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PHOTO BY JENNIFER McCABE

Robinson students Michael McCabe and Abigail Clark at the 'March for Our Lives.' They attended the march with 150 others from Robinson, including those from the group 'Students Demand Action.'

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MARCH 29-APRIL 4, 2018

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



## Two New Eagle Scouts

Boy Scouts of America Troop 1131 has two new Eagle Scouts. Robert Stephen Wallace (205) and Devin James Albrecht (209) received their Eagle Scout awards at St. Stephen's United Methodist Church in Burke.



Photo Courtesy of G.C. 'Gary' Black, III

## Blood Donation Opportunities

Though spring has officially arrived, the American Red Cross blood supply is still recovering from severe winter storms in March. Donors of all blood types are urged to roll up a sleeve and help save lives.

Volunteer blood donors from across the country are needed to help ensure lifesaving blood products are available for patients this spring. Make an appointment to donate blood by downloading the free Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 1-800-

RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Upcoming blood donation opportunities in the area, March 20 to April 15

Fairfax  
3/30/2018: 7:45 a.m. - 3 p.m.,  
Fairfax Blood Donation Center, 2720  
Prosperity Avenue, Suite 200  
3/31/2018: 7:45 a.m. - 3 p.m.,  
Fairfax Blood Donation Center, 2720  
Prosperity Avenue, Suite 200  
4/1/2018: 7:45 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.,  
Fairfax Blood Donation Center, 2720  
Prosperity Avenue, Suite 200

## Girls on the Run Announces Three New Board Members

Girls on the Run of NOVA announced the appointment of three new members to its Board of Directors. Joining the Board are Shruti Buckley, Felicia Faragasso, and Robert Hargreaves. "All three of our new Board members embody the spirit of our Girls on the Run mission as well as bring a wealth of talent, expertise and energy to the table. We are very fortunate to have them by our side as we continue to inspire all girls across the Northern Virginia region to be joyful, healthy, and confident," says Katey Comerford, GOTR NOVA's Executive Director.

Shruti Buckley is with Hilton as Senior Vice President and Global Head, Hampton by Hilton. She has more than 25 years of experience in the areas of global business management, brand strategy and analysis, consumer marketing and public relations. She has seen the impact on the girls and wants to contribute to Girls on the Run of NOVA's future growth. Felicia Faragasso comes with passion for the GOTR NOVA mission and legal expertise as the Senior Legal/Contracts Counsel, Corporate Secretary and Chief Ethics Officer with Exostar. An athlete growing up, Faragasso is a runner today and believes in the empowerment of girls and women.

Robert Hargreaves is with Discovery Communications as Director, Global Content Reporting and Analytics. He comes to the board with strong management and strategic planning skills. "When my daughter participated in GOTR NOVA, I found the lessons in self-confidence were so unique and so powerful for girls at that stage that I wanted to help the organization extend its service, and I am honored by this opportunity to serve on the Board," says Hargreaves.

Last year, GOTR NOVA served 4,903 girls with 921 volunteer coaches in 8 school districts across the Northern Virginia region.

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Photo by Jennifer McCabe

A group of students from Robinson who gathered at the Vienna Metro and traveled to the March together. From left: Corinne Baum, Erin Reno, Alayna Ricard, Ivy Mitchell, Danait Haddish, Lily Brintzinghoffer, Laura Armendaris, Adrianna Ladino, Michael McCabe, Laura Tirpak, Lizzy Lawrence, and Tyler Layton



Photo courtesy of the Office of Del. Eileen Filler-Corn

Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41) and U.S. Rep Gerry Connolly (D-11) join Robinson students at the March.

# Robinson Students Join 'Awakening'

Michael McCabe, 16, points to a 'great examples of kids in Parkland.'

By Natalia Megas  
The Connection

Before the Parkland teens rose up to speak out against gun violence in the aftermath of the Stoneman Douglas school shooting, Robinson Secondary School sophomore student Michael McCabe observed that students who wanted to make a change "were lost in the noise" and often didn't know how to do it.

But since then, "we have had great examples of kids in Parkland that have been uplifted by other examples, like the urban communities affected by gun violence," said McCabe, 16. "There's a lot more visibility of activists working past the apathy and misunderstanding and paralysis and have been doing important work."

"Now kids realize they can reach out to people and there are events, movements, organizations and volunteer opportunities. This has been an awakening in that sense," he said.

**AFTER THE MARCH** For Our Lives, which took place this past Saturday, McCabe said the sentiment among classmates is: "We're not going to let this go away. A lot of us are really fired up," he said.

McCabe was born in Northern Virginia and moved to Fairfax in second grade. Since he can remember, he's always tried to stay engaged and educated.

"I've always been an avid reader of the news and have had my own political opinions from a pretty young age," he said. When he was seven years old, he recalls making signs and cookies for Obama's campaign volunteers and watching the inauguration.

At 11 years old, he joined his grandmother, also an activist, to Richmond for



Photo by Bill Bronrott

From left, Rowan Clark, 13, eighth grader at Frost Middle School, Fairfax, and Ellie D'Alessandro, 19, of Fairfax, 2016 graduate of W.T. Woodson High School.

## Tired of Planning an Escape Route

Rowan Clark, 13, eighth grader at Frost Middle School, Fairfax and Ellie D'Alessandro, 19, Of Fairfax, 2016 graduate of W.T. Woodson High School participated in Saturday's March for Our Lives.

Rowan said: "I am tired of having to plan an escape route. As children and young people, it's come to the point where we have to know our laws and read the bills because they have failed us."

Added D'Alessandro: "An AR-15 is meant for war. We shouldn't be able to buy them. There is no reason for civilians to have these military weapons."

—Bill Bronrott

the lobby days.

"I always remember coming home from those [trips] thinking things through and wondering, what else can we lobby for, how does this issue affect me? It got me thinking about the issue of gun violence," he said.

Fast forward to the recent march on gun violence, which McCabe attended with 150 others from Robinson, including those from the group "Students Demand Action" which he is a member, and he is hopeful and emboldened.

