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McLean CONNECTION

FALL FUN
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Virginia Sen. Jennifer Wexton (D-33) and U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) during the debate Sept. 21, 2018 at the National Conference Center in Leesburg.

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NEWS



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Karen Pearson, McLean, plays in NVSO mixed doubles pickleball competition.

Pickleball Mixed Doubles Opens Final Week of NVSO

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

"Did you forget to bring the bananas?"

"What time do you play?"

"I haven't seen you since last year. How you been?"

Enthusiasm was evident in the participants in the Northern Virginia Senior Olympics (NVSO) pickleball mixed doubles competition on Monday, Sept. 24.

Walkers circled the track surrounding the pickleball courts located in the middle at Thomas Jefferson Community Center where the competition was taking place. Four age brackets compete, ranging from five teams in the 60-64 year old class to three teams in the 80-89 year old class.

A table of volunteers, wearing black T-shirts emblazoned with a bright green NVSO logo, checked in the participants and pointed them to their courts.

"Did you see that shot," enthusiastic supporters yelled encouragement from metal chairs on the sideline, cheering on relatives or waiting their turn to play.

Neil Shawen, an Arlington native, and Karen Pearson from McLean play in the 70-79 year old category.

Shawen said, "My secret is this," holding up a roll of silver duct tape. "It fits over my knee. I hold myself together with it." He says that pickleball is strategic and takes teamwork and is less strenuous than tennis. "It is more forgiving on the joints with a shorter swing, less torque on the shoulder."

The NVSO will continue until Sept. 26 with more pickleball, croquet, mini-golf, handball and bunco with rain date track events and tennis mixed in. This year's competitive events are being held in 29 locations across Northern Virginia.

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2018 NATIONAL PRESENTING SPONSOR

Edward Jones

‘Results vs. the Resistance’ or ‘Common-sense vs. Out-of-touch’?

Comstock and Wexton present stark choice for voters during first debate.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) charged directly at Democratic challenger Jennifer Wexton in her opening statement during the candidates’ first debate Friday, casting Wexton as “the most left-wing state senator” who “wants to represent the resistance and who threatens economic growth and tax cuts.”

Wexton, a former prosecutor and current state senator, shot back, calling Comstock a “political chameleon” who “paints herself as a bipartisan problem-solver” but “won’t stand up for her constituents” against President Donald Trump.

“I fear how much damage can be done by this President and the Congress that enables him,” Wexton said, emphasizing her bipartisan work in the Virginia legislature.

The 90-minute debate, organized by the Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce and held in the National Conference Center ballroom in Leesburg, was attended by a record crowd of 550 members.

Frequently punctuated by applause and whistles from supporters on both sides of the aisle, the debate was the first faceoff in one of the most closely watched congressional races in the nation.

VIRGINIA’S 10TH Congressional District has been held by a Republican for 38 years, but Democrats believe demographic shifts in the sprawling district — which include sections of Fairfax and Prince William counties and all of Loudoun County — and growing opposition to President Trump, will lead to a Democratic victory. In the 2016 election, Trump lost the district by 10 percentage points while Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam, a Democrat, won the district by double digits in 2017.

Wexton has a record of bipartisan success in Richmond, where she passed more than 40 bills while in the minority.

But Comstock’s supporters say she has demonstrated her ability to successfully navigate politics in the “Age of Trump” through her relentless campaigning, fast and furious fundraising, hands-on mastery of local issues and personal connections to people in her district.

“If there is a ribbon cutting or picnic, you can bet Barbara will be here,” said Loudoun County developer David Garmand, who attended Friday’s debate. “She sticks to what’s important to the average business person.”

Sidestepping direct support for Trump, Comstock credited her party for low unemployment, economic growth, increased defense spending and GOP tax cuts, saying those have benefitted Loudoun County.

“These are results to celebrate, not resist,” Comstock said, to loud applause.

Comstock broke with Trump, however, on the key issue of imposing tariffs on U.S.



U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) responds to questions from Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce panelists during 90-minute debate Sept. 21, at the National Conference Center in Leesburg while her challenger, state Sen. Jennifer Wexton (D-33) looks on.

goods, declaring herself a “free trader” who has always “opposed tariffs.”

Wexton agreed that tariffs hurt Virginia farmers and businesses. “President Trump needlessly and recklessly imposed tariffs that are hurting Americans,” Wexton said. Regarding the administration sending bailout checks to farmers, Wexton said “They don’t want a bailout from the government. They want to sell their goods on the open market.”

As with their shared opposition to the tariffs, the candidates mirrored one another on several other issues.

Both said they oppose Congressional moves to expand service at Reagan National Airport at the expense of Dulles International Airport, which is located in the district. Both agreed that the opioid epidemic is a serious public health problem, and that addicts need to be treated, not just punished. Both expressed opposition to President Trump’s proposed freeze on the pay of federal workers, thousands of whom call the 10th District home.

But when the candidates addressed immigration reform, the debate took a heated turn.

Comstock and Wexton both said they supported comprehensive immigration reform, including the expansion of programs enabling tech businesses to bring in skilled immigrants to fill cyber jobs.

“I do support having additional immigra-

tion,” Comstock said. “But it needs to be legal and in a fair system. I have supported increasing H1B visas so we can get those high-quality workers.”

“We need to address our immigration challenges in a bipartisan and comprehensive way,” Wexton said, “but President Trump’s divisive rhetoric and policies are only making that more difficult. Immigration is vitally important to our Northern Virginia economy; we have many tech businesses that rely on H1B visas and we have over 30,000 unfilled cyber jobs here in Virginia. Our farmers rely on seasonal immigrant laborers, and we need to make sure that they have them.”

Wexton added that Republicans, who have controlled Congress for years, “have sat on their hands and put kids in cages.” Her comment drew loud and sustained cheers and boos from supporters of each candidate, prompting an “order please” request from the event moderator.

DIFFERENCES between the candidates were also sharply defined on the GOP’s tax reform bill passed last year. Wexton called it the “Trump-Comstock Tax Scam” which she said gives 80 percent of tax cut benefits to the wealthiest one percent of taxpayers and increases the annual deficit by a trillion dollars, instead of helping middle-class families. Comstock said she wanted to expand personal tax cuts and pursue more



State Sen. Jennifer Wexton (D-33) shakes hands with U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) at the end of the candidates’ first debate Sept. 21, at the National Conference Center in Leesburg. The candidates are vying for Virginia’s 10th Congressional District seat.

small business tax cuts.

