

Great Falls CONNECTION

WELLBEING

PAGE 9

HOLIDAY
ENTERTAINMENT

PAGE 12

They're here! Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in Great Falls on Sunday evening, Dec. 2, to light the village Christmas Tree, and listen to children's Christmas wishes.

It's Christmas In Great Falls!

NEWS, PAGE 3

'Nutcracker' in Honor of
Military, First Responders

NEWS, PAGE 8

Aging in Great Falls

NEWS, PAGE 10

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The singers from St. Francis Creche Preschool gave “Jingle Bells! their very best efforts, bell-ringing and “Ha-Ha-ing!” included.



The kids from Siena Academy put on a great show with the addition of those hats and some fun choreography.

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

It's Christmas in Great Falls!

Santa arrives and the tree is lit.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

The Christmas season has arrived in Great Falls. On Sunday, Dec. 2, at 5 p.m., just at nightfall. Santa pulled up in style atop an old-fashioned fire truck to the Village at Great Falls. Accompanied by Mrs. Claus and a cheerful elf, the jolly gentleman strode across the fields to the cheers and shouts of the young and the young-at-heart to officiate the lighting of the Great Falls Christmas tree.

Once the lights were lit and Santa had made the rounds, greeting the fans who had eagerly awaited his arrival, he took his place on a comfy couch and proceeded to hear the whispered wishes of a long line of little ones.

Before Santa's appearance, the Celebrate Great Falls Foundation organizers made sure there was plenty to see and do at the 28th Annual Tree Lighting while awaiting the main attraction.

To spark the Christmas spirit, numerous children's singing groups performed some all-time carolling favorites. The Great Falls United Methodist Preschool, Village Green Day School, King's Kids Preschool, Siena Academy, and St. Francis Crèche Preschool brought smiles to the crowds with their performances, while Forestville ES Ensembles, kids from Great Falls Elementary, and the Colvin Run ES Singalongs kept things going after the tree was lit and Santa was ensconced in this temporary Great Falls digs.

A petting zoo – with some really calm and friendly furry and feathered inhabitants – attracted a lot of attention – especially the mini pig and his floppy-eared bunny cage-mate.

Kids didn't seem to mind the long line for the pony rides and their adults couldn't keep



Time for Santa to really get to work. After presiding over the 28th annual Great Falls Tree Lighting, Santa took a quick turn around the tree to greet his fans, and then it was on to his main responsibility – a visit with the kids and listening to those Christmas wishes.

the smiles off their own faces as they snapped photos of their budding equestrians.

There was hot chocolate, cookies and popcorn in abundance, so no one went hungry while they waited in a line or for the arrival of the man-in-red ... and if anyone got a bit chilled hanging about in the admittedly muddy field, there were even some fire-barrels (well roped off and supervised) to add a bit of warmth as darkness fell.

After the petting zoo closed down and the animals sent off for a well-deserved rest, the crowd gathered to watch the staging of the Live Nativity scene.

Numerous sponsors helped make this year's event a great success, including AOG Wealth Management, Costa Family & Cosmetic Dentistry, The Old Brogue & Katie's Coffee House, Great Falls Swim & Tennis Club, Great Falls Citizens Association and Great Falls Friends and Neighbors and so many more generous supporters. A full list of those to be thanked for their contributions can be seen at www.celebrategreatfalls.org



It might be his first rodeo – of sorts – but Henry Howard, 2 of Vienna, was thrilled with the experience.



Two-year-old Caroline Brogden of Great Falls declared her pony ride at the Great Falls Tree Lighting Festival to be “Fun! Not scary!”



16-month-old Madeleine MacFarlane was ready to step in and substitute as a Santa's Elf – cheery smile and lots of laughs included – should the need arise at the 28th annual Great Falls Tree Lighting.

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1 and 2
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NEWS

Eagle Scout Project Completed at Riverbend Park



Top: Boy Scout
Cameron Snyder (pictured third from the left) from Arlington Troop 162, completed his Eagle Scout Project in Riverbend Park on Oct. 13. With the help of fellow scouts, friends and park staff, he built a paddle board rack to provide easier access for park patrons. Despite construction delays caused by poor weather and Potomac River flooding, the completed project improves visitors' ability to enjoy water-sports at this scenic park.



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NEWS

Now a cozy art space, the “Artists on the Green” location was once a hardware store

Far right, Coty Dickson, Mary Nesbitt, and Layla Gray of “Artists on the Green” pictured in their studio.



PHOTOS BY C.J. GRECO/THE CONNECTION

Great Art Made in Great Falls

Holiday ArtFest held at Great Falls Grange and Schoolhouse.

BY C.J. GRECO
THE CONNECTION

This past Saturday and Sunday the Great Falls Holiday ArtFest took place at Great Falls Grange and Schoolhouse, as well as the Village Centre Studios. The two locations served as gallery space for more than 20 artists, all members of Great Falls Studios.

The local art collective was established in 2003, and consists of members who either live or have studio space in Great Falls.

“We do three shows a year, a spring show, the holiday show, and in October we do ‘Studio Tour,’” said exhibiting photographer and GFS board member Dean Souleles.

“There’s just a very eclectic group of artists, very different,” continued Souleles, “We’ve got some national and world class painters. ... And over the 7 or 8 years I’ve been involved I’ve seen the quality of the work improve just across the board as artists get better and more mature.”

Dorry Emmer, a local photographer and New Zealand transplant, who was presenting her

work at Great Falls Grange, had a theme forced upon her work by mother nature.

“This year I planned several long weekends here and there,” said Emmer, “and they were all chosen because they were places that were good to photograph, and I’d get there and it was raining. So I said ‘my challenge is taking photographs in the rain.’”

Over in the Village Centre, the painters of “Artists on the Green” presented their broad portfolios of takes on varying mixes of realistic impressionism in what was, in a past life, a hardware store.

“We cleaned it all up, painted it, just the five of us, we got it going,” said AOTG painter Mary Nesbitt, “We didn’t know if the next year we’d be able to make it, and now we’re actually going on our sixth year!”

“For aspiring artists: do a lot of art,” said Souleles. “If you’re a photographer: take pictures. Don’t worry about cameras and lenses and expensive stuff. Get a camera that’s good enough, and go take a lot of pictures. Develop a passion, find something that you love and do a lot of it. ... If you like it, if you love it, people can see it in the work that you do.”

Information on the studios and events featured in this story can be found at greatfallsstudios.com and artistsonthegreen.net.

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OPINION

Give Locally

The holidays are about giving, and giving thanks. The holidays are about children and family. The holidays are about sharing, about joy. The holidays are about being thankful and about faith and appreciation. The holidays are about helping others.

Northern Virginia is among the wealthiest areas in the country. Many if not most of us go through our daily and seasonal routines without encountering evidence

of the needy families among us.

In Fairfax County Public Schools, more than 54,000 students (29 percent) are poor enough to receive subsidized meals.

Many are children living in families who may be on the brink of homelessness. Some of these are children who may not be sure that they will have a meal between the meals they get at school.

School holidays can bring uncertainty and hunger, a far cry from the celebrations, gifts

and plenty that we associate with Christmas and the holiday season.

Many nonprofits in the region need your help to provide holiday meals around Christmas, to provide children with gifts.

