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A host of area elected and civic leaders cut the ribbon to celebrate the near completion of the McLean Community Center's renovation. George Sachs, the Center's executive director handles the scissors with help from Del. Kathleen Murphy and MCC Governing Board Chair Paul Kohlenberger to the left, and Robert Alden, a founder of the original center to the right. Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust stands ready with an extra pair of scissors "just in case!" with state Sen. Janet Howell beside him. Del. Mark Keam and Del. Rip Sullivan also joined the official opening team.

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Sharon Bulova
with the Board
of Supervisors.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Sharon Bulova Announces She Will Not Seek Re-election

On Thursday, Dec. 6, Chairman Sharon Bulova of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors announced that she will not be seeking re-election in 2019.

"It has been an honor to serve the Fairfax County community," Chairman Bulova said. "During these past 30 years, I have been privileged to work alongside dedicated elected officials at every level of government, with talented, caring county staff and a county full of enthusiastic community volunteers. While I will not be running for re-election in 2019 I sure do have a lot to look back on with great satisfaction."

Bulova served as the Braddock District Supervisor on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors from 1988 - 2009, and was elected Chairman of the Board of Supervisors in a special election in 2009. She was re-elected Chairman in 2011 and again in 2015. The year 2019 will mark her 10th year as Chairman and her 31st year as a member of the Board of Supervisors.

During her career, Chairman Bulova is proud of her role in founding the VRE commuter rail system, piloting Metro's Silver Line Phase 1 over the finish line, navigating through the Great Recession and federal sequestration while retaining Fairfax County's

triple A Bond rating, founding Faith Communities in Action, initiating Communities of Trust, convening the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, helping launch Diversion First, facilitating the new vision and plan for Tysons, and spearheading numerous environmental, historical and cultural initiatives on behalf of the residents of Fairfax County.

"There is still much to do and contribute," Chairman Bulova said. "My term does not end until the end of next year. I look forward to working with you during these months ahead and thank you for your engagement, support and participation in your community."

The upcoming election for the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will take place on Nov. 5, 2019, and the new Board will begin its work on Jan. 1, 2020.



Chairman Sharon
Bulova

IN OTHER NEWS, more change is coming to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) has announced he will not seek re-election in 2019. Supervisor Linda Smyth (D-Providence) has also announced that she will not seek re-election in 2019. Supervisor Jeff McKay (D) has announced that he will run for Chairman in 2019, vacating his Lee District seat.

REACTIONS

Ensuring Prosperity, Quality of Life

U.S. Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA):

"As former mayor to a city of 200,000 people, I have enormous respect for Sharon Bulova's leadership of a county of 1.1 million. Over the past 30 years, Fairfax County's population has grown by nearly half, and Sharon's service during that time has played a major role in ensuring the prosperity and quality of life accompanying that growth. Congratulations, Sharon, on a job well done."

A True Community Treasure

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11), former Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors:

"I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Sharon Bulova for more than 20 years and she is a true community treasure. Under her leadership, she turned the idea of the Virginia Railway Express into a reality. As Chairman, she guided the County through the worst of the Great Recession, while still maintaining the critical investments and services that Fairfax residents have come to expect. And over her years of public service, she has helped transform our community into one that is envied by all others."

"Sharon's time on the Board will be remembered for her decency and commitment to collegiality, her willingness to listen to her constituents and bring people together, and her drive to leave Fairfax a better place for future generations. I want to thank my dear friend for her lifetime of service and the undeniable mark she has left on our community."

Gold Standard

Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34)

"I first met Sharon Bulova in 1996 when I was a young

lawyer entering the political world. She was (and is) the gold standard by which local officials can be measured. Her retirement marks the end of an era in Fairfax County which history will remember as one of prosperity and good will."

A Strong Proponent of Economic Growth

Gerald L. Gordon, Ph.D., president and CEO of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority:

"Chairman Bulova has been a strong and effective proponent of economic growth and the Economic Development Authority and me personally for many years. The effects of her leadership will be felt throughout the county for generations to come. Her support of our global outreach marketing has been particularly forward-looking and effective over the years."



Silver Line Phase 1 Opening Day.

Bulova Reflects on Getting Started

In her own words:

Memory is funny. If you asked me what I did last Tuesday I would be hard pressed to fill in the details. Some things, however, remain frozen in time, down to seemingly insignificant details.

Lunch at Hunan West on Jan. 11, 1987 is one of those memories. I was working as an Aide to Annandale District Supervisor Audrey Moore. She had pretty much made up her mind to run for Chairman of the Board of Supervisors against incumbent Jack Herrity. My co-workers, Florence, Carolyn and Janet, and I had escaped the office for lunch in the Kings Park Shopping Center.

We began discussing Audrey's plans, then the subject shifted to who would run for the open Annandale District seat. "Sharon Bulova," announced Florence Naeve. I looked up from my Sweet and Sour Pork laughing, thinking that she was joking. To my horror, my friends' expressions were elec-

trified. They excitedly began listing all the reasons why this was a good idea. I countered with a list of my shortcomings, why I couldn't possibly run for office, starting with a phobia about speaking in public. Carolyn smiled broadly and exclaimed, "And see! You're so modest and organized!"

Sometimes routine events like lunch with friends can prove pivotal. Despite all my doubts and misgivings, I did, indeed run for office, and went on to serve as Annandale - later renamed Braddock - District Supervisor for the next twenty years. When then-Chairman Gerry Connolly was elected to Congress in 2008, I ran for his open seat in a special election on February 3, 2009. This coming February will mark ten years since I have served as Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

Local government is an awe-

SEE BULOVA, PAGE 5



PHOTO BY MICHAEL MCMORROW/THE CONNECTION

Permanent residents at the park.

NEWS

‘Claude Moore’ To Die Dec. 21

Colonial educational farm is victim to inaction.