While both candidates touted their work supporting funding for the Metro system, Wexton said Comstock’s proposals for Metro were so extreme they have failed to earn the support of any other members of Congress in the region. Wexton sharply criticized Comstock for voting against Metrorail’s Silver Line expansion, “but that didn’t stop her from showing up at the ribbon cutting.”

The candidates also split over the Affordable Care Act. Comstock said “Obamacare was a totally partisan bill,” calling it “deeply flawed.” She said she did not support repeal, but instead would seek to fix the problems “piece by piece.”

Wexton said there were steps the federal government could take to improve the system, but that “access to quality affordable healthcare is a right for all, not a privilege of the few” and that the Medicaid expansion she helped pass was providing “access to affordable healthcare to 400,000 needy Virginians.”

In their closing statements, the candidates reiterated their campaign rhetoric:

“My record is one of getting results on your priorities with results, not resistance,” Comstock said.

“[Republicans’] actions show that they have no interest in real solutions, only sabotage. Unlike them, when I go to Congress, I’ll work across the aisle to find real solutions,” Wexton said.

OPINION

How We Can Bring Criminal Fine Reform to Fairfax County

BY SUPERVISOR JOHN C. COOK
(R-BRADDOCK)



Criminal justice reform is about making sure that the criminal justice system achieves its goals and works equally for everyone. One issue being examined is whether assessing traffic and court fines and costs, regardless of ability to pay, and then punishing those who do not pay, is achieving any desired goal. Court fines and fees can be assessed for criminal or traffic offenses, such as speeding or parking violations. When someone receives a ticket or is ordered to pay a fine for an infraction, they also have to pay court and processing fees. This system is in place to deter people from committing these crimes, and also as a way to reimburse the cost of expenses associated with processing the cases and pay back to society for the cost of any damage caused by their actions.

For some, paying fines is not a problem. For others who are struggling to get by, it may be difficult or impossible to pay. The penalties for failing to pay fines and fees end up having a much greater impact on those in poverty than the rest of the population. If someone cannot pay their fine or traffic ticket, penalties for non-payment increase the amounts they could not pay in the first place. Overdue fines often go to collection agencies and the mountain of debt grows even higher, since a 17 percent collection fee can be added on to

the existing balance.

Compounding the issue is that if someone fails to pay their fines, the state can take their driver's license away. The Legal Aid Justice Center found in January that almost one million (974,349) Virginians had their licenses suspended due to unpaid fines and other charges. Two-thirds of that group (638,003) had their licenses suspended solely because of unpaid fines. When the courts suspend driver's licenses for unpaid fines, those individuals are not able to legally drive to work. Many people choose to drive illegally on their suspended licenses so they do not lose their income. If they are caught, then even more legal fees are added to their debt and some have to serve jail time. This vicious cycle makes it impossible for the courts to ever collect their fines and for those who owe to meet their obligations. It also means that people are pushed out of jobs and potentially into applying for government benefits.

Fortunately, in Fairfax County there are several programs to help individuals avoid these escalating penalties. Defendants can enter into a monthly payment plan with a down payment due at the time of their conviction. If a monthly payment is missed, then the defendant will go into default, which could result in additional fines and/or jail time. Another option is to

defer the entire payment until a later date. Defendants may also be eligible for the Fines Option Program, which allows defendants to perform community service in lieu of paying fines and fees. Those who sign up for this option go to the Magistrate's office on a Saturday morning, sign in, and take a bus to the George Mason University campus to perform tasks such as picking up litter, landscaping, or painting. Work hours are credited at the rate of \$15 an hour toward payment of fines.

While we have some remarkable programs to assist those who cannot afford to pay off their fines, many people still fall through the cracks. We need to implement a new system to help determine a person's ability to pay before they go to trial. The judge and clerk's office need the ability to set fines that can actually be paid. We need further opportunities for the alternative of assigning community service with more flexible schedules for those who cannot make the Saturday morning sessions.

Fine reform cannot truly take place without significant changes by the General Assembly. However, the County can help in the process by assisting the courts in bolstering their programs and making them more effective. We defeat the purpose of fines if we cause people to lose their jobs and the ability to support their families. Alternatives are important to a more just system.

Almost one million Virginians have had their licenses suspended due to unpaid court fines and other charges.

Celebrating with Understanding

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



Next year will be the quadricentennial — four hundred years — of important events happening in Virginia in 1619. Those events are not the rah-rah kind of happenings that are too often recognized with simple merriment. They are not examined for what we can learn from whence we came to understand how we got to where we are. The English established their first permanent colony in what became America in 1607; they did not "discover" America. There were an estimated 50,000 residents on the North American continent when the English bumped into the continent on their way to the riches of the Far East. The Spanish had visited the mid-Atlantic region decades before the English arrived but did not stick around for they found no gold or fountain of youth.

The indigenous people living in what the English named Virginia had a form of government in a confederation under the Great Chief Powhatan, an agricultural system, environmental protection, and a religion based on the natu-

ral spirits. They resented the people showing up in great ships and booming guns and taking land on which their forbearers had lived for as many as 15,000 years. There should be no surprise that the indigenous people begrudged these illegal immigrants coming and taking their land and responded with what some people called savagery.

Joining the new settlers at the community they called Jamestowne in 1619 were an essential component of keeping a community thriving into the future — women.

Just in time for the 2019 celebration, the Women's Commission has construction underway for a monument celebrating the contributions of women in making Virginia thrive. Not a bit too soon!

Women were invited to join the men at Jamestowne to help start a new life in a new world.

Not invited to join the white men and women were the enslaved Africans who were dropped off at Jamestowne without their consent and with an indentured servant agreement that could never be paid off. The enslaved Africans

in 1619 were the first that would be brought to the colony to work in the tobacco fields and to do the hard labors without any of the benefits a new start in life was supposed to bring.

The relationship between the white and black populations in Virginia were to dominate so much of the history of the state to the senseless killings of the Civil War and the complexities of race relations today.

In 1619 representatives of the plantations in the colony of Virginia met together in the mud-dab constructed church in Jamestowne to form a local government, much like a homeowner's association, because the real power of governance continued to reside in London. That meeting is celebrated as the first meeting of representative government tracing its beginning in 1619 through the Revolutionary War, with a slight deviation of the Civil War, to today.