"I wasn't sure what to expect going in [to the march]," he said. But "I've been astounded by the emotion and unedited, unabridged truth and the stories that have been coming out in the wake of Parkland and all the media attention. I knew this would be a wildly successful and meaningful event."

**THE MOST INSPIRING PART** of the march for McCabe was seeing Naomi Wadler on stage. Wadler, an Alexandria fifth grader who represents African American girls, spoke at the march about those suffering from gun violence.

McCabe had met her before the march, describing her as "very self-confident and well spoken for an 11-year-old."

"I had no idea she was going to be on stage. I was blown away by her speech," he said. "The fact that Naomi Wadler was up there and she was affected by gun violence, it's incredible that they're in elementary school and they're doing this. That was my favorite part of the whole event."

He found the march's message promising too.

"I was blown away by the intersectionality and the extent to which they were able to uplift the voices of people who had been affected by different forms of gun violence and really convey a broader scope of the issue. I thought that was really neat to see."

Although the conversation around gun violence has been happening for some time, he said he was struck by how well rounded the speakers were and how well the tone was carried.

"It took a really solid balance between the tragedy and the conversation and the media hubbub, and the broader scope of the issues."

What's next for the movement? "It goes back to lawmakers," he said.



## ‘Channeling Outrage into Activism’

By Adam P. Ebbin  
State Senator (D-30)

*Ebbin spoke to students at Lewinsville Park in McLean during the walkout on March 14. The students, who attend schools across Northern Virginia, were participating in a rally for gun violence prevention organized by Students Demand Action DMV following a 17-minute National Student Walkout held that morning at 10 a.m. in memory of the 17 who were killed in the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Fla.*

I’m Senator Adam Ebbin, and I have an “F” rating from the NRA. Across the country, the gun violence prevention movement is being led by students like you. You are doing more than just wearing an orange ribbon, you are taking action and leading a conversation. You are channeling your outrage into activism.

I’ve been moved and inspired by the bravery and resilience of the young people in Parkland. Today, we are amplifying their message. With your activism, we can make real progress.

Every day, 96 Americans are killed with a gun.

Every 10 hours a Virginian is killed with a gun.

153,000 students have been exposed to campus shootings since

Columbine.

For decades, the corporate gun lobby has dictated our gun laws.

Elected leaders at the local, state, and national level can make a difference; implore us all to take action. Hold legislators accountable for their voting records.

While Washington is mired in empty expressions of thoughts and prayers, it’s time for state legislators to step up.

I have worked for common sense gun laws for years. This year, over 60 bills addressing gun violence were introduced in the Virginia General Assembly, but every one was defeated. Del. Kathleen Murphy [D-34] and I have formed a General Assembly Gun Violence Prevention Caucus, but we need more voices — loud voices, informed and passionate voices, particularly voices like yours. I’m here to amplify your voice, to tell you that you don’t have to be a voter yet to shape the debate. Speak up by calling your elected officials.

Engage the community by writing letters to the editor.



Get involved at election time. Register to vote as soon as you are eligible. Stay informed and stay active.

Vote. Repeat until no school in America has to wonder “Who’s next?”

Refuse to accept the status quo. Demand an end to gun violence.

The NRA tells us the AR-15 shouldn’t be banned.

When a soft nosed bullet leaves the barrel of an AR15, it is travelling at three times the speed of a bullet fired from a handgun. It will break the sound barrier leaving the gun, travelling at 3,000 feet per second, tumbling end over end until it makes contact with its target. When its target is a human body, the bullet enters and exits in less than the time it takes to blink, shredding tissue in a process known as cavitation, killing soft tissue for up to three inches around the entry path, and leaves an exit wound the size of an orange. A high capacity magazine on an AR-15 can unleash 50 of these rounds in less than a minute.

Outfitted with an NRA-supported bump stock this weapon can empty this magazine in a matter of seconds.

Don’t let the NRA tell you it shouldn’t be banned.

At Marjory Stoneman Douglas high school first responders saw the power of this weapon, the twitch of a finger painting the hallways of their school with blood.

Don’t let the NRA tell you it shouldn’t be banned.

Don’t tell us that kids have a right to carry these into our schools and movie theatres and malls and concerts and unleash the fury of this weapon on Americans.

Don’t tell us that anyone has the right to carry a gun that holds 50 rounds and can be modified to fire them in under ten seconds.

Don’t tell us we shouldn’t be able to stop dangerous individuals from buying AR-15s at a sporting goods store.

Don’t let the NRA tell you that thoughts and prayers are enough.

Enough is enough. We’re telling the NRA times up, we’re telling them no more.

No more fearing the next headline. We’re telling the corporate gun lobby we’re done with being afraid that when your friends go to school they might not come back. We cannot wait any longer.

The NRA can get out of the way, or they can get run over.

## Cracking Down on Online Predators

### Bipartisan legislation to protect sex trafficking victims.

By Barbara Comstock  
US Rep. (R-10)



For years we have warned of human traffickers preying on our youth at a mall or places where teens may congregate. A predator would approach a young girl – average age 12 or 13 – pretending to be a boyfriend and groom them for sexual exploitation by showering them with gifts or drugs, and then exploit their naivety and traffic them for sex.

The same thing is going on today, only now the predator is using the Internet to reach out and exploit our youth.

Online predators now reach into our homes and target unsuspecting children on computers and social media. Congress investigated this Internet sex trafficking and we came up with landmark, bipartisan legislation that will protect sex trafficking victims who have been targeted by online predators.

I cosponsored the Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act, which has now passed the House and Senate. It will give prosecutors, state attorneys general, and sex trafficking victims a clearer path to take legal

action against websites hosting advertisements for prostitutes, which, in reality, often turn out to be young girls and boys who are being illegally trafficked for sex.

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, nearly three-quarters of all reports of online child sex trafficking can be traced back to the website called Backpage.com. In a recent CBS News article, a 14-year old girl who was trafficked on the site said, “They’re letting all of this happen on their website. I mean, without Backpage, I would have never been in any of this in the first place.”

Her mother continued, “Backpage has a primary purpose and it’s to sell sex. Backpage has not done anything to ensure the safety of the kids on there, period.”

