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# Great Falls CONNECTION



Beth Mertens, school counselor at Colvin Run Elementary, gives a Helping Hands Award to Reagan Exley at the Great Falls Optimist Club Awards Ceremony held on Thursday, May 10, at the Great Falls Library.

## Optimist Club Presents Awards

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Great Falls Authors  
Celebrate Published Works  
NEWS, PAGE 9

Halm's Defense, Gomez's  
Goals Lead Langley  
SPORTS, PAGE 11

PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION OPINION, PAGE 6 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 10 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 14



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## About Time or Deja Vu?

BY KEN MOORE  
THE CONNECTION

Commuters crossing the river at the American Legion Bridge, both morning and night, try to find any route that saves just a little time. But already clogged McLean intersections, roads and neighborhoods have become even more saturated by drivers, some armed with traffic applications like Waze, who think McLean is the cut through of choice to save a few minutes.

At a community meeting hosted by VDOT last Wednesday, May 9, 2018 at McLean High School, Dranesville Supervisor John Foust told McLean residents that “exciting” developments are on the way.

“There has been some, I think, really wonderful news coming from the Maryland side,” Foust said, in McLean High School cafeteria.

More than 75 people attended the meeting to hear short term, intermediate and long-term plans to break gridlock on McLean’s streets.

“They are really pressing forward,” Foust told the audience about the expansion of lanes on the American Legion Bridge to relieve congestion.

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R) announced plans earlier this year to add four new lanes to I-270, the Capital Beltway, and the Baltimore-Washington Parkway by means of a public private partnership. Hogan touted the \$9 billion traffic relief plan as a way to reduce congestion for millions of drivers and significantly improve the traffic conditions on some of Maryland’s most traveled roads.

“The [Maryland] Governor says he wants construction to begin in 2020,” said Foust. “I don’t think that realistic,” but “it’s not my place to say so.”

“I say, ‘Go for it,’” said Foust.

“Let me just say, ‘Yay!’” said Sharon Bulova at the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors meeting on May 1, 2018, when the Supervisors voted to send a letter pushing Maryland to study options to relieve congestion at the Bridge.

“You can see traffic backed up way beyond Tysons trying to get to Maryland in the evenings,” Foust said at the Supervisors meeting.

“Maryland just did a major major commitment to its own Beltway and I-270 and the American Legion Bridge and I thank them so much for that.

“I didn’t think we were ever going to get to this point. I really didn’t,” said Foust.

**THE LETTER** the Board sent to the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration is firm.

“The County believes that the capacity needs across the Potomac River must be addressed to alleviate the existing congestions and to ensure that the region remains economically vibrant,” wrote the Supervisors.



PHOTOS BY KEN MOORE/THE CONNECTION



About 75 people came to a meeting in McLean last week with concerns about gridlock and cut through traffic, some of it caused by traffic on the Beltway.



Captain Alan Hanson of the Fairfax County Police calls for a ‘media blitz’ on ‘don’t block the box’ as McLean officers continue an enforcement campaign at McLean intersections, especially Balls Hill and Georgetown Pike.

“Approximately 239,000 vehicles use the bridge on an average weekday, resulting in substantial congestion and delay for those residing and working in our localities. Use of the bridge is expected to increase over the next 25 years, further exacerbating the problem. Addressing the capacity of the bridge is essential to the quality of life and economic development for our region.”

Board members expressed enthusiasm as they reviewed the letter at the Board meeting on May 1, 2018.

“This moves us forward to working with Maryland on providing continuity for transportation on the Beltway,” said Bulova. “The

**Traffic backs up on the Beltway where the Express Lanes end and cars must merge. Cut-through traffic trying to avoid the backup on the Beltway backs up on McLean’s roads, causing a “nightmare,” according to some residents.**

may just be talking about just adding roads and toll lanes now, it could be the basis for other sorts of transit for the future.

“There are lots of possibilities with this in the future. We just need to get something constructed,” she said.

According to Herrity: “It’s finally good that we’ve got a governor in Maryland that’s serious about improving congestion on both their side and our side.

“Hopefully we keep the pressure on them for a second crossing,” said Herrity, who described the congested path down I-270, to I-495, to the Dulles Toll Road that Marylanders take to work.

Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay says congestion is impacting the entire county, including the southeastern area.

“The Maryland traffic in Virginia is stilling to our communities. It has gotten so bad, I think more than half of the people at Fort Belvoir have Maryland tags now and they have inundated our roadways to a point where schools can’t get busses out on Telegraph Road, Mount Vernon Highway is backed up for miles, the GW Parkway is a raceway,” said McKay. “We certainly want to be a region, but the impacts of the huge influx of Maryland folks coming into Virginia and the southeastern end of the county most specifically Fort Belvoir has had a tremendous effect on our infrastructure.”

**NOT ALL** were convinced, including Hunter Mill Supervisor Catherine Hudgins.

“I will tell you that my excitement is not quite at the level of others because I have been riding the Beltway since early 70s. It was crowded then, it is crowded now. And I’m subject to believe that it’s going to be crowded,” said Hudgins.

“I’m skeptical,” she said. “My optimism isn’t there.”

Maryland’s Montgomery County Council has historically opposed the possibility of a second crossing through Montgomery County, since past studies didn’t prove a second crossing or widening of the American Legion Bridge would be effective.

The environmental impact would be massive, since Potomac, Md., like Great Falls, has been zoned a low density area to protect the health of the Potomac River and the region’s drinking water. Montgomery County has created a 93,000-acre agricultural reserve in the outer part of the county which is not hospitable to a so-called techway.

In its letter, the Board of Supervisors said the Park Authority needs to determine “any anticipated impacts to the Scotts Run Nature Preserve.”

**SOME McLEAN RESIDENTS** at last week’s meeting say the Express Lanes built on the Virginia side have caused a choke point at Georgetown Pike, because the lanes



Dranesville Supervisor John Foust says: “There has been some, I think, really wonderful news coming from the Maryland side.”

cooperation and coordination with Maryland really is critical.”

Braddock Supervisor John Cook calls it “common-sensical.”

“The fact that it’s taken such a push is quite amazing,” he said. The letter, he said, serves “as a way of sharing our positive experience [with the Express Lanes], to the extent that people in Maryland can’t look at the obvious and understand it, maybe we can help prod them that way a little bit.”

Providence Supervisor Linda Smyth and Springfield Supervisor Pat Herrity envisioned the future with transit and a second crossing over the Potomac River.

“We have certainly been pushing our colleagues in Maryland to come up with a proposal to work on this as part of our planning for the region,” said Smyth. “While we

SEE BRIDGE, PAGE 14



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## NEWS

MOD Pizza presents a ceremonial check to Officer Ashley Block. (From left) are her dad, Kerry Block; stepmom, Tammy Block; boyfriend, PFC Sharif Issa of the McLean District Station; Block; her mom, Janet Winner; Greenbriar MOD General Manager Dean Ladson; store trainee Jenny Bye; and MOD District Manager Dirk Huber.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

## 'It Restores Your Faith in Humanity'

### Injured police officer receives money raised for her.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

One minute, McLean Police Officer Ashley Block was helping out during the March 2 windstorm; and the next, she was pinned to the ground by a tree that crashed down on her. She sustained severe injuries; and when a Sully District police officer mentioned her accident to the general manager of a Chantilly pizza place, it spurred a fundraiser for her. It was held March 20 at MOD Pizza, and police and firefighters from throughout Fairfax County, plus area residents, braved freezing temperatures, sleet and ice to get there. A month later, on April 26 – although still on crutches – Block was able to be at the restaurant, herself, to receive a check for the \$3,000 raised in her name.

"I'm lucky to be alive," she said. "I came close to being paralyzed. I just took my first steps today."

When the windstorm struck, Block was a new patrol officer. Trees were down everywhere and, while one officer cut them up, she cleared away the debris. But the wind was so strong that the top of a tree broke off and fell on her, knocking her onto the ground and impaling her left leg. She broke her femur, shoulder, elbow, four ribs and some vertebrae.

