go forward."

The budget would transfer \$2.26 billion to the school system, 52 percent of the total. Funding the school's proposed budget

would bring teacher salaries closer to market rates, said Brabrand.

"Every year we wait is a year teachers can make a choice to go elsewhere," said Brabrand.

See [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget) for more.



Sharon Bulova



Jeff McKay



Kathy Smith



Bryan Hill



Scott Brabrand

FILE PHOTOS

## FAIRFAX COUNTY TOWN HALL BUDGET MEETINGS

- ❖ **Wednesday, March 7, 7 p.m.**, Sully District Town Hall, Rocky Run Middle School Little Theater, 4400 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly
- ❖ **Thursday, March 8, 7 p.m.**, Hunter Mill Community Summit, South Lakes High School Lecture Hall, 11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston
- ❖ **Monday, March 12, 7:30 p.m.**, Great Falls Budget Meeting, Great Falls Library Meeting Room, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls
- ❖ **Wednesday, March 14, 7 p.m.**, Providence Community Budget Meeting, Providence Community Center, First Floor Multipurpose Room, 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax
- ❖ **Wednesday, March 14, 7:30pm**, Braddock District Council Annual Budget Meeting, Location To Be Determined
- ❖ **Thursday, March 15, 7 p.m.**, Mason District Budget Town Meeting, Mason District

- Governmental Center, Main Community Room, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale
- ❖ **Monday, March 19, 7 p.m.**, Mount Vernon District Budget Town Hall, Location to be determined
- ❖ **Wednesday, March 21, 7 p.m.**, Lee District Budget Town Hall Meeting, Franconia Governmental Center Community Room, 6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria
- ❖ **Thursday, March 22, 7 p.m.**, Springfield District Budget Town Hall Meeting, Springfield Governmental Center, Community Room, 6140 Rolling Road, Springfield
- ❖ **April 10-12**, Board of Supervisors Public Hearings on FY 2019 Budget and FY 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan. See [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/speakers-form](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/speakers-form) to sign up.

# Extracurriculars: Secret Sauce of Success

Superintendent's budget eliminates barrier of \$50 activity fee.

**S**chool Superintendent Scott Brabrand's budget would eliminate a \$50 extracurricular activity fee that went into effect this year. Eliminating the fee will cost the schools \$1 million, but Brabrand said it was important.

"I believe that extracurricular activities in Fairfax County are the secret sauce of success for our kids," Brabrand said, during a joint budget committee meeting held with members of the Board of Supervisors and School Board on Feb. 27.

Brabrand said he conducted grade point average research every year when he was a principal. "We looked at every kid, and regardless of background, regardless of race," he said, when students were in-

**"Extracurricular activities ... are the secret sauce of success for our kids."**

**— Scott Brabrand, School Superintendent**

involved in extracurricular activities they had higher grade point averages.

"Frankly, our kids that do get involved in sports and extracurricular activities already pay a mountain of fees as part of travel, as part of going places and being a part of booster clubs," said Brabrand. "So I don't think an additional fee does anything but set up a barrier for our kids to participate."

Brabrand said two other fees were implemented by the school system for FY2018. Fees will still be mandated for families whose children transfer out of boundary to another school and for students who take

more than six Advanced Placement or I.B. tests.

"The school system pays for the first six," he said.

— KEN MOORE



PHOTO BY WILL PALENSCAR/THE CONNECTION

**The Oakton Cougars defeated the Westfield Bulldogs 59-54 to win the Concorde District Championship on Feb. 16. This year, students who participated in extracurricular activities like sports paid a \$50 fee, but the superintendent of schools proposes eliminating the fee.**



## NEWS

### Day of Falling Trees

This giant tree fell away from the road and towards Jim and Joan Brady's house in Great Falls, landing on the vegetable garden area and not the house. As a result of the significant wind event Northern Virginia experienced Friday, March 2, more than 130,000 residents lost power, trees fell including more than 50 on houses, and traffic signals broken throughout the area.

PHOTOS BY  
JOAN BRADY



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

### Neighbors Pitch In

Langley High School junior Thor Kurzenhauser stands atop a fallen tree blocking River Bend Road near Arnon Chapel Road. Thor and his sister (not pictured) used a chainsaw to help neighbors partially clear a lane that allowed traffic to resume.

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## SPORTS



PHOTO BY WILL PALENSCAR

**Final score, 47-46: Langley players celebrate.**

## Langley Girls Move to State Quarterfinals

The Langley Saxon girls (19-7) faced the Woodbridge Vikings (21-4) girls in the first round of the Class 6 VHSL Championship on 3-3 at Robinson Secondary. Langley would move on to the quarterfinals with a 47-46 win and face TC Williams who advanced after defeating Marshall 50-27. The quarterfinal game will be played at Robinson on March 6. The winner of that game will take on the winner of Landstown-Cosby at the Siegel Center on the campus of Virginia Commonwealth on March 8.

The first quarter Langley came out with an early 11-7 advantage but with seconds to play Rana Azad from Langley converted on a long range three pointer to add 3 more

to her point total giving her 11 for the quarter single handedly outscoring Woodbridge.

The second quarter Woodbridge fought back, outscoring the Lady Saxons 13-9 to pull within 3 at halftime, 23-20.

In the 3rd quarter, four Woodbridge players scored at least 2 points, yet Langley still held a 36-35 lead with a quarter to play.

In the fourth quarter both teams added 11 more points and Langley moved on to the quarterfinals with a 47-46 win.

Langley was led by Rana Azad's 15 points and Jordyn Callaghan's 12. Hailey Chapman and Carly Britt each added 7 points. Woodbridge was led by Jasmine Forte's 12 points. Aaliyah Pitts and Paris McBride each added 9.