Congress investigated the practices of Backpage and disclosed that its operators actually helped predators modify their ads to delete references to teenage prostitutes or young victims of human trafficking, and still allowed the ads to run. The Washington Post reported that Backpage used a company in the Philippines to solicit both prostitutes and johns from other websites and created new ads that facilitated trafficking.

It became apparent that current anti-trafficking laws could not be applied to websites like Backpage, which host thousands of exploitive

ads daily — too many of which are children being trafficked by adults. Backpage, time and again, successfully cited the Communications Decency Act, which they argued protected them.

In a 2016 case against Backpage.com, the First Circuit Court of Appeals made clear: “The remedy is through legislation, not litigation.” All 50 state Attorneys General joined the call for reform of this legislation to address the use of these sites for trafficking and both the House and the Senate responded on a bipartisan basis. This legislation included backing from many in the technology community such as Facebook’s COO Sheryl Sandberg: “Those of us in the United States must recognize that these deplorable acts of buying and selling children for sex don’t just happen in other countries. They happen here as well — right under our noses ... we at Facebook support efforts to pass amended legislation in the House.” Now our prosecutors will be able to crackdown on online predators.

Every summer, as part of my Young Women’s Leadership Program, we provide a session on the problem of human trafficking. We have made it a priority to educate young women about this threat that is online, as well as in their communities. With the passage of this legislation, there will be more tools to stop these unspeakable crimes against our youth.

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## News

### Del. Filler-Corn Participates in 'She Suite Summit'

Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41) participated in the the final panel of the "She Suite Summit" which also included State Sen. Jennifer McClellan (D-Richmond) and Arlington County Board Chair, Katie Cristol.

The "She Suite Summit" was put on by Velvet Suite, a marketing consulting group and was sponsored by the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce. The day long summit took place in McLean on March 16. The theme of the conference was "Awaken Your Greatness".

Del. Filler-Corn and Sen. McClellan discussed the changes in this year's General Assembly. Filler-Corn focused on the new makeup of the House of Delegates which now includes 12 newly elected women of all ages including two who recently gave birth. They also discussed the challenges of being a female legislator in a predominantly male environment. Chair Cristol gave an additional perspective about her role, not just as a woman, but as a millennial.

"I appreciated the opportunity to share my story with two of my good friends and colleagues," said Filler-Corn. "I am grateful for the women who paved the way before me, and I look forward to the successes of many women elected officials to come," she added.



Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41), left, participating in 'She Suite Summit' panel in McLean.

Photo contributed



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### A New Eagle Scout

Joseph Tirre (207) Passed his Eagle Scout Board of Review at BSA Troop 1131, Burke. Pictured, Eagle Scout Board of Review members: Carol Herrity-Tun, Philip Sternberg, Troop Committee Chair, Karla Tirre (mother), Paul Hoffman, Unit Commissioner, Eagle Scout (207) Joseph Tirre, William Tirre (father), Alan Dunham, C.P. Watkins, Patriot District, Mark Blanchard, Scoutmaster. Not in photo G.C. 'Gary' Black, III.

Joseph Tirre is a junior at Robinson Secondary School and attends St. Stephens UMC in Burke. His father is William Tirre and his mother is Karla Tirre.



Photos courtesy of G.C. 'Gary' Black, III





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# Easter & Spring Fun

## Easter Egg Hunts In the Area

**THURSDAY/MARCH 29**  
**EGG-Streme Teen Egg Hunt.** 8-10 p.m. at Historic Blenheim and the Civil War Interpretive Center, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Glow-in-the-dark-themed egg hunt begins at dark. Pictures with the Easter Bunny and obstacle course moon bounce. 10-14 years old. Bring a basket and a flashlight. \$5 per hunter. Register at [apm.activecommunities.com/fairfaxcityrecdept/Activity\\_Search/11522](http://apm.activecommunities.com/fairfaxcityrecdept/Activity_Search/11522).  
**Easter Egg Hunt.** 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. At Cameron Run Park, Alexandria. Children, 2-11 years old, are invited to celebrate spring with coloring, games and photo opportunities with the Easter Bunny. Bring an Easter basket, and a camera to take photos with the Easter Bunny. Each hunt is \$10 per child, plus a \$3 online service fee. visit [apm.activecommunities.com/novaparks](http://apm.activecommunities.com/novaparks) for details and to register.

**THURSDAYSATURDAY/MARCH 29-31**  
**Baskets and Bunnies Event.** Assist with arts and crafts, help with registration, dress up in the Sunny the Bunny costume, assist with Mini Golf or be a Sunny the Bunny helper at Burke Lake Park. Volunteer on Thursday, March 29, on Friday, March 30 Saturday, March 31. Register at:

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burke-lake/baskets-and-bunnies](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burke-lake/baskets-and-bunnies)

**THURSDAY/MARCH 29-SUNDAY/APRIL 1**  
**Fairfax County Parks.** Egg-citing activities are breaking out at parks throughout Fairfax County in March. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/park-news/2018/psa055](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/park-news/2018/psa055).  
**Hidden Oaks Nature Center** is running a Dinosaur Egg Hunt on March 29, 30, 31 and April 1. Enjoy a dinosaur-themed program and outdoor egg hunt while visiting Dinoland in Nature Playce. The program is for children age 2-8. \$8 per child.  
On Saturday, March 31, **Burke Lake Park** is hosting a day of fun called Baskets and Bunnies. There will be egg hunts, carousel and train rides, crafts and games. \$12 per person in advance; \$16 the day of the event.  
**Clemyontri Park** is offering an Easter Egg Hunt, crafts and photo ops with the Easter Bunny for children age 1-9. \$7 per child. Add a carousel ride for \$2. There's also an Egg Hunt that day at **Nottoway Park**. Register at the picnic shelter for egg hunts for children age 1-9. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. Schedule: ages 1-2, 10:30 a.m.; ages 3-4, 11 a.m.; ages 5-6, 11:30 a.m.; ages 7-9, 12 p.m.\$10 per child, registration 9:30-11:45 a.m. \$10 per child – cash only at registration.



Shoppers browse the many tables of goods for sale at an earlier ECHO Yard Sale.