There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of ways to give locally this season, for humans in need, for animals in need, for an environment in need. Here are a few ideas. Please let us know what we have missed.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

EDITORIAL

Where to Give Locally

- ❖ **Cornerstones**, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, www.cornerstonesva.org. Providing support and advocacy for those in need of food, shelter, affordable housing, quality childcare, and other human services. Programs and services include the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, Emergency Food Pantry, Hypothermia Prevention Program, Gifts for Kids and annual Coat Drive. Contact Nate King, Donations and Drives Coordinator, at 571-323-9569.
- ❖ **SHARE** of McLean operates a food pantry; provides assistance to families to avoid eviction, keep utilities on and meet other needs in a crisis. Share of McLean will provide holiday assistance to hundreds of needy families this year. In December, Share's families will be welcomed to a festive party, served a light meal, and visit with Santa. Help Share help those in need by fulfilling a wish or donating gift cards. Contact ShareWishes@gmail.com for more information. Visit www.shareofmclean.org for more info about Share.
- ❖ **Herndon-Reston FISH** (Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help), 336 Victory Drive, Herndon, 703-391-0105 herndonrestonfish.org. Herndon-Reston FISH has assisted local residents in short-term crises by since 1969. 703-437-0600.
- ❖ **The Community Foundation of Northern Virginia** www.cfnova.org. The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia works to respond to critical need and seed innovation in our region. www.cfnova.org/for-donors/donate-now
- ❖ **LINK**, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more. Every year the goal is to provide each family with a week's worth of non-perishable food in December. Children 16 and under receive gifts. holiday@linkagainsthunger.org. 703-437-1776 www.linkagainsthunger.org.
- ❖ **Committee for Helping Others** (CHO), Vienna, organized in 1969 by a group of churches and individuals in the Dunn Loring, Merrifield, Oakton, Vienna community to provide simple, loving charity to those in need. Coming up, holiday bike drive. 703-281-7614, www.cho-va.com
- ❖ **Northern Virginia Family Service**. The organization provides the essential building blocks for financial, emotional and physical well-being, serving as leaders and innovators for the Northern Virginia community. www.nvfs.org. Northern Virginia Family Service, 10455 White Granite, Drive, Suite 100, Oakton, VA 22124. 571-748-2500
- ❖ **Second Story** — Second Story (formerly Alternative House) provides shelter and services for

- homeless, runaway or abused teenagers, unaccompanied youth, and young mothers and their children. second-story.org.
- ❖ **Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna** providing services, personal enrichment, volunteer opportunities for adults 50 and over. Currently serving 3,000-plus mature adults in the region. 703-281-0538, www.scov.org
- ❖ **Touching Heart** in Herndon is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate children to have giving hearts. www.touchingheart.com, 703-901-7355.
- ❖ **FACETS** helps parents, their children and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty in the Fairfax area, a partner in efforts to end homelessness in Fairfax County. FACETS is always in need of donations and volunteers 703-865-4251 or volunteer@facetscares.org. www.facetscares.org. 10640 Page Ave., Suite 300, Fairfax VA 22030
- ❖ **Britepaths** Britepaths is working to assist 800 Fairfax County area families who might otherwise go without December holiday meals and gifts for their children. Sponsor a family or donate to provide a family with a holiday meal and/or gifts for their children. britepaths.org
- ❖ **Centreville Labor Resource Center** (CLRC), a safe, organized center where residents and contractors can negotiate work arrangements with day laborers. Centreville Square Shopping Center, 5944 Centreville Crest Ln, Centreville, VA 20121. Phone: (703) 543-6272 Email: Contact@CentrevilleLRC.org www.centreville-lrc.org/
- ❖ **Lorton Community Action Center** (LCAC) will provide holiday assistance to hundreds of families. Christmas food baskets along with fulfilling gift wishes for children and teens will help low-income families. See website for warm coat and Christmas donations and volunteer needs. lortonaction.org/seasonal-assistance/.
- ❖ **Assistance League of Northern Virginia** is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that feeds, clothes and educates children in need. Assistance League's philanthropic programs touch the lives of thousands of children at 11 Title I schools in Northern Virginia, serving children most in need at selected schools in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria. To learn more about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, contact alnorthernva@gmail.com or visit www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org
- ❖ **Comfort for America's Uniformed Services** (CAUSE) ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation

- for all that they have done. Mailing address: 4201 Wilson Blvd., #110-284, Arlington, VA 22203, CFC #33011, Phone 703-591-4965, cause-usa.org
- ❖ **Shelter House** provides crisis intervention, safe housing and supportive services to promote self-sufficiency for homeless families and victims of domestic violence in Fairfax County. It is our mission to get families back into stable housing in order to provide them the opportunity to continue their journey to self-sufficiency. www.shelterhouse.org
- ❖ **Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter**. For more than a decade, the Friends community has impacted thousands of pets; saving lives, easing pain and suffering, and enriching the lives of pets and their humans. (571) 212-9858 www.facebook.com/pg/FFCAS/about/
- ❖ **New Hope Housing**, founded in 1977, is a non-profit agency in Northern Virginia committed to finding creative and lasting solutions to end the cycle of homelessness by offering homeless men, women and children the services they need to change their lives and succeed. 8407E Richmond Hwy., Alexandria, VA 22309 www.newhopehousing.org/how-to-help/donate/
- ❖ **National Capital Food Bank**, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia, 703-541-3063. www.capitalareafoodbank.org
- ❖ **Homestretch** is a provider of transitional housing in Fairfax County and offers a services to help the homeless better their lives through education. Email: jhenderson@homestretchva.org; 703-237-2035 x125; homestretchva.org/volunteer/
- ❖ **Pathway Homes** providing non-time-limited housing and supportive services to adults with serious mental illness and co-occurring disabilities in Northern Virginia. Founded in 1980, Pathways currently serves more than 400 adults in community-based homes in Northern Virginia. www.pathwayhomes.org
- ❖ **Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington Fairfax Area** operates three clubs in the county, Culmore, Chantilly and Mount Vernon, focusing on character and academic success. www.bgcgw.org/fairfax
- ❖ **Friends of Guest House Northern Virginia** offers structure, supervision, support and assistance to female ex-offenders who want to improve their lives and break the cycle of incarceration. Offers the only program for women of its kind in Northern Virginia. One East Luray Ave., Alexandria, VA 22301-2025, 703-549-8072, info@friendsofguesthouse.org, friendsofguesthouse.org/

- ❖ **Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia** transforms the lives of lower-income families in need by providing affordable homeownership opportunities in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax and Falls Church. Learn more at www.habitatnova.org.
- ❖ **TAPS, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors**, 3033 Wilson Blvd., Third Floor, Arlington, VA 22201, Call 24/7 800-959-TAPS (8277) The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors offers compassionate care and resources to all those grieving the loss of a military loved one. Make a donation to support surviving military families and loved ones. You can also make a gift in honor or memory of a loved one. www.taps.org/donate
- ❖ **Neighborhood Health**, 6677 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA 22306. The organization partners with its patients to treat the whole person through medical, behavioral health and dental programs. It has 10 clinics throughout Arlington and Fairfax counties. Participating with all insurance including commercial, Medicare, Medicaid, 703-535-5568, www.neighborhoodhealthva.org
- ❖ **OAR** rebuilds lives and breaks the cycle of crime with opportunities, alternatives, and resources for offenders and their families to create a safer community. 10640 Page Ave., Suite 250, Fairfax, VA 22030, 703-246-3033. OAR needs volunteers and financial donations. oarnova.org/christmas
- ❖ **NAMI Northern Virginia** (National Alliance on Mental Illness) works to raise awareness and provide education, advocacy, and support programs for people living with mental illness, families, students, educators, law enforcement, and the public throughout our neighborhoods. Many excellent programs. www.nami-northernvirginia.org/ HelpLine: (571)458.7310, Email: info@nami-nova.org
- ❖ **PRS**, Inc. exists so that individuals living with mental illness, substance use disorders, and anyone who faces life crises can achieve safety, personal wellness, recovery and community integration. Crisis counseling and connection to supports CRISISLINK When crisis calls, we answer 24/7 Call: 800-273-TALK [8255] Text: "CONNECT" to 85511
- ❖ **Potomac Riverkeeper Network** works to protect the public's right to clean water in our rivers and streams; to stop pollution; to promote safe drinking water; to protect healthy river habitats; and to enhance public use and enjoyment. (202) 888-2037 www.potomacriverkeepernetwork.org
- ❖ **Potomac River Conservancy**, 301.608.1188 potomac.org, seeks to improve the Potomac River's water quality by building an impassioned base of river advocates to impart change at the local level.

Great Falls CONNECTION

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HOLIDAY DONATIONS

Blanket and Coat Drive. Through Dec. 8. Organized by NOVA Relief Center, blankets and coats will be sent to refugees in three camps in Jordan this winter. Blankets and coats should be new or gently worn. Monetary donations are also needed and may be made to NOVA Relief Center online and at some drop-off locations. For drop-off sites or to make a tax-deductible donation, visit novareliefcenr.org.