**The Langley Saxon girls (19-7) defeated Woodbridge Vikings (21-4) in the first round of state championship, 47-46. Langley's Jordyn Callaghan scored 12 points.**



**Langley's Jordyn Callaghan in action against Woodbridge. In a quarterfinal game Langley faces TC Williams who advanced after defeating Marshall 50-27.**



# HOME SALES

In January 2018, 14 Great Falls homes sold between \$1,375,000-\$550,000.

Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	Postal Code	Subdivision
10506 WYNFIELD WOODS DR	5	4	2	GREAT FALLS	\$1,375,000	Detached	0.85	22066	FOX RUN
214 DONMORE DR	6	7	2	GREAT FALLS	\$1,300,000	Detached	5.16	22066	SENECA FARMS
1115 AMANDA DR	5	4	1	GREAT FALLS	\$1,125,000	Detached	1.10	22066	GREAT FALLS HUNT
10430 DEERFOOT DR	4	4	1	GREAT FALLS	\$1,100,000	Detached	1.84	22066	SPRINGVALE FOREST ESTATES
304 SPRINGVALE RD	3	3	0	GREAT FALLS	\$1,050,000	Detached	2.50	22066	N/A
9693 ARNON CHAPEL RD	4	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$967,500	Detached	2.12	22066	ARNON LAKE
9715 LINDSAY BLAKE LN	5	5	2	GREAT FALLS	\$925,000	Detached	1.76	22066	GREAT FALLS RIVER BEND
11692 HOLLYVIEW DR	5	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$855,000	Detached	0.61	22066	HOLLY KNOLL
9898 SUNNYBROOK DR	4	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$825,000	Detached	2.21	22066	HICKORY RUN
1034 RIVA RIDGE DR	4	2	1	GREAT FALLS	\$818,500	Detached	0.57	22066	LOCKMEADE
11782 HOLLYVIEW DR	4	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$810,000	Detached	0.59	22066	HOLLY KNOLL
9100 STERLING MONTAGUE DR	4	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$800,000	Detached	0.28	22066	WASHINGTON GREAT FALLS
12121 HOLLY KNOLL CIR	5	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$685,000	Detached	0.48	22066	HOLLY KNOLL
821 GOLDEN ARROW ST	4	3	0	GREAT FALLS	\$550,000	Detached	0.51	22066	OLIVER ESTATES

Copyright 2018 MarketStats for ShowingTime. Source: Bright MLS as of February 15, 2018.

## Women Supporting Women

Each year, the Great Falls Friends and Neighbors sponsors a White House Christmas ornament fundraiser to raise money for Artemis House. Artemis House is the only shelter exclusively for women and children in Fairfax County that services victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. Members Maria Volpe and Pat Kuehnelt of the Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Philanthropy Committee were in charge of this fundraising effort.

This year's ornaments, honoring Franklin D Roosevelt, were sold at Great Dogs (in Great Falls), Studio Hair (in Great Falls and Fairfax), Burke Jewelers (in Reston). Proceeds from all the sales of the ornaments went directly to support Artemis House. On March 1, Great Falls Friends and Neighbors presented a check for \$5000 to Jennifer Dalessio,



PHOTO COURTESY OF GREAT FALLS FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

**On March 1, Great Falls Friends and Neighbors presented a check for \$5000 to Jennifer Dalessio, Director of Development for Artemis House.**

Director of Development for Artemis House. Great Falls Friends and Neighbors, as a women's organization, is honored to support such a worthy cause that helps women and children in need.

— DEBORAH NAGY-HUANG, GFFN

## WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

### Town Hall Meeting to Focus on Budget

On Monday, March 12, Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA) will co-sponsor a public meeting on the pending County and Schools Budgets for the upcoming year. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Great Falls Library (meeting room). County Budget Director, Joseph Mondoro, will make the presentation on the budget and Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) will provide context and overview as well as be available to answer questions. Fairfax County is sending staff to present their school budget. Questions from the audience will be taken following presentations. The GFCA members and the general public are invited to attend. <mh> 'Around the World' with Kenneth Garrett<bt>Great Falls Senior Center welcomes back guest speaker Kenneth Garrett, an independent photographer, who will make a presentation titled "Around the World in 24 Days." His photographs reflect his creativity in covering major archaeological sites of the Mayas, Aztecs, Olmecs, and ancient Egyptians and the important discoveries in the evolutionary history of mankind. Garrett has photographed major archaeological sites and has worked around the world for a host of major magazines while also accumulating book credits. The March 20 event will held at The Great Falls United Methodist Church, 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and includes

lunch. A donation would be greatly appreciated for the lunch. Reservations are a must. Contact Polly Fitzgerald at pollyfitz1@verizon.net or 703-759-4345. If you have not renewed your membership, you can do that at the Hospitality Desk. Also look for Message Board to be informed of future programs. For more information, visit gfseniors.org. The event sponsor is Costa Family and Cosmetic Dentistry, 100135 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls.

### Supporting Loved One with Dementia

Great Falls Senior Center will host an event on "How to Best Support a Loved One with Dementia," with Speaker, Karen McPhail, RN MSN, CDP, CCTC on March 26, 2-3 p.m. at Great Falls Library Meeting Room. Come and learn more about cognitive impairments and key considerations for supporting a loved one with dementia.

Karen M. McPhail, the Managing Director of Eldementals LLC, is an aging life care professional with more than 25 years of experience in the healthcare industry. Her specialty is managing complex care needs and providing concierge-style care management for private clients. As an aging life care professional, she has been educated in the various fields of human services, including case management, psychology, nursing, pediatrics, and gerontology. See [www.eldementals.com](http://www.eldementals.com) (Reservations not required)

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# No Guns in the Classroom

Gun safety is an American value.

BY MONTE F. BOURJAILY, IV

In the aftermath of the horrific school shooting in Parkland, Florida, the President of the United States and the head of the National Rifle Association, have advocated arming teachers and hardening schools in other ways. These are shriveled, reactive measures that appeal to fear and rely on the false statement that “to stop a bad guy with a gun, you need a good guy with a gun.”