## ECHO Yard Sale

Join the hunt for treasures at ECHO's semi-annual yard sale. Toys, fashion accessories, collectibles, and more. Proceeds benefit Ecumenical Community Helping Others in Springfield. Saturday, April 7, 8 a.m.-noon in the Gymnasium of St. Bernadette Catholic Church and School, 7600 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Free admission. Email [cefrabee@verizon.net](mailto:cefrabee@verizon.net).

**FRIDAY/MARCH 30-SUNDAY/APRIL 1**  
**Easter Egg Hunt.** Friday, 3 p.m.; Saturday, 10:30 a.m., 12:30 and 2:30 p.m.; Sunday, 12:30 and 2:30 p.m. at Lee-Fendall House Museum, 614 Oronoco St., Alexandria. Activities include games, crafts, refreshments, and photos with the Easter Bunny. Every participating child will receive

an Easter egg. \$12 children, \$5 adults. Call 703-548-1789 or visit [www.leafendallhouse.org](http://www.leafendallhouse.org).

**SATURDAY/MARCH 31**  
**Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt.** 9-10:30 a.m. at Grace Presbyterian Church, 7434 Bath St., Springfield. Enjoy a continental breakfast, a craft

or two, and an Easter egg hunt. Bring an Easter basket. Free. Call 703-451-2900 or visit [gracepresby.org](http://gracepresby.org).  
**Traditional Easter Egg Hunt.** 9:30-11:30 a.m. at Herndon Municipal Center Town Green, 777 Lynn St., Herndon. Cost is \$9 per child in advance; \$10 onsite. Visit [herndonva.gov/recreation](http://herndonva.gov/recreation), or call 703-435-6800, ext. 2128.  
**MCC Spring Fest.** 10 a.m.-noon at St. Luke's School, 7005 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Carnival games, roaming duck, bunny and squirrel characte, parent and child Easter Egg Hunt. For children ages 3-8. Visit [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org), and use Activity No. 4501.318. Call the Center at 703-790-0123. TTY-711.  
**2018 Community Egg Hunt.** 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Van Dyck Park, 720 Old Lee Hwy, Fairfax. The annual Egg Hunt at Van Dyck park is open and free to the community, thanks to Combined Properties. No registration required. All ages welcome. Visit [www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/city-calendar](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/city-calendar).

**SUNDAY/APRIL 1**  
**Easter Brunch and Easter Egg Hunt.** 11 a.m.; 11:30 a.m.; 1 p.m.; 1:30 p.m. at Hilton McLean Tysons Corner, 7920 Jones Branch Dr., Tysons. The brunch buffets on both Easter, April 1, and Mother's Day, May 13, occur from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. and feature gourmet stations with an array of dishes. Arrive early as a maximum of 50 participants will hunt in each age group. In addition, the Easter Bunny will be available from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. for photos. Reservations at 703-761-5131 or on OpenTable at [opentable.com/harthr](http://opentable.com/harthr).

lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known

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[lostdogandcatrescue.org](http://lostdogandcatrescue.org)



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# Between Thwarted Love and Madness

## Virginia Opera presents “Lucia di Lammermoor” at GMU Center for the Arts.

By David Siegel  
 The Connection

Virginia Opera concludes its season at the Center for the Arts with the “bel canto” (Italian for “beautiful singing”) “Lucia di Lammermoor.” Set in Scotland, Donizetti’s “Lucia” is the tale of a young woman forced to marry a man she does not love in order to improve her family’s fortunes. As she becomes completely distraught, she imagines what it would be like to have married the man she loves. Then she takes actions that change everything.

Ari Peltó, who conducts the opera, called “Lucia di Lammermoor” the pinnacle; the glorification of the voice and

what it can do.” Describing the opera, Peltó said it was “full of all the things we could love about opera including grand dramatic gestures and a young woman struggling as she tries to save her family from ruin. It is unforgettable.” Virginia Opera’s “Lucia di Lammermoor” will feature Metropolitan Opera soprano Rachele Gilmore in the title role of Lucia. Gilmore described her character as “a woman at her emotional breaking point.” Complementing Gilmore bel canto soprano voice will be tenor Joseph Dennis as Edgardo.

“Lucia” is about a woman growing up in difficult times. All the men in her life are pressuring her to do things as they wanted,” said Gilmore. The opera is full of vocal fireworks and highly dramatic elements, “so the audience will understand and be drawn into and focus on the tragic tale and my character of Lucia.”

In an interview, Gilmore noted that she always wanted to be a singer. She received her Bachelor of Music from Indiana University and continued with Graduate studies at Boston University. As an artist, she was a winner in Plácido Domingo’s renown Operalia World

## Where and when

Virginia Opera’s “Lucia di Lammermoor” at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performances: April 7 at 8 p.m. and April 8 at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$110, \$90, \$54. Note: Sung in Italian with English supertitles. Pre-Performance Discussion with Dr. Glenn Winter “Dr. Opera” begins 45 minutes before the performance.

**Tenor Joseph Dennis (Edgardo) and soprano Rachele Gilmore (Lucia) in Virginia Opera’s “Lucia di Lammermoor.”**

Opera Contest in Paris. For director Kyle Lang, “Lucia di Lammermoor” is a cautionary tale of a fragile “heroine of a gothic horror story. It is warning tale of the destructive power of blind ambition.” “Lucia” is one of the most-performed operas worldwide with its focus on the beauty of the human voice and enduring romantic themes. “Lucia will be a great production for our company and the



Photo by Ben Schill Photography/Courtesy Virginia Opera

audience,” said Russell Allen, President and CEO of the Virginia Opera.

Donizetti’s “Lucia di Lammermoor” is surely to be a compelling performance concluding Virginia’s Opera’s season at the Center for the Arts. And join Dr. Glenn Winters for his “Opera Up Close” pre-curtain talk for his informative, entertaining insights.