"I'm scared of trees now," she admitted. "When it happened, I heard a crack and started running – and all of a sudden, I was down and blacked out. The other officer called for help; then Dispatch called me, and I answered so they'd know I was alert and could respond. The next day, in the hospital, the ladies of Dispatch came to see me and brought me flowers. They said, 'We're so glad you responded; we didn't know if you were conscious.'"

Block spent five days in the hospital and was then in a rehabilitation hospital for two-and-a-half weeks. Meanwhile, her mom, Janet Winner, packed up and

moved here from Michigan to take care of her daughter while she convalesced.

She now undergoes physical therapy, five days a week, both at the Police Academy and with a private physical therapist. "I want to get back to where I need to be," she said. "But it'll be four to six months until I'm back at work on full duty."

On April 26, Block and her family and boyfriend, PFC Sharif Issa, also of the McLean District Station, were treated to a pizza-and-salad dinner by Dean Ladson, general manager of MOD Pizza in the Greenbriar Town Center. Then Ladson and MOD District Manager Dirk Huber presented her with the check.

They wanted to raise money for her, explained Ladson, because "MOD believes in community giving, and we knew it was the right thing to do." But his restaurant went above and beyond what most events of this type attempt.

Instead of donating just 10 or 20 percent of their proceeds during a few-hours' time period, MOD gave Block 50 percent. It also made it an all-day fundraiser that applied to every customer that day. Topping it off, the wait staff donated 100 percent of their tips – which accounted for \$700 of the total \$3,000 raised.

"Police officers give everything for us, so we wanted to do something for her," said Huber.

Before the check presentation, Ladson told Winner how happy they were to hold the fundraiser for her daughter; and she replied, "Thanks for taking care of my baby; I think it's awesome."

Block said she became a police officer because "I always had a passion to serve the community; I just had a calling for it. I hope to work federally someday, but I wanted to see what law enforcement was like on the streets, first. This accident is a hurdle, but it could have been a lot worse."

As for the pizza fundraiser, she said, "It was amazing; I'm very grateful. Not many communities come together like that for an officer."

But, said Ladson, "It's always important that people know there are others outside [of their immediate circle] who care. It restores your faith in humanity."

**"I'm lucky to be alive. I came close to being paralyzed."**  
— Police Officer Ashley Block

### WEEK IN McLEAN

## Used Book Collection for Scholarships for Women

McLean Branch American Association of University Women (AAUW) will hold Used Book Collection on Saturday, June 2, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at SunTrust Bank, 515 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. Used books, CDs, DVDs, software, children's books, records, and recent books will be accepted. No encyclopedias, VHS tapes or audiotapes. The

Book Sale will be held on Aug. 31-Sept. 2 at the Spring Hill Recreation Center. Sale proceeds benefit scholarships for women. Questions: [aauwbookfair@gmail.com](mailto:aauwbookfair@gmail.com) or 703-527-4206. There will also be book collections on June 23 and July 14 at the same time and place.



## NEWS

**Donned in crisp white attire, students split into two teams – Oxford and Cambridge – and played first and second innings throughout the day.**

PHOTOS  
CONTRIBUTED



### The Langley School Celebrates 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Cricket Day

On Tuesday, May 8, fifth-graders at The Langley School participated in a cultural experience: an authentic cricket match. This spring marks the 20<sup>th</sup> year that Langley fifth-graders have taken part in this annual tradition first introduced in 1998 by Langley teacher Mark Loach, who was born and raised in England.

Donned in crisp white attire, students split into two teams – Oxford and Cambridge – and played first and second innings throughout the day on the school's turf field, with enthusiastic parents cheering them on. Students also enjoyed a taste of authentic British cuisine during a morning "elevenses" refreshment break and afternoon tea, completing the typical cricket experience.

Watching Langley's fifth-graders skillfully bat, politely clap for opponents, and use terms such as "wicket" and "over," it was hard to believe that most students had little knowledge of the game prior to this spring. For the past month, students patiently learned the terminology, rules, and techniques of this complex sport during their P.E. classes and lunch breaks.

So why has cricket become a fifth-grade tradition at The Langley School? This sport offers an innovative way to expand students' understanding and perspective of the world, as well as teach them the importance of honesty, teamwork, and sportsmanship. And the traditions and rules of cricket provide the perfect learning opportunity.

## TRAIL SAFETY & ETIQUETTE

When you enjoy Fairfax County's 500 miles of trails by bike or foot, please be mindful of the comfort and safety of other trail users.

Slow down and signal before passing others. All trail users should keep to the right except when passing.

Keep one ear clear when using headphones, and always watch for debris, uneven or slippery trail conditions.

Before crossing a street, always make eye contact with the motorist to ensure they see you - even if the walk sign is on. Wait until the road is clear or until all traffic has stopped.

The 2018 Fairfax County bike & trail map is now available at all government centers and bike shops in Fairfax County, as well as at [fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/bike-walk](http://fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/bike-walk)

### 10th Congressional Campaign Forum in McLean

**May 23, Wednesday, 5 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.**

**Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in McLean**

**1545 Chain Bridge Road**

*Candidates from Both Parties in the Nationally Watched 10th District Race*

**Key issues:** Virginia Economic Equality Caucus (EEC) nonpartisan forum for 10th District Candidates on economic progress and equality, job creation, infrastructure, health care, and opportunity for women and minorities, Wednesday evening, May 23.

**This is free. Please register ASAP to Lee Powell at [leepowell@delta.comcastbiz.net](mailto:leepowell@delta.comcastbiz.net) or by phone at (202) 360-6347**

**Key Speakers** are 10th Congressional District candidates from both parties:

- Alison Friedman, Democrat, (confirmed)
- Dan Helmer, Democrat, (confirmed)
- Shak Hill, Republican, (confirmed)
- Paul Pelletier, Democrat, (confirmed)
- Lindsey Davis Stover, Democrat, (confirmed)
- Julia Biggins, Democrat, (confirmed)
- State Sen. Jennifer Wexton, Democrat, (invited)
- US Rep. Barbara Comstock, Republican incumbent in the 10th District (invited)

**Agenda: 5 p.m.-5:50 p.m.-Reception & Non-political section for nonprofits 6 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.—Forum for 10th Congressional candidates from both parties**

The Virginia EEC committee is a nonpartisan coalition of nonprofits, faith-based entities and grassroots leaders in Virginia.

There is an optional suggestion for a donation to Lutheran Church of the Redeemer Social Concerns committee to help the needy.

## CONTEST OPENS TODAY!

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# OPINION

## Decision Slows Transportation Progress

BY JEFFREY C. MCKAY  
LEE DISTRICT SUPERVISOR



### COMMENTARY

**F**rustrating. Exasperating. Maddening. Irritating. Anyone who regularly drives in Northern Virginia is familiar with these feelings, because we all spend time sitting in traffic, staring at miles of brake lights in front of us.

One way we overcome these congestion problems is through funding from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVT), a state agency that has awarded \$990 million to transportation projects all over the region.

After years of underfunding by the Commonwealth led to crippling traffic and insufficient maintenance, the 2013 Virginia General Assembly and then Governor McDonnell thankfully reached an agreement to significantly

increase funding for transportation, particularly in Northern Virginia, through this new pot of funds. It has been tremendously successful.

This year, attention was focused on the needs of Metro — a vital component in our transportation network and the Commonwealth's economy. While the Commonwealth provides significant aid, it is important to note that the local jurisdictions in Virginia that have been responsible for funding Metro since its inception — over half a billion dollars has been provided through local and regional revenue sources in the last five years alone.

Unfortunately, Speaker Kirk Cox and Del. Tim Hugo blocked Gov. Ralph Northam's plan

to provide new revenues for Metro (through small increases in taxes on hotel stays and property sales), which resulted

from discussions with a bipartisan coalition of businesses, local governments, transportation advocates, and legislators — instead, they forced the adoption a plan that diverts more than \$100 million per year from existing road and transit projects funded by the transportation revenues enacted in 2013.