Introducing guns into the classroom doesn’t demonstrate the virtue of the Second Amendment, it poisons the educational environment, increases the risk that innocents will be hurt and simply challenges “the bad guy” to creatively get around the armed target. We can uphold the Second Amendment, and the rule of law, and ensure Americans’ safety and sense of security with common sense measures, like repealing the Dickey Amendment, that focus on preventing unsafe and malevolent use of firearms.

Arming teachers is a terrible idea. First, it changes the dynamic in a classroom, placing

the weapon between the teacher and the students. Even if its purpose is to protect students, the weapon is a distraction and a barrier. Second, and more importantly, you are introducing more projectile weapons into a chaotic environment, dramatically increasing the likelihood of friendly fire killing children, other teachers and law enforcement seeking to assist. How well do police and soldiers perform in the high stress conditions of an actual confrontation? Does the stress and opportunity for errors increase or decrease when multiple shooters (friend and foe) are added to a situation? Third, in response to the argument that a shooter will avoid schools knowing that teachers are armed, what is to prevent the shooter from wearing body armor? It is easy to buy. We need to stop reacting and problem-solve and innovate, which is our true nature.

Guns are tools, like cars, that can cause serious injury or death when used improperly or with ill-intent. I also am a hunter who grew up respecting guns.

Why is there a “gag rule” (the Dickey Amendment of 1996) on Centers for Disease Control research into the effects of gun violence? How are guns different than cars? The National Highway Transportation Safety Commission collects data on motor vehicle fatalities through the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS).

Gun owners have a Second Amendment right to own and use guns responsibly, not unconditionally. All Americans have a right to gain a better understanding of how guns are used in ways that harm other Americans and in ways that can pose a risk to all of us.

We must respect the Second Amendment, like we uphold all of the Constitution as the rule of law. However, there are few absolutes under the Constitution, including how far we interpret the right to bear arms. Freedom of Religion does not permit the practice of human sacrifice and Freedom of Speech does not permit fighting words. In short, my right to swing my arms ends at the tip of your nose. We Americans are at our best as problem solvers and innovators. We use data and common sense to find solutions. We confront threats, rather than fearfully wait for them. Can we find common ground on reasonable gun control by listening to each other and recognizing reasonable rights and reasonably accepting certain limits in respectful recognition of the rights of others?

*Monte F. Bourjaily, IV is a lawyer who teaches US Government, American History and Philosophy at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. All submissions are in his personal capacity.*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Not Paying Attention in Logic Class

To the Editor:

I was very surprised at the honesty of the headline on your Feb. 21-27 editorial, but then someone pointed out to me that “Another Assault on Common Sense” probably wasn’t referring to the content of your editorial. My mistake.

Since I was wrong about that, maybe I don’t understand the cartoon either. As I understand it, a deranged individual murdered 17 people in a school in Florida; many of that person’s peers “knew” that he was dangerous, but apparently did not mention that to school authorities until after the shooting; school authorities considered him dangerous, but did not go to police; police made dozens of visits to his house, but two investigators concluded that he was not a danger to himself or others; the adults with whom he was living did not notice the aberrant behavior that so many others saw; the FBI was “unable to identify” him as the author of a post indicating he wanted to be a school shooter, and when the FBI received two separate tips actually naming him as dangerous and threatening to become a school shooter, the Bureau ignored one, and failed to send the

second to the local Field Office for action, and when he became the school shooter he said that he wanted to be, the Broward County deputy on duty at the school failed to do his duty and remained outside the building where the shooting was taking place, where he was joined by other Broward deputies who also did not enter the building – and so the NRA was responsible for the atrocity.

I must not have been paying attention in Logic Class.

**H. M. Padon**  
Great Falls

## Conversation Stopper

To the Editor:

If I hear the word “conversation” in the media one more time, in relation to another massacre of humans, I might be driven to violence. “Conversation” is not a solution to any of our social diseases. It is particularly unnerving when the calls for a “conversation” usually relate to gun control, and come from folks who don’t even know the meaning of the words they are chanting. “Automatic” weapons have already been banned for decades. “Assault Rifles” have the same capability as many other guns, but they are just designed to look cool. They are a

legal version of a rifle that a veteran can own as a reminder of the automatic rifle he carried while risking his life for his country.

But the demands for a “conversation,” or for the President to do something rather than nothing, keep getting louder and louder. The hysteria usually includes mantras about the NRA having too much influence. Yet no one seems to grasp the idea that maybe it’s the influence of the National Education Association (NEA) that is too weak and misdirected regarding the interests of teachers who can easily identify kids, as early as first grade, who should never have access to a gun. Maybe the NEA should lobby harder for increased regulation of dysfunctional kids, and the parents that are irresponsible. Even without access to guns, these kids can eventually get a driver’s license, and propel a car or a truck into their schoolmates during a fire drill.

**Gene Phillip**  
Great Falls

## Cowardice and Complicity

To the Editor,

I’m one of the lucky parents. Like most parents, I worked hard during the 18 to 20 or so years it takes to raise my children, educate

them, instill values, help them become productive adults and, hopefully, parents themselves. All those playdates, sports practices, trips to the library, school events, college visits, illnesses, successes, and disappointments we gladly work through, enjoy, suffer through, and, if we’re lucky, our children actually survive and move on. I can think of nothing worse for parents than to have their child, their gift to the future and image of themselves, taken horribly before his or her time.

A parent should never outlive his child. Even a nuclear holocaust is preferable, because then we’d all die, and the parent would not have to pretend to celebrate the memory of what might have been had the promise of this nation been kept. That’s right, the core promise of this nation is embodied in our elected representative’s oath of office to protect its citizens from enemies, both foreign and domestic.

I call out every Republican in Congress and the President and Vice President for violating their oath, sworn on a bible. If they had any integrity, they would resign. There is a moral duty to act to save a life when you have the opportunity, ability and means. Failing to act is cowardice, and worse, complicity.