Volunteers Needed: CHO Christmas Store & Bike Program. Friday, Dec. 7, 9:30 a.m.-noon (set up); Saturday, Dec. 8, 8:30 a.m.-noon (shop) at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. NE, Vienna. CHO's 2018 Christmas Store is an annual event that invites our less fortunate neighbors to "shop" for gifts for their families and provides holiday extras that many take for granted. CHO (Committee for Helping Others) will be accepting donations of new unwrapped gifts for young children, gift cards for teens, as well as food gift certificates from Giant and Safeway. It also will be accepting new or like new jackets and coats. Clothing and other donations can be dropped at the CHO Clothes Closet at Vienna Court Condos, 133 Park St. NE, across from the Vienna Presbyterian Church, any Monday morning or by appointment. Call 703-281-7614; leave a message in Box # 1. The "bike distribution program," will be collecting bikes on Saturday, Nov. 24, 9 a.m.-noon, at the Vienna Presbyterian parking lot and at Antioch Christian Church, 1860 Beulah Road.

Toys for Tots Drive. Through Dec. 10. Area Sheehy Auto Stores will collect new and unwrapped toys to benefit the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program,

which will distribute those toys as gifts to less fortunate children in the community in which the campaign is conducted. Sheehy's Toys for Tots drop-off locations include:

* Sheehy INFINITI of Tysons, 8527 Leesburg Pike, Vienna

* Patriot Harley-Davidson, 9739 Fairfax Boulevard, Fairfax

Toy Drive. Through Friday, Dec. 14 at local Weichert, Realtors offices. Members of the community are invited to drop off new, unwrapped toys at the company's sales offices. The toys will be delivered throughout the holidays in conjunction with local charities that assist financially and physically disadvantaged children. To find your local office, go to www.weichert.com/offices/.

Holiday Sponsors. Through Dec. 14, Britepaths is seeking help from community members to sponsor Fairfax County area families in need for the December holidays or donate funds or gift cards to assist families who are not sponsored. Families Britepaths are assisting are referred by Fairfax County and Fairfax County Public Schools social workers. Visit britepaths.org/our-programs/holiday-program.

WEBINAR

Online Salary Negotiation Workshop. AAUW (American Association of University Women) Work Smart is free online for anyone looking to learn how to negotiate a salary increase or promotion. Why is

negotiation so important? AAUW's research on the gender pay gap shows that, one year out of college, women are already paid significantly less than men. Visit salary.aauw.org.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 5

Policymaker Breakfast Series. 7:30-9 a.m. at WGL, 8614 Westwood Center Drive, 12th Floor, Vienna. Join the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance for a conversation about the future of Metro with GM Paul Wiedefeld moderated by Washington Post's Robert McCartney. Breakfast will be provided. Register at secure.everyaction.com/gajS3CnuLES-1sbtYefx3g2. \$25 per person. Call 703-883-1830 for more.

THURSDAY/DEC. 6

Online Engagement Workshop. 8:30 a.m.-noon at Banyan Conference Center, 8300 Boone Blvd., First Floor, Suite 450 Vienna. Randi Penfil, from Google, and Matthew Montoya, from Constant Contact, will give a workshop at the Hispanic Chamber NOVA offices to share how customers find a business online and how to promote an online presence. Call 703-790-0303 or visit www.vahcc.com to register.

Caregivers Support Group. 10-11:30 a.m. at UUCF Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. For caregivers to adult

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

Youth Rugby Seeks New Players

Great Falls Youth Rugby is continuing efforts to expand youth rugby in the greater Great Falls area, looking forward to welcoming new families into the rugby community. There will be a meeting for parents and players (older players are encouraged to attend) on Saturday, Dec. 8, 2018,

9:30-11:30 a.m. at the Great Falls Library, located at 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls.

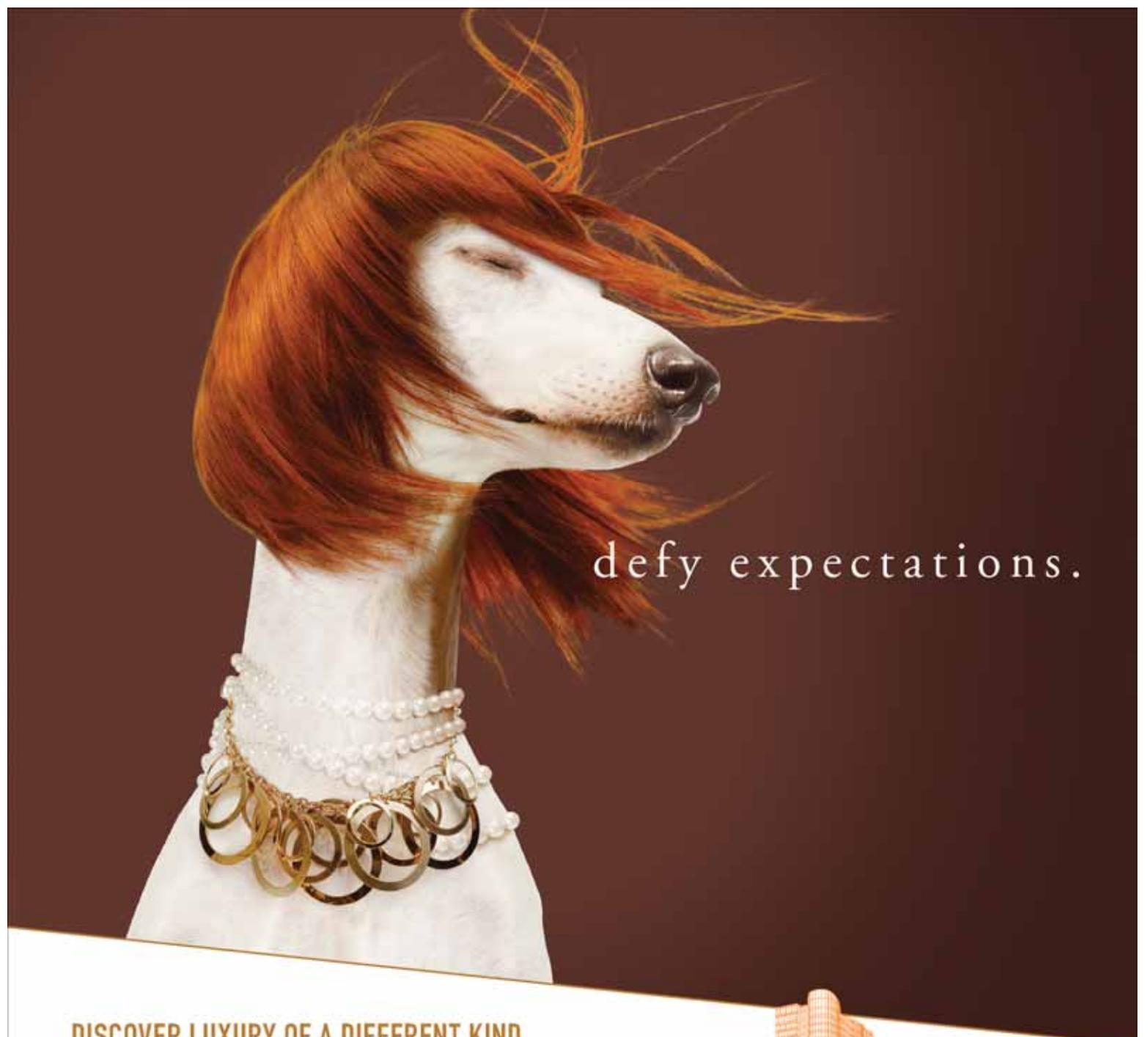
The programs offered include non-contact (coed PreK/K to fourth grade) and tackle (boys, fifth grade to high school). If enough girls are interested, they will add a girls team.

Rugby is offered year-round, and the one-time registration is good for the year, so your kids can play whenever they are available or not playing other sports.