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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

**Artists & Poets: Freedom of Expression-Freedom of the Press.** Through March 31, 5 p.m.-midnight, daily, at Epicure Café, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Nasrin Navab and Epicure Cafe present: Artists & Poets: Freedom of Expression-Freedom of the Press. Instigated by Helen Frederick, the DC art community came together two years ago in solidarity with people of Iraq and the Middle East to support the "Al Mutanabbi Street Starts Here!" Project. Al-Mutanabbi Street is Baghdad's bookselling street that has created space for books for hundreds of years. In 2007, the street was destroyed in a car bombing. Visit [www.epicurecafe.org/](http://www.epicurecafe.org/).

**Fairfax Pets on Wheels New Volunteer Orientation.** An orientation for new volunteers interested in visiting residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities with their approved pets through the Fairfax Pets On Wheels program is held the first Wednesday of every month starting at 7:30 p.m. Visit [www.fpov.org](http://www.fpov.org) for each month's location. Prior to attending, please complete the online application found at [www.fpov.org/volunteer](http://www.fpov.org/volunteer). [dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**English Conversation Groups** weekly at George Mason, Burke Centre, and Lorton Libraries Practice and improve your English. Day and start times vary. Visit: [va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/eventcalendar.asp](http://va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/eventcalendar.asp)

### THURSDAYSATURDAY/MARCH 29-31

**Fairfax County Parks.** Egg-citing activities are breaking out at parks throughout Fairfax County in March. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/park-news/2018/psa055](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/park-news/2018/psa055).

**Hidden Oaks Nature Center** is running a Dinosaur Egg Hunt on March 29, 30, 31 and April 1. Enjoy a dinosaur-themed program and outdoor egg hunt while visiting Dinoland in Nature Playce. The program is for children age 2-8. \$8 per child.

On Saturday, March 31, **Burke Lake Park** is hosting a day of fun called Baskets and Bunnies. There will be egg hunts, carousel and train rides, crafts and games. \$12 per person in advance; \$16 the day of the event. There's also an Egg Hunt that day at **Nottoway Park**. Register at the picnic shelter for egg hunts for children age 1-9. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. \$10 per child, registration 9:30-11:45 a.m. \$10 per child - cash only at registration.

### THURSDAY/MARCH 29

**Fact Checking - Effective Speaking.** 7-8:30 p.m. at City of Fairfax Regional Library, Meeting Room B, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Hot Topics: News, Blues and How to Defuse. An interactive workshop on media literacy and dialogue skills. Guided by experts from GMU's School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution and FCPL librarians. Visit [librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/3783528](http://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/3783528).

**EGG-Streme Teen Egg Hunt.** 8-10 p.m. at Historic Blenheim and the Civil War Interpretive Center, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Glow in the dark themed egg hunt begins at dark. Pictures with the Easter Bunny and obstacle course moon bounce. 10-14 years old. Bring a basket and a flashlight. \$5 per hunter. Register at [apm.activecommunities.com/fairfaxcityrecdept/Activity\\_Search/11522](http://apm.activecommunities.com/fairfaxcityrecdept/Activity_Search/11522).

### THURSDAYSATURDAY/MARCH 29-31

**Volunteer: Baskets and Bunnies at Burke Lake.** Assist with arts and crafts, help with registration, dress up in the Sunny the Bunny costume, assist with Mini Golf or be a Sunny the Bunny helper. Volunteer on Thursday, March 29, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and 4 p.m.-7 p.m. On Friday, March 30, volunteers are needed from 4-7 p.m. Helpers will be needed on Saturday, March 31. Sign up for shifts from 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. or from 1:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m. Register at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burke-lake/baskets-and-bunnies](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burke-lake/baskets-and-bunnies).

### MARCH 30-APRIL 15

**"The Pavilion."** at The Hub Theatre, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. This play is by turns poetic and comic, romantic and philosophical. Peter returns to his 20-year high-school reunion with dreams of winning back Kari, the girl he left behind. Visit [www.thehubtheatre.org](http://www.thehubtheatre.org).

### SATURDAY/MARCH 31

**Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt.** 9-10:30 a.m. at Grace Presbyterian Church, 7434 Bath St., Springfield. Enjoy a continental breakfast, a craft or two, and an Easter egg hunt. Bring an Easter basket. Free. Call 703-451-2900 or visit [gracepresby.org](http://gracepresby.org).

**2018 Community Egg Hunt.** 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Van Dyck Park, 720 Old Lee Hwy, Fairfax. The annual Egg Hunt at Van Dyck park is open and free to the community, thanks to Combined Properties. No registration required. All ages welcome. Visit [www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/city-calendar](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/city-calendar).

**Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra.** 8 p.m. at GMU's Center for the Arts' Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Canadian singer, trumpeter, and songwriter Bria Skonberg joins Mason's own Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra in a swinging evening of fresh beats and brassy standards. Tickets: \$46, \$39, \$28. Calling 888-945-2468 or visit [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

### TUESDAY/APRIL 3

**Genealogy in Depth.** 7-9 p.m. at Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak, Burke. Explore the use of cemetery records, and newspapers in your genealogy research in this informal and informative presentation by Beach Carre. Free. Email [slawski\\_brian@yahoo.com](mailto:slawski_brian@yahoo.com) or visit [www.burkehistoricalsociety.org](http://www.burkehistoricalsociety.org)

### WEDNESDAY/APRIL 4

**National Walking Day.** 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Springfield Town Center, 6500 Springfield Mall, Springfield. Enjoy a brisk walk around the mall, while learning how to lower the risk of heart disease and stroke. The American Heart Association is partnering with Sheehy Auto Stores and Springfield Town Center to host this free public walking and wellness event. Registration will start at 10:30. Email [GWRAHA@heart.org](mailto:GWRAHA@heart.org) or visit [www.facebook.com/events/567199020306840/](http://www.facebook.com/events/567199020306840/)

**GMU Visiting Filmmakers Series.** 7:30 p.m. at GMU's Johnson Center Cinema, 4477 Aquia Creek Lane, Fairfax. Short documentary screening and discussion with filmmaker and photographer Karen Ruckman, producer Emma Pearce, and photographers Calvin Gorham and Michael Moses El. "In Lorton's Darkroom" includes powerful video of Lorton in the mid 1980s, a visit to the prison before it was closed in December 2001, and in-depth interviews over a twelve year period with two men who talk frankly about the horrors of prison life, and how learning to take photographs gave them the discipline and tool for self-



**Directed by Edward Gero (pictured).**

## 'The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail'

Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee imagine circumstances surrounding 19th Century writer Henry David Thoreau's imprisonment for his refusal to pay a poll tax designed to support an unpopular war in "The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail." Thursday-Saturday, April 5-8, 8 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday, April 7-8, 2 p.m. at George Mason University Harris Theatre, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. \$30 general admission; \$15 students, staff, seniors and groups. Call 703-993-8888 or visit [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

discovery. Free. Visit [fams.gmu.edu/events/7499](http://fams.gmu.edu/events/7499) or call 703-993-2768.