Please keep up with the celebrations for next year by visiting the website of <https://www.americanrevolution2019.com/> or watch for announcements of events in my electronic newsletter, *Virginia E-News*, available by free subscription (sign up at kenplum.com). In our celebrations, let's continue to critically examine where we are in light of where we have been.

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NEWS

Recognizing High School STEM Awards Recipients

Two of the six students receiving the McLean Area Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) 2018 Science and Math Achievement Awards were recognized at the Sept. 16 branch event. Eileen Wen, who received the Science Award for Langley High School, and Gwyneth McNamara who received the Science Award for Marshall High School, both spoke about their interest in STEM.

For the last five years, the McLean Area Branch has partnered with counselors at McLean, Langley, and Marshall to award Science and Math Achievement Awards to six female students finishing their junior year. Each award, which is funded through the branch's annual book sale, consists of a certificate and a check for \$100 for the honoree presented in the spring at each high school. The branch instituted the awards to encourage young women to pursue educational opportunities related to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math).

The criteria for the awards include a demonstrated record of overall academic success, as well as a distinguished record of achievement in either math or science. Career center counselors at the schools manage the process of selecting the students. In addition to Wen and McNamara, the following students received the 2018 awards:

McLean High School – Math: Kelly Zhang



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Eileen Wen, far left, and Gwyneth McNamara, second from right, were recognized at the September branch event for their Science Achievement Awards given by the branch. Shown with the students are Myrtle Hendricks Corrales, second from left, AAUW McLean Area Branch Co-President and STEM awards contact for McLean High School, and Betsy Schroeder, far right, AAUW McLean Area Branch Co-President.

McLean High School – Science: Lora Zhou
Langley High School – Math: Rose Lee
Marshall High School – Math: Madeleine Kienzle

For more information on the McLean Area Branch and its annual book sale, visit the AAUW McLean Area website at <http://mclean-va.aauw.net>.

McLean Lutherans Host Jewish Congregation

This Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, more than 800 Jewish congregants have the McLean Lutherans to thank during their prayers. It's because of the Lutheran's generosity and the relationship forged between the two that the Jewish congregants have a place to pray on their holiest days this year.

The conversation was started at a Fairfax County Preparedness meeting by a greeting that happened by coincidence, even though the two congregations are less than two miles from each other. In conversation, Beth Silver, Executive Director of Temple Rodef Shalom in Falls Church mentioned to Bill Parks, Director of Church Operations at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in McLean that she was on the hunt for overflow space for her congregation to celebrate their High Holy Days. They had outgrown the offsite space they were in and had been searching for an alternative space for years with no luck. Their main building already served more than 1,000 people per service time – it wasn't an option anymore. Without hesitation, Parks offered Redeemer as an option. Days later, after

touring the space, the deal was done.

The morning of Rosh Hashanah, Pastor Sandy Kessinger and Deacon Erin Swenson-Reinhold were alongside Bill Parks to assist the TRS team with their 7:30 a.m. setup. A Redeemer group of around 20 congregants arrived shortly thereafter. Their sole purpose, as the Temple Rodef Shalom (TRS) congregants who arrived for their New Year service soon learned, was to offer the biggest, warmest smiles, a Happy New Year greeting and to help them find their way in the unknown building. Beth Silver commented, "their entire staff and congregation were truly lovely. They went above and beyond to make us feel at home in their space. We are so grateful." As the service ended and more than 400 congregants left the building, whispers were heard among TRS members that they were going to tell their friends about this service space as an option for the next holiday. The teams chatted about the upcoming Yom Kippur service - when they'd do it all over again the next week - and about how good they all felt about this new partnership and friendship.



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From left, Paige Farrington-Himes, Jessica Faust, recipient Lori Carbonneau of the McLean Project for the Arts, and Jennifer Salopek, President, NDWC.



From left, Paige Farrington-Himes, Jessica Faust, Elizabeth Hale with Maria Barnett of recipient Safe Community Coalition, and Jennifer Salopek, President, NDWC.

New Dominion Women's Club Awards \$14,400 to Community Groups

Beneficiaries include: McLean Project for the Arts, Safe Community Coalition, Share of McLean, and Friends of Pleasant Grove.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

At its first meeting of the club's new year on Monday, Sept. 17, the New Dominion Women's Club disbursed \$14,400 to four of its selected beneficiaries – each receiving checks for \$3,600. Recipients included: McLean Project for the Arts, Safe Community Coalition, Share of McLean, and Friends of Pleasant Grove.

The money was raised through the club's fundraisers that were held during the 2017-2018 club year, which were the Arts Night Out with MPA, the Spring Fling Fashion Show with Bloomingdale's, and the "50-50" Raffle at the 50th Anniversary Celebration at the Pavilions at Turkey Run in May, according to Jennifer Salopek, New Dominion Women's Club President.

About 40 club members sipped wine and sampled hors d'oeuvres at the Ashby in McLean where they also introduced new Board members, promoted the calendar of events for the Fall, and welcomed five new members. "And we think that our programs



New Dominion Women's Club President Jennifer Salopek addresses the members.

and activities for this year are off to a great start," said Salopek.

The recipient of a \$3,600 check, Lori Carbonneau, Executive Director of the McLean Project for the Arts, said: "What's so distinctive about the New Dominion Women's Club's support is that it's not only financial, which is robust and one of our

top donors in the community, but they also help with their heads and their hearts and their hands." She's referring to the upcoming MPA Art Fest on Oct. 7 in McLean Central Park where the New Dominion Women's Club hosts the Children's Art Walk.

Another recipient, Judy Mueller, Vice President of Development for Friends of

Pleasant Grove, added: "Historic Pleasant Grove is a unique community treasure, preservation of which is supported by this group of wonderful women. They understand that its history, its structure, its position in our community is unlike anything. ... The fact that it's been saved and preserved for the preservation of our history as a historic museum; it's no longer a consecrated church — it's a museum where people can gather, study and learn about our growth and development. So, we are so thrilled to be the recipients of the philanthropy of people who feel likewise."

Recipients Chris Wilbur and Erica Shane are Share of McLean's food pantry and clothing room co-chairs and board members. "The New Dominion Women's Club has been a long-time community partner. And because of their assistance and the assistance of other community partners, we are able to help more than 300 needy families from the McLean, Great Falls, and Pimmit Hills area each year. ... Their donation will provide our Neighbors in Need with food, diapers, school supplies and emergency financial assistance. We are 100 percent volunteer-run and 100 percent community funded so we greatly appreciate this important relationship," said Wilbur.