BY MICHAEL MCMORROW
THE CONNECTION

Northern Virginia is awash with the plantations and magnificent homes of upper-class colonials, such as Mount Vernon. However, only one

location reconstructs the lifestyle of the common yeoman farmers who were pushing back the edges of an unsettled frontier. A visitor can find a humble home, shelters for living animals, the animals themselves, a tobacco drying shed and gardens and fields with crops common in those long-ago days.

Costumed docents transport the guests to the days before the American Revolution began. The place is referred to simply as “Claude Moore” or “The Farm.”

Sitting on 69 acres of land owned by the Federal government, off Route 193 in McLean, administrative oversight is provided by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior (NPS). After several early years run by NPS, reduced funding threatened the future viability of The Farm. Local community members offered to operate it as a non-profit cooperative. In 1981, The Farm was entrusted to Friends of Turkey Run Farm, Inc.

The expiration date stated in the formal management agreement, as amended, between NPS and The Farm is Dec. 21, 2018.

Under that agreement, organization has been responsible for funding, maintaining, improving, staffing and operating The Farm. A recent annual operating budget exceeded \$400,000. Over the life of the agreement, more than \$8 million in private funds have gone into operations and another \$2 million spent on capital improvements. The Farm has welcomed more than 2 million visitors to view life as lived in the late 1700s before the nation became a nation.

A year or so ago, NPS anticipated the scheduled end of the NPS-Claude Moore agreement, and noted that the language of its terms and conditions was out of step with standardized language common with its other public-private relationships. NPS insisted on revising its agreement with The Farm to bring it into conformity with those other agreements and requirements.

NPS offered a 10-years extension coupled to conditions, such as: approval of goods sold in the gift shop; more financial reports; writing annual work plans; drafting guidelines for operation of the on-site pavilion; and compliance with federal concession laws, workplace safety standards financial audits and other requirements.

The leaders of the nonprofit found the proposed restructuring of the agreement would be unduly burdensome and expensive and would contribute not at all to continuation and expansion of educational programs and facilities at The Farm. The absence of any suggestion of impropriety by the corporation itself or any of the vol-

defy expectations.

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

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NEWS

Sharon Bulova - second from right - with (from left): Del. Mark Keam (D-35), State Sen. Janet Howell (D-32), Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville), U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11), Del. Ken Plum (D-36) and Supervisor Catherine Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill).



Bulova

FROM PAGE 3

some place to be. It's the level of government closest to the people you represent. It's the place where you can truly make a tangible difference, touch lives, and engage with the community in a personal, positive way. Deciding when to stop is just as hard as making the decision to start down the road of elective office. For me, however, that time has come.

When questioned by Tony Olivo of the Washington Post about my plans for running, I told him I was going to use the Thanksgiving holiday to think about it, and to talk to my family and friends. On Thanksgiving Day my son David arrived for dinner equipped with a large flip chart and colored stickies for voting. He titled the Chart "Family Decision Making Matrix" and separated it into "Pros" and "Cons." It was a fun, light-hearted

after dinner activity. Many of the items listed on the "Pro" side of the chart were some of the reasons that had already persuaded me to not seek another four-year term. More time with family and grandchildren, time for travel, to entertain, to smell the roses.

It has been an honor to serve the Fairfax County community on the Board of Supervisors. During these past thirty years, I have been privileged to work alongside dedicated elected officials at every level of government, with talented, caring county staff and a county full of enthusiastic community volunteers. While I will not be running for re-election in 2019 I sure do have a lot to look back on with satisfaction.

My term does not end until the end of next year. Between now and then there is still much to do and to contribute. I look forward to working with you during these months ahead and thank you for your engagement and participation in your community.

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OPINION

Holidays Speed By

Every year is Election Year in Virginia; sometimes every month ...

Our last live newspapers of 2018 will come out next Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 18 and Dec. 19. Editors are already working on hundreds of submissions for our Children's Connections, which will come out in the days between Christmas and New Year's. Our first regular newspapers will come out in the first week of January, 2019.

Don't miss our holiday calendars in these weeks, with so many local things to do.

Among things to do is to watch for a Special Election Day on Tuesday, Jan. 8, to fill the unexpired term of the 33rd District seat in the

Virginia State Senate, as Jennifer Wexton vacates that seat to head to U.S. Congress in Virginia's 10th District.

On Election Day polls are open from 6 a.m. until 7 p.m. Joe T. May (R) faces Jennifer B. Boysko (D). If Boysko should win, another Special Election will be scheduled to fill her seat in the Virginia House of Delegates. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/upcoming

And later in 2019, every seat on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, every seat on the School Board, every seat in the Virginia House of Delegates and Virginia Senate, and more are

up for election. We already know that there will be significant turnover, with many new candidates to get to know. Primaries will likely be in June.

The 2019 session of Virginia's General Assembly begins Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019.

For families, we can point you back to holiday happenings; breathe and enjoy some hot chocolate with your children and neighbors.

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EDITORIAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Welcoming Amazon

To the Editor:

The following open letter was addressed to Amazon.

Welcome to Northern Virginia! As the timeframe for your decision on HQ2 drew closer, those of us who already call this region home began to think about how we'd welcome you to our community.

Community foundations have a more than 100-year history as community conveners and conversation brokers who work tirelessly to preserve, enhance and protect the quality of life for our neighbors. This role often places us directly in the middle of our community's most important decisions, most pressing issues, and most promising opportunities. Many in our community believe that your decision to locate HQ2 in Northern Virginia is the most impactful event to happen in each of these categories in a generation.

Your arrival will bring jobs, critical advancements in the quality of our public transportation, investments in technology education, and opportunities for small businesses that will serve you and the workers you attract — among many other things. Like you, we want our neighborhoods to be diverse and vibrant places to live and work. We want our economic development to be a rising tide that lifts all boats. Companies and community foundations have worked in tandem to address local issues for over a century. It is therefore our deepest hope that in partnership, we can reimagine solutions to workforce development, affordable housing and other social problems, perhaps driven by imaginative technology-dependent solutions not yet seen that we invent together.

