

Pet-Friendly Decor

Pet-owning designers offer advice on practical design choices that don't sacrifice style.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

For pet owners, creating a home décor that's both aesthetically appealing and pet-friendly can be a delicate balance. From muddy paw prints on an heirloom area rug to a velvet sofa covered in cat hair, three local designers — all of whom own pets — share their best advice for addressing animal dilemmas and styling a chic interior that accommodates both man and his best friend.

"There are so many ways that pets enhance our quality of life in the same way that a serene, well-designed home might be a sanctuary for relaxation after a long day," said Karen McBride of Inspired Spaces. "The good news is that you really don't have to choose one or the other. The key is to make sure everything is durable and easily cleaned."

Flooring that can withstand paws with claws top the list of considerations for McBride. "Hardwood floors are beautiful, but they're easily scratched and dinged," she said. "Stone or ceramic tile flooring are ideal for pets owners. You can wipe up puddles and mop up muddy paw prints easily. Hardwood requires immediate cleaning because they absorb liquids and odor."

Rugs with patterns that can hide pet stains are what designer Rochelle Clark uses in



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NEST EGG

the Fairfax home that she shares with her two Italian Greyhounds, Lola and Fiona. "My dogs are not housebroken, so I have to use indoor-outdoor rugs made of polypropylene because I can just hose them down when they get dirty, which is often," she said. "Rugs made from sisal are also good choices if you have pets. I encourage my pet-owning clients to purchase inexpensive rugs because if you have dogs or cats, rug stains are inevitable. It's just a waste of money to invest in a high-end rug if you

have pets. There so many ways that they can be ruined and there are plenty of rugs that don't cost a lot, but have a high-end look to them."

When choosing fabrics for furniture or throw pillows, pet owners should steer clear of textures like velvet or chenille, which can be magnets for pet hair, advises designer and corgi owner, Tami Evers of The Simply Elegant Home. "You also want to avoid silk and other delicate fabrics that could tear easily," she said. "There are so many op-

Pet owners should look for stain-resistant and durable upholstery fabrics when creating a stylish and animal-friendly interior.

tions now for durable, stain resistant upholstery fabric that's as elegant and tasteful as its more traditional counterparts. Believe it or not, I finished a project for a client who had two giant labradoodles, and her living room furniture is entirely of Sunbrella fabric."

Other durable and easy to clean options that Evers recommends include leather and Crypton. "The only issue with leather is that it will scratch easily if you have pets with sharp nails, but some people think scratched leather has character," she said. "Crypton can withstand almost anything. If you have a dog or cat that barfs a lot or has lots of accidents, Cyrpton is the way to go. It's stain-proof, tear-proof and comes in a wide range of patterns and colors."

Built-in eating spaces and pet beds for her two Bichon Frises are ways that personal home organizer Becca Anderson of The Organized Life streamlines her pet spaces to maintain her home's aesthetic.

"Pet owners love their animals, but no one wants their home to look and smell like it's been overrun with animals," she said. "I advised one of my clients to add a custom, built-in litter box space to her laundry room for her three cats."

She even invested in a self-cleaning litter box, and those two features were transformative."

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'The Wise Build Bridges, the Foolish Build Barriers'

Ahmadiyya Muslim women host interfaith dialogue.

BY BONNIE HOBBS

In today's divisive world, it often seems like the nation's leaders don't communicate well with each other. But the women who gathered Saturday, March 9, at the Mubarak Mosque in Chantilly had no such problem.

In honor of Women's History Month, the Women's Association of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community hosted an interfaith dialogue. The topic was "Women in Public Service: How Faith Inspires Nation Building."

This association, called Lajna Imaillah, raises awareness of the importance of women in society. Said the group's spokeswoman, Bushra Mirza: "When we come together, we have power in our voices." On Saturday, the more than 120 attendees heard speakers espousing Hindu, Christian, Jewish and Islamic perspectives, plus the keynote speaker, U.S. Rep. Jennifer Wexton (D-10).