For more information on the club, visit the website at: www.ndwc.org.



From left, Paige Farrington-Himes, Jessica Faust, recipients Erica Shane with Chris Wilbur of Share of McLean, and Jennifer Salopek, President, NDWC.



From left, Paige Farrington-Himes, Jessica Faust, Judy Mueller with Paul Kohlenberger of recipient Friends of Pleasant Grove, and Jennifer Salopek, President, NDWC.

SPORTS

Langley's Franke a Force at the Net

Wake Forest
commit leads
Saxons to win.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Olivia Franke stepped up to serve early in the fourth set of a recent Liberty District match against South Lakes with a chance to extend Langley's lead.

Instead, the 6-foot-4 Saxon middle hitter smashed the ball into the back of teammate Kylie Allen's head, giving a point to the Seahawks.

Franke apologized to Allen before heading to the bench, where she received a ribbing that included a reference to her older sister, former Saxon standout Allison Franke.

"She hasn't done that since she was a freshman," Langley head coach Susan Shifflett said. "Her sister used to give her crap about that, so I told her, I'm calling your sister and letting her know what you just did."

Olivia Franke's service error provided the Langley volleyball team with a moment of humor during Thursday's match. Unfortunately for South Lakes, Franke also provided the Saxons with plenty of points.

FRANKE was a dominant force at the net, totaling 16 kills and four blocks and the Saxons defeated the Seahawks 3-1 (26-24, 18-25, 25-18, 25-21) on Sept. 20 at South Lakes High School.

Langley graduated six seniors from last year's 6A state championship-winning team, including setter Elena Shklyar, the 2017 VHSL state Player of the Year, who now leads Michigan State in assists as a freshman. Also gone is Franke's sister, Allison, a first-team all-state selection who now plays for Franklin & Marshall College.

The Saxons, however, do return the younger Franke, a Wake Forest commit who was a first-team all-state selection as a sophomore. No. 13 is an imposing ball-striker who can help lead Langley while the 2018 team discovers its identity.

"As a freshman, she came in outstanding," Shifflett said. "In the state finals last year, Elena got her the ball, but Olivia finished it. ... She's a great kid. She's a great leader, she's a great player, she's so pleasant to teach and coach."

Against South Lakes, Franke helped Langley navigate through a match that Shifflett called "ugly." After the teams split the first two sets, Franke produced two kills, four blocks and an ace in the third set, giving the Saxons a 25-18 win and control of the match.

"She's smart," Shifflett said. "She understands the game, she studies the game. She knows when she has to go, she knows when to ease off. She sees the court, she's just a really smart volleyball player."

Opponents can experience joyful moments if able to find success against the talented and towering Saxon.



PHOTO BY JON ROETMAN/THE CONNECTION

Langley junior Olivia Franke is committed to play volleyball at Wake Forest University.

"She's a great leader, she's a great player, she's so pleasant to teach and coach."

—Langley head coach Susan Shifflett

South Lakes sophomore middle Brianna Scott, whose primary sport is basketball, blocked Franke during Thursday's match.

"It gave me inspiration because if I can block her, then I can probably block anybody," Scott said when asked how it felt to block a Division I-level player. "She's a really good hitter. It felt really nice to block her."

When talking about her role on the team, Franke said the Saxons look to seniors for leadership, but said she hopes to help younger players build confidence.

"I hope to step up, also, as a junior," Franke said, "just to our freshmen, specifically, so they know they that they are just as important on the court and they can do just as well as any other senior or junior on the court."

Against South Lakes, four of Franke's teammates finished with at least four kills. Freshman Helena Swaak and senior Hailey Chapman each had six kills, sophomore outside hitter Allen totaled five and senior captain Jackson Friedman added four.

Junior setter Stephanie Liu finished with four aces.

ON SATURDAY, Langley lost to Robinson, 3-2, and defeated Briar Woods, 3-1, moving the Saxons' record to 10-4.

Langley will travel to face Yorktown at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 27.

"The whole chemistry is totally new and they are still trying to get used to each other," Shifflett said. "We have communication issues on the court because they're not used to playing with each other. It's just one step at a time. They're trying to live up to last year and they're a different team. ... We're a good team, but we're a different team. Once they find their identity and they're comfortable with the identity, they'll be fine."

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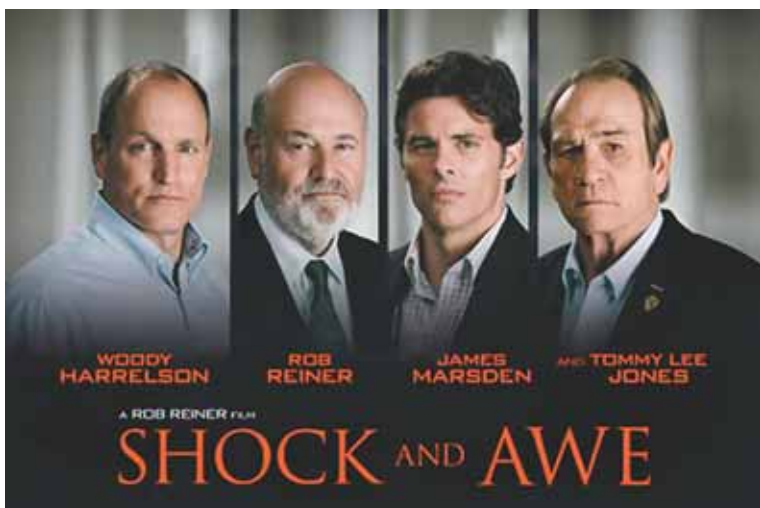
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FALL FUN & ENTERTAINMENT



‘Shock and Awe’

Movie screening and discussion with Lewinsville’s own John Walcott in Fellowship Hall. “Shock and Awe” is the story of a team of four Knight Ridder reporters who dared to ask the questions their colleagues did not regarding the reasons behind the Bush Administration’s 2003 invasion of Iraq. Director Rob Reiner brings the real life drama to the big screen in “Shock and Awe.” Reporters Jonathan Landay and Warren Strobel (played by Woody Harrelson and James Marsden, respectively), their editor John Walcott (played by Rob Reiner) and famous war correspondent Joe Galloway (Tommy Lee Jones), sifted through the chaos and official lies to uncover the truth. Walcott served as Washington Bureau Chief at Knight Ridder, Inc. during the time period of the movie. Popcorn and movie treats provided. Rated R (Language); 90 min. running time. Wednesday, Oct. 3, 7-9 p.m. at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Free. RSVP at www.lewinsville.org/event-items/special-movie-presentation/. Call 703-237-0358 or visit www.lewinsville.org for more.