Our region's transportation needs are still sizable, as evidenced by the fact that NVT received \$2.5 billion in project requests over the next six years, though it only has approximately \$1.25 billion available to

distribute. As a result, many projects that would alleviate congestion and improve mobility will likely be delayed, deferred, or never built — a regrettable outcome that could have been avoided. We should not be addressing one transportation need at the expense of others.

## The Quest for Education

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



### COMMENTARY

**I** can remember the conversation almost word for word even though it occurred decades ago. The counselor in my high school asked me to come to her office, and there she told me it was time for me to start preparing applications to go to college. I was about to fall out of my chair. I explained to her that no one in my family had ever been to college, and there was no way that I could go. Most of my family had never finished high school. She told me that lots of people are the first in their families to go to college and that I could be such a person. I did not know what to answer; it was such a new idea that she proposed to me.

Secretly inside she had set ablaze in me a fire that would never go out. The excitement of the idea that I could go to college and learn about so many new things of which I had been curious was more than I could contain. I was

skeptical, however, and I did not go to college the first year out of high school. The next year with lots of fear and trepidation I did start my education at a higher level, and I never have stopped. From my Bachelor of Arts at Old Dominion College, now University, to my master's in education at the University of Virginia to a thirty-year career with Fairfax County Public Schools, to the Plum Center for Lifelong Learning being named in my honor, to my teaching at George Mason University's Osher Lifelong Institute, education both formal and informal has been a fundamental part of who I am. I can still feel the excitement that I have had in being a part of so many different educational experiences.

All these reminiscences about my educational background came back last week as my grandson received his MBA from Virginia Tech. Growing up in a family where the high-

est educational achievement was a brother who graduated from high school, I now live in a family where I, my wife and our children and grandchildren have among us 14 college degrees with six of those degrees being beyond the bachelor's level. I am honored to represent a district with constituents who are among the very best educated in the state.

Needless to say, education is among the highest priorities I have as a legislator. I want all students to have access to educational programs that will help them realize their highest potential. Fundamental to me is that our educational system leave all students with a quest for knowledge and the appropriate tools with which to pursue their interests. We cannot afford to have students not like school, nor can we ignore the fact that learning is a lifelong adventure. We have the institutions and the resources to make education at higher levels the best in the Nation. Virginia needs to join the states that are making community colleges free. Can we afford it? The answer is simply that we cannot afford not to!

## Send Father's Day Photos

Father's Day is Sunday, June 17, and once again this newspaper will publish a gallery of Father's Day photos.

Every year at this time, we put out the call for photographs of fathers and their children, grandfathers and their children and grandchildren.

Send in photos with the following information: the town where you live, the names of everyone in the picture, the approximate date the picture was taken, the ages of the children and a sentence or two about what is happening and where the photograph was taken. Be sure to tell us your town name and neighborhood. Photos are due by June 12.

You can submit your photos online at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/fathersday](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/fathersday). You can also email photos to [editors@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:editors@connectionnewspapers.com).

## Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

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Call: 703-917-6444.

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## Great Falls CONNECTION

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# Girl Scout Project Highlights ‘Modern Day Slavery’

There was a bustle at the door as women and girls of all ages came through to pay a visit at the Old McLean Firehouse in McLean. The project titled “The Sustainable Style Initiative Community Expo” was created as an open community event on April 29, and was aimed at raising awareness about being a responsible consumer of the fashion industry.

Alicia Gonzalez, a senior Girl Scout of Troop 1692 decided to educate the community for her Girl Scouts Gold Award project on a topic that is not often discussed or debated fully. The event included two clothing vendors, a station to create hair accessories as well as containers to put them in, a “style swap” station where you could swap your clothes for someone else’s, and featured a screening of the documentary “The True Cost.”

Not only is the function bringing attention to the truth about the fashion industry, but the expo also takes place during Fashion Revolution Week, an international campaign which commemorates the horror that occurred in the Rana Plaza factory collapse in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2013.

One of the vendors, The Ethical Olive, is striving to bring the issues to light; Michelle Humbertson, the creator of The Ethical Olive, started her company

in Richmond with the hope to raise awareness on what she calls “modern day slavery.”

Her textiles and variety of other products are stitched and sent from countries all over the world from workers who have been victims of heinous events. “A lot of the artists who create [these products] are victims of human trafficking or at risk of being trafficked; human beings who are treated like slaves,” Humbertson explains. Her store bringing the issues to the surface in regards to human rights, and also environmental rights and awareness.

“All my products are created out of sustainable material, there are so many issues in the world right now and environmental waste due to clothing is definitely one people should be aware of.”

Humbertson’s company brought to light the story of those working under inhumane conditions in countries around the world, also told in the documentary being viewed at the expo. Overall, Gonzalez was happy with the outcome of her event and her drive to educate community on what really goes into making the clothes we wear, providing an eye opening experience.

## Participating vendors:

The Ethical Olive: <https://www.theethicalolive.com/> and Plato’s Closet: <https://www.platoscloset.com/>

Sisters Isabel (left) and Blanca (right) are employees of a gently used clothing store called Plato’s closet; Located in several counties in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area, they take in and buy gently used clothing and accessories that are in good condition.



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Michelle Humbertson, founder of the clothing store The Ethical Olive, explains the message behind her company at her vending stall.



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# A Education • Learning • Fun More Than Apple for Teacher

Gifts for those who educate children.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

As the school year nears an end, it's time to thank those whose jobs run the gamut from comforting kindergartners with separation anxiety to teaching biology to hormonal teenagers. End-of-year teacher gifts are seemingly ubiquitous in June, but how does one choose a useful present that doesn't get re-gifted or donated? Local tastemakers offer their take on gifts for teachers that teachers actually want to receive.

"Teachers can always use extra supplies for their classrooms," said Courtney Thomas of the Picket Fence in Burke. "Put together a goody bag full of pencils and markers, notepads, page flags and sticky notes or anything your teacher needs to keep his or her desk stocked. Tie it all up in a reusable bag they can repurpose to carry papers and books to and from school."

Treat your teacher to a spa day at home, advises Thomas. "Get a collection of your favorite lotions, soaps and candles and give your teachers a much appreciated excuse to pamper themselves."

Flowers are a cheerful present to offer those who teach children, but fresh flowers have a limited lifespan, advises Todd Martz of Home on Cameron in Old Town Alexandria who suggests bouquets with longevity. "Felt flowers always look fresh and add a bit happiness to every day," he said.

Sometimes the most treasured gifts are those that don't come with a price tag. "My favorite handmade teacher gift is a thoughtful note of thanks, said Kathryn Horn Coneway of Art at the Center in Alexandria. "Taking the time to say thank you and be specific about how an adult has impacted your child's growth is a powerful way of affirming the work teachers do. I think it is great to encourage kids to write letters of thanks as well and to think through what specifically they can name that they have learned or gained from a teacher."

"A beautiful and thoughtful gift for all teachers are



PHOTO COURTESY OF SONORAN ROSE BOUTIQUE

**Wine-scented bath bombs from Napa Valley are the perfect gift for the teacher who needs a little pampering.**



COURTESY OF KATHRYN CONEWAY

**Notepads make useful end-of-year teachers gifts, suggests Amanda Mertins of Patina Polished Living in Alexandria.**

guest towels," says Cristina Chiotti of Sonoran Rose Boutique in Potomac, Md. "[We have some] that come from South Africa and are available in a variety of lovely prints and designs," she said. "Delicious wine-scented bath bombs from Napa Valley are the perfect gift for the teacher who needs a little pampering."

For teachers with a preppy spirit, Amanda Mertins, of Patina Polished Living in Alexandria, advises, "Some of the most thoughtful gifts for teachers who go above and beyond to educate our children are gift monogrammed items, gifts cards and notepads."

And for teachers who enjoy spending time outdoors, Chiotti says an ideal gift includes "Pairing some local Maryland honey with our gardening tool kit for the perfect springtime gardening gift."