**Les Halpern**  
Herndon

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# Discussing School Shootings with Children

Open dialogue is key to quelling fear, say mental health professionals.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Helping parents who are grappling with their children's feelings of anger and fear following the recent Florida school shooting and subsequent fallout was a recent topic that Lisa Jackson-Cherry, Ph.D., department chair and program coordinator, Pastoral Clinical Mental Health Counseling & Pastoral and Spiritual Care programs at Marymount University, had with her graduate students. The class discussed how high profile acts of violence can frighten children who might feel as though they or someone they love could become a victim or find themselves in danger. From mass shootings to natural disasters, an open dialogue with children is key to dealing with thoughts and feelings.

"In most instances, talking about the incident helps to gain some control over what is not controlled," said Jackson-Cherry. "Normalizing feelings and thoughts like fear, sadness, anger, and confusion can help children know they are not abnormal in how they are feeling or thinking."

"First ask what they heard rather than starting by telling them about it," added Joanne Bagshaw, Ph.D., professor of psy-

chology at Montgomery College. "I wouldn't get too stuck on the details. Just get a sense of what they know and make sure it's accurate."

In fact, exploration is key. "Encourage children to express their feelings and validate them," said Bagshaw. "You can start by saying, 'I can understand why you're feeling that.'"

Monitor both the amount and source of information that children receive about high profile incidents, advises Bagshaw. "I would really limit their social media and news intake about the violence," she said. "Videos about the shooting are too traumatic, and watching them can be too traumatizing and too dramatic."

Reviewing the family's safety plan can help children feel secure, advises Bagshaw. It's something she did in her own family. "At my daughter's middle school, you can't just walk into a building like they did in Florida," she said. "I reminded my daughter of this and explained the safety differences between her school and the school in Florida. One thing that you don't want to say is that 'That will never happen here.' You want to focus on what's real and what's realistic."

Maintaining a sense of normalcy follow-

ing a public display of violence can help quell fear that children might be feeling, advises Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at George Mason University and a licensed clinical psychologist. "Parents play a key role by staying calm, maintaining household routines, explaining that many events we worry about seldom happen, and stating that we will cope with whatever happens," he said. "Parents should place the highest priority on helping children stay safe."

"I would caution against using leading questions like, 'Are you scared?' because this question already implies they should be scared of something and that may not be accurate," continued Jackson-Cherry. "Depending on their answers, parents can assist in having the child integrate aspects of power and control in a situation where they may not be in control."

While putting national events into perspective in a way that children can understand, Short also advises parents to explore emotions. "Ask children what they are feeling and empathize and validate what they say. Ask children how they feel about school," he said. "Is there anything at school that worries them? Be reassuring that you will help protect them."

Reviewing safety guidelines can help children feel secure, says Short. "Parents [can say that] local police are working to keep the community safe. We need to look out for each other," he said. "Say that high-profile violence is unlikely to happen at local schools because of safety procedures. For example, there are more than 130,000 elementary and secondary schools, and we focus on relatively few schools where shootings have occurred."

Even those children who don't express emotions or appear unaffected by news reports of violence might still be anxious about the event. "Many children may not display outward anger or fear but that does not mean they are not fearful, angry, or sad about what they have heard or experienced," said Jackson-Cherry. "I think in most circumstances, parents asking about a child's knowledge of the event would be a good way to start."

Limit a child's exposure to media coverage of acts of violence and discuss it in an age appropriate manner, advises Jackson-Cherry. "If the parent is watching or listening to the news together with their child, try asking, 'What are you thinking or feeling about what just happened or was reported?'" she said. "I asked my 15 year old, 'Has the school discussed the shooting in Florida? Have you had drill in case it were to happen?'"

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## NEWS

### Troop 673 Promotes Three New Eagle Scouts

Boy Scout Troop 673, sponsored by the Great Falls United Methodist Church's Men's Club, recently celebrated the promotion of three new Eagle Scouts, Buckley Ross, Dakota Brookfield, and Joshua O'Cain, on Feb. 11.

❖ Buckley Ross, son of Margaret and Bruce Ross, joined Troop 673 in 2011. Since joining the troop, Buckley has served in the leadership positions of Patrol Leader, Instructor, Chaplain Aide, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, and Senior Patrol Leader. While serving in these positions, he was accepted into the Order of the Arrow, Scouting's National Honor Society; completed the requirements for joining the Order of the Arrow Brotherhood; and earned 30 merit badges. He participated in three of Scouting's High Adventures: Sea Base (sailing in the Florida Keys), Philmont (hiking in the New Mexico mountains), and the Summit Bechtel Scout Reserve.

For his Eagle Project, Buckley constructed a 12 x 12 foot sandbox in the playground of the Great Falls United Methodist Preschool. The designated area was cleared of grass and a gravel drainage way was installed beneath the sandbox. The construction and installation was accomplished with more than 30 people participating. Buckley has revisited the sandbox every year since it was built in 2014 to top off the sand levels before Preschool begins each fall. It remains one of the most popular playground features today.