### FRIDAY/APRIL 6

**Author Event: Chloe Benjamin.** 7:30 p.m. at Grand Tier III, George Mason University's Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Benjamin discusses her novel, "The Immortalists" which follows four children as they discover the dates of their deaths and live the next five decades in their quests for life, love, and immortality. \$10 general admission. Call 703-993-4039 or visit [fallforthebook.org/for-book-clubs/](http://fallforthebook.org/for-book-clubs/).

### SATURDAY/APRIL 7

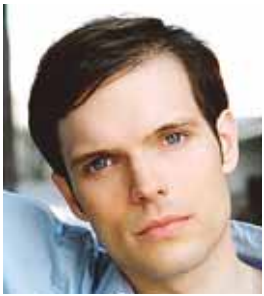
**ECHO Yard Sale.** 8 a.m.-noon in the Gymnasium of St. Bernadette Catholic Church and School, 7600 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Join the hunt for treasures at ECHO's semi-annual yard sale. Toys, fashion accessories, collectibles, and more. Proceeds benefit Ecumenical Community Helping Others in Springfield. Free admission. Email [cefrazee@verizon.net](mailto:cefrazee@verizon.net).

**Spring Forward Family Fun Day in Fairfax.** 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Providence Community Center, 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax. In this celebration of families formed by foster care adoption, and kinship care, children will enjoy a morning of games and activities while parents, caregivers, and older youth participate in personal development training sessions and workshops. Keynote address "Trauma to Resiliency: Building Stronger Families and Communities." will be presented by Dr. Elizabeth Meeker. [www.FormedFamiliesForward.org](http://www.FormedFamiliesForward.org) or call 703-539-2904.

**Rose Care Seminar.** 10 a.m.-noon at Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Award-winning Consulting Rosarian Pam Powers shares the basics about rose selection, how to plant and grow beautiful blooms from May to November. Free. Light refreshments. Door prizes. Hosted by Arlington Rose Foundation. Call 703-371-9351

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**Matt Bassett appearing in the Hub's production of "The Pavilion."**



**Helen Murray appearing in the Hub's production of "The Pavilion."**

# A Play Full of Joy And Regret

**The Hub explores with "The Pavilion:" Is winning back who you left behind possible?**

By David Siegel  
The Connection

**C**elebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> season, the Hub Theatre will be re-mounting "The Pavilion," its inaugural production. "It is so heart-warming to return to where we started with Craig Wright's 'The Pavilion,' a play about community and healing," said Helen Murray, the Hub's Artistic Director. "As the Hub has grown we have continually honed our aesthetic. And I get to share the stage with friends and collaborators."

"The Pavilion" features Hub veteran Nora Achrati, as well as Hub's associate artistic director Matt Bassett and Helen Murray. It is directed by Kelsey Mesa known to Hub

audiences for directing "The Magi" and "Wish List." Mesa is associated with The Kennedy Center's American College Theater Festival. Playwright Craig Wright is also a television producer and writer. Some of his television credits include "Six Feet Under" and "Lost."

"The Pavilion" has a simple premise that flows into much more including our connections to the universe and love. It is specifically about Peter who returns to his hometown for his twenty-year high-school reunion. He has dreams of winning back Kari, the girl he left

behind, under less than good reasons. As the reunion night progresses, both Peter and Kari are led, through their interactions with a host of characters all played by a virtuosic Narrator. The two come to face the outcomes of their choices from long ago as they try to start back into life with newfound strength and bittersweet determination.

"The Pavilion" is a special re-mount for our tenth Hub season. And I have the chance to challenge myself in a role as a romantic lead; although, it's not that simple," said Bassett.

His character as Peter has a "yearning for the past, and his hope for a brighter future. That present some great acting challenges. Peter is hoping for the best while having to

face his own worst actions," added Bassett. "Peter is coming back to his hometown to try regain something he gave up a long time ago. He has lived his adult life in professional success as a psychologist, but this occasion has led him to reevaluate the last twenty years and, in his mind, those years have come up short."

Can Peter and Kari find a way to put things right after so many years? The Hub audience gets to witness what happens in "The Pavilion," a play full of joy and regret told through beautiful language to savor.

## Where and When

The Hub Theatre presents "The Pavilion" at The John Swayze Theatre, New School of Northern Virginia, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. Performances: March 30 to April 15, 2018. Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets \$32 and \$22 (Students and Seniors). Call 703.674.3177 or visit [www.thehubtheatre.org](http://www.thehubtheatre.org). Note: There is construction occurring next to The New School of Northern Virginia parking lot. There is plenty of parking, but be careful of changing lanes.



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## Public Hearings

### Funding the Right Transportation Projects

You are invited to share comments on transportation projects that have been recommended for funding in the FY2019-2024 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). Additionally, pursuant to §33.2-202, comments will be accepted for new projects valued in excess of \$25 million. The Commonwealth Transportation Board will take your comments into consideration as it develops the FY2019-2024 Six-Year Improvement Program. The program allocates public funds to highway, road, bridge, rail, bicycle, pedestrian and public transportation projects. All federally eligible projects in the SYIP will be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program to document how Virginia will obligate its federal funds.

Meeting materials will be available at <http://www.ctb.virginia.gov/planning/springmeetings/default.asp> beginning April 16, 2018.