Fall Session just ended: September - December; Spring Session: End-January - mid-May; Summer session: Mid-May-end July.

The Spring Session starts mid-January and registration is ongoing. See more at <http://www.greatfallsrugby.com/>

Coaches are all required to be USA Rugby certified.



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The proposed community plan has been submitted to Fairfax County for final approval.



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NEWS

Giovanna Lee, Samarra Pack, Philip Smith-Cobbs, Emma Diehl, Madeline Chang, Sofia Santos, Samantha Condro, Elisabeth Musseman (Snow Queen), Ruslan Amrayev (Snow Cavalier), Claire de la Paz, Haley Dale, Taylor Anderson, Helene Yao.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

'Nutcracker' in Honor of Military, First Responders

The Ernst Community Cultural Center at the Northern Virginia Community College Annandale campus opened to a full house the Friday before Thanksgiving as Classical Ballet Theater performed their beloved, full length performance of the "Nutcracker" in honor of our military servicemen and women, local first responders and their families.

In this popular holiday classic young Clara falls asleep after a long Christmas party, and is swept away by her Nutcracker Prince and journeys through the Land of Snow to a magical realm where enchanted inhabitants of the Kingdom of Sweets dance for her. Among the many enchanted characters she meets on her journey are majestic Snow Queen (Elisabeth Musseman) and her flurry of snowflakes. Her trip culminates with a beautiful Pas de Deux (duet) danced by the Sugarplum Fairy and her Cavalier.

"It was a thrill and honor to perform for our local

veterans and first responders, and to dance with such an accomplished professional partner," said Musseman.

The Classical Ballet Theater of Northern Virginia has been training young dancers in the DC Metro area for professional careers with internationally acclaimed classical ballet and modern dance companies including the San Francisco Ballet, Boston Ballet, Houston Ballet, Martha Graham Contemporary Dance Company, Alvin Ailey American Dance Company, and many others for over 25 years.

"It's Classical Ballet Theatre's honor to perform some of the area's highest caliber classical ballet and contemporary dance productions with our military veterans and first responders via our outreach programs," said Cynthia Donavin, Classical Ballet Theatre Founder and Artistic Director.

Future outreach performances, and applications for aspiring young dancers can be found at cbtva.org.



Cooper Middle student Elisabeth Musseman performed the role of Snow Queen. She was paired with Ruslan Amrayev, a professional dancer and former soloist with the Moscow Festival Ballet.

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Habits that Stick

Key to making changing old habits and making new ones.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Standing outside the glass doors of the studio, lit harshly by fluorescent bulbs, Annabelle VanLandingham admits that she is intimidated by a group of women standing in front of her — all model-thin and wearing cropped tank tops that reveal finely toned abs.

“I always feel like I don’t fit in and everybody is staring at me, but this time, I’m really going to stick with it,” she said, acknowledging her failed attempts to make regular exercise part of her daily life.

Vows to change habits are easy to make, but keeping them can seem nearly impossible. Commitments to cooking healthy weeknight dinners give way to the reality of packed schedules, while a morning meditation practice is overtaken by an inability to resist checking email right after getting out of bed. Local human behaviorists say that when it comes to creating habits, understanding how they develop is a first step.

“If you want develop a meditation practice to relieve stress at work, set an alert on your phone for a time that know you’ll definitely be free.”

— Lauren Puglisi, LCSW

“Essentially, a habit is turning a new behavior into something that is done automatically,” said Lauren Puglisi, LCSW. “For example, grabbing a cigarette after dinner or putting on your seatbelt when you get in the car are automatic. You don’t have to talk yourself into doing those things, you do them without even thinking.”

For those who want to make activities like exercising or meditating life-long habits, the key is to begin with realistic and attainable steps. “New habits are best formed in small, manageable increments,” said Jessica McLaughlin, Ph.D. assistant professor of psychology at Montgomery College. “For instance, if you want to develop the habit of exercising, start by taking 10-minute walks instead of promising to exercise for an hour every day. It is easier to form habits if the changes are similar to what you are already doing, as opposed to something that drastically alters your current day-to-day schedule.”

Develop a list specific actions to take, advises Puglisi. “For example, swapping out potato chips and a soda for hummus and whole wheat pita bread for an afternoon snack or taking a 30-minute walk three days each week can be attainable ways to get started,” she said. “Otherwise, you might get overwhelmed and give up.”

“Research supports that it can take approximately two months of daily repetition to develop a habit, but keep in mind that some habits aren’t as easy to make automatic, and may require more time,” added Joanne Bagshaw, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Montgomery College. “For instance, developing a habit of walking 15 minutes every day may take eight to 10 weeks to become an automatic behavior, but running five miles every day could take much longer.”

Find ways to increase accountability. “Write down your goals and keep [the list] in a visible place where you have a constant reminder and can check off your accomplishments each day,” said McLaughlin. “Tell someone else what you are doing or, better yet, make the change with someone else, such as practicing mindfulness together or eliminating sugary drinks as a team.”

Setting up reminders can help one avoid backsliding, especially when habit formation is

in its early stages,” said Puglisi. “If you want develop a meditation practice to relieve stress at work, set an alert on your phone for a time that know you’ll definitely be free,” she said. “Set a realistic amount of time to spend meditating, and select a specific meditation. This will make it easy to do quickly and easily, so you’ll have fewer excuses not to do it.”

The company one keeps also plays a role in habit formation. “You’re likely to boost your willpower if you choose to spend time with someone who has strong willpower,” said Bagshaw. “Plan on creating your daily walk or running habit with a friend, or coach, or group who will be a role model for self-control.”

Assess your progress regularly. “Self-monitoring adds to success,” said psychologist Stacie Isenberg, Psy.D. “Writing down what you’ve eaten each day can help you stay honest with yourself. That said, be realistic with your time frames and don’t cause yourself extra stress. If thinking about how you ate during the week on a Friday is less stressful than writing it every day, do that. But do choose a regular time to consider progress and impediments or you’ll be at 2020 without your new habit.”

“It helps to set up the environment to remind you to do the behavior and make it easy to follow through,” said Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at George Mason University. “For example, put vegetables and fruits on the first shelf you see when you open the refrigerator. You are more likely to eat what you see than what you do not see.”

Don’t forget rewards, says McLaughlin. “Change won’t happen unless you are motivated to make the change,” she said. “This means you have to find what is rewarding for you. You might find that what you are doing is intrinsically rewarding, such as increasing your energy levels or seeing your scale number go down. Other times, you might need to create your own reward, such as getting a manicure when you’ve gone a week without biting your nails.”

“Plan on creating your daily walk or running habit with a friend, or coach, or group who will be a role model for self-control.”

— Joanne Bagshaw, Ph.D.,
Montgomery College



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Left-side panel. Right or left side from the podium did not denote anything political – just the best way to seat the experts at the “Savvy Seniors” forum.

Right-side panel. Four of the speakers at the “Savvy Seniors” seminar.

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Aging in Great Falls

Civic association hosts Seminar for Savvy Seniors.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

A panel of interesting and informed experts kept a room full of Great Falls citizens glued to their seats and taking copious notes for more than two hours on Saturday, Dec. 1. The Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA) hosted the seminar for “Savvy Seniors and Their Families” in a meeting room at Christ the King Lutheran Church on Georgetown Pike.

GFCA president Bill Canis welcomed the sizeable crowd of attendees, and did the honors of introducing the panel, and facilitating the Q&A session after the speakers’ presentations, starting things off by noting that the GFCA, celebrating its fiftieth year in service to the community, was also reaching “those golden senior years.”

Canis said the GFCA decided to hold a meeting on senior issues after being approached by two groups, looking to expand services into the Great Falls area.

“We put their information in our newsletter,” he said, but after some discussion and obvious interest, the GFCA determined that a gathering of numerous field experts was in order, so they organized the seminar.

THE TURNOUT seems to have proven their instincts to be correct.

“Or else it was just the wonderful homemade pastries by GFCA board member Jennifer Falcone that really brought this many people out on a drizzly Saturday morning.”