'It's the Most Wonderful Time'

Holiday fun abounds around the area, including Carriage Rides at Reston Town Center's Market Street.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MYERS PUBLIC RELATIONS



Your arrival in Northern Virginia gives us all a chance to create a more regional, collaborative approach to local philanthropy that brings to bear the full capacity and weight of our nonprofit partners, our collective community knowledge, and our shared impulse to help build community through philanthropy. We look forward to working with you, problem solving with you, and advancing our community's best interests, together.

Heather Peeler
President & CEO, ACT for Alexandria

Jennifer Owens
President & CEO, Arlington Community Foundation

Amy Owen
President, Community Foundation for Loudoun & Northern Fauquier Counties

Eileen Ellsworth
President & CEO, Community Foundation for Northern Virginia

Bruce McNamer
President & CEO, Northern Virginia Greater Washington Community Foundation

Time is Running Out to Save the Farm

To the Editor:

With only days left, I am writing to urge you and your readers to help save The Claude Moore Colonial Farm at Turkey Run in McLean. The National Park Service intends to "terminate" (their word) the Farm on Dec. 21, 2018. For over forty years, this special place has been a very important part of my life and so many others. Its loss would be huge for the community at large.

While it began as a National Park, the Farm was turned over to the Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm in 1981 and has been a successful, private endeavor ever since. The Farm portrays the life of a lower-class, homesteading Virginia family during the late Colonial period. It offers a unique historical perspective and opportunities to engage in colonial living experiences.

As a Fairfax County Public

School teacher, for years I took my fourth grade classes to the Farm to live three days and two nights in the year 1771. It truly was "living history." This program continues to this day as schools from Virginia, Maryland and D.C. bring students to participate in colonial encampments. As a mom, I was one of many who took their children there to learn about colonial life at Market Fairs and through many other farm events.

To date, more than 12,480 people have signed the Save the Farm petition. Information on how to help can be found on the Farm's website— <http://1771.org/savethefarm> While legislation has moved to the floor in the House of Representatives, no legislation has even been introduced in the Senate by the Virginia Senators. Legislation must pass the Senate by Dec. 14. Time is running out.

The historical learning experiences offered by the Farm are so worth saving.

May Ohman
Arlington

McLean
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McLean Community Center Celebrates Renovation

Officials cut the ribbon;
community Open
House on Jan. 5.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

There's still a bit more work to be done before the McLean Community Center (MCC) officially re-opens its doors after more than a year and a half of major upgrades, renovations and additions, but the finish line was well-enough in sight on Dec. 5 to warrant a ribbon-cutting by officials and a tour for those most closely associated with the facility and the project.

Residents of McLean have been asking MCC executive director George Sachs for months "when will we have our grand opening?" Addressing the event attendees before the scissors were taken to hand, Sachs responded that this new-look center was really having a "grand re-opening."

Sachs led the acknowledgement and applause for Robert Alden who was seated in the front row during the welcoming remarks. Alden joined the McLean community as a 21-year-old in 1953 and was the driving force behind the construction of the



PHOTO BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Roberto and Gloria Maria Federigan at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. The new, glass-enclosed courtyard behind them is a much-admired addition to the renovation and made possible by a generous donation from the Federigans. "Our family has gotten so much from this center, especially our children," said Roberto Federigan. "We just wanted to do something to say 'thank you.'"

Center, which hosted its original grand opening in 1975.

Alden and the center's founders saw a

need for a place in the community where people could meet to learn and improve their skills and talents, share them with oth-

Open House on Jan. 5

The Community Open House is scheduled on Saturday, Jan. 5, 2019 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., when the public is invited to take a self-guided tour through the new facility, join in some class demonstrations and get a sneak preview of 2019 events. There will also be a free "McLean Be Fit" Health Fair during the open house, with free health screenings and lots of health related information and resources.

As executive director George Sachs said, the McLean Community Center is not quite there yet, "but we're almost home again."

ers, and engage in the performing and visual arts, added MCC Governing Board chairman Paul Kohlenberger.

THE CENTER was envisioned to be a place "for citizens to meet, discuss and decide on matters of importance."

In 1970, locals approved \$800k in bonds to build that place. The project being completed today, designed by RRMM-Lukmire Architects and built by Sorenson Gross Construction Services, cost "a bit more" – just over \$8 million – but "the folks of McLean know sound, good investments, then and now," said Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville).

The Supervisor said that he is often asked by constituents in other parts of his district why they don't have community centers like

SEE MCC, PAGE 11

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PHOTO BY HOME ON CAMERON

Todd Martz of Home on Cameron in Old Town Alexandria suggests adding a decorative mirror for a quick bathroom update.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANNE WALKER

Potomac designer Anne Walker used Thibaut wallpaper to make the room a "fabulous, joyful place to visit," she said.

Preparing for Holiday Guests

Sprucing-up a bathroom without a renovation.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Amid the tree-trimming, wreath hanging and stocking stuffing in an effort to deck the halls in anticipation of holiday guests, there's one space that can be forgotten: the humble bathroom. While not as festive as hanging garland, a few simple tweaks can transform a bathroom from glum to guest ready.

"Hands-down, the easiest way to spruce up a bathroom with little or no expense is to de-clutter," said Anne M. Walker of Anne Walker Design. "You'll be amazed how beautiful your bathroom looks if you clear away all of the items sitting on the countertop and around the room."

To help with that effort, Walker suggests investing organizational items such as Lucite or bamboo trays and drawer inserts so that personal items can be kept out of sight.