Buckley is a senior at Langley High School where he is a member of the varsity Crew team as well as active in the Langley Marching Band and the Wind

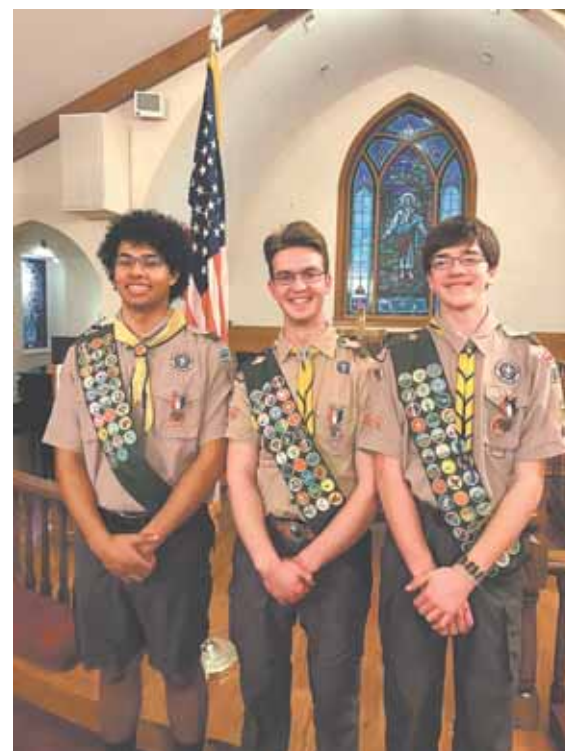


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**From left: Joshua O'Cain, Buckley Ross  
and Dakota Brookfield.**

Symphony. He is looking forward to studying computer science and engineering in college this fall.

❖ Dakota Brookfield, son of Karen Hershey and Jon Brookfield, joined Troop 673 in 2013 after earning the Arrow of Light as a Cub Scout. Since joining the troop, Dakota has served in the leadership positions of Librarian, Quartermaster, Scribe, Patrol Leader, Instructor, and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. He was accepted into the Order of the Arrow,

SEE EAGLE SCOUTS, PAGE 11

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**March 17, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

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at VINSON HALL RETIREMENT COMMUNITY**

**On Saturday, March 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** drop by The Sylvestery at Vinson Hall Retirement Community for a St. Patrick's Day Parade of Homes. This is a perfect time to come and see The Sylvestery.

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# NEWS

## Three New Eagle Scouts

FROM PAGE 10

Scouting's National Honor Society; completed the requirements for joining the Order of the Arrow Brotherhood; and earned 43 merit badges, the National Outdoor Award (for camping), and the Frosted Camper Award. Dakota participated in Philmont, one of Scouting's High Adventures, and also took part in the troop's 42-mile Hike Across Maryland.

For his Eagle Project, Dakota cleared a meadow of invasive plants and shrubs at Riverbend Park and reforested the site with trees and shrubs native to the area. With a number of volunteers, Dakota cleared out stilt grass, brambles, and rose bushes, replacing them with ironwood, birch, and oak trees. The trees have had a survival rate of 80 percent.

Dakota is a sophomore at Langley High School where he is a member of the Science Olympiad team and participates in the marching band. After high school, he plans to pursue a career in the physical sciences.

❖ Joshua O'Cain, son of Chiquita and Bruce O'Cain, joined Troop 55 in 2010 after earning the

Arrow of Light as a Cub Scout, and while in that troop, he served in the leadership positions of Librarian, Historian, and Assistant Patrol Leader. In 2014, he moved to Troop 673, and served in the positions of Patrol Leader, Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, and Senior Patrol Leader. Joshua earned 28 merit badges, the Polar Bear Camping Award, and the Religious Award. He participated in a High Adventure at Summit Bechtel Reserve and plans to join a Northern Tier High Adventure next summer as an adult leader.

For his Eagle Project, Joshua conducted a book drive for the Pediatrics Clinics of Walter Reed Military Medical Center. With the help of Troop 673 and donations from the surrounding community, Joshua collected 2,000 books for the Pediatrics Clinics and the nearby Wounded Warrior Project Center.

Joshua is a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology where he is on the Physics Team and the Varsity Wrestling team. Following graduation, Joshua plans to pursue his passion in physics in college.

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**Wednesday, March 14th** – St. Patrick's Day Beer Tasting and Open House by Scott Maguire, an expert in IPAs and Stout beers. **RSVP by 3/13.**

**Friday, March 23rd** 11:30 am to 1 pm – AARP's Focus on Seniors and the Five Pillars of a Brain-Healthy Lifestyle presentation. Join us to learn more about AARPs's new initiatives and steps to keep your brain healthy and active by Genea Luck, Associate State Director, AARP VA State office. Lunch provided. **RSVP by 3/21.**

**Sunday, April 1st** – Spring Brunch from Noon to 2 pm - \$25/ person – Join us for our Arbor Spring Sunday Brunch by Chef Paul. Thinking about transitioning to independent senior living and cuisine is important, we are a great option. **RSVP by 3/27.**

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# Call for Candidates

## McLean Community Center 2018 Governing Board Election

**Qualification:**  
Must be a resident of Small Tax District 1A-Dranesville.

**Petition to Become A Candidate:**

- Candidate must pick up own petition packet at the Center, and return own petition.
- Adult candidate must have ten (10) signatures of adult tax district residents on petition.
- Teen candidate must be 15-17 years old as of McLean Day (May 19) and have ten (10) signatures of teens also 15-17 years old who live in the tax district and in the candidate's high school boundary area.


**Positions:**

- Three (3) Adult Seats - Three-year terms.
- Two (2) Youth Seats - One-year terms. One (1) each for the Langley and McLean high school boundary areas.

**Key Petition Dates:**

- **January 22:** Petition Packets are available at the McLean Community Center Administrative Office, 6631 Old Dominion Dr., McLean, VA.
- **March 16:** Completed petitions are due to the Center's Administrative Office by **5 p.m.**

☐ For more information visit the Center at:  
6631 Old Dominion Dr., McLean, VA 22101  
call: 703-790-0123, TTY: 411  
email: elections@mcleancenter.org  
or visit: [www.mcleancenter.org/about/candidates](http://www.mcleancenter.org/about/candidates)

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# CALENDAR

Submit entertainment announcements at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## ONGOING

### "The Farnsworth Invention."

Through March 11, Thursdays-Sundays, various times at 1st Stage in Tysons, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Writer Aaron Sorkin's signature style lends itself to the story of the invention that changed our lives. In 1929, two ambitious visionaries race against each other to invent a device called "television." Who will unlock the key to the greatest innovation of the 20th century: the ruthless media mogul, or the self-taught Idaho farm boy? \$33 general admission, \$30 seniors (65+), \$15 students and military. Purchase at [www.1ststage.org](http://www.1ststage.org) or 703-854-1856.