After Canis’s welcome, Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust declared that senior issues and serving older adults in the community has long been a priority.

“The predicted shift in the population where the over-65 contingent will double in size between 2010 and 2030 has been described in studies as a ‘Senior Tsunami,’ and we had better prepare for that day,” cautioned Foust.

In October of 2011, Foust was a driver behind a district-wide meeting on older adults living in the area. About 100 people attended that meeting, and it was the start of things to come.

“Fairfax County is one of the only such



There was a strong turnout for the “Savvy Seniors and their Families” seminar, hosted by the Great Falls Citizens Association - despite the cold, wet weather.

Resources

Couldn’t attend the “Savvy Seniors” seminar or just want to know how to access some of these resources? Here’s a start:

- ❖ The Great Falls Senior Center – www.greatfallseniorcentergfsc.wildapricot.org.
 - ❖ Shepherd’s Center of Great Falls – www.thescgf.org. 703/586-9696
 - ❖ Dementia Friendly America – Herndon - www.dfaherndon.org
 - ❖ Fairfax County Division of Adult and Aging Services – 703/324-7948 (Mon-Fri. 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.) for Response Line. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults. Also see the 50+ Plan on the county website.
 - ❖ Golden Gazette – subscriptions – 703/324-5633 or email birendra.kunwar@fairfaxcounty.gov.
 - ❖ Eldementals – www.eldementals.com. 703/399-4028
 - ❖ Stan Corey – www.divorcedance.com
- Many of the websites include additional resources and blogs on related topics.

jurisdictions in the nation that have anything like the Fairfax 50+ Committee and Plan that are actively engaged in developing policies and programs aimed at protecting seniors and enriching their lives, at educating seniors and those who support them.”

Foust concluded his remarks by saying he felt fortunate to live in this county, since “I satisfy most of the statistics we’ve been talking about already!”

The objective of the “Savvy Seniors” seminar was to inform and provide resources on older adult issues, and the GFCA pulled together experts well-prepared to offer insight from all angles.

Carol Blackwell, an active member of the Great Falls community for more than 40 years, was on hand to talk about the wide variety of services and programs offered by the Great Falls Senior Center (GFSC). Blackwell, the president of the GFSC, described the day trips, seminars, workshops and classes, and other events that the GFSC

has organized since its inception in 2012. The GFSC partners with Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services to enhance its offerings.

“Our biggest challenge right now?” said Blackwell. “Today we are a virtual center, a center without walls.” To better meet the needs of local older adults and to “give people a place to drop by and stay connected in the community,” Blackwell says the group is “dreaming big” and hopes to someday either share space with an expanded Great Falls Library, or to “have a place of our own” in which to hold their events and invite seniors meet and mingle.

Blackwell also has significant experience with the needs of adults with dementia and their caregivers.

“Staying engaged really helps those suffering with dementia live a better quality of life.”

Speaker Carol Edelstein is a founding member and the secretary of the newly formed, all-volunteer Shepherd’s Center of



Bill Canis, president of the Great Falls Citizens Association, welcomes the attendees to the “Savvy Seniors and their Families” seminar.

Great Falls. After twenty-plus years working with seniors, especially those with dementia, and developing an intergenerational program for seniors and kids as the head of a non-profit private school in Fairfax, Edelstein continued serving older adults as a volunteer driver for the Shepherd’s Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church. It wasn’t long before she decided that her neighbors in Great Falls could use the same sort of assistance, getting rides to medical appointments and other important errands, and getting a little handy help around the house.

The Shepherd’s Center of Great Falls is just about ready to launch. Affiliated with the nationwide Shepherd’s Centers of America, this local branch is actively recruiting volunteers and ready to take transportation requests.

“Our services are free to our clients – except for any parking charges – and the rides can be one-way or round trip,” said Edelstein. “Our volunteer drivers are background checked and we provide supplemental insurance when they drive a client ... and they accept only the rides that work for them. There is no requirement of so many days or hours to volunteer. It works well for all parties.”

SEE SEMINAR, PAGE 11

NEWS

Seminar for Seniors Held in Great Falls

FROM PAGE 10

Toni Reinhart is the Director of Dementia Friendly America-Herndon, and the owner of a Comfort Keepers in-home care company. She's on a mission to raise awareness about dementia and to make the world a friendlier place for those it affects.

"Even with all of my experience with seniors, I didn't fully understand the difficulties of living with dementia until it affected my own father," she told the attendees.

Taking dementia-sufferers out into the world can be difficult. "But isolation makes the progression of the disease even faster," said Reinhart, so she offers seminars on communicating with those with dementia and works on creating a dementia-comfortable environment.

"We are about keeping people – all people – connected with the community."

THE COUNTY itself was represented at the seminar, with Grace Lynch, the community outreach manager for Fairfax County's Division of Adult and Aging Services on hand.

Lynch came prepared with stacks of informational material, but the objective of her remarks was to inform the public that her office can be the free "one stop shop" for all of the issues associated with aging.

"The changes that occur as we age can be complex. Physical, social, financial, and more. Where to find the right assistance and put it all together can be a daunting task. We are here to help."

The county operates an "Aging, Disability and Caregiver Response Line" Monday through Friday, staffed by experienced social workers.

"We can send you in the right direction, provide translators if needed, or even in-depth assessment consultations for more complex situations. You have an advocate in Fairfax County government."

Lynch also detailed some of the preventative programs offered through the county, and the outreach resources on public television Channel 16, and via their "Hot Topics" educational podcasts. Highly recommended by Lynch was a free subscription to the Golden Gazette newsletter. "It really keeps you up to date and in the know and provides lots of valuable information."

Karen McPhail, RN, MSN, CDP

spoke about concierge care management for all aging-related issues, not just healthcare. She is the managing director of Eldementals, LLC, with a specialty in managing complex care needs.

"We are true micro-managers, watching every step and reviewing or advocating for you. We have to be experts in our field."

Whether you use a service like Eldementals or you go it alone, McPhail's advice is "pre-planning is the best thing to do to ensure that your wishes and needs are heard and met." She strongly recommends being sure that trusted friends or family know where to find information in an emergency.

"You really need a trusted financial advisor and good elder care attorney." She also suggests preparing a Durable Power of Attorney as part of that pre-planning "so that your representatives are not making the decisions so much as acting on your wishes."

The final speaker to present before the Q&A was Stan Corey, who was a Certified Financial Planner Professional, a Chartered Financial Consultant and Certified Private Wealth Advisor for almost 40 years. Corey has taken those years of experience and authored two books so far.

One of those is on a "difficult subject," but one that Corey says needs to be discussed. "The Divorce Dance" addresses "protecting your money, managing your emotions, and understanding the legal issues if you initiate or are faced with divorce." Corey mentioned the topic at the "Savvy Seniors" gathering since he says that the fastest growing population segment experiencing divorce is now those over 65.

"But today I want to focus on 'When Work Becomes Optional,'" he continued, referencing the title of his latest book.

Corey talked about the suddenness of the changes that occur with retirement, noting that those often the hardest affected are professionals and upper level management.

"For so many in these categories, what they were doing was their identity. It's hard when you take that away from one day to the next. Now what do you do?"

When "teaching" retirement these days, Corey says the most important lesson is that the act of retiring is not the goal, "it's only the 50-yard line, or half time. You need to continue planning for your life events."

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT



From left: Russell Rinker, Karma Price, Billie Krishawn, Ayanna Hardy, Suzy Alden, Gary L. Perkins III, Joshua Simon, Demitrus Carter, Rebecca Ballinger, and V. Savoy McIlwain in “A Civil War Christmas” at 1st Stage in Tysons. The show runs through Dec. 23.

Civil War Christmas: An American Musical Celebration

It's 1864 and Washington, D.C. is settling down to the coldest Christmas Eve in years in this pageant of carols by Paula Vogel, the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer of *Indecent*. Stories of many intertwining lives—spanning from the battlegrounds of Northern Virginia to the halls of the White House—demonstrate that the gladness of one's heart is the best gift of all. Through Dec. 23, Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.; Fridays, 8 p.m.; Saturdays 2 and 8 p.m.; and Sundays, 2 p.m. at 1st Stage in Tysons, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Approximately 2 hours with one 15-minute intermission. Visit www.1ststage.org for the schedule of Community Conversations, captioned and audio described performances. Tickets: general admission, \$39; senior (65+), \$36; student and military, \$15 at www.1ststage.org or at 703-854-1856.