For those with a budget and time to allow for it, Walker suggests a fresh coat of paint or new wallpaper. "That can make a huge visual impact in a bathroom," she said. "Since the space is so small, and it's a room where you don't spend long periods of time, you can have fun with interesting colors and patterns."

Also think about painting just one wall as an accent or the ceiling," said Todd Martz of Home on Cameron in Alexandria. "[Add a new] mirror, such as a decorative or colorfully framed mirror or one that runs from floor to ceiling, for a fresh look."

He also suggests updating a bathroom's lighting to make the space feel bright and airy.

Another practical tip that Walker offers is a good, old-fashioned scrub-down. "Clean like you've never cleaned before," she said. "Use a surface cleaner with bleach, like Krud Kutter, which is my personal favorite, a strong brush, and your elbow grease to remove dust, grime and dirt from tile grout, caulk, and cor-

ners of the room."

Among the more mundane tasks is to visually inspect the bathroom's grout to check for cracks and stubborn, unsightly mold. Re-grouting might be necessary, says Chuck Khiel, vice president of Fred Home Improvement. "When making a repair, it is very important to remove all of the cracked grout in the joint so that the full edge of the tile is exposed," he said. "The new grout can then bond to the full thickness of the tile edge. Simply smearing a thin layer of new grout over old grout will not work."

Once the room is sparkling clean and totally decluttered, Walker suggests adding display on a countertop or in a shower niche. "A vase full of bamboo, pretty soaps in a rattan basket or a Lucite tray filled with beautiful guest towels are just a few suggestions for fresh objects that will lend an air of tranquility to your bathroom."

For guests who might cringe at the thought of shared guests towels, Martz suggests adding a tray of disposable hand towels. He also encourages engaging one's sense of smell by, "adding some scented candles like those by Rigaud's Cypres and Cythere."

Another simple fix is to buy fresh new bath linens, says Walker. "No matter how hard you try, towels and shower curtains get dingy over time," she said. "There are so many places to buy lovely linens, and many of them are very low cost."

With the right accessories, even the most modest spaces can be made to feel like a spa, suggests Walker, recalling a bathroom in which she added a Turkish towel, striped shower curtain which became transformative. "Even though the bathroom, itself, is modest, the beautiful shower curtain makes it feel like a resort," she said. "By adding just a couple of colorful accessories on the countertop, it pulls the whole room together."

Installing new fixtures such as a shower head can quickly transform a bathroom from outdated to updated. "There are many types of shower heads on the market these days," said "Some offer a variety of water streams and different features, [and] most manufacturers make it so that changing a shower head is fairly simply."

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NEWS

Stanley Cup Trophy Makes a Stop at The Langley School

Students at The Langley School “Rocked the Red” on Friday, Nov. 30 when the National Hockey League’s Stanley Cup trophy made a stop at the school as part of its victory tour celebrating the Washington Capitals’ 2018 championship win.

During a brief assembly, students in every grade level had the opportunity to see, touch, and take photos with the Stanley Cup as well as meet the Capitals’ mascot, Slapshot. This exciting experience was made possible by Roger Mody, a Langley parent and co-owner for Monumental Sports & Entertainment, who arranged for the trophy to spend several hours at the school.

“Whether in the classroom or on the athletic field, we teach our students the value of collaboration, perseverance, and good sportsmanship,” says Dr.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE LANGLEY SCHOOL

During a brief assembly, students in every grade level had the opportunity to see, touch, and take photos with the Stanley Cup.

Elinor Scully, head of The Langley School. “The Stanley Cup embodies these qualities and serves as an example of what can be achieved when we work together to overcome challenges. This was a truly unforgettable experience for our students and faculty.”

Farm to Close Dec. 21

FROM PAGE 4

unteers conducting operations for more than 37 years was underscored.

After numerous exchanges of views, NPS would not change its position and began pointing to the coming expiration date of the entire management agreement. The nonprofit turned for help to its federal legislators. The Farm is situated in the district of U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10). She introduced a bill transferring title to the property to the nonprofit organization, subject to Federal government reversion if use as an 18th century farm ever ceases. With ownership in the private corporation, numerous NPS policies and regulations and requirements for government contracts would be applicable no longer. Costs to NPS would be reduced to less than negligible. The nonprofit was

confident that transfer of title would allow it to operate and make capital improvements in the most efficient manner that guarantees the stable, long-term future of a local and national treasure.

Comstock’s bill was favorably reported out of committee last September, with The Farm described as having “a uniquely independent status in the National Park System” and “a model of a successful public-private partnership.” However, the proposal never reached the entire House of Representatives for a vote.

Multiple recent contacts were made to Comstock’s office to learn whether any last-minute legislative efforts would be made to save The Farm. No response was received.

Even less success was had with Virginia’s U.S. Senators, Mark Warner and Timothy Kaine. Neither senator introduced a legislative solution to The Farm’s imminent demise. The final words from Warner’s office were that he had

spoken to both the acting director and the current nominee for director of NPS to encourage both sides to agree on an extension of the management agreement: “[A]t this juncture, a mutual agreement is the best productive path forward.”

At this time, nine days remain until the NPS-Claude Moore management agreement expires. Absent a last-minute reprieve — a short extension of the management agreement to permit re-introduction of bills in the new Congress — The Farm will be closed and NPS will allow a reasonable period for the nonprofit to remove all structures and other property from the premises. NPS will then dispose of any items abandoned and the land will revert to the barren field and fringe forest of the landfill existing in the 1970s. NPS has given no hint of possible future uses for the acreage.

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www.mcleancenter.org



This colorfully-costumed bunch lined the entryway to the “Great Halle,” singing the diners in to their suppers.



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Pages and jester never slipped out of character during the “feaste” – not even in those backstage moments.