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Row by Row Junior. Through Oct. 31, local quilt shop proprietors like Jinny Beyer Studio (776 Walker Road, Great Falls) are welcoming children participating in Row by Row Junior to their shops. It’s the junior version of the summertime travel event for quilt making fans known as Row by Row Experience. Kids visit shops in person, collect a free sewing pattern, and find inspiration in colorful, creative world of sewing. At home, families can find free tutorial support and activities online by visiting www.rowbyrowexperience.com or jinnybeyer.com for local quilting.

McLean Farmers Market. Fridays through Nov. 16, 8 a.m.-noon at 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/mclean.

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

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

THURSDAY/SEPT. 27

Tyson’s Tailgate. 5-8 p.m. at VALO Park, 7950 Jones Branch Drive, Tysons. Building Brighter Futures is a tailgate-themed festival, enjoy live music, beer, wine, tailgate-themed menu, lawn games, raffle prizes; proceeds will benefit Second Story, the only youth emergency shelter in

Northern Virginia. Ticket price includes two drink tickets. \$30 per ticket/\$35 at the door. Tysons Partnership Members receive a discount. Call 703-688-2129 or visit www.tysonspartnership.org/event/2018-tysons-tailgate/.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 28

McLean Art Society Meeting. 10 a.m.-noon at in rooms 1 and 2 at the Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Mr. Jamshid Kooros will be the featured presenter at the McLean Art Society Meeting. Kooros uses colored pencils to make Birds-Eye and Aerial View Maps. He has made maps of Paris and the Loire Valley of France as well as aerial views of D.C. He will be speaking and demonstrating perspective. Guests are welcome and refreshments are served. Visit www.mcleanartsociety.org.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 29

Fall Festival. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at Great Falls United Methodist Church, 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Children’s activities; bake sale; White House ornaments; jewelry and accessories; used books, games and cds; silent auction; apple butter and apple cider; tools; Kitchen Kupboard vendor; and yard sale. Visit www.greatfallsumc.org.

Fall Festival. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist), 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. Where Fun and Kindness Connect, includes “Rise Against Hunger” food packing event (50,000 meals), as well as a blood drive, children’s program, moon bounce and food and refreshments. Visit www.GoodShepherdVA.com.

St. Francis Fall Fest. 3-7 p.m. at St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Fall festival and wine tasting with bluegrass music by Andrew Acosta Band and Mookie’s BBQ. Silent auction and fun activities for the children. Free admission. Email laurenmcchewning@gmail.com or call 434-566-8302.

Kayak Tour in the Parks. 5:30-6:55

A Bucket List for Fall

Activities that will add spice to the season.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

When the leaves turn colors and the air is crisp, Caitlin Upton gathers her family and pulls out a whiteboard and a marker. She’s careful to jot down all of the ideas, shouted in rapid-fire fashion from her three children.

“We always create a fall bucket list of things that we want to do as a family,” said Upton, who is a mother of three children ranging in age from two to seven. “This year, the kids want to go on a hayride and pick pumpkins. It’s not too original, but they love it and get really excited about it. It gives us something to look forward to during the week when we’re so busy.”

Creating a fall bucket list — a compilation of experiences or achievements that one wants to accomplish — is an important way to create lasting family traditions and memories, while enjoying all that the season has to offer. From hayrides to pumpkin-carving, fall ushers in enough family-friendly activities to create an overflowing list of activities that make the most of the season’s bounty.

“The start of a new season is a perfect time to create bucket list, and during fall there are so many fun things to do,” said Upton, a marriage and family therapist in Burke. “So often, people have ideas of things that they want to do either with their kids, their friends or just personal things, but never get around to them. It’s important to write them down and commit to doing them. I write our list on a white board in our kitchen, but I keep it short and attainable so we don’t get overwhelmed. Carving out quality time to spend with family is important.”

Foraging for vibrantly color fallen leaves in shades of orange and yellow is at the top of Bella Middleton’s bucket list. Middleton, who is an art

instructor in Bethesda, gathers her two preschool-age children and collects leaves with the goal of turning nature into art. “Sometimes we do something as simple as taking branches with leaves that have turned orange and put them in vases that we display around the house. I mix pumpkins with leaves to create a centerpiece for the dining room table.

Making wreaths and collages is another project that Middleton does with her family. “This is really one of the most inexpensive and fun projects that you can do,” she said. “My kids and I go to a park and gather fallen leaves. Then I get some construction paper and glue sticks or spray mount and let my kids attached the leaves to the paper in any way they want, then I display their works of art around the house. It’s a great way to welcome the season.”

Turning leaves into candle holders is another project that Middleton and her family enjoy. “You take leaves and glue them to the inside of mason jars and let them dry. You can attach the leaves with a craft glue called Modge Podge, which dries clear. Tie a pretty ribbon around the mouth of the jar and you have a beautiful decorative piece for fall.”

Spending a day enjoying a scenic drive to Shenandoah, passing through the so-called Apple Trail, is must-do task for Arlington mother Camilla Kendrick and her family.

“It’s a beautiful drive down. We stop and pick apples and then we come home and make apple doughnuts,” said Kendrick, who works as a private chef. “They’re messy, so the kids think they’re fun to make. I also make apple cider doughnuts for some of my clients.”

Taking a local fall foliage drive with her four children is something that Lauren Bickle puts on her bucket list each fall. “It’s certainly not as breathtaking as the fo-

liage in some place like New England, but this area has a lot to offer,” she said. “There’s Great Falls of course, and then Mount Vernon and Arlington National Cemetery have some great colors. If you’re up for a longer drive, Harper’s Ferry in Maryland is fantastic for a fall day trip.”