PHOTOS BY TERESA CASTRACANE

From left: Rebecca Ballinger, Suzy Alden, and Tiziano D' Affuso in “A Civil War Christmas” at 1st Stage. The show runs through Dec. 23 in Tysons Corner.

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Santa HQ. Through Dec. 24, Tysons Corner Center, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, Tysons Corner. Santa is all about the experience and this year Tysons Corner Center is again partnering with HGTV to present the incomparable, immersive “Santa HQ.” Families are invited to explore the wonder of Santa in the digital age. Guests can make reservations to spend less time in line. Shoppers are invited to bring an unwrapped toy benefiting Second Story (formerly Alternative House). Visit www.santa-hq.com.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 5

Open House. 4-8 p.m. at Field & Gown warehouse, 318 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. Field & Gown is a Vienna-based wedding and event décor rental company. Check out the curated inventory at the Field & Gown Holiday Open House. Visit www.fieldandgown.com.

THURSDAY/DEC. 6

52nd annual Holiday Homes Tour. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Tour four large, festively decorated homes in the McLean neighborhoods of Langley Forest, River Oaks, Odrick's Corner and McLean Hamlet. Jewelry and holiday boutique and high-end raffle at house in River Oaks. \$30 before Dec. 6 at Mesmeralda's in McLean, Karin's Florist in Vienna, and Great Dogs of Great Falls. \$35 at the tour houses on Dec. 6. Call 703-556-0197 or visit www.mcleanwomansclub.org.

Movie Screening: “Angst: Raising Awareness Around Anxiety.” 7 p.m. in the McLean High School Auditorium, 1633 Davidson Road, McLean. This documentary features students affected by anxiety, mental health professionals, and Olympic

athlete and mental health advocate Michael Phelps. Following the movie, a panel of mental health professionals from McLean High School and the community will lead a discussion. Friends, neighbors and anyone sixth grade and above are welcome to the free event. Visit mcleanscc.org/.

FRIDAY/DEC. 7

“Dining with Dorothy.” 12:30 p.m. at Tysons Corner Sakura Japanese Steak House, 8369 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. Join with friends or make new ones. Newcomers are welcome. To reserve space contact event chair, Dorothy Flood at dflood1706@gmail.com.

Old Firehouse Friday Night Trip.

3:30-11 p.m. at The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Join the Old Firehouse as they head to AMC Tysons for two movies and dinner at the food court. Movie tickets are included in the fee. Bring \$20 for dinner and additional money for movie concessions as desired. \$35/\$25 MCC district residents. Activity No. 5303.218. Register at www.mcleancenter.org/teens/events/after-school-trips.

Meet the Artist: Fleurs et Fruits.

6-7 p.m. at TD Bank, 9901 Walker Road, Great Falls Village. Jan Heginbotham presents “Les Fleurs et les Fruits,” still life paintings in oil and gouache. Portraits of fresh flowers and handsome fruits and veggies. Free. Email the_sculptor@hotmail.com or visit www.JanHeginbotham.com.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 7-8

Annual Renaissance Feaste. 7 p.m. at Langley High School, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Langley High School's choirs are busy rehearsing for the 16th annual Renaissance Feaste, which takes place in the school's “Langley Halle.” Choir students in full medieval attire—dressed as jesters, minstrels, and musicians—will serenade guests with

holiday carols, entertaining them with performances straight out of Merrie Olde England. Guests will dine on authentic medieval English fare, including meat pie (or chicken or vegetarian), potatoes, and English custard topped with apple crisp. For tickets, available through Nov. 30, visit www.brownpapertickets.com, and search for “feaste” (with “e” at the end).

DEC. 7-JAN. 4

Art Exhibit: Fleurs et Fruits. Bank hours at TD Bank, 9901 Walker Road, Great Falls Village. Jan Heginbotham presents “Les Fleurs et les Fruits,” still life paintings in oil and gouache. Portraits of fresh flowers and handsome fruits and veggies. Free. Email the_sculptor@hotmail.com or visit www.JanHeginbotham.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 8

Puppy Nativity. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist), 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. Celebrate the holiday season with third annual Puppy Nativity, where dogs play dress up as part of the nativity (costumes provided). The church's youth group will be on hand to accept donations for Britepaths (britepaths.org). The “Peace Like a River” art exhibit also will be open in during the event. Free. Visit www.GoodShepherdVA.com.

Annual Holiday Bazaar. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at McLean High School, 1633 Davidson Road, McLean. The McLean High School Annual Holiday Bazaar Fundraiser features many returning and new vendors this year. Complimentary gift wrapping. Free admission for shoppers and free parking. Food available to purchase. Learn more at www.mcleanboosters.org.

Cookies and Cocoa with Santa. 1-3 p.m. at Vienna Pediatric Dentistry, 301 Maple Ave. West, Suite 400, Vienna. Cookie decorating (gluten

free options available), cocoa, Christmas music and most importantly, Santa. Parents are welcome to take pictures of their children with this special guest. Free, all are welcome. *Consider bringing a small, unwrapped gift to donate to Toys for Tots. Call 703-938-6600 or visit viennapediatricdentistry.com.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 8-9

Christmas Market. Saturday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. Shop for holiday hand-crafted gifts, fine art jewelry, nature photography, watercolors and homemade baked goods and sweets. The United Methodist Women will be providing Christmas gift wrapping services (morning drop-offs welcomed). Bring a camera and the kids to visit with Santa from 11-3 on Saturday. A majority of the profits will go to women and children's missions. Free admission. Call 703-759-3509 or visit www.andrewchapelumc.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 9

Gifts for Good Market. 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. N.W., Vienna. Vienna Presbyterian Church will host its annual Gifts for Good Haiti Christmas Market featuring handmade Haitian artwork, including metal art, jewelry and Christmas ornaments. “Haiti Is Hot Sauce” gift packs in three “Caribbean” flavors are also for sale. All community members are welcome. Proceeds benefit Vienna Presbyterian mission partner Community Coalition for Haiti (www.cchaiti.org). For more email wevn@verizon.net.

Fair Trade Fair. 9:15 a.m.-noon at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Ten Thousand Villages is an all-fair-trade store in Alexandria with products crafted by artisans from around the world—brought to Lewinsville's St. Andrews Hall. Shop

for stocking stuffers, larger Christmas gifts, or treats for oneself. The sale each year is sponsored by the Mission and Service Ministry Group. Free and open to the public. Visit lewinsville.org or call 703-356-7200.

Cathedral Brass Concert. 4:30-5:30 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. NE, Vienna. Jazz to traditional. Childcare is available. Call 703-938-9050 or visit viennapres.org.

“Amahl and the Night Visitors.” 6 p.m. at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The Choirs of Lewinsville Presbyterian Church present: “Amahl and the Night Visitors” by Gian Carlo Menotti. A prelude of choral and handbell Advent and Christmas music will begin at 6 p.m. The production will begin at 6:30. Reception to follow in St. Andrews Hall. Free and open to the public. Visit lewinsville.org or call 703-356-7200.

TUESDAY/DEC. 11

McLean Historical Society Meeting. 7:30 p.m. in the Administrative Office of the McLean Community Center, 6631 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. The program will feature author/historian Chuck Mauro who will discuss his latest book “We Once Met by Chance,” a story of four individuals during the Civil War. Everyone is welcome. Contact Carole Herrick at 703-356-8223.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 12

McLean Newcomers and Neighbors Holiday Luncheon. 11:30 a.m. at Brio Tuscan Grill, 7854L Tysons Corner Center, McLean. The cost of the luncheon is \$34 per person. To attend, pay at squareup.com/market/mclean-newcomers-club. Prospective members are invited. Make reservations no later than Friday, Dec. 7. Visit www.McLeanNewcomers.org.