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PICKET FENCE

**Candles, soaps and lotions in a gift bag will make luxurious end-of-year teacher gifts, says Courtney Thomas of The Picket Fence in Burke.**



PHOTO COURTESY OF ART AT THE CENTER

**A note written on a handmade card such as this collage with mulberry paper and acrylic medium on watercolor paper by Kathryn Horn Coneway of Art at the Center, makes meaning teacher gifts, says Coneway.**



# Great Falls Authors Celebrate Published Works

Conversation with authors to be held Saturday, June 2, at the Great Falls Library.

BY CHRISTINA TYLER WENKS

Life's challenges, solutions, and stories worth sharing are among published works that more than a dozen local authors celebrate on Saturday, June 2, at the Great Falls Library. Conversation with authors begins at 4 p.m.

All featured authors are Great Falls Writer's Group members, who will discuss their inspiration, writing process, and what they hope to give their audiences.

Nancy Hannan's first novel, "In the Light of Winter," is a love story for those late in life. Hannan's first two books, "A Mother Never Forgets" and "A Way Out," are about real-life experiences reconnecting with the adult child relinquished to adoption at birth and life in an abusive marriage. Her books are intended to help readers through difficult situations.

**PERSONAL TRIALS AND RECOVERY** inspire many GFWG authors to assist others through their writing.

Educator Mary McKay's "Swimming Lessons: How Our Mental Healthcare System Fails Us" is a mother's personal reflection that helps parents navigate the world of specialists, schools and programs to manage a child suffering from behavioral problems, emotional illness, learning disabilities and addictions.

"I was encouraged by others familiar with my story to share and help other parents learn from my experience," says McKay.

Sharon Rainey's third book, "The Best Part of My Day Healing Journal," follows the publication, "Lyme Savvy: Treatment Insights for Lyme Patients and Practitioners," and encourages joy, happiness and laughter to promote healthy recovery and illness resistance.

"Recording positive emotions, recalling them in a journal, is a positive step of therapeutic value," Rainey says. "So many people had asked me how I healed at the emotional and spiritual levels, that I shared what I had learned."

A life goal of GFWG matriarch Mary Dacoba is writing her personal story in "Ninety-seven



Adriaan Verheul



Bill Lewers



Catherine Mathews



Clarence Ashley



Jennifer Hammond



Judy Politzer



Mary Dacoba



Mary McKay



Nancy Hannan



Pu-Chin Hsueh Waide



James and Darlene Diedrich

Years."

Catherine Mathews follows her memoir debut, "My Family's Journey," with "Twinbridge," a fictionalized account of life in a small town during World War II.

Pu-Chin Hsueh Waide shares her father's life as a Chinese child in a Tibetan village until WWII in her book, "Hong Chen: Memoirs of a Turbulent Life Through Rose-Tinted Dust Storm."

Clarence Ashley's "Spy Master," chronicles Central Intelligence Agency case officer George G. Kisevalter's life in tsarist Russia, Cold War espionage that resulted in negotiating power during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and life in McLean.

History and mystery converge with Adriaan Verheul's experiences as a peacekeeper abroad in his political thriller, "A Clean Death."

J. Robert DiFulgo's

## Great Falls Writer's Group's Featured Authors

Clarence Ashley, "CIA Spymaster"  
Mary Dacoba, "Ninety-Seven Years"  
Darlene and James Diedrich, "Don't Shoot the Giraffes"  
J. Robert DiFulgo, "Titanic's Resurrected Secret – H.E.W." and "The Invisible Moon"  
Jennifer Hammond, "101 Resources for Veterans: The Ultimate Resource Guide"  
Nancy Hannan, "In the Light of Winter," "A Mother Never Forgets," and "A Way Out"  
Bill Lewers, "The Gatekeepers of Democracy," "November Third," "A Voter's Journey," and "Six Decades of Baseball: A Personal Narrative"  
Catherine Mathews, "My Family's Journey" and "Twinbridge"  
Mary McKay, "Swimming Lessons: How Our Mental Healthcare Systems Fails Us; A Mother's Personal Reflections and Cry for Help."  
Judy Politzer, "Fractured Nursery Rhymes, Fairy Tales, and Potpourri"  
Sharon Rainey, "Lyme Savvy: Treatment Insights for Lyme Patients & Practitioners," and "The Best Part of My Day Healing Journal"  
Adriaan Verheul, "A Clean Death"  
Pu-Chin Hsueh Waide, "Hong Chen: Memoirs of a Turbulent Life Through Rose-Tinted Dust Storm"

book, "Titanic's Resurrected Secret – H.E.W.," unravels Titanic's untold secret about an individual whose identity was forfeited because of the theft of a valuable object in his possession. DiFulgo's "The Invisible Moon" tells of a man suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and assembling his past after an unexpected visit from a former Navy shipmate.

In gratitude to the military family who took her in as a teen, Jennifer Hammond compiled "101 Resources for Veterans: The Ultimate Resource Guide." Book purchases allow her to put more copies in the hands of vets who need them.

Inspired by decades of volunteering at polls, Bill Lewers cre-

ated "The Gatekeepers of Democracy" and "November Third," a series about citizens with differing political persuasions who work Election Day battling malfunctioning equipment, political trickery, and deteriorating weather as the workers provide a positive voting experience for those casting ballots.

Previous publications by Lewers include non-fiction books "Six Decades of Baseball: A Personal Narrative" and "A Voter's Journey."

James and Darlene Diedrich worked on development projects in Africa. "Don't Shoot the Giraffes" is a compilation of short stories, photographs and letters illustrating daily life with their two



J. Robert DiFulgo



Sharon Rainey

children, whose second language is Swahili.

**THE AUTHOR EVENT** features reads for youngsters, too. Author and illustrator Judy Politzer created, "Fractured Nursery Rhymes, Fairy Tales, and Potpourri," which teaches the alphabet through nursery rhymes with enhanced original endings.

"These new versions tell how the story really ends and tickles the children's imagination through smiles, giggles, and laughter," says Politzer.

"This event is a celebration of the talent and passion that exists within our writing family," says GFWG Founder Kristin Clark Taylor.

"Bringing the community together to recognize this talent is joyous and exhilarating. It makes my heart smile."

The June 2 event is open to the public. All books are available for purchase and signing.



# CALENDAR

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

## ONGOING

### “Trees, Trees, and Beyond.”

Through May 31 at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Vienna Arts Society Exhibition. Free. Open 10-7:30 p.m. in May. Visit [www.ViennaArtsSociety.org](http://www.ViennaArtsSociety.org) or call 703-319-3971.

**Oakton Farmers Market.** 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax Church, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Year-round weekly farmers market in Oakton. Local produce, meats/eggs, dairy, baked goods, and more. Admission is free. Visit [community-foodworks.org](http://community-foodworks.org).

**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.

## FRIDAY/MAY 18

**Bike to Work Day.** Join more than 18,000 area commuters for a free celebration of bicycling as a fun, healthy and environmentally-friendly way to get to work. Starting at various early morning hours, and some in the afternoon. Morning Bike to Work Day convoys, led by experienced bicycle commuters, will travel throughout the region. All levels of cyclists are welcome to join the convoys. To register, visit [www.biketoworkmetrodc.org](http://www.biketoworkmetrodc.org) and be entered for a free bike raffle.

**McLean Art Society Meeting.** 10 a.m.-noon at the Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Susan O'Neill, a graphic artist will be doing a demonstration on charcoal drawing. There will be a sale of art materials and books to fund the Society's volunteer projects. Call 703 356-2998.

**Thomas Pandolfi Concert.** 7:30-9 p.m. at Great Falls United Methodist Church, 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Pianist Thomas Pandolfi in concert performing works by Mozart, Chopin, Ponce and Bernstein. Sponsored by the United Methodist Women. Meet and greet reception to follow. \$40. Tickets in advance at [www.greatfallsumc.org](http://www.greatfallsumc.org).