Apple Doughnut Recipe

Ingredients
2 cups flour
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 egg
3 tablespoons buttermilk
1/3 cup whole milk
5 Granny Smith apples, cored and sliced vertically into three pieces to create doughnut shapes.
2 cups olive oil for frying
1/2 cup powdered sugar, for coating

Directions: Stir together flour, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt to create the batter. Gradually stir-in buttermilk, whole milk and egg. Coat each apple ring with batter. Heat the oil in a deep frying pan. Place the doughnut rings in the pan and fry on each side for three minutes or until golden brown. Drain doughnuts on a paper towel and allow to cool. Sprinkle with powdered sugar.

p.m. at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. “Kayak Tour-Wildlife of the Potomac” is designed for participants age 14 to adult. Watch for deer foraging on the islands and osprey and bald eagles searching for fish. This is not a whitewater tour. No previous experience is required. \$39 per person. Kayaks are provided; one person per kayak. This tour will be canceled in the event of inclement weather or hazardous river conditions. Call 703-759-9018 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend.

Movie on the Green: Top Gun. 7:30

p.m. on the Great Falls Village Centre Green (behind the Old Brogue). Bring your blankets, snacks and drinks. Popcorn provided. Free. Visit celebrategreatfalls.org.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/SEPT. 29-30

Fall Book Sale. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Featuring thousands of top quality used books, CD’S, DVD’S, books on CD. Special sale Sunday – fill a large shopping bag with books, movies, CDs, DVDs, etc., for \$5. Free parking and admission.

Email sharonbohlman@msn.com, call 703-568-0104 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ph.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 30

Production Meeting - Amahl. 4:30-5:30 p.m. at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Lewinsville Presbyterian Church in McLean plans to perform Giancarlo Menotti’s Christmas play “Amahl and the Night Visitors” on Sunday, Dec. 9 with an instrumental and choral prelude beforehand. All interested participants are welcome

FALL FUN & ENTERTAINMENT

to a preview meeting. Cast members need not be a member of the church. Contact John Nothaft, director of Music Ministries, at 703-356-7200. Visit www.lewinsville.org.

Countdown Concerts in the Park:

So Fetch. 5 p.m. in the McLean Central Park Gazebo, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Concert series tracks the history of the McLean Community Center from its opening in 1975 — revisit a decade as the McLean Community Center prepares for the reopening of the Ingleside Avenue facility. Visit www.mcleancenter.org/alden-theatre/.

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 3

McLean Newcomers and

Neighbors: Coffee. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike (Route 7), Falls Church. The McLean Newcomers and Neighbors will host a coffee for members and for non-members who might be interested in joining. Visit McLeanNewcomers.org or email McLeanNewcomers@yahoo.com.

Movie Screening: "Shock and

Awe." 7-9 p.m. at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Movie screening and discussion with Lewinsville's own John Walcott in Fellowship Hall. "Shock and Awe" is the story of a team of four Knight Ridder reporters who dared to ask the questions their colleagues did not regarding the reasons behind the Bush Administration's 2003 invasion of Iraq. Director Popcorn and movie treats provided. Rated R (Language); 90 min. running time. Free. RSVP at www.lewinsville.org/event-items/special-movie-presentation/. Call

703-237-0358 or visit lewinsville.org.

THURSDAY/OCT. 4

Hitchcocktober: Rear Window

(1954). 7 p.m. at Angelika Film Center – Mosaic, 2911 District Ave., Fairfax. Every Thursday night in October a classic film by Sir Alfred Hitchcock will be featured with a bonus screening of PSYCHO on Halloween. Tickets are \$10. Visit angelikafilmmcenter.com.

FRIDAY/OCT. 5

Raise Region Gala. 6:30-10 p.m. at Hilton McLean Tysons Corner, 7920 Jones Branch Drive, McLean. Join 600 business, philanthropic, and community leaders to celebrate the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia's 40th Anniversary at the annual Raise the Region Gala event recognizing the growth of philanthropy in the area and its potential to help shape the future of the region. \$300. Call 703-879-7636 or visit www.cfnova.org/gala.

SATURDAY/OCT. 6

The McLean 5K. 7 a.m. at 6631 Old Dominion Drive, McLean (McLean Square Shopping Center). The race features a certified course through the heart of McLean and is designed to appeal to runners of all abilities. The event will also promote Public Safety Appreciation and serve as a celebration of the first responders from McLean Volunteer Fire Department and McLean District Police Station. Visit www.McLean5K.com or email McLean5K@mcleancenter.org.

2018 DC-Metro Modern Home Tour. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. The 9 homes



"Spring in the Garden 3" by Kathy Bodycombe.

on this year's tour are located in the following towns and neighborhoods: Takoma Park, Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Pinehurst Parkway Park, Arlington, and McLean. Modern Home Tours give people a chance to explore and view examples of modern architecture via a self-guided tour. 12 and older. \$40. Visit www.dcmetromodernhometour.com. **Oktoberfest.** 6-9 p.m. at Claude Moore Colonial Farm, The Pavilions of Turkey Run, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Enjoy a Bavarian-themed festive event with all proceeds benefitting the local living history museum and working 18th century farm. DJ, music and dancing. Cider and beer tasting. Catered meal and cash bar. Silent auction. Adults, \$35; farm volunteers, \$25; children 6-12, \$12; children under 6, free. Purchase tickets in advance at 1771.org/

"Fall into Color" 2018

ValeArts will present an all new "Fall into Color" fine art show featuring Lynn Martin and Kathy Bodycombe in addition to ValeArts members Linda Lovell, Lorrie Herman, Meredith Hannon, Kim Davis, Laura Barringer and Jenna Klimchak. All varieties of fine art in a historic setting. Free and family friendly. Friday, Sept. 28, 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 29-30, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Vale Schoolhouse, 3124 Fox Mill Road, Oakton. Artist reception Friday, Sept. 28, 7-9 p.m. Call 703-860-1888 or visit www.valearts.com for more.

events-item/oktoberfest/ or e-mail Catherine Anderson at canderson@1771.org.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/OCT. 6-7

"A Tuna Christmas." Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 2 p.m. at Vinson Hall Community Building Ballroom, 1735 Kirby Road, McLean. The McLean Community Players present "A Tuna Christmas," the second in a series of comedic plays set in the fictional town of Tuna, the third-smallest town in Texas. MCP's cast of seven will play 22 roles. \$18-\$20 at 1-800-838-3006, www.McLeanPlayers.org or at the door.

THURSDAY/OCT. 11

Hitchcocktober: Shadow of a Doubt (1943). 7 p.m. at Angelika

Film Center – Mosaic, 2911 District Ave., Fairfax. Every Thursday night in October a classic film by Sir Alfred Hitchcock will be featured with a bonus screening of PSYCHO on Halloween. Tickets are \$10. Visit angelikafilmmcenter.com.