Ananda Vrindavani, temple president of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness in Washington, D.C., spoke first. "In Hinduism, dharma is the essence of something, and the dharma of a living being – of a soul – is service," she said. "When we get beyond service to ourselves, we begin to grow."

She also mentioned bhakti, or service with love for the benefit of others. "A mother's love for her child is without expectation of anything in return – it's pure," said Vrindavani. "And when you serve that way, you can have a real impact."

Born and raised in Ireland, she taught in



Ramona Carroll, interfaith coordinator for Fairfax County government, was the moderator.

India for 21 years. Her husband is Jewish, their son was born in India and he's marrying a girl from London. "So where do I put my loyalty?" she asked. "Nation- and peace-building is dependent on our daily, spiritual practice."

Similarly, the Rev. Ellen LaCroix-Fillette, a pastor at Centreville United Methodist Church, said, "Our belief in God orders the way we live our individual lives and our lives together in community." She also noted that "There's a wide range of beliefs among Christians, and not all denominations believe in women in pastoral service."

So, she said, "It fills me with so much hope to see women in positions of authority and in public service. Christian living is a balance between personal and social holiness. Our inward transformation leads to our outward expression of faith. Social holiness is where women find their voice and work together in community. "We can boldly claim our place to engage in holy work, in service to our community and world ...



Natalie Roisman

working with the most vulnerable in our society. Compassion is the inspiration for social, faith-based engagement. Sometimes, it's one-on-one interaction to fill a need for, for example, food, shelter or companionship. It's meeting people exactly where they are, loving them and providing assistance to them. Western Fairfax Christian Ministries is an example."

LaCroix-Fillette said seeking justice is also advocacy "to change cultural norms or societal structures so people no longer feel in that place of social injustice." According to Confucius, she said, "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime." But, she added, "It doesn't help if that man has no access to a pond."

So social justice is providing that access, she said. "We are all equally valuable in the eyes of God," said LaCroix-Fillette. "So places without women's voices are incomplete. As a Christian, I'm called to usher in God's need for social justice. And I truly



Ananda Vrindavani

believe that watching women and others whose voices have been limited, step forward, is a step toward deliverance."

Attorney Natalie Roisman specializes in technology law and policy; but she's also her firm's director of social responsibility and advocates for children and families. Fighting against family detention at the U.S./Mexico border, she said, "They're all our children."

On Saturday, Roisman represented the Jewish perspective. "I believe women are the key to progress in our world," she said. "They'll be instrumental in elevating the ways in which we talk to and about each other, so the future generation doesn't sink as low in discourse as we see today."

She's also on the council of a Jewish-Muslim bridge-building group, the Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom. And last year, the members traveled together to Montgomery, Birmingham and Selma, Ala., to learn more about America's Civil Rights movement.

SEE THE WISE, PAGE 8

'Despite Our Differences, We Are All Americans'

Wexton addresses women's faith and service event.

BY BONNIE HOBBS

A former prosecutor, advocate for abused children and now a congresswoman, U.S. Rep. Jennifer Wexton (D-10) was the keynote speaker at Saturday's interfaith event about women, faith and public service.

Addressing the crowd at the Mubarak Mosque in Chantilly, she said, "Interfaith events like this build community. A lot of people have never been to a mosque, but they're places of understanding. And this mosque – just like any other place of worship – is a pillar of our local community."

Furthermore, said Wexton, "The Muslim community is part of the American community. Muslim Americans are Americans, so

thank you for caring for your neighbors and lifting up our community."

Too often, she said, "The Muslim community is the scapegoat of demagogues and others with dangerous rhetoric causing fear and division. So threats and harassment of Muslim Americans have surged. This type of rhetoric is inexcusable and has no place in our society."

"We are one, American family. And when one part of that family feels unwelcome or unsafe – when we lose sight of the fact that our diversity makes us stronger – it diminishes the greatness of America. Hatred and bigotry in any form is contrary to our values. Despite our differences in race, faith or creed, we are all Americans."