**Encore Chorale Concert.** 7:30-9 p.m. at United Christian Parish Reston, 11508 North Shore Drive, Reston. Combined Encore Chorales from Reston, Fairfax, and Lansdowne Woods sing music from Broadway, the Great American Songbook, and traditional Spirituals. Free and open to the public. Visit [www.EncoreCreativity.org](http://www.EncoreCreativity.org).

## FRIDAY-SATURDAY/MAY 18-19

**Traditional Afternoon Teas.** 3-5 p.m. at Freeman Store and Museum, 131 Church St. NE., Vienna. Enjoy a traditional English tea. Tickets are \$30 per person and include scones, tea sandwiches, assorted sweets and a bottomless cup of tea. A program will feature The Language of Flowers. Space is very limited; make reservations by calling 703-938-5187.

## SATURDAY/MAY 19

**2018 NGC Standard Flower Show.** 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Flower show “Celebrate Gardening Diversity.” Learn about plants that you can grow in the area, view creative floral designs. Free. Visit [www.gfgardenclub.org](http://www.gfgardenclub.org).

**Teens on the Green.** 11 a.m.-4 p.m. For one afternoon each spring, teens run the Town of Vienna – at least its



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER

**McLean Day now has two stages for entertainment—which means there is something for everyone to enjoy.**

# McLean Day Festival Returns Saturday

**M**cLean Day 2018 — produced by the McLean Community Center (MCC) — will be held on Saturday, May 19, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Rd. Admission is free.

The party starts early this year! On Friday, May 18, from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. patrons can come to Lewinsville Park to enjoy the large, ticketed amusement rides just inside the entrance on Chain Bridge Road. Ride prices vary and some rides have height requirements.

Now in its 103<sup>rd</sup> year, McLean Day began in 1915 when the McLean School and Civic League sponsored a festival to raise funds for school and community projects.

A variety of popular large amusement rides can be enjoyed at McLean Day. Younger children can enjoy a “Kids’ Way” area that features ticketed rides especially for them. There will also be several free games and activities all over the park, including Bubble Ball, a climbing wall, laser tag and Squeals on Wheels Petting Zoo.

McLean Day now has two stages for entertainment—which means there is something for everyone to enjoy.

For festival updates, driving directions, shuttle bus stop locations and a festival area map, visit: [www.mcleancenter.org/](http://www.mcleancenter.org/) special-events or call the Center at 703-790-0123/TTY: 711. The Center’s telephone will be answered from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the day of the festival.

entertainment. Vienna Parks and Recreation will host a youthful day of spring on stage as teens take over the Town Green with performances by Club Phoenix Live members, Madison High School’s jazz band, Adrenaline Dance, School of Rock, and Velocity Dance. Call 703-255- 6360.

**McLean Day 2018.** 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Several options in stage entertainment. Rides, fair food and more. The festival will be held rain or shine. Call 703-790-0123/TTY: 711, [www.mcleancenter.org/](http://www.mcleancenter.org/) special-events.

**Over the Edge Rappelling Fundraiser.** at Hilton McLean Global Headquarters, 7930 Jones Branch Drive, McLean. Some 80-plus thrill seekers will rappel down the McLean Hilton headquarters building. Sponsored by Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia. Each participant pledges to raise \$1,000 [www.habitatnova.org/ote/](http://www.habitatnova.org/ote/).

**Connect Our Kids Fundraiser.** 5-8 p.m. at Mosaic District’s Alex and Ani store. In honor of May’s National Foster Care Month, Connect Our Kids, a Falls Church-based non-profit, is pairing with Mosaic District’s Alex and Ani store for a Charmed By Charity event. Alex and Ani will

donate 15 percent of gross sales made during the event to support Connect Our Kids and their work developing proactive software that helps America’s foster children find their families faster. Visit [www.connectourkids.org](http://www.connectourkids.org).

**A Salute to the Military.** 7:30 p.m. at Vinson Hall Community Building, 1733 Kirby Road, McLean. With Tysons McLean Orchestra. Sponsored by Linda and Wayne Sharp with special guest Col. Arnald Gabriel. Featuring Copland’s Lincoln Portrait and Tchaikovsky’s 1812 Overture. Adults, \$40; seniors, \$30; youth, \$15. Visit [tysonsmcleanorchestra.org](http://tysonsmcleanorchestra.org).

## SATURDAY-SUNDAY/MAY 19-20

**Saturday Spring Market Fair.** 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at The Claude Moore Colonial Farm, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Play games and watch a children’s puppet theatre. Order nails from the Blacksmith or a Corn Husk Doll. Enjoy music, dancing and 18<sup>th</sup> century fun. Lunch for purchase. The Colonial Tavern serves a variety of beer and ale, wine, lemonade and ginger ale. Adults, \$8; children and seniors, \$4; children under 3 free admission; free parking; directions at [www.1771.org](http://www.1771.org).

# Tenth District Forum to Be Held in McLean

## Candidates to debate at the McLean Lutheran Church of the Redeemer on May 23.

**T**he McLean Forum for 10th District candidates from both parties will focus on economic equality, jobs, health care and key safety net programs, education, women and minority issues and infrastructure investments, Wednesday evening May 23, 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the McLean Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 1545 Chain Bridge Road.

This is a meeting put together by the Virginia committee of the Economic Equality Caucus, a non-partisan coalition of nonprofits and concerned citizens in northern Virginia. No candidate will be endorsed.

The organizers want to focus on economic policy for all working families in this nationally watched race.

There is a non-political section for nonprofits from 5 p.m. to 5:50

p.m. and then the candidates’ forum from about 6 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.

Organizations who will be attending include:

- ❖ Phillips Programs for Children and Families;
- ❖ Share, Inc. nonprofit in McLean/Tyson’s;
- ❖ Community Foundation for Northern Virginia;
- ❖ Lutheran Church of the Redeemer Social Concerns Committee;
- ❖ Hunger Free America nonprofit;
- ❖ Northern Virginia labor federation;
- ❖ Virginia Planned Parenthood advocates;
- ❖ business groups;
- ❖ faith-based entities;
- ❖ women and minority organizations.

This is free and open to the public.

## SUNDAY/MAY 20

**Breakfast Buffet.** 8 a.m.-noon at Vienna American Legion Post 180, 330 Center St., N. Vienna. Get omelets, scrambled eggs, blueberry pancakes, bacon, sausage, biscuits and gravy and more. Adults \$10, children 12 and under \$4. Call 703-938-6580.

**Better Wellness and Safety for Mature Adults.** 1-4 p.m. at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. SE. Tips related to finances, physical and mental health, and public safety – all especially for senior adults – at a Wellness & Safety Expo hosted by Vienna’s parks and recreation and police departments. Snacks will be provided by Cava and Fresh Market, and guests may pick up a free Town tote bag filled with giveaways. Call 703-255-7801.

## TUESDAY/MAY 22

**Sierra Club Hikes.** 7-8:30 p.m. at Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Frank Wodarczyk, a Sierra Club hike leader, will talk about the Sierra Club Potomac Region outings and provide information about the type of hikes, what to bring, and transportation options. Free. Email [s.weltz@yahoo.com](mailto:s.weltz@yahoo.com).

## THURSDAY/MAY 24

**Fundraising Benefit.** 6-9 p.m. at the Tower Club, 8000 Towers Crescent Drive, Suite 1700, Vienna. The Women 2 Women Committee of the Tower Club is hosting a fundraiser to benefit the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association. The evening will feature journalists/authors Cokie Roberts and her daughter, Rebecca Boggs Roberts. All tickets (\$95, +fees) entitle participants to a reception featuring heavy hors d’oeuvres and two drink tickets. Visit [www.suffragistmemorial.org](http://www.suffragistmemorial.org).

## SATURDAY/MAY 26

**Vegetable Plant Clinics.** 10 a.m.-noon. At Nottoway Park, 9601 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Learn

about growing nightshade plants (tomatoes, etc.). Fairfax County Master Gardeners will add a focus on vegetable gardening to their Plant Clinic program. Sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension. Contact the Master Gardener Help Desk at 703-324-8556.