**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](http://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](mailto:kathleen@greatfallsfarmersmarket.org) for more.

**The Golden Girls** of Northern Virginia, a senior women's softball league, is looking for players through April. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. Games are on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna. Visit [www.goldengirls.org](http://www.goldengirls.org).

**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.

**MCC Summer Camps.** Plan now to register children for MCC's enriching summer camp programs for children ages 3 through 18. Visit [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org).

**The Arts of Great Falls School** offers winter classes for adults and children of all skill levels. Visit [www.greatfallsart.org](http://www.greatfallsart.org) for more.

## THURSDAY/MARCH 8

**Vienna Arts Society Membership Meeting and Demo.** 10:30 a.m. at Vienna Arts Society, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Ruth Ensley will discuss and show how she builds the intensity of watercolor using transparent layers and builds the depth of textures shown in her work. Call 703-319-3971 or visit [www.ViennaArtsSociety.org](http://www.ViennaArtsSociety.org).

## MARCH 9-24

**"Harvey."** Friday-Saturday, 8-10:30 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. at the Great Falls Grange, 9818 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The McLean Community Players will present Mary Chase's Pulitzer Prize-winning comedy, "Harvey." Matinees on Sundays, March 11 and 18. \$18-\$20. Email [info@McLeanPlayers.org](mailto:info@McLeanPlayers.org) or visit [McLeanPlayers.org](http://McLeanPlayers.org).

## SATURDAY/MARCH 10

**Black History Concert.** 3 p.m. at Historic Pleasant Grove, 8641 Lewinsville Road, McLean. Historic



PHOTO BY IRISH EYES PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOBY/COURTESY MCLEAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS

## 'Harvey' Comes to Great Falls

McLean Community Players present "Harvey" at Great Falls Grange, 9818 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. In rehearsal photo, from left: Veta (Anne Hilleary) discusses the party she is hosting with her daughter Myrtle Mae (Caroline Peterson). Performances: March 9-24, 2018. Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$18-\$20. Group rates available. General admission tickets through Brown Paper Tickets at 800-838-3006 or visit [www.McLeanPlayers.org](http://www.McLeanPlayers.org).

Pleasant Grove is hosting the acclaimed Washington Revels Jubilee Voices for a free concert celebrating African American musical traditions. Visit [www.HistoricPleasantGrove.org](http://www.HistoricPleasantGrove.org).

## SATURDAY-SUNDAY/

### MARCH 10-11

**"The Snow White Variety Show."** 2 p.m. at The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. All the fun of just about every TV show genre you can imagine is jam-packed into this wild and fast-paced comedy. This is a part-talk-show, part-reality show dramatic retelling of a classic story you thought you knew performed by talented local young actors! The dwarves team up to share their own side of Snow White's story. \$10-\$15. For ages 6 and older. Visit [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org) for tickets.

## SUNDAY/MARCH 11

**"Something Old! Something New."** 4 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. NE, Vienna. The McLean Symphony presents its spring concert, "Something Old! Something New!" Marvin Camacho Villegas, renowned Costa Rican composer, gives the McLean Symphony the honor of performing the world premiere of Ritual y Celebración. This piece brings together music, nature, and the sounds of the rainforest. Guest pianist Thomas Pandolfi performs a trio of pieces. Students \$15; adults \$25; seniors \$20; children 12 and under free. Get tickets at [mclean-symphony.org](http://mclean-symphony.org) and at the door.

**Winter Traditional Celtic Concerts.** 4 and 6 p.m. at The Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Al Petteway and Amy White perform fireside. Tickets must be purchased in advance through the link at [oldbrogue.com](http://oldbrogue.com): \$18 general admission/\$12 children under 12. Season ticket: \$96/\$60 children. Call 703-759-3309.

## MONDAY/MARCH 12

**"Abra Cadaver."** noon-2 p.m. at at

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 14

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



## News

# Transforming Lives

## Assistance League to host annual spring luncheon and auctions.

**A**ssistance League of Northern Virginia will hold its annual fundraiser on April 27 to support its community outreach programs. The public is invited to attend the event which will raise funds for the nonprofit's three major programs: Weekend Food for Kids, New Clothing for Kids, and Reading Express. Through these programs, the all-volunteer nonprofit organization helps more than 6,000 disadvantaged students each year. Started in 2010 with a delivery of 500 bags of food to one school, Weekend Food for Kids now provides food to children living with food insecurity in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria who receive free or reduced-price meals on school days but lack adequate food resources on weekends. Today, with financial and hands-on support from the community, Assistance League delivers 1,650 bags of supplemental food to children in six Title I schools every month during the school year. Last school year, with the help of Dominion Energy, Intelsat, Tee Off for Tots Children's Charities, Quadrant and other charitable organizations, the program provided 15,672 bags of food to children who may otherwise go hungry on weekends. The population served is multicultural, and the school counselors identify the children to receive the food.

Through the New Clothing for Kids program, clothing, shoes and personal grooming products are provided to more than 2,870 children whose families cannot afford those items.

Reading Express targets at-risk first grade students by providing one-on-one tutoring to improve the reading skills of students at Providence Elementary School in Fairfax. In 2016-17, members gave 521 hours of support in the classroom and, to encourage reading at home, also provided new books to students enrolled in the program.

Through fundraising efforts and grant awards, members lend their time and talent to raise funds to support the organization's mission.

Assistance League will again conduct its primary campaign to raise money to sustain its philanthropic programs in the 2018-19 school year. The "Transforming Lives" Spring Luncheon is scheduled for Friday, April 27 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Country Club of Fairfax, 5110 Ox Road, in Fairfax. Ticket price is \$65 (\$30 is tax deductible).