SATURDAY/OCT. 13

14th Annual Merrifield Fall

Festival. 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at Mosaic District. Food vendors, a beer garden, music and entertainment, as well as a pre-holiday handmade and vintage market. Children's activities including: Vienna Singing Princesses, pumpkin painting, face painting, hair braiding, sack races, karate, peace mural painting, carnival games and more. Visit greatermerrifield.org/merrifield-fall-festival.

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.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/OCT. 13-14

"A Tuna Christmas." Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 2 p.m. at Vinson Hall Community Building Ballroom, 1735 Kirby Road, McLean. The McLean Community Players present "A Tuna Christmas," the second in a series of comedic plays set in the fictional town of Tuna, the third-smallest town in Texas. MCP's cast of seven will play 22 roles. \$18-\$20 at 1-800-838-3006, www.McLeanPlayers.org or at the door.

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McLEAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS
Presents



A TUNA CHRISTMAS

BY JASTON WILLIAMS JOE SEARS ED HOWARD

Originally produced by
Charles H. Duggan

Directed by Jerry Bonnes
Produced by Bunny Bonnes and Claire L. Tse

OCTOBER 6 & 7 AND 13 & 14, 2018




SATURDAYS AT 8:00 P.M. ; SUNDAYS AT 2:00 P.M.

Performances at Vinson Hall Community Building
1735 Kirby Road, McLean, VA 22101

TICKETS: BROWN PAPER TICKETS 1-800-838-3006 OR
WWW.MCLEANPLAYERS.ORG

The McLean Community Players, Inc. is funded
in part by the Arts Council of Fairfax County. 

A Tuna Christmas is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc..

CONNECT WITH MCP:  [FACEBOOK.COM/MCLEANPLAYERS](https://www.facebook.com/McLeanPlayers)   

Announcements

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NEWS

'A Tuna Christmas' At Vinson Hall

McLean Community Players provide madcap delight.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

The McLean Community Players will present "A Tuna Christmas," a comedy set in the fictional town of Tuna, the third-smallest town in Texas. Written by Jaston Williams, Joe Sears, and Ed Howard, "A Tuna Christmas" first opened on Broadway in 1994 to audience delight.

"Laughter is the best medicine. A visit to see the characters in 'A Tuna Christmas' at Vinson Hall is the prescription to add some madcap delight to your day no matter what time of the year," said the show's director, Jerry Bonnes.

In "A Tuna Christmas" the residents of Tuna are utterly in turmoil preparing for Christmas. Events are to take place all around town; including the annual Christmas Yard Display Contest, the Tuna Little Theatre production of "A Christmas Carol," and the Station OKKK Christmas party and potluck. With all that, the Christmas Phantom is expected to play a prank involving yard displays, and the city secretary may have to cut off electricity to the theater.

Of note, with the continuing renovation of the McLean Community Center, "A Tuna Christmas" was chosen as the first joint production venture of Vinson Hall and the McLean Community Players (MCP).

MCP and Vinson Hall have had a partnership for the past several years. For many MCP shows, Vinson Hall has provided rehearsal space in the Grand Ballroom auditorium, the same location where shows are often performed. MCP has done play readings, which are free of charge to Vinson Hall residents. MCP also created and performed the cabaret-style "Meet the Artist" series. For "A Tuna Christmas" Vinson Hall residents are volunteering in set construction, painting, and costumes. The actual set



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCLEAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS

Shayne Gardner and Elizabeth LeBoo in rehearsal for "A Tuna Christmas" presented by the McLean Community Players.

Where and When

McLean Community Players (MCP) present "A Tuna Christmas" at Vinson Hall Retirement Community, 1735 Kirby Road, McLean on Oct. 6, 7, 13, and 14, Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$18-\$20. Visit www.McLeanPlayers.org or Brown Paper Tickets at 1-800-838-3006. Group rates are available. Tickets will also be available at the door.

construction will take place at Vinson Hall's workshop.

According to Bonnes, the MCP production "will be true to the script. Beyond that we also need to realize that we are not trying to copy any other portrayal of the characters of 'A Tuna Christmas,' but creating our own interpretation."

The MCP production does diverge from the original; there will be seven diverse actors play twenty-two roles rather than the original production, which featured two men performing the nearly two dozen roles.

With all its comedic satire, "The reality of 'A Tuna Christmas' is that the residents of Tuna are really no different than us. They even have the same problems," added Bonnes.

Join the antics that take place in Tuna, Texas just by traveling to McLean's Vinson Hall.

McLean Community Players (MCP) present "A Tuna Christmas" at Vinson Hall Retirement Community, 1735 Kirby Road, McLean on Oct. 6, 7, 13, and 14, Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$18-\$20. Visit www.McLeanPlayers.org or Brown Paper Tickets at 1-800-838-3006. Group rates are available. Tickets will also be available at the door.

WEEK IN MCLEAN

'Shock and Awe' Movie Screening and Discussion at McLean Church

John Walcott, Foreign Policy and National Security Editor at Thomson Reuters, will lead a discussion after a showing of the movie "Shock and Awe" at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 3.

John Walcott served as Washington Bureau Chief at Knight Ridder, Inc. during the time period of the movie. He is the inaugural winner of the I.F. Stone Medal for Journalistic Independence from the Nieman Foundation at Harvard. His work has won the Edward M. Hood Award and the Freedom of the Press Award from the National Press Club and three Overseas Press Club awards. He is a co-author of the book "Best Laid Plans: The Inside Story of America's War Against Terrorism," an adjunct associate professor in Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, and the recipient of Georgetown's Vicennial Medal and the Bicentennial Medal from Williams College, his alma mater.

"Shock and Awe" tells the true story of the four Knight Ridder reporters who in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks were alone in questioning the Bush administration's allegations that Iraq had ties to al Qaeda and possessed weapons of mass destruction.

Reporters Jonathan Landay and Warren Strobel (played by Woody Harrelson and James Marsden, respectively), their editor John Walcott (played by Rob Reiner) and famous war correspondent Joe Galloway (Tommy Lee Jones), sifted through the chaos and official lies to uncover the truth. Knight Ridder was the only major news organization to challenge the Bush administration's case for invading Iraq. Award-winning director Rob Reiner brings the real-life drama to the big screen in "Shock and Awe."