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

## SATURDAY-MONDAY/MAY 26-28

**Viva! Vienna!** Vienna celebrates its annual three-day festival in the heart of historic Vienna along Church Street. The festival, hosted for 33 years by the Rotary Club of Vienna, features carnival rides, food, live entertainment across three stages, and more than 300 arts and craft and other vendors. Free admission. Rides require a specific number of tickets, which varies from ride to ride; tickets are \$1 each or \$20 for a sheet of 24, or \$35 for an all-day wristband. Parking in the historic area is very limited. Visit [vivavienna.org](http://vivavienna.org).

## SUNDAY/MAY 27

**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 and on Vienna celebration days, including Viva! Vienna and the Vienna Holiday Stroll. Free admission. Call 703-938-5157 or visit [www.nvmr.org](http://www.nvmr.org).

## MONDAY/MAY 28

**Memorial Day Brunch and Cookie Class for Children.** 10 a.m.-noon at Wildfire, Tysons Galleria, 3rd floor, McLean. A special Memorial Day brunch where guests will enjoy a breakfast buffet, cookie decorating class and face painting. \$20.00 per adult/child plus tax (gratuity not included). To make a reservation, call 703-442-9110.



# SPORTS



VIDEO SCREENSHOTS BY JON ROETMAN

Langley goalie Kevin Halm held Yorktown to three goals on Friday.

## Halm's Defense, Gomez's Goals Lead Langley

Saxons beat Yorktown in district semifinals.

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

It wasn't pretty, but a strong defensive effort and three goals from Justin Gomez helped put the Langley boys' lacrosse team back in a familiar setting.

The Saxons earned a return trip to the Liberty District tournament championship game with a 6-3 win over Yorktown in the semifinals on May 11 in Arlington. Langley on Tuesday — after The Connection's deadline — took on South Lakes in the tournament final. Last year, the Seahawks beat the Saxons to capture the Liberty crown.

Langley never trailed against Yorktown on Friday. The Saxons led 3-0 at the end of the first quarter and 4-2 at halftime. The Patriots cut the Langley lead to one midway through the third quarter, but the Saxons pulled away with goals by Gomez and Ben Johnson.

"I think our strength right now is our defense," second-year Langley head coach Jamie Parrot said. "Our leadership is our defense. [We are] using that as kind of our base that we build off of ... and then controlled offense. We don't have quite the athletes that we've had at times in the past, so we've got to play six guys instead of a one-on-one game. It's kind of a grinding kind of thing. ... You have to understand our strengths and weakness and play to them."

Junior goalie Kevin Halm, a first-year varsity starter, led the way defensively for Langley.

"He played incredibly well," Parrot said. "... He's stepped in and really done a great job for us. He has the confidence to be a leader and that's the biggest thing. I knew he could stop the ball but being the leader of the defense — can he do it?"

Yorktown head coach Greg Beer praised Halm, as well.

"Their goalie ... he made a couple great saves," Beer said. "We had a couple really nice looks in the first half and he played great. Everything that we basically threw, it seemed like it was right in his stick."

While Halm helped limit Yorktown to three goals, Gomez took care of the Langley offense. The junior captain and first-team all-district selection scored three goals.

"He's our most important offensive player," Parrot said.

Fellow captain and first-team selection Johnson scored twice for the Saxons and sophomore Robert Hage added a goal.

**"Their goalie ... he made a couple great saves. We had a couple really nice looks in the first half and he played great. Everything that we basically threw, it seemed like it was right in his stick."**

— Yorktown head coach Greg Beer

Justin Gomez scored three goals for Langley during the Liberty District semifinals on Friday.



# VOTE

## on McLean Day

### McLean Community Center Governing Board Election

The Governing Board and staff of the McLean Community Center (MCC) strongly encourage all qualified residents to vote for members of its 2018-2019 Governing Board. Your vote sends a very important message of your support of the Center's programs and services.

**When & Where**

Vote between the hours of 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. at the McLean Day 2018 festival on Saturday, May 19, at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Rd.

**Requirements to Vote**

1. You must be a resident of the MCC tax district (Dranesville Small District 1A); however, you need not be registered to vote in the general election.
2. You must be at least 18 years old by McLean Day to vote for an adult candidate. Adults may vote for up to three candidates.
3. You must be 15 through 17 years old by McLean Day to vote for youth candidates. Youth voters have two votes, and may vote for one candidate in the McLean High School boundary area, and one candidate in the Langley High School boundary area.
4. You must bring identification and proof of residency, such as a driver's license or you may sign a sworn statement.

**The McLean Community Center**  
Temporary Administrative Office Address  
6631 Old Dominion Dr., McLean VA 22101  
703-790-0123/TTY: 711  
[www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org)

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# Great Falls Optimist Club Presents Awards

Awards given for Optimist International Essay Contest; Oratorical Contest; and Helping Hands Recognition Awards.

BY STEVE HIBBARD  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Great Falls Optimist Club held an awards ceremony on Thursday, May 10, 2018, at the Great Falls Library honoring exceptional youth in the community. After a crowd of about 50 people dined on a meal catered by Deli Italiano, the club gave out awards for the Optimist International Essay Contest; Oratorical Contest; and Helping Hands Recognition Awards. Children participated from schools in Great Falls, McLean, and Reston.

"I'm inspired by the children who have stepped up to compete and to be a step above in their individual schools and I congratulate them for making the effort to do what they've been doing," said Linda Thompson, President of the Great Falls Optimist Club.

**FOR THE ESSAY CONTEST**, this year's topic was "Can Society Function Without Respect?" Essays were 700 words minimum and were selected as the most outstanding from six area high schools and middle schools.

The first-place winner was Mackenzie Chen, 13, an eighth-grader at Longfellow Middle School. "I was trying to relate to people where they can rely on respect to function in the world. My goal was basically trying to connect people," said Chen, the daughter of Annie Tang and Tony Chen. The second-place winner was Sam Barbaro of South Lakes High School and the third-place winner was Faraz Mirza of Longfellow Middle School.

For the Oratorical Contest Winners, Robbie Folsom tied for first place and received \$250. "The question was 'What Are My Roots of Optimism,' and I based my speech around my root of optimism being my family and my teachers. And my teachers were probably the biggest part of that with my sixth-grade teacher being part of that, too," said Folsom, an eighth-grader at Langston Hughes Middle School. His parents are Rachel and Rob Folsom of Reston.

Alessandra Mandala-Kol, 17, also tied for first place in the Oratorical Contest and received \$250. "My goal for the speech was to convey that my roots of optimism come from love. Even though that's a broad term, I specified exactly what I meant and how specific instances in my life have caused me to have optimism, like the love I have for my sisters, love my parents have always showed me as a young child, and how that makes my future seem so much brighter," said Mandala-Kol, an 11<sup>th</sup> grader at South Lakes High School. Her parents are Justin and Monica Mandala-Kol of Herndon. The

SEE OPTIMIST, PAGE 13



**Mackenzie Chen, first place winner in the Essay Contest during the Great Falls Optimist Club Awards Ceremony.**



**Alessandra Mandala-Kol, first place winner in the Oratorical Contest during the Great Falls Optimist Club Awards Ceremony.**



**Robert Folsom, first-place winner in the Oratorical Contest during the Great Falls Optimist Club Awards Ceremony.**



**Andrea DePiro, assistant principal of Armstrong Elementary, gives a Helping Hands Award to Emily Snowden.**



**Mary-Lynn Robosky, Gifted and Talented Teacher at Churchill Road Elementary, gives a Helping Hands Award to Abigail Dix.**



**Beth Mertens, school counselor at Colvin Run Elementary, gives a Helping Hands Award to Reagan Exley.**

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION



**The crowd recites the Optimist's Creed at the Great Falls Optimist Club Awards Ceremony held on Thursday, May 10, 2018, at the Great Falls Library.**

PHOTOS BY  
STEVE HIBBARD/  
THE CONNECTION



## Optimist Club Awards

FROM PAGE 12

second-place winner was Yeojae (Jeannie) Oem of Longfellow Middle School; and the third-place winner was Mingy Qu of McLean High School.