This year's luncheon will include silent and live auctions and feature Keynote Speaker Tony Perkins, Fox 5 News Anchor and Co-Host MAJIC 102.3/92.7. Local businesses donate a variety of goods to support the cause. Current event sponsors include: Quadrant, Joyce Koons Honda Buick GMC, Manassas Spine Care Chiropractic Center and NOVEC. To attend or contribute, contact: ALNorthernVA@gmail.com. Visit [www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org](http://www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org).



Tony Perkins

PHOTO COURTESY OF FOX 5 NEWS



**McLean Community Center**  
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## Here's What's Happening at MCC

### The Old Firehouse Friday Night Trips Rebounderz, Fuddruckers and a Movie

Friday, March 9, 3:30-10 p.m.  
The Old Firehouse  
1440 Chain Bridge Rd.  
\$50/\$40 MCC district residents



### Alden Spring Production "The Snow White Variety Show"

Saturday and Sunday  
March 10-11 & 17-18, 2 p.m.  
The Old Firehouse  
1440 Chain Bridge Rd.  
\$15/\$10 MCC district residents



### The Old Firehouse 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grader Party St. Paddy's Day Party

Friday March 16, 7-9 p.m.  
The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd.  
\$35 each/\$25 MCC district residents.



**Presented by The Alden**  
"Sing Faster: The Stagehands' Ring Cycle" Movie  
Saturday, March 24, 2 p.m.  
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Free admission

### The Old Firehouse Spring Break Trips

Monday, March 26-Friday  
March 30, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.  
The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd.  
Prices vary by destination



### Presented by The Alden Clue Spring Break Quote-Along Movie

Friday, March 30, 7 p.m.  
The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd.  
Admission and popcorn are free.  
Prop bags are \$5 each.



### Spring fest

Saturday, March 31, 10 a.m.-noon  
New Location! St. Luke's School  
7005 Georgetown Pike  
\$5 per person; under 36 months free.



**The McLean Community Center**  
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### McLEAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS Presents



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**HARVEY**  
OPENS FRIDAY, MARCH 9!

**WEEKENDS, MARCH 9-24, 2018**

FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS AT 8:00 P.M.  
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Presented at the Great Falls Grange  
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Great Falls, VA 22066

TICKETS AND MORE INFORMATION: [www.McLeanPlayers.org](http://www.McLeanPlayers.org)

Directed by Eleanore Tapscott  
Produced by Jennifer Levy and Mike Scott

The McLean Community Players, Inc. is funded in part by the Arts Council of Fairfax County. **ARTSFAIRFAX**  
HARVEY is presented through special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

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**CALENDAR**

FROM PAGE 12

Our Lady of Good Counsel, DeSales Hall, 8601 Wolftrap Road, Vienna. The Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna's Lunch N' Life presents a murder mystery play provided by the Stage Coach Theater Company - "Abra Cadaver." \$30 per person includes lunch and theatrical performance. Prepayment required by March 7. No refunds. To register, call 703-281-0538.

**TUESDAY/MARCH 13**

**A Civil Life in an Uncivil Time.** 7 p.m. at Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. Paula Whitacre discusses A Civil Life in an Uncivil Time: Julia Wilbur's Struggle for Purpose. Learn about this abolitionist's/suffragette's commitment to equal rights in the 19th century and her impact on today's world. Free. The public is invited. Visit [vienna-va.aauw.net/](http://vienna-va.aauw.net/).  
**McLean Historical Society.** 7:30 p.m. at the Old Firehouse Teen Center 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The program will feature genealogist Elaine McRay who will discuss "Family Research on the Internet." The public is invited. Call 703-356-8223.

**THURSDAY/MARCH 15**

**Bunco Fundraiser.** 7-9 p.m. at the Vienna Arts Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Vienna Art Society Bunco fundraiser. \$20 reserves a seat for an evening of hors d'oeuvres, beer, wine, prizes, 50/50 raffle, and of course a game of Bunco. Call 703-319-3971 or visit [www.ViennaArtsSociety.org](http://www.ViennaArtsSociety.org).

**SATURDAY/MARCH 17**

**Model Railroaders Open House.** 1-5 p.m. at the Vienna Depot, 231 Dominion Road NE. Northern Virginia Model Railroaders hold an open house at the Vienna Depot each month. Free admission. Call 703-938-5157 or visit [www.nvmr.org](http://www.nvmr.org).

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY/MARCH 17-18**

**"The Snow White Variety Show."** 2 p.m. at The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. All the fun of just about every TV show genre you can imagine is jam-packed into this wild and fast-paced comedy. This is a part-talk-show, part-reality show dramatic retelling of a classic story you thought you knew performed by talented local young actors! The dwarves team up to share their own side of Snow White's story. \$10-\$15. For ages 6 and older. Visit [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org) for tickets.

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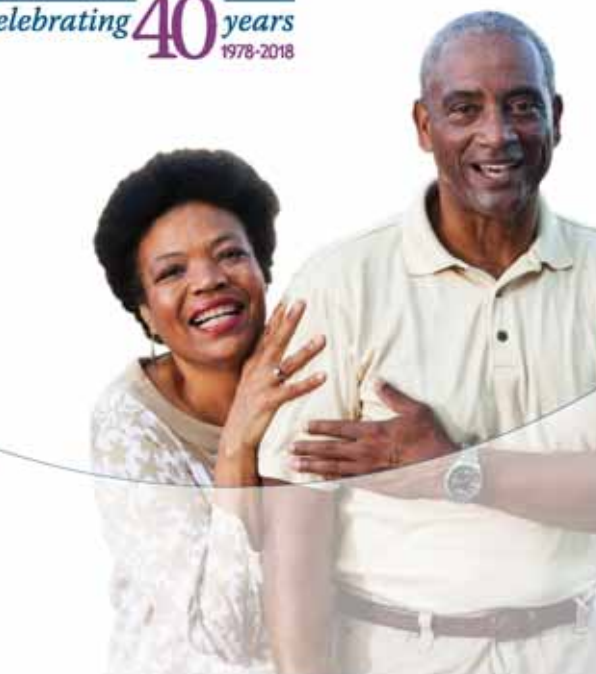
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**Announcements**

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Jolie Hair Academy is applying for initial accreditation with the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education. Persons wishing to make comments should write to the Executive Director of the Commission, Council on Occupational Education, 7840 Roswell Road, Bldg. 300, Suite 325, Atlanta, GA 30350. Persons making comments must provide their names and mailing addresses.