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

THURSDAY/DEC. 13

Arts Society Holiday Party.

7:30 p.m. at Vienna Art Center, 243 Church St., NW, suite 100, Vienna. The Vienna Arts Society is a 501 c 3 non-profit organization dedicated to enriching the community through the arts. All are invited. Call 703-319-3971 or visit www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 15

Holiday Pancake Breakfast.

8 a.m.-noon at the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center St., South, Vienna. The Vienna Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary hosts their annual Holiday Pancake Breakfast. All you can eat pancakes, sausage, bacon, juice and coffee. Santa Claus will be greeting all from 9:30-11 a.m. Adults \$8, adults; \$7, seniors (65+); \$6, children ages 5-12, children 4 and under free. Email Joanie@vffd.org or visit vffd.org.

Parents' Day Out.

9 a.m.-noon at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. For children in Kindergarten through Grade 6. Children will spend time watching Christmas movies, making crafts, decorating Christmas cookies, and playing games while parents prepare for the holidays. Free and open to the public. Sign up at www.lewinsville.org/event-items/parents-day-out/ or email Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom at agroenenboom@lewinsville.org.



Ashleigh Watkinson, of Great Falls, will perform the role of Clara.

Studio Bleu's The Nutcracker

This performance of The Nutcracker Ballet was choreographed by Troy D. Brown, who has been dancing professionally for over 20 years, and who attended the School of American Ballet in New York, under full scholarship, and is a graduate of the Duke Ellington School. Studio Bleu, located in Ashburn, is a nationally acclaimed dance center, owned by Kimberly Rishi, a resident of Reston. Studio Bleu has been partnering for almost 10 years with Brown's Art of Technique ballet conservatory program. Ashleigh Watkinson, of Great Falls, dances the role of Clara in Studio Bleu Dance Center's in the 2 p.m. performance. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Brad Kaminsky Foundation in support of their efforts to fight childhood cancer. Saturday, Dec. 15, 2 and 7 p.m. at Stone Bridge High School in Ashburn. Visit www.tututix.com/client/studiobleu2018/ for tickets.

Model Railroaders Open House.

1-5 p.m. at the Vienna Depot, 231 Dominion Road NE. Northern Virginia Model Railroaders hold an open house at the Vienna Depot each month. Free admission. Call 703-938-5157 or visit www.nvmr.org.

Studio Bleu's The Nutcracker.

2 and 7 p.m. at Stone Bridge High School in Ashburn. Ashleigh Watkinson, of Great Falls, dances the role of Clara in Studio Bleu Dance

Center's in the 2 p.m. performance. Studio Bleu is owned by Kimberly Rishi, a resident of Reston. Visit www.tututix.com/client/studiobleu2018/ for tickets.

Christmas Carol Sing-along.

3-5 p.m. at Historic Pleasant Grove, 8641 Lewinsville Road, McLean. Historic Pleasant Grove is holding its annual Christmas Carol Sing, followed by cookies and hot cider, at their quaint historic site. Free. Visit www.HistoricPleasantGrove.org.

Night in Bethlehem. 5-7 p.m. at Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. Wander through the outdoor city marketplace and discover what life was like when Jesus was born. Create keepsakes and interact with this live nativity including Mary, Joseph and a tame camel, donkey and sheep – and hear the story of Jesus' birth. Free. Visit www.andrewchapelumc.org.

4-5:30 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. NE, Vienna. Sanctuary Choir, Cathedral Brass, Youth Choir, Friendship Chimes. Childcare is available. Call 703-938-9050 or visit viennapres.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 22

Holiday Animal Winter Festival. 10 a.m.-noon at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Sip hot chocolate and celebrate by learning about wintering animals. Make holiday ornaments of the animals, too. \$12 per person. Designed for participants 3-adult. Call 703-759-9018 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend.

Klondike Campfire Cookout.

3:30-5 p.m. at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Expand cooking skills at the "Klondike Campfire Cookout." Prepare a winter meal using colonial and indigenous cooking techniques around the campfire. Food and drink provided. Bring a flashlight and warm clothes. Designed for participants 3-adult. \$15 per person. Call 703-759-9018 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 15-16

Christmas with Voce.

Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 4 p.m. at Church of the Holy Comforter, 543 Beulah Road, NE, Vienna. Voce celebrates the festive season with Ottorino Respighi's glittering Lauda per la Natività del Signore (Laud to the Nativity). \$25 general admission; \$20 age 62+; \$10 student (18+); children under 18 free. Visit www.voce.org or call 703-277-7772.

SUNDAY/DEC. 16

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.

Gifts for Good Market.

9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. N.W., Vienna. Vienna Presbyterian Church will host its annual Gifts for Good Haiti Christmas Market featuring handmade Haitian artwork, including metal art, jewelry and Christmas ornaments. All community members are welcome. Email wevn@verizon.net.

The Glorious Sounds of Christmas.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 2

Coffee with The McLean

Newcomers and Neighbors.

11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. The McLean Newcomers and Neighbors will host a coffee for members and prospective members. Visit www.McLeanNewcomers.org or email McLeanNewcomers@yahoo.com.

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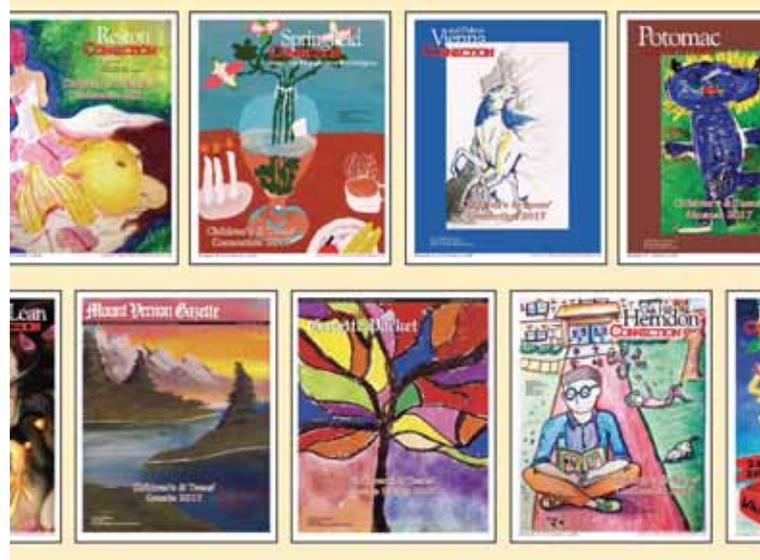
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PEOPLE

Eagle Scout Project Completed in Time for Holidays

Max Dallas from Great Falls Troop 673 completed his Eagle Scout project over three days in late November. The Project involved refurbishing the Celebrate Great Falls "Santa Claus Shed" next to the Christmas tree behind the Post Office. The walls of the shed were in deep disrepair due to rot and insect damage and it did not have any doors.

The project was very timely due to the shed being a key part of the Great Falls Christmas Tree lighting celebration with Santa himself sitting in the decorated shed and listening to children's holiday wishes.

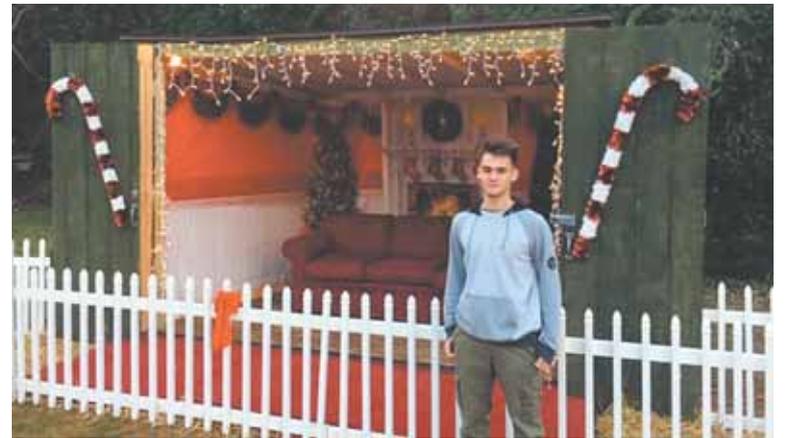
Max planned the project and lead a team of fellow Troop 673 Scouts in installing new wood siding and a weatherproof base trim all around the shed, as well building custom bi-fold doors and hardware. He also stained the siding and doors with forest green stain to blend in with the surrounding trees.