Langley Madrigals Present the Art of Singing

Singers transport ‘Gueysts’ to Renaissance Yuletide celebration.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

For the seventeenth year, the talented members of the Langley High School choral groups and a small army of countless other technicians, volunteers, supporters and additional cast members treated a “halle” full of “gueysts” to a re-creation of a Renaissance Yuletide celebration, circa 1584, for two dinner performances on Friday, Dec. 7, and Saturday the 8th.

The “halle” – the large open space that leads to the school’s theatre – was transformed into a medieval dining hall, complete with long communal dining tables, banners, and “candlelight.” The appropriate atmosphere was struck from the moment guests entered, greeted by a line up of costumed singers – and a jester or two. With the sounds of merry Christmas carols to accompany them, the attendees were then personally escorted to their tables, after, of course, being properly announced by their “pages,” where the first course of their feaste – a cheese, bread, and fruit plate – already awaited them.

THE LANGLEY MADRIGAL SINGERS took center stage – literally - at this performance. From the “First Fanfare” which was the welcome, to the Seventh, which was the post-dinner concert, the Madrigals told the story of this type of traditional Yuletide gathering, imparting a little history with a bit of humor and a lot of awe-inspiring harmonious madrigal singing.

In between enjoying their Cornish pasties of beef or chicken with a cup of wassail to wash it down, the diners learned that the English adopted the Italianate form of singing in the 16th century.

By the “modern” 1500s, the madrigal had



“Now bring us some figgye pudding!” The pages of the Langley High School Choral Department Renaissance Feaste comply with that request, escorting a faux figgye pudding into the “halle.”

become a sophisticated art form, the feaste-goers were informed, with “overlapping sections of single voices in some portions, some with voices singing the text all togetherÉ other sections with each voice part being interesting and independent.” It was part of the education of noble or wealthy ladies and gentlemen of the time to be trained in the art of singing.

The Madrigals Singers, and in fact the participating Langley Treble Choir, the Select Choir, the Minstrels, the Concert Choir and the singers who played the pages and the jesters have all, indeed, been well-trained in their art form under the direction of Dr. Mac Lambert, Langley’s Choral Director.

Together, the young singers gave a performance that would not have been out of

place at any professionally-staffed concert hall. If truth be told, they really were that good.

Before allowing the “gueysts” to dig into the victuals, one of the fair ladies unrolled a lengthy scroll and read out the rules of the house, titled “the Book on Curtasye.”

The diners were admonished to “avoid querrying and making grimaces with other gueysts,” or telling “unseemly tales at the table,” nor to “wype theyre greezy fingers on theyre beardes” as part of the proper etiquette for guests at the manor house.

FOR THE BETTER PART of two hours, the Madrigals sang songs of intricate harmony, while telling their tales and melodiously celebrating the arrival of each “Fanfare.” Welcome, Processional and Wassail Bowl, Din-



The maestro behind the performance – Dr. Mac Lambert, Choral Director at Langley High School – was, of course, also in costume and character during the Renaissance Feaste.

ner Concert, The Boar’s Head, the actual main course, the “Flaming Figgye Pudding,” and the after dinner concert.

Thankfully, the “boar’s head” was not the real deal. Both the “head” and the “pudding” were carried into the “halle” with much ceremony by a duo of pages, who completed their tasks without mishap, despite the “harassment” of the jesters.

When the plates were cleared away by the “serving wenches and fellows,” there was still more songs to be sung, before the troupe made their thank-you speeches to all, from Langley principal Kimberly Greer, school administration, Sarah Kirk, Guild president, Sydnee Calderwood, Feaste Chair, Lori Taylor, accompanist, director Lambert, Cooper 8th grade students for joining the serving staff, and enough more generous helpers and supporters to fill another score of scrolls.

Then it was time to declare the feaste closed for another season, and guests wished-well on their departure and offered the best of holidays seasons and new year.

Proceeds for the Feaste benefit the school’s choral program. The quality and enthusiasm of this performance and its ability to foster a high-note seasonal spirit is reason enough to already mark your calendars for next year. Perhaps we can entreat the Ghost of Christmas Future to persuade the singers to add a performance or two to next year’s gathering so that even more can “make merry” during the festive season.

News

McLean Community Center executive assistant Holly Novak demonstrates how visitors to the renovated facility will be welcomed at the new reception desk in the expanded lobby – an area now enhanced by a glass-enclosed inner courtyard.



PHOTO BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

MCC Celebrates Renovation

FROM PAGE 7

the MCC. Congratulating the residents of McLean for their vision and commitment, Foust said his answer to that question is easy. “Because the people of McLean are willing to pay extra to achieve this.”

Foust spent 25 years in construction claim litigation, so he probably has the credentials to assert that in all that time he has never seen a “construction project of any significance come in on-time and under budget until this one.”

Sachs said that with the partnership of the architect, builder, the staff, and the people of McLean got quite a lot for their money.

The improvements begin right at the entrance to the facility on Ingleside Avenue.

“We’ve improved the entryway – and the lights are now working,” he reported. The outdoor pathways will now also be lighted.

About 7,700 square feet of space have been added, including two new meeting rooms and a multipurpose room that will allow the center to offer more programs to a larger number of participants. Another 33,000-plus square feet were improved upon.

Office space was consolidated in the renovation, with most staff located near the center’s entrance. Performing arts staff will be the exception, with their offices located on the lower level near an entrance to the theatre.

Before the re-do, “we had people all over the building,” said Sachs, “even using storage rooms and coat closets” as work spaces.

Some of the improvements may not be so visible, but greatly enhance safety and security, including stormwater management and filtration systems that run under the parking lot.

“We’ve certainly been tested of late,” noted Sachs, referencing the record rainfalls of 2018, and “so far, so good.”

The lobby is the area where visitors will immediately notice the most change.

THE SPACE has been dramatically opened up and now features a reception desk to welcome patrons and where registration for facility events and classes will now take place. Pre-renovation, the lobby was faced by a large wall. Now, as visitors gather in the area, they are offered a panoramic view of the cen-



Diane and Bob Alden were among the honored guests.