Seating will be limited. Reservations are encouraged. Register online at <https://www.lewinsville.org/event-items/special-movie-presentation/>

BULLETIN

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

VOTER REGISTRATION AND ID EVENTS

The Fairfax County Office of Elections
(12000 Government Center Parkway Suite 323, Fairfax) is open daily during normal business hours to provide county residents the opportunity to register to vote or obtain a free voter photo ID if needed. Applicants will need to complete a photo voter ID application, have a photo taken and sign a digital signature pad. Call 703-222-0776.

The following special events will also provide opportunity to register to vote and/or get a photo Virginia Voter card.

- Thursday/Sept. 27, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Lewinsville Retirement Residence, 1515 Great Falls Street, McLean.
- Tuesday/Oct. 9, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Arleigh Burke Pavilion at Vinson Hall Retirement Community, 1739 Kirby Road, McLean.

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 26

2018 Virginia Senatorial Debate. 5-8 p.m. at Capital One Bank. Sen. Tim Kaine (D) and Chairman Corey Stewart (R), Chuck Todd of NBC's Meet The Press, will moderate, televised live on NBC4.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 27

Planning Study Open House. 7-9 p.m. at McLean High School Cafeteria, 1633 Davidson Road, McLean. The community will have the opportunity to view the drafts of the McLean Community Business Center vision plan and provide feedback. This open house will focus on the initial draft of the vision plan, referred to as a framework plan, which will outline major elements of the vision. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-zoning/mclean-cbc-study for more.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 28

Google Classroom 101. 10 a.m.-noon at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 - Room 100, Dunn Loring. Start the school year off by attending this workshop to learn how Google Classroom works and what parents need to know. Eric Fleming, FCPS Assistive Technology Services. Visit www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center to register.

Military Academy Nomination Application Deadline. 5 p.m. Students interested in applying for a nomination by the 10th District Service Academy Advisory Board to one of the nation's military academies can mail or hand deliver applications to U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock's Sterling office at 21430 Cedar Drive, Suite 218, Sterling, VA 20164. Interested students can request an Academy Nomination Application at comstock.house.gov/services/military-academy-nominations.

Work and Play in Tysons. 6:30-9 p.m. at Tower Club Tysons, 8000 Towers Crescent Drive, Suite 1700, Vienna. Join the Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce in the heart of Tysons to support the Chamber as they entice people in Tysons to stay there after work. Attendees will enjoy distillery tastings and drink specials from Virginia Distillers as well as heavy appetizers while developing and expanding their networks. \$75. Visit business.tysonschamber.org/

SATURDAY/SEPT. 29

Fall Festival. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at Great Falls United Methodist Church, 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Annual Fall Festival will be held rain or shine. Reserve a 10'x10' outdoor space for \$25 (check made out to and mailed to Great Falls United Methodist Church) to sell arts, crafts, junk and treasures. Spaces are limited so reserve early. Visit www.greatfallsumc.org or call 703-759-3705.

Mental Health and Wellness Conference. 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Dr. Amy Przeworski, associate professor in the Department of Psychological Sciences at Case Western University, will give the keynote presentation, Using Stress to Your Advantage in Achieving Academic Success and Emotional Well Being. For the first time, the conference will also include an Our Minds Matter Teen Summit for middle and high school students. Participants will be able to choose from a wide variety of breakout sessions, and there will be many resource tables available. Free. Visit www.fcps.edu/mentalhealthwellnessconference

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-Thomas Fuller

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An expert is someone
who knows some of the worst mis-
takes that can be made in his subject
and how to avoid them.

-Werner Heisenberg

Woe I'll Never Be



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not on hold with the Oncology department today. Not elbowing Twinkle or Biscuit off my writing tablet as I sit and write this week's column. And not going hungry from the previous Friday's infusion (a week plus has passed so the worst side effect of the treatment has passed).

In general, aside from waiting for my upcoming CT scan on Sept. 26, I am glad that soon I can get on with my life.

You'll note I didn't say fate. That word has too negative a connotation. And my nature, as you regular readers know, is as a positive/glass half full kind of person. So, as I approach this next milestone, I view it not so much as a millstone but more so as just another rock that hopefully leaves me not in a very hard place.

The pre-existing cancer diagnosis is already hard enough. But after living with it for so long and enduring as many rounds of chemotherapy, side effects, lab work, diagnostic scans, 24-hour urine collection and all the associated anxiety surrounding a "terminal" diagnosis as I have, one, at least this one, has learned to live with the miscellaneous demands.

It's not to imply that doing so is easy, but not doing so is so much more difficult. To that end, which ultimately won't be my end, assimilating the good, bad and the incredibly worrisome into some sort of mental spreadsheet seems the only logical pursuit.

Either you learn to take it in stride or you'll die not trying.

And since dying, so far as we know anyhow, is so much less appealing than living, I'm striving to balance my equilibrium and never get too high or too low no matter the news. (Yes. I'm a Libra so balance is very much a part of my process.)

That's not to say that there aren't incredible pressures and challenges that us cancer patients have to manage, it's more that to say that laughing in the face of death is not a sign of weakness but more so a sign of enlightened strength.

Part of that strength is respecting the process with which cancer patients are all too familiar and moreover, and most importantly, understanding and respecting what we don't have control over. There's an element of letting go which enhances one's quality of life and minimizes obstacles as well.

Doing what you can and not fretting about what you can't, in addition to keeping an open mind, combines to smooth out the rough edges and to focus on the path ahead. The 'path ahead' being the goal.

I remember that exact philosophy being expressed by my oncologist at the original Team Lourie meeting back in late February 2009. When it was suggested that my mother's smoking of Chesterfield King cigarettes in my youth or my dalliances in college in the '70s might be relevant/have had an impact on my lung cancer diagnosis, my oncologist would have none of it.

Retrieving fragments of history and/or assigning blame for less-than-ideal behavior was irrelevant to him. His concern was not the past, it was the present/future. We were to be looking/planning ahead and treating forward.

And so here I sit, very much having been treated forward.

At present, I am my oncologist's prize cow, a stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer survivor, alive and reasonably well nine years and nearly seven months into an initial "13 month to two year" prognosis. After hearing that grim prognosis, I never would have imagined that in August 2018, I'd still be alive.

But here I am. Not a victim of my own circumstances.

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



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