**Public meetings begin at 4:00 p.m. in each of the locations except as noted below:**  
*A formal comment period will be held at these meetings.*

<b>Monday, April 16, 2018</b> Hampton Roads - Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization, 723 Woodlake Drive Chesapeake, VA 23320	<b>Thursday, April 19, 2018</b> Lynchburg - VDOT Lynchburg District Office Ramey Memorial Auditorium 4303 Campbell Avenue Lynchburg, VA 24501	<b>Tuesday, April 24, 2018</b> Richmond - Hilton Garden Inn 800 Southpark Boulevard Colonial Heights, VA 23834
<b>Monday, April 30, 2018*</b> Northern Virginia - Northern Virginia District Office Potomac Conference Room 4975 Alliance Drive Fairfax, VA 22030  *meeting begins at 5:30 p.m.	<b>Thursday, May 3, 2018</b> Staunton - Holiday Inn and Conference Center 152 Fairway Lane Staunton, VA 24402	<b>Monday, May 7, 2018</b> Culpeper - Culpeper District Auditorium 1601 Orange Road Culpeper, VA 22701
<b>Tuesday May 8, 2018</b> Fredericksburg - Germanna Community College Workforce and Technology Center 10000 Germanna Point Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22408	<b>Thursday, May 10, 2018</b> Salem - Holiday Inn Valley View 3315 Ordway Drive NW Roanoke, VA 24017	<b>Monday, May 14, 2018</b> Bristol - Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center One Partnership Circle Abingdon, VA 24210

You can also submit your comments by email or mail by May 30, 2018:

For roads and highways: [Six-YearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov](mailto:Six-YearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov), or Infrastructure Investment Director, Virginia Department of Transportation 1401 East Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219.

For rail and public transportation: [DRPTPR@drpt.virginia.gov](mailto:DRPTPR@drpt.virginia.gov), Public Information Office, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond VA, 23219.

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**News**

**Operation Medicine Cabinet Cleanout April 28**  
**Service is free, anonymous and no questions asked.**

By Mercia Hobson  
The Connection

Unused medications in homes can create a safety concern due to accidental ingestion, theft, misuse and abuse. In response, Fairfax County Government announced that in conjunction with the United States Drug Enforcement Administration Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, it is holding Operation Medicine Cabinet Cleanout: Saturday, April 28, 2018.

Fairfax County reports drug take-back programs are important, "Because they are a safe method for disposing of prescription drugs and are organized and closely monitored by local, state, and federal government agencies. Safe disposal of unused or expired medications prevents drug abuse and misuse, accidental poisoning, and protects the environment."

Residents in Fairfax County can drop off medications at any of eight Fairfax County District Police Stations between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 28, 2018. Pills and liquids will be accepted; no pressurized canisters or needles.

The Drop-off sites are Reston District Station, 12000 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston; Fair Oaks District Station, 12300 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax; Franconia District Station, 6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria;

Mason District Station, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale; McLean District Station, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean; Mount Vernon District Station, 2511



Photo by Mercia Hobson/The Connection

**Operation Medicine Cabinet Cleanout: Saturday, April 28, 2018, residents in Fairfax County can drop off medications at any of eight Fairfax County District Police Stations between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Pills and liquids will be accepted; no questions asked.**

Parkers Lane, Alexandria; Sully District Station, 4900 Stonecroft Boulevard, Chantilly; and West Springfield District Station, 6140 Rolling Road, Springfield.

On their website, Fairfax County recommends that to dispose of syringes, needles and other medical sharps: "Place in (a) plastic container with (a) screw-on top. Mark the container 'residential sharps' and place in the trash."

DEA Diversion Control Program reports the total weight collected on National Take Back Day 2017 was the most ever collected: 900,386 pounds; that's 450 tons from 5,498 sites, beating the previous high of 447 tons from 5,400 sites in 2016.

"Wastewater treatment plants and onsite sewage disposal sys-

tems are not designed to remove these chemicals. As a result, these medications can end up in the environment and eventually in our drinking water."

In addition, DEA states on their website that the majority of prescription drug abusers report in surveys that they got their drugs from friends and family. "Americans understand that cleaning out old prescription drugs from medicine cabinets, kitchen drawers, and bedside tables reduces accidents, thefts, and the misuse and abuse of these medicines, including the opioid painkillers ... Eight out of 10 new heroin users began by abusing prescription painkillers and moved to heroin when they could no longer obtain or afford those painkillers."

**K9 Teams Hold Workshop, Training**

Recently, multiple local agencies with K9 teams from Fairfax County Fire and Rescue (VA-TF1), Fairfax County Police Department (PD), Prince William PD, and George Mason PD came together to train at the K9 Drive Building Workshop. The workshop was taught by Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Assistant Chief (ret) Garrett Dyer at the Perfect Pet Resort in Maryland.

One goal of the workshop was to teach participants how to become a better handler and helper for the working dog. First half of day consisted of lecture and discussion. The rest of the day involved field work with the K9 and handler to help enhance the K9's desire to detect their target odor.

There were also teams from out of the area including K9's from Massachusetts and Virginia Beach. It was a fantastic learning experience for all involved.

—Technician Trish Danula/Fairfax County Fire and Rescue



Photo courtesy of Fairfax County Fire and Rescue  
**The workshop was held at the Perfect Pet Resort in Maryland.**



# Bulletin Board

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.

## VOLUNTEERS WANTED

**The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum** needs volunteer docents on Sunday afternoons from 1-4 p.m. Greet museum visitors and tell them about the exhibits, the Museum and the its railroad and Civil War history. Training and orientation provided. Other volunteer opportunities are gardening, publicity and exhibit planning. The Museum is located at 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Call Michael at 703-945-7483 for more information.

## THURSDAY/MARCH 29-SUNDAY/APRIL 1

**Holy Week Worship at King of Kings Lutheran Church**, 4025 Kings Way, Fairfax. Maundy Thursday, March 29 - 7 p.m.; Good Friday, March 30 - 12:15 and 7 p.m.; Easter Sunday, April 1 - 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. Visit [www.kofk.org](http://www.kofk.org) or contact the church office 703-378-7272.

**Holy Week at Historic Pohick Church**, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Call 703-339-6572 or visit [www.pohick.org](http://www.pohick.org).