PHOTOS COURTESY OF MCC



MCC Executive Director George Sachs with Reston Community Center Executive Director Leila Gordon.

ter, and are greeted by a floor-to-ceiling glass-enclosed courtyard with benches and inviting greenery.


This addition was made possible by a generous donation from McLean residents Roberto and Gloria Maria Federigan. The couple have lived in the community for 40 years. “Our children had many opportunities and good experiences here,” said Mr. Federigan. “The people of McLean have always been so good. We know the importance of this building and we wanted to give something back.”



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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

Art Exhibit: “Peace Like a River.”

Through Dec. 16, gallery hours at The Gallery at The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist), 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. Exhibit of mixed media paintings by Alice Nodine, of Centreville. For exhibit hours and information, visit www.GoodShepherdVA.com.

Art Exhibit: 500. Through Dec. 23, Wednesday-Sunday, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. at Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic, 105 District Ave., Fairfax. The Torpedo Factory Artists’ Association (TFAA) presents 500, a mixed-media show featuring the work of 13 TFAA member artists, from framed oil paintings to photography, all of the art is priced \$500 and under. Visit www.torpedofactoryartists.com.

A Civil War Christmas: An American Musical Celebration.

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. 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. 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.

Art Exhibit: Fleurs et Fruits.

Through Jan. 4, 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.

Free Tai Chi. Saturdays through March 30, from 7:55-9 a.m., Introduction and Beginners’ Practice, meet in the Langley Hall at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. All are welcome. Call 703-759-9141 or visit www.FreeTaiChi.org.

Trivia Night. Tuesdays, 7 p.m. at Lost Dog Cafe - McLean, 1690 Anderson Road, McLean. Trivia featuring multiple winners and fun door prizes. Free to play. Visit www.facebook.com/EarthTriviaDc/.

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

Bingo Night. Sundays, 4 p.m. Flame Room, Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center St. S, Vienna. \$10. www.vvfd.org/bingo.html.

Gentle Yoga. Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. Emmaus United Church of Christ, 900 E Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Gentle Kundalini Yoga, one free introductory session, senior discounts. Increase flexibility, improve breathing and health, reduce



Santa HQ

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. Interactive technology transforms and customizes the experience. Guests can make reservations to spend less time in line. Shoppers are invited to bring an unwrapped toy and participate in our ‘Help Through Holiday Giving’ toy drive benefitting Second Story (formerly Alternative House). Visit Santa through Dec. 24 at Tysons Corner Center, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, Tysons Corner. HGTV’s Santa HQ is located in Fashion Court near Nordstrom on the Lower Level. Visit www.santa-hq.com for more.

stress. Ravi Kaur has 15 years experience teaching yoga. \$15 per session. www.edimprovement.org. 571-213-3192.

The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia, a senior women’s softball league, is looking for players. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. Games are on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna, April-October. Other activities during the year. Visit www.goldengirls.org.

Colvin Run Mill open 11-4 p.m. daily, closed Tuesday. 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Fairfax County’s operational 19th century water powered gristmill, offers recreational and educational activities for all ages through daily tours, school programs and special events. Fees: \$7/adult, \$6 students 16+ with ID, \$5 children & seniors. Admission to park is free except for some special events.

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.

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.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 13-16

A Christmas Carol. Through Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 2:30 p.m. at James Lee Community Center, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. In 1933, an unemployed Shakespearean actor and his manager run out of gas, and the townsfolk agree to supply them with some if they tell them the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim. This depression-era adaptation of Charles Dickens’ classic

truly brings this story to life. \$17. Tickets and more information at www.providenceplayers.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. There will be tours of the fire equipment available. Free child photo ID and fingerprint cards will be available from Fairfax County Sheriff’s office. Adults \$8, adults; \$7, seniors (65+); \$6, children ages 5-12, children 4 and under free. Email Joanie@vvfd.org or visit vvfd.org.

Parents’ Day Out. 9 a.m.-noon at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Annual Parents’ Day Out event for children in Kindergarten through Grade 6. Sponsored by the Lewinsville Youth Ministry, 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.

Model Railroaders Open House. 1-5 p.m. at the Vienna Train Station, 231 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. What would the holidays be without trains? The NVMR open house has model trains and trolley activities that realistically depict an actual railroad that existed in North Carolina in the 1950s, the Western North Carolina (WNC). Locomotive, rail car, and towns industry in this layout is modeled after those places and things as they looked in that era. Thomas and Friends are here too. Free. 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 unique 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.

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). Written in 1930, Respighi’s seasonal cantata is an exquisite, neo-Baroque treatment of the Christmas story scored for chorus, soloists, and chamber ensemble. \$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. “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.

The Glorious Sounds of Christmas. 4-5:30 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. NE, Vienna. Sanctuary Choir,

SEE HOLIDAY, PAGE 14



Toy Drive

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. Through Friday, Dec. 14 at local Weichert, Realtors offices. To find a local office, go to www.weichert.com/offices/.

Jones Branch Connector Partially Opening to Traffic Dec. 15

An important new connection for drivers in Tysons will partially open to traffic Saturday, Dec. 15, according to the Virginia Department of Transportation. The Jones Branch Connector will open one lane of traffic in each direction while construction on the project continues. It will provide a new connection to Route 123 and provide an alternate route across I-495, linking the Tysons East and Central area.

The half-mile project includes new roadway from the interchange of the 495 Express Lanes and Jones Branch Drive to Route 123. The Connector will provide drivers with direct access to Route 123 and the northbound and southbound 495 Express Lanes. New dynamic message signs along Route 123 and Scotts Crossing Road will display toll prices for the 495 Express Lanes.

The exit name for Jones Branch Drive displayed on Express Lanes signage will be renamed from "JONES BR" to "JB/RT123" on Dec. 15 to reflect the new access.