### Helping Hands Award Winners

The following students are winners of the Helping Hands Awards. Winners received a plaque and a check for \$250 that goes to the student's school.

❖ Emily Snowden, 11, a sixth-grader at Armstrong Elementary School. "I did a lot of things to help with the homeless shelter, so I donated some money and did a project to collect towels and later on — maybe six months ago, I had a few lemonade stands to raise money for the St. Jude's Research Hospital and the Salvation Army," said the daughter of Monica and Scott Snowden of Reston.

❖ Abigail Dix, 12, a sixth-grader at Churchill Road Elementary School. "I helped my school with cleaning out invasive plant species in the backyard of our school park and we cleaned out the invasive species because it was taking over. We all loved doing it but my group especially, we went back farther and helped more in-depth and we also helped plant more plants, and I really enjoyed it. It was a lot of fun. I love doing community service so I wanted to help my teacher a little bit more," said the daughter of Jennifer and Joshua Dix of McLean.

❖ Reagan Exley, 12, a sixth-grader at Colvin Run Elementary. "I made paper cranes for cancer patients. I made 1,000 paper cranes for each person. I made 5,000 paper cranes so far. I really did it to provide emotional support for the patients. It helped me form an emotional connection with them. It was amazing to see how they reacted and how much it meant to them. I felt that it was one of the special things I got to do," said the daughter of Marilyn and Fran Exley of Great Falls.

❖ Josie DeBellis, 11, a sixth-grader at Great Falls Elementary. "What I've been doing is trying to ban veal crates in Virginia, which are the crates male calves are put in after they are taken away from their mothers when they're only an hour old in the dairy industry...So by 2019, I hope it has gone through all of the legislation so it can be banned. I have created draft letters to U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) and have run them through my Youth Leadership Council and we are going to send them and hopefully by 2019, she will allow us to ban veal crates in Virginia," said the daughter of Tracy and Peter



**Petrina LeBlanc, sixth-grade teacher at Spring Hill Elementary, gives a Helping Hands Award to Luke Stayin.**

DeBellis of Great Falls.

❖ Luke Stayin, 12, a sixth-grader at Spring Hill Elementary. "In the beginning of the year, I wanted to run for Vice President of my school. I thought of ways to get that position, so for that I needed a running platform, and thought what could make Spring Hill better? I thought more school spirit so I thought we should get a school mascot, and now we actually have a Panther Mascot. It was my idea. I had a funny catch phrase: 'Stay in Spirit with Luke Stayin.' I also did some community service. I acolyte and lay-read for my church and I helped pick up after the Boston Marathon along with doing community service with my Boy Scout Troop," said the son of Stephanie and Greg Stayin of McLean.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Langley's Advance Women's Choir rehearsing medley from the musical 'Waitress' directed by Mac Lambert and accompanied by Lori Taylor.**

### 'Steppin Out on Broadway!' At Langley High School

On the heels of their recent trip to New York City, Langley High School Choir presents "Steppin Out on Broadway!" with a variety of songs from famous musicals such as West Side Story, Grease, Dear Evan Hansen, Hamilton, and many more. Directed by Dr. Mac Lambert, and choreographed by Keri Staley as well as some of the students, the show is fun for all ages and showcases the

musical talents of the award-winning choirs in a fun and unusual way. This is the senior students' last performance, and the last chance to see them performing with the choir on May 23 and 24 at 7 p.m. in the Langley High School Auditorium. Tickets can be purchased ahead of time or at the door for a recommended donation of \$5 for students and children, and \$10 for adults.

### WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

### Town Hall Meeting in Great Falls On May 22 to Discuss Tysons

The Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA) will hold its May townhall meeting on Tuesday, May 22 at 7:30 p.m. at the Great Falls Library. Members and the public are invited to attend. The evening's speaker will be Sol Glasner, president and CEO of the Tysons Partnership, a private, nonprofit organization that is advising Fairfax County and Commonwealth of Virginia officials on issues related to the expansion and growth of the Tysons area. Glasner will discuss development plans for Tysons, including land use and zoning changes, transportation needs for the growing city, and sustainability issues. The proximity of Great Falls to the burgeoning Tysons area is of interest to all Great Falls residents; this program will provide an opportunity for residents to learn more about how accelerating development there may impact our community. Corporate members of the Tysons Partnership include Capital One, Mitre, Hilton and Booz Allen Hamilton.

During the May 22 townhall meeting, the slate of candidates for the GFCA will be presented to the members and nominations for board of directors and officer positions may be made from the floor. GFCA elections will be held in June.

### Poetry Contest Winners Announced

The National Garden Clubs, Inc. invited students in Kindergarten through 9th grade throughout the country to participate in its 2018 Poetry Contest. The theme was "Let It Grow." The Great Falls Garden Club was one of many garden clubs that sponsored local entries. The National Capital Area Garden Clubs has selected seven winners from the Great Falls' participants.

The local winners were sponsored by the Great Falls Garden Club and their poems will be entered in the National Capital Area Garden Club' competition.

The winners are: K - Jack Rawlings, Great Falls Elementary School; Grade 1 - Isabelle Rawlings, GFES; Grade 2 - Jamie Scheid, GFES; Grade 3 — Selina Argel, Brookfield Elementary School; Grade 4 - Martina Dethero, GFES; Grade 5 - Luke Argel, Brookfield ES; Grade 6°- Preston Brown, GFES.



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**News**

**Traffic headed  
toward Maryland  
on the Beltway  
backs up where the  
Express Lanes end.**

PHOTO BY KEN MOORE/THE  
CONNECTION



## Bridge Expansion Debated

FROM PAGE 3

end abruptly, and are not matched by increased traffic capacity on the American Legion Bridge or the Beltway in Maryland.

"Putting all the merge points at one point makes it a nightmare," said April Georgelas, calling the situation an emergency.

In April, Virginia's Commonwealth Transportation Board approved \$6 million in funding for the Virginia Department of Transportation to conduct an environmental study of a plan to extend the I-495 Express Lanes by approximately three miles from the Dulles Toll Road interchange to the vicinity of

the American Legion Bridge and Maryland line.

A meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2018 at Cooper Middle School to specifically address the proposal and its impact on McLean and the region.

According to the letter: "With the daily delays leading to the American Legion Bridge, many commuters leaving Virginia have found alternative routes to travel as close to the bridge as possible before entering the Capital Beltway. Since some neighborhood roads near the bridge have been affected by traffic from these commuters, we request that the traffic study undertaken as part of this process include the impact on these roads in its scope."

## McLean Auctioneer Earns Top Industry Designation

McLean auctioneer Anne Nouri, of Prime Auction Solutions, recently completed her training at the Certified Auctioneers Institute (CAI). CAI is the industry's premier training program developed by the National Auctioneers Association (NAA) for auction professionals. Nouri joins an exclusive group as there are approximately only 120 women with current CAI Designations in the world (as of March 2018). The three-year CAI designation program provides auction professionals the opportunity to earn the industry's most respected professional designation. CAI is an intensive, executive development program offering professional auctioneers with instruction and coursework in business management, ethics, finance, communication, strategic planning and marketing. The



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Anne Nouri**

NAA conducts CAI every March at Indiana University in Bloomington. In 2014 Nouri completed her auction training at the Missouri Auction School and has since earned the following NAA designations: Accredited Auctioneer Real Estate, AARE, Benefit Auction Specialist, BAS, Graduate Personal Property Appraiser, GPPA and now the highest designation in the Auction Industry, Certified Auctioneers Institute, CAI. Nouri is also a licensed Realtor in Virginia, Washington DC, and Maryland with Sorelle Realty at Keller Williams McLean, where she serves on the ALC, Agent Leadership Council.