- Maundy Thursday, March 29: Maundy Thursday Liturgy and Holy Communion at 7:30 p.m.
- Good Friday, March 30: Good Friday Observance from noon-3 p.m.
- Easter Sunday, April 1: Lighting of the Paschal Candle at 5:30 a.m., Festival Holy Eucharist at 7:45 a.m., 9:15 a.m., and 11:15 a.m.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 1

**Easter Sunday Celebration**. 10:30-noon. Unity Spiritual Center of Springfield, 8136 Old Keene Mill Road, Suite 205, Springfield. Special youth activities including an Easter egg hunt. Visit [unityspiritualcenterofspringfieldva.com](http://unityspiritualcenterofspringfieldva.com).

**Easter Sunday Service**. 6:30 a.m. at Lee Chapel Cemetery (Intersection of Ffx County Pkwy & Lee Chapel Road), Burke. This is an outdoor worship sunrise service. Dress appropriately for the weather. From 1871 to 1951, Lee Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church was the home of worship, study, fellowship, celebration, and remembrance for the people of Burke. The ground remains sacred space. All are welcome. Visit [www.leechapelburke.org](http://www.leechapelburke.org).

**Easter Sunrise Service**. 7-7:45 a.m. at The Circle at George Washington Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon. Ahnna Lise Stevens-Jennings, director of Youth Ministries, Aldersgate UMC presents "When Morning Meets Our Eyes." Hosted by the Rotary Club of Mount Vernon assisted by Boy Scout Troop 993. Bring a lawn chair. All are welcome. Free. Email [mikej1013@verizon.net](mailto:mikej1013@verizon.net) for more.

## MONDAY/APRIL 2

**Scholarship Deadline**. Scholarship for research of local Civil War history — The Bull Run Civil War Round Table in Centreville, a 501 (3) c organization, offers a \$2,000 scholarship to a public or private high school senior who resides either in Fairfax County. Applicants should plan to attend college in the fall of 2018. Information and application instructions can be found at [bullruncwrt.org](http://bullruncwrt.org).

## WEDNESDAY/APRIL 4

**Public Meeting: Richmond Highway Corridor Improvements**. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon High School, 8515 Old Mt Vernon Road, Alexandria. Join a third public information meeting hosted by Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) about plans to widen Richmond Highway from four to six lanes between Jeff Todd Way to Napper Road. A brief presentation will begin at 7 p.m. Visit [www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/richmond\\_highway.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/richmond_highway.asp).

## THURSDAY/APRIL 5

**Public Meeting: Painting and Restriping**. 7 p.m. in the Springfield Governmental Center, 6140 Rolling Road, West Springfield. The Virginia Department of Transportation and the Fairfax County Department of Transportation will hold a public meeting on 2018 paving and restriping efforts in the Springfield District. Information will be on display in an open house format, with a presentation at 7:15 p.m. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/2018-paving-and-restriping](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/2018-paving-and-restriping).

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## The Daze Continue To Go Bye



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

You know, if my feet didn't hurt so much, I could almost forget that I have cancer, other than being aware of my upcoming infusion: April 6; my upcoming CT Scan and MRI: April 18; and my upcoming follow-up appointment with my oncologist to discuss the results: April 27.

Nevertheless, the goal is to not think about the fact that I have non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. The kind for which there is no cure; made clear by my oncologist at the initial Team Lourie meeting when he advised me that he "could treat me but that he couldn't cure me." What?! At that surreal moment, what goes in one ear flies out the other.

But here I am, nine years and counting; you bet I'm counting. That's one of the recurring thoughts I have as a multi-year cancer survivor; although, as my friend Frank has said to me: "you're in pretty good condition for the condition you're in."

Other than schedules and my underlying diagnosis (and my original "13 month to two year" prognosis), I regularly consider how long I've lived, one month now into year 10. It's both scary and reassuring: Am I further from the beginning or closer to the end? See. I can't stop thinking about it.

Generally speaking however, I am not bogged down by my diagnosis/circumstances, as anybody who knows me, knows. Nor am I preoccupied with the imminent danger in which my diagnosis places me everyday. And I'm certainly not bemoaning the likely reduction in my life expectancy from what I assumed it would be: mid to late 80s, given how long both my parents lived, to what is logical to believe it will now be: late 60s; considering all the statistics for similarly diagnosed individuals. Typically, one diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer doesn't just live with it (as a chronic-type disease), rather you die because of it.

This column is more for public consumption than it is about private perception. In truth, although a second, minute or hour doesn't go by when I don't think/remember/acknowledge the facts of my case, I am able, most of the time, to keep a smile on my face and not bring a frown to others.

Moreover, I want/need those others to forget that I have cancer as much as it is possible for it to be forgotten. And I want my behavior to be a contributing factor to their forgetting. If I don't start it then there's no reason for them to finish it.

And I'm being selfish in saying so? Absolutely! Because the better vibrations I receive from others, the better I'll feel about myself. And the better I feel about myself, the better and more able I'll be to deal with my disease and all its emotional and physical side- and straight-on effects. Effects which are hardly the stuff with which dreams are made. To invoke and rework a quote from the legendary screen actress Bette Davis: Having cancer is not for sissies.

But it is indiscriminate and projections into the not-to-distant future are frightening: for both males and females, one in three have a "lifetime risk of developing or dying from cancer," according to the U.S. National Cancer Institute's Surveillance Epidemiology and End Results (SEER) Database, based on "data compiled between 2012 and 2014, the most recent available."

So how do you put that in your pipe and not smoke it? If you're unlucky enough to be one of these new "diagnosees," you either roll with the punches or get rolled over instead. The choice is yours, as it was mine.

"Get busy living or get busy dying," as Andy Dufresne (Tim Robbins) said to "Red," (Morgan Freeman), in the Oscar-nominated "The Shawshank Redemption" (1994). And I try to remind myself of that every day, and every night, too.

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



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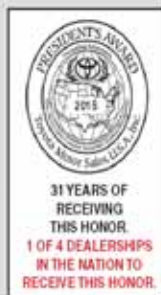
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