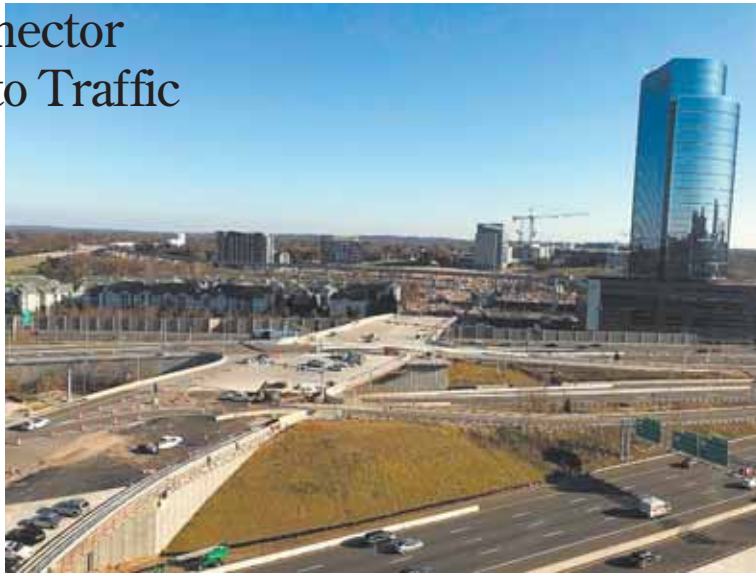


PHOTO COURTESY VDOT

Jones Branch Connector Looking East Toward Route 123.

When fully completed as scheduled in fall 2019, project features will include:

- ❖ Two travel lanes and on-street bike lanes in each direction
- ❖ Three bridges over the 495 Express Lanes and I-495 general purpose lanes
- ❖ 8- to 12-foot-wide lighted sidewalks, landscaping and other streetscape amenities
- ❖ A wide, raised median to accommodate future transit

By providing an alternate route

across the Capital Beltway and linking the Tysons East and Central areas, the Connector is expected to relieve traffic along Route 123, at the I-495 interchange, and at other congested intersections. The road is expected to carry more than 32,000 vehicles per day by 2040.

The \$58 million project is being completed through a combination of federal, state and county funds. Fairfax County led design and development, while VDOT is administering construction.



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DEC.
14

Unruly Theatre Project
Friday, Dec. 14, 7 p.m.
The Old Firehouse
1440 Chain Bridge Rd.
Free admission.

The Old Firehouse WINTER BREAK TRIPS

Trips depart from and return to The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd.

DEC.
26

Dave & Buster's
Wednesday, Dec. 26, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
\$70/\$60 MCC district residents

DEC.
27

Indoor Go Karting
Thursday, Dec. 27, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
\$80/\$70 MCC district residents

DEC.
28

Zavazone & Movie
Friday, Dec. 28, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
\$65/\$55 MCC district residents

JAN.
2

Snow Tubing & Ice Skating
Wednesday, Jan. 2, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
\$60/\$50 MCC district residents

JAN.
3

Laser Tag & Indoor Paintball
Thursday, Jan. 3, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
\$60/\$50 MCC district residents

JAN.
4

Upscale Bowling & Movie
Friday, Jan. 4, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
\$65/\$55 MCC district residents

Closing Notice

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

MCC and The Old Firehouse will be closed Monday, Dec. 24 and Tuesday, Dec. 25, and will reopen at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 26.



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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO BY BARB HOPKINS

Andrew Chapel youth dressed as shepherds pet the cow and camel at the live nativity scene.

Night in Bethlehem

Wander through the outdoor city marketplace and discover what life was like when Jesus was born. Create unique keepsakes and interact with this live nativity including Mary, Joseph and a tame camel, donkey and sheep – and hear the story of Jesus' birth. Saturday, Dec. 15, 5-7 p.m. at Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. Free. Visit www.andrewchapelumc.org.

FROM PAGE 12

Cathedral Brass, Youth Choir, Friendship Chimes. Childcare is available. Call 703-938-9050 or visit viennapres.org.

TUESDAY/DEC. 18

What Do Furry Friends Do in Winter. 10-11 a.m. at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. People wear coats to stay warm and dine in cozy kitchens when they get hungry in winter, but what do animals do when the cold settles in? Register for "Our Furry Friends" to find out. Through fun activities, children age 2-5 will explore the lives of squirrels, deer and other mammals at Riverbend Park. They will learn how critters stay warm and find food during the cold winter months. \$8 per child. Call 703-759-9018 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend.

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 the season 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 with using colonial and indigenous cooking techniques around the campfire. Food and drink are provided. Bring a flashlight and warm clothes. Space is limited. Designed for participants 3-adult. \$15 per person. Call 703-759-9018 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend.

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 McLeanNewcomers.org or email McLeanNewcomers@yahoo.com.

FRIDAY/JAN. 4

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.

SATURDAY/JAN. 12

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.

AAUW Presents Dr. Dwandalyn Reece. 2 p.m. (doors open at 1:30) at Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Dr. Dwandalyn Reece is Curator of Music and Performing Arts at National Museum of African American Culture and History. Reece created the museum's award-winning inaugural exhibition, Musical Crossroads, and co-curated the grand opening music festival, Freedom Sounds: A Community Celebration. The public is invited. Free. Visit vienna-va.aauw.net/.

TUESDAY/JAN. 15

Mah Jongg Card Order Deadline. This effort supports various Temple

Rodef Shalom programs and charitable giving through a rebate program from the National Mah Jongg League. Last year more than 620 cards sold to raise over \$1,300. These are official cards and will be sent directly from the National Mah Jongg League in late March/early April 2019. \$8 for small cards; \$9 for large cards. Visit bit.ly/mahjcards2019 to order. Contact Gail Gershman at 561-596-4245 or Gail.Gershman@gmail.com.