To learn more about Nouri, call 703-889-8949, email [Anne@PrimeAuctionSolutions.com](mailto:Anne@PrimeAuctionSolutions.com) or visit [www.PrimeAuctionSolutions.com](http://www.PrimeAuctionSolutions.com).

## 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.

### GOVERNING BOARD CANDIDATES

#### The McLean Community Center

Three adult positions and two youth positions are open this year. Key Election Dates:

- ❖ 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>.

#### THURSDAY/MAY 17

**TedX Salon.** 6-8 p.m. in the Kathy Martin Community Building Ballroom, Vinson Hall Retirement

Community, 1735 Kirby Road, McLean. From active duty to serving the community... How do the skills learned in the military translate when changing teams, companies or communities? \$20. Call 703-554-4103 or visit [tedxtyson.com](http://tedxtyson.com).

**Public Information Meeting.** 7 p.m. at Westbriar Elementary School cafeteria, 1741 Pine Valley Drive, Vienna. The meeting will be used to provide an overview of the Fairfax County Resident Curator Program (RCP) administered by the Park Authority, and to discuss the use of the historic Lahey Lost Valley house as a Resident Curator property. The meeting will provide an opportunity for public questions and comments. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rpc](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rpc).

### SATURDAY/MAY 19

**McLean Day 2018**, is offering patrons a new way to stay up-to-date on the festival's many aspects. MCC has established the new app in cooperation with Whova, Inc. Patrons can download the app to their smart phones or other devices by searching for the Whova App in the Apple Store or Google Play. Once it has been downloaded, they can use the search feature to find McLean Day on May 19. The festival will be held 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Rd. Admission is free. Visit [www.mcleancenter.org/special-events](http://www.mcleancenter.org/special-events).



# BULLETIN

## THROUGH MAY 20

**NVTA Candidate Projects.** The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority has released for public comment 60 candidate projects and related information for its inaugural FY 2018-2023 Six Year Program. Through May 20, 2018, the Authority invites the public to learn more about and comment on the candidate projects under consideration for funding. A detailed project list, project description forms, maps and technical analyses are available at [www.TheNoVaAuthority.org](http://www.TheNoVaAuthority.org) and at the NVTA offices (3040 Williams Drive, Suite 200, Fairfax), on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. E-mail: [TheAuthority@TheNoVaAuthority.org](mailto:TheAuthority@TheNoVaAuthority.org); phone: 703-642-4652. Visit [www.TheNoVaAuthority.org](http://www.TheNoVaAuthority.org).

## MONDAY/MAY 21

**Proposed Zoning Changes Community Meetings.** 7-9 p.m. at Colvin Run Elementary, 1400 Trap Road, Vienna. The Department of Planning and Zoning will hold provide information about upcoming Zoning Ordinance Amendments and staff will speak one-on-one about zoning issues. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicaffairs/learn-about-proposed-zoning-changes-may-affect-your-neighborhood-2018-zoning-open-houses](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicaffairs/learn-about-proposed-zoning-changes-may-affect-your-neighborhood-2018-zoning-open-houses).

## FRIDAY/JUNE 1

**Help Children Navigate Adolescence in the Digital Age.** 10 a.m.-noon at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 - Room 100, Dunn Loring. What else can parents do to keep their teenager safe on the internet? Join Richard Stegman, FCPS Educational Specialist, to learn the top internet dangers for teens and seven steps for good digital parenting. Free. Call 703-204-3941 or visit [www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center](http://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center).

## WEDNESDAY/AUG. 1

**Application Deadline.** Think and Act Green. The Town of Vienna's Community Enhancement Commission (CEC) is challenging local businesses and nonprofits to adopt green practices and self-certify as "sustainable" based on points earned. Find a list of suggested green strategies and the Sustainability Challenge checklist at [viennava.gov/sustainabilitychallenge](http://viennava.gov/sustainabilitychallenge). Submit to Town Hall at 127 Center Street S., Vienna to the attention of the Community Enhancement Commission. Contact Desiree Di Mauro at [desiree@d2t2.org](mailto:desiree@d2t2.org).

## SUPPORT GROUPS

**Parent Support Partners,** a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax) or [www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html](http://www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html).

**Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group.** 703-941-7000, [www.havenofnova.org](http://www.havenofnova.org) or [havenofnova@verizon.net](mailto:havenofnova@verizon.net).

**Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group,** Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. 703-532-4892.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**STEM Professionals Needed.** Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, [stemvolunteers.org](http://stemvolunteers.org), during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or [donaledge@aol.com](mailto:donaledge@aol.com).

**Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed.** Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk. Contact Ibrahim Khalil at [Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-324-4547.

**Operation Paws for Homes,** a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See [www.ophrescue.org](http://www.ophrescue.org)

**RSVP,** a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit [www.rsvpnova.org](http://www.rsvpnova.org).

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## Musing About Infusing



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Seven weeks between chemotherapy infusions; I could get used to this. Here I am sitting and writing on Wednesday, May 9 and my next scheduled infusion isn't until Friday, June 1. That's another three-plus weeks. It's a "staycation," of sorts, meaning: I'm not going anywhere, but due to the new extended chemotherapy infusion interval – from six weeks to seven, I don't have to.

Though it's hardly an ideal vacation – either staying or going – for a cancer patient still undergoing treatment, not having to go the Infusion Center is about as good as it gets. What's even better is receiving scan results (which at present are still scheduled quarterly) which show "stable," "shrinkage," or even "N.E.D.," which means "no evidence of disease" (I'm "stable"). All of which I can live with. Despite ending that last sentence with a preposition.

With respect to "N.E.D.," unfortunately, being asymptomatic as I generally am – and mostly have been, is not necessarily an indicator that all is well.

Neither do symptoms always confirm "progression" (medical jargon for growth and/or movement). Sometimes the pain is scar tissue. Other times it's a side effect of the medicine you've been infusing or the pill you've been swallowing. (Presently, there are targeted treatment options which enable patients to take pills at home, tarceva being one example. Which if I may quote the late Maurice Chevalier singing in "Gigi:" "I remember it well" from the 11 months a few years ago when I didn't have to commute to the infusion center.)

Throw in the occasional phone appointment I've had with my oncologist, post-scan, when he and I both know – per an email he usually sends, that the results continue to show "stable," and when an in-office examination is likely not to "present" (more medical jargon; this one meaning, show) any contradictory findings and I've definitely had my moments of relative/comparative calm. Moments which, when they do occur, need to be cherished because, in the terminal cancer world, the news is not always good.

And since you have to take the good with the bad, with minimal control over both – acknowledging the good and not giving into the bad, become your stock and trade. It's easy, maybe even inevitable that a cancer patient will get overwhelmed by his or her circumstances so finding a way to navigate the slings and arrows of the outrageous misfortune which has befallen you is more than crucial; it's life sustaining.

Practically speaking though, how does one absorb the news and subsequent reality of a cancer diagnosis? What word I used to describe what I felt and heard at the initial Team Lourie meeting with my oncologist when he told me I had a "terminal" form of cancer: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV, was "surreal."

It's a word I've heard many other cancer patients use when describing the moment when they first heard their devastating news. At that ground-zero moment, the words "non-small cell lung cancer," at least for me, were almost incomprehensible, especially if there's no cancer history in your immediate family (which was true for me). I mean, I understood him well enough, I just didn't process the information.

Similar to when I received a call at work, from my internal medicine doctor, a few days after my biopsy (and a week or so before meeting my oncologist), advising me of the results. He asked me if I wanted to meet him at his office (that can't be good I thought – and it wasn't). I said, "No. Just tell me" And so he did.

He told me that they found tumors in my lungs which were malignant. My knee-jerk reaction? "What does that mean?" Upon hearing that kind of news/maybe just that word, "malignant," you sort of lose control of your faculties. (At least I did.)

Thinking straight? Hardly. You're thinking crooked. But as time goes by and you somehow begin to assimilate/compartamentalize your diagnosis/prognosis, it becomes quite clear: anything you can do to bring some normalcy into your life is a win-win for you and a lose-lose for cancer.

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



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