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# BULLETIN

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

## SOBER-RIDE FOR ST. PATRICK'S DAY

**Free Sober Rides.** Saturday, March 17, 4 p.m. through Sunday, March 18, 4 a.m. Area residents, 21 and older, may download Lyft to their phones, then enter a code in the app's "Promo" section to receive a no cost (up to \$15) safe ride home. WRAP's St. Patrick's Day SoberRide promo code will be posted at 2 p.m. on March 17 on [www.SoberRide.com](http://www.SoberRide.com). The SoberRide code is valid for the first 1,500 Lyft users who enter the code.

## 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](http://www.fcps.edu/registration/kindergarten-registration).

## 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). To have their names placed on election ballots, candidates are required to obtain the signatures of 10 McLean tax district residents in their respective categories (either adult or youth). Three adult positions and two youth positions are open this year. Key Election Dates:

- 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.
- For more information on the MCC Governing Board Elections, call the Center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, or visit the Center's website: <http://bit.ly/2ix7qc1>.

## MONDAY-THURSDAY/MARCH 7-8

**Unclaimed Property.** Virginians can visit any of the four events below and find their unclaimed property. This free public service is facilitated by The Virginia Department of Treasury. Learn more at [www.VaMoneysearch.org](http://www.VaMoneysearch.org).

- Wednesday, March 7, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Fairfax County Jennings Judicial Center Cafeteria, 4110 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax
- Thursday, March 8, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Hollins Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria

## WEDNESDAY/MARCH 7

**1 Million Cups.** 8:30 a.m. networking; 9-10 a.m. program at Make Offices at Tysons, 1751 Pinnacle Drive, Suite 600, McLean. Each week a different business owner gives a brief six-minute presentation about where they are in their business. They then offer up a challenge question about a new idea, product, expansion or something they are facing in their business. The group then masterminds solutions. Free and open to the public. Visit [www.1millioncups.com/](http://www.1millioncups.com/).

**Members Coffee.** 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at St. Luke Orthodox Church, 6801 Georgetown Pike, McLean. McLean Newcomers and Neighbors will host a coffee for members and for non-members who might be interested in joining. Visit [www.McLeanNewcomers.org](http://www.McLeanNewcomers.org).

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## Reflections



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

A few weeks back at my last post CT-scan appointment with my oncologist (when all continued to be amazingly stable), he finally asked me the question I've been wondering if he'd ever ask: "Mr. Lourie, I talk about you all the time, how well you're doing; is there anything I can tell people about what you're doing that might help them?"

My first reaction was to laugh and then ask if I even have cancer. I mean, typically, one diagnosed with an incurable disease doesn't just live life merrily along as if the diagnosis was a mere inconvenience, no matter what he or she may or may not be doing. My oncologist assured me that I indeed have cancer and even offered up some news about my tumors with which I was totally unfamiliar.

Five years ago when I was hospitalized (due to excessive fluid in my lungs), in the course of the procedure, the thoracic surgeon did a DNA profile of my tumors to determine if I had a specific mutation (allowing for more targeted treatment). Unfortunately, the ALK and ROS-1 mutations were not confirmed. In pursuit of more current information, more recently, I had a liquid biopsy (a blood test) which tested for the EGFR and T790 mutations. Again, no confirmation. As it stands now, I am as unclassified. For the nine-year moment then, I remain in treatment without the targeted precision so many of my fellow cancer survivors have been extraordinarily fortunate to have. Yet life goes on.

So what am I doing? Other than laughing in the face of death (my best attribute), which if anecdotal reports are to be believed, truly is the best medicine, a bit more. Remaining positive and generally upbeat is a parallel corollary to humoring yourself and those around you.

But more specifically and perhaps uniquely, I am supplementing my standard of care with some non-Western care: alkaline water, organic apple cider vinegar, and about 60 pills a day, most chosen for their qualities of strengthening my immune system and/or eliminating the toxins from my body. I can't say I'm eating really right, but neither will I admit to not eating totally wrong. Reducing stress and exercising are popular advisories in my control. One out of two will have to do.

However, as I told my oncologist, whatever I'm doing I've been told to do by my holistic health and fitness coach. She knows what, how and why. (I might as well be Sergeant Schulz from "Hogan's Heros: "I know nothing.") I don't feel qualified to speak to any of what I do.

Yes, I've survived but, I'm a sports and chocolate guy not a science and medicine man. All I can do is list what I'm doing. I can't chapter and verse any of it. I'm not NIKE, but I just do it. It's a routine and I rarely stray. I do add stuff occasionally but to think any of what I do might have a bearing on another cancer patient's survivability? Not hardly, and that's what I told my oncologist. Dina suggested the alkaline water. I suggested my "coach."

I guess I'm just not that deep of a thinker. I trust people the same way that as a salesman I want them to trust me. I'm not leading anybody astray, and I'm providing them the best available knowledge. I'm not manipulating. Nor am I maneuvering. I'm simply managing dos, don'ts, maybes, what ifs and why nots.

Moreover, I'm trying to think outside the box while respecting and appreciating that the box has its purpose as well.

Heck, for all I know, my non-Western stuff has had minimal impact on my life expectancy and the standard of care from my oncologist has provided the most.

Maybe I'm just an anomaly, pure and simple: a nine-year-plus non small cell lung cancer survivor. What am I doing? Trying not to abuse the privilege, that's what.

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



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