SUNDAY/JAN. 20

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration: "Liner Notes." 2 p.m. at The Alden 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. For all ages. Collide with music's past and present through jazz standards, hip-hop samples and actual liner notes from musicians of the civil rights movement in this multimedia concert experience (video). \$25/\$15 MCC district residents. Visit www.mcleancenter.org.

SUNDAY/JAN. 27

McLean Chocolate Festival. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Wide variety of chocolate vendors. Demonstration of pre-revolutionary chocolate-making. Children's game room with chocolate-themed games and live performances. Plenty of free parking. Admission, \$2; under 3, free. McLean Rotary uses proceeds to fund local charitable organizations. Visit mcleanchocolatefestival.org.

SUNDAY/FEB. 10

All Night Grad Party Fundraiser. 7 p.m. in the Langley High School auditorium, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The Capitol Steps use song parodies and skits to bring bi-partisan levity to major issues of the day. Open to the general public. Tickets are \$35 each at www.ptsalangley.org/all-night-grad-party, at the ANGP Capitol Steps banner.

BULLETIN

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

SOBER-RIDE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Free Sober Rides. 8 p.m.-4 a.m. daily, Dec. 14-Jan. 1. Area residents, 21 and older, may download Lyft to their phones, then enter a code in the app's "Promo" section to receive a no cost (up to \$15) safe ride home (limited quantities available). WRAP's Holiday SoberRide promo code will be posted at www.SoberRide.com.

HOLIDAY DONATIONS

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, Fairfax-based non-profit 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.

THURSDAY/DEC. 13

Learn about Citizenship. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Thomas Jefferson Library, 7415 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church. Learn about the process of becoming a U.S. citizen at this free information session. After the presentation a USCIS representative will answer your questions. U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner will make opening remarks. Free. Email libtj@fairfaxcounty.gov, call 703-573-1060 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/4476399 for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 15

Simbang Gabi (Filipino for "Night Mass"). 7 p.m. at Our lady of Good Counsel, 8601 Wolftrap Road SE, Vienna. Join the Filipino-American community for Simbang Gabi. The Vigil Mass will be celebrated by Rev. Thomas Ferguson, Vicar General of the Diocese of Arlington. A "salu-salo" (dinner reception) will follow immediately in DeSales Hall. The "Panuluyan", a depiction of the search for an inn which culminates in a manger, will be presented as a play during the reception by the children of the Fil/Am Community Ministry based at OLG. To RSVP to attend reception email filminolgc@gmail.com or call Chiqui 571-499-8277, Verna 703-408-0652, or Zeny 202-390-3037.

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.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 19

Vienna Woman's Club Meeting. 7-9 p.m. at Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. SE, Vienna. Vienna Woman's Club invites prospective members to its open membership meeting with a guest speaker on a common interest subject. Visit www.ViennaWomansClub.org for more.

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Still Scared to ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As a follow up to last week's column: "Scared to ...," let me provide a bit more context for the fear and anxiety I wrote about; as well as some history for you readers to appreciate the emotional challenges some of us cancer patients experience.

It all began with the initial Team Lourie meeting on Feb. 27, 2009 when we met my oncologist for the first time.

After exchanging pleasantries, such as they could be, I was examined by my oncologist in an adjacent room. After he completed his exam, we all re-assembled in his office where he reviewed the results of my most recent medical history dating back to Jan. 1, 2010 when I first showed up at the Emergency Room complaining of shortness of breath.

Subsequently, there were two sets of X-Rays, one CT scan, one P.E.T. scan and then a surgical biopsy to confirm the previous findings. It was nearly eight weeks to the day that I learned my diagnosis: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. And so my oncologist began to talk. I'm semi-quoting, but clearly remembering the substance:

I can treat you, but I can't cure you. Your prognosis is 13 months to two years. The percentage of patients who live beyond two years is 2 percent. Could you be the one who lives beyond two years? Absolutely. This is extremely serious. You should begin chemotherapy as soon as possible. Next week if possible.

Then our questions began – after we gathered our composure that is. I mean, hearing these words directed at you is as surreal as it gets, and with limited knowledge on the subject and the circumstances, we had difficulty starting a conversation.

This is as much as I remember hearing that day. Could there have been more? I'm sure. Unfortunately, we were ill-prepared for the occasion.

Though there were three of us: my wife, Dina, my brother, Richard, and myself – collectively, what went in all of our ears went out in different directions.

What was said, what was heard, what was understood, what was remembered, was all a jumble. No one thought to take notes or bring in a recording device, two suggestions which have been subsequently made and that I now pass on to you.

My oncologist answered our questions about surgery, radiation, treatment, drugs, side effects, schedule, etc., all of which was difficult to absorb.

He then attempted to describe what my life would be like going forward, offering no guarantees of anything particularly hopeful, which now explains the reasons for these two columns: death and progression from dying/symptoms getting worse. He used a staircase as an example.

My health would steadily decline, as if walking down a flight of stairs. As my health deteriorated/symptoms manifested (down a couple of steps), he could stabilize me there by trying new treatment. But he could never bring my health back to its previous place. Then after a while the new treatment would become unsuccessful (down a few more steps), and again, he could stabilize me but he couldn't bring me back. And on and on until ... I think I can remember another visual he offered: playing with a yo-yo as I descended the stairs; down, down, down.

Amazingly, this has not happened to me despite a week's long hospitalization five-plus years ago.

HOWEVER, per my understanding of my condition (I wasn't diagnosed as "terminal" for nothing), I anticipate stepping down at some point. And any time – every time – I experience symptoms uncharacteristic of my semi-normal existence, I ALWAYS wonder if this is the beginning of my end.

And as much as I want to stay one step ahead, it's hard for me (practically impossible) to not think that when new symptoms occur, cancer is stepping up its attack.

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



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