Max is a 12th grade student at Langley High School.



Max Dallas in front of his completed Shed re-build project.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



The Shed shown decorated for the Great Falls Village celebration with Santa.

Chapter members presenting Sandra Grimes with the Women in History Award: From left — chapter member Jean Luning-Johnson, Chapter Historian Maureen Jenkins, Sandra Grimes, and Chapter Regent Beth Boswell.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Sandra Grimes Honored with a Women in History Award

The December meeting of the Freedom Hill Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, a McLean based chapter, was held on Saturday, Dec. 1, 2018. During the meeting, chapter members and guests enjoyed a talk given by Sandra Grimes about the events leading up to and her personal involvement in the search for a traitor within the CIA, which led to the identification of fellow officer Aldrich (Rick) Ames.

Mrs. Grimes is a retired CIA officer who spent most of her twenty-six-year career working against the former Soviet Union. In the mid-1980s, the CIA experienced significant loss of Soviet human assets. Grimes served on a small team that investigated and uncovered the actions of Aldrich (Rick) Ames, a CIA officer who was subsequently con-

victed of spying for the Soviet Union and sentenced to life in prison.

Grimes co-authored "Circle of Treason: A CIA Account of Traitor Aldrich Ames and the Men He Betrayed," (with colleague Jeanne Vertefeuille). The ABC mini-series The Assets is based on the book.

Chapter member Jean Luning-Johnson introduced Grimes at the start of the program. After the presentation, Chapter Regent Beth VanDoren Boswell and Chapter Historian Maureen Jenkins presented Grimes with a Women in American History Award to honor her service to our county and recognize her role in American History. The emphasis of Women in American History is on the role of women, past and present, in American history.

BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 7

family members with dementia. First and third Thursdays of every month. Hosted by Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna, scov.org. Contact facilitator Jack Tarr at 703-821-6838 or jtarr5@verizon.net.

SUNDAY/DEC. 9

Blue Christmas. 3 p.m. at Katie's Coffee House 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. A Blue Christmas Service is a non-traditional service of remembrance and hope for those who are stressed, lonely or grieving. No reservations, all are welcome. Dress is casual. Free. Call Carol Wright at 703-582-1640 for more.

MONDAY/DEC. 10

Public Forum, Police Civilian Review Panel. 7-9 p.m. at Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, Mt. Vernon. The Police Civilian Review Panel will conduct a public forum. Learn how to initiate the complaint process, who will investigate complaints, what to expect once a complaint is filed, and receive a 2018 update on Panel activity. The Independent Police Auditor will be present to explain the Auditor's role in oversight. Participants will have the opportunity to engage the Panel with questions about the process. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecivilianreviewpanel/police-civilian-review-panel-public-forum for more.

TUESDAY/DEC. 11

Community Meeting, Kirby Road Sidewalk project. 7 p.m. in the cafeteria of Chesterbrook Elementary School, 1753 Kirby Road, McLean. The Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) has scheduled a community meeting for the Kirby Road Sidewalk project (from Chesterbrook Road to Mori Street). Preliminary design of the project will be presented, and the public will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide input. Comments will be accepted until Jan. 2, 2019. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/projects/kirby-road-sidewalk-chesterbrook-road-mori-street.

SUNDAY/DEC. 16

Christmas Worship. 9 and 11:15 a.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. Visit www.stjohnsmclean.org or call 703-356-4902.

FRIDAY/DEC. 21

The Longest Night. 7 p.m. at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. A Service of Hope for those who see no joy in the holidays. Some don't have the energy or interest to sing the traditional Christmas carols with masses of happy people. Sometimes darkness, grief and discouragement are heightened at Christmastime. Gather in candlelight to sing, pray and receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as we lay claim to the Light of Life in the midst of darkness. www.lewinsville.org or call 703-356-7200.

MONDAY/DEC. 24

Christmas Eve Worship. At St. John's Episcopal Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean.
 * 4 p.m. - Family Service of Holy Eucharist with Christmas music beginning at 3:30.
 * 7 p.m. - Holy Eucharist with Christmas music beginning at 6:30.
 * 10 p.m. - Holy Eucharist with Christmas music beginning at 9:30.
 Visit www.stjohnsmclean.org or call 703-356-4902.
Christmas Eve Services. At Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. All are welcome at Christmas Eve services:
 * 4:30 pm - Family Christmas Eve service. No need to worry about keeping the children quiet in church - this service has been designed for them. Childcare provided for infants.
 * 7 and 9:30 p.m. - Candlelight Communion Services. Hear the Christmas Story, enjoy the beloved music of Christmas with the handbell choirs and Chancel and Westminster choirs, and celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Childcare provided for infants-5 years old at the 7 p.m. service only.
 Visit www.lewinsville.org or call 703-356-7200.

TUESDAY/DEC. 25

Christmas Day Worship. 11 a.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Holy Eucharist. Visit www.stjohnsmclean.org or call 703-356-4902.

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Scared to ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

And that's what worries me. There's a part of me (too big a part, I'll admit), that rationalizes not going to the doctor as a means of preventing an untimely death.

Oh, don't get me wrong. I go to the doctor as often as needed. In fact, I've been commended as being a very "compliant" patient, meaning I show up for my appointments (apparently some patients don't). And I will continue to do so.

However, this column is not about the appointments I do make, it's about the ones I don't make.

Huh?

Let me clarify. I am referring to the voluntary-type appointments that I schedule myself - at my discretion, when some symptom or other, relating to cancer or not, manifests itself. The symptom which forces me to consider my own mortality because it's "presenting" at a time and place at which my oncologist is unaware.

The kind of symptom which, were I not a cancer patient, I wouldn't give a second thought (let alone a first thought). But since I am a cancer patient, whatever the symptom is - and I mean any and all symptoms: small, medium or large, it must be "the cancer" as "Forrest, Forrest Gump" characterized his mother's cause of death, and therefore, can't be minimized. In point of alternative fact, it must be maximized, and in that maximization comes anxiety and fear and every other stress-related emotion you can imagine.

Nevertheless, just as George advised Jerry in a long-ago "Seinfeld" episode on how to beat a lie detector test: "It's not a lie if you believe it," so too do I employ a similar strategy: if I don't go to the doctor and get evaluated then the symptoms I'm experiencing can't be confirmed as cancer. And if my symptoms can't be confirmed as cancer then I have much to less to worry about than if they were. The symptoms are simply the same kind and frequency as non-cancer patients experience and do not represent a slippery slope for yours truly.

I suppose there's a part of me (the irrational, unreasonable and illogical part) that believes if I don't make any extra-curricular-type visits to any of my doctors then my cancer can't get worse and I can continue to go on living as if I've not been diagnosed with a terminal disease: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV.

It reminds me of my late father's philosophy concerning automobile maintenance. If he never takes the car in for service, the mechanics will never find anything wrong with it. It's a version of what you don't know can't hurt you.

Well, in the cancer world in which I live 24/7, it all can hurt you and it can do so on its own timetable; when you least expect it and when you most fear it.

As yet another attempt to explain why this column has been written. For the past three weeks I've had persistent cold symptoms.

Since the symptoms never got any worse (though my fear did), I went along, tissue in hand, until my voice got so hoarse and weak that my wife, Dina - to her credit - insisted that I visit my internal medicine doctor and email my status as well to my oncologist. All of which I've done.

So far, nothing conclusive to report.

I've been prescribed some pre-pneumonia pills, have had a CT scan of the neck (per my oncologist's direction), results for which have not YET been received, am seeing an ENT doctor next week and am puffing Flonase into each nostril twice a day. My symptoms have not totally subsided but neither have they gotten worse - unlike my anxiety.

I really don't think there's anything wrong with me medically; mentally however, is another matter.

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

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