Wexton also noted how proud she is to be serving with the first, two, Muslim Americans elected to Congress. "Our diverse, freshman class in the House is changing history," she said. Mentioning the diversity in her own house, too, Wexton said

SEE DESPITE OUR, PAGE 8



From left: Ananda Vrindavani, Sahar Choudhary and Jennifer Wexton during the question-and-answer session at the end of the program.

OPINION

A+ Primer for Our Neighborhoods

County Community Emergency Response Guide strengthens community, builds local resiliency, and mitigates potential risks.

BY JOHN C. COOK
BRADDOCK DISTRICT
SUPERVISOR (R)



ur Fairfax
County
government is

well prepared to deal with emergencies, both large and small, from large storms to disease outbreaks to criminal and even terrorist events. But our communities are not so prepared. In the first 72 hours after a major emergency event, governmental services may not be available.

COMMENTARY Power may be out, transportation blocked, medical services overwhelmed, and food, gas, and even money difficult to find.

In those first few days, communities would need to come together so neighbors can help each other. And even during those lesser emergency events which occur with some regularity — snowstorms, serious thunderstorms, and the like — neighbors need to help each other out.

That's why I am so thrilled that Fairfax County has published its first ever Community Emergency Response Guide from the Office of Emergency Management. The publication of this document, and the plan behind it, fulfills a goal of mine that even predates my election to the board. When I served as president of the Kings Park Civic Association I recognized the great need for a citizen-focused emergency planning tool.

As a supervisor I have pushed for this program for years. Now the Office of Emergency Management made this idea a reality. The end result is a comprehensive planning tool that will strengthen community, build local resiliency, and mitigate potential risks.

Community coordination is needed in making a successful community emergency plan. It requires citizens to take initiative, reach out to their peers, and work together to identify local risks and assets. The Community Emergency Response Guide breaks down emergency planning into easy-to-follow steps. These including defining your area, recruiting leaders, knowing your area, building an emergency response team, and planning your approach.

Everything is laid out in this step-by-step guide, including how to organize an emergency team, creating a family emergency kit, and adding disabled residents to a functional needs registry. It even lists the most likely emergencies and explains how to prepare for, respond to, and recover from them. Users can also find information on local volunteer groups who can assist in these emergencies, such as the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). By filling out the Community Emergency Response Guide will give you a never-before-seen view of your own neighborhood.

You can find the Community Emergency Response Guide online at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/cerg>. The Office of Emergency Management offers community workshops to those who would like extra help in creating their emergency response plan. The request form can be found on the Office of Emergency Management website.

I encourage all residents to work within their particular communities to create an emergency response program appropriate for your neighborhood. We are here to help.

Sully Scouts Compete in Derby and Bakeoff

More than 100 Cub Scouts gathered for the annual Sully District Pinewood Derby Championship Races on Sunday, March 3 at St. Timothy Catholic School's cafeteria. Races were held by rank first and then the top three finishers in each rank went on to race in the "Finals" of the Sully District Pinewood Derby.

Winners were: LION - First Place - Abel C., Pack 1459, Second Place - Ethan L., Pack 1859, Third Place - Aaron R., Pack 1863; TIGER - First Place - Matthew F., Pack 146, Second Place - Edward L., Pack 1860, Third Place - Michael S., Pack 1459; WOLF - First Place - Seth Z., Pack 127, Second Place - Carson L., Pack 1859, Third Place - Dante F., Pack 1459; BEAR - First Place - Hadrian A., Pack 146, Second Place - Michael R., Pack 1860, Third Place - Brendan P., Pack 146; WEBELOS - First Place - Ben M., Pack 1860, Second Place - Jacob S., Pack 1459, Third Place - Michael M., Pack 1514; and ARROW OF LIGHT - First Place - Evan L., Pack 1860, Second Place - Hayden B., Pack 127, Third Place - Zaid K., Pack 127

This year, the 2019 Bakeoff had a record 42 entries. The categories were Cookies, Pies, Breads, Cakes, and Decorative / Creative. Cookies winners were First Place - Colin S., Pack 1459, Second Place



The first, second, and third place finishers of their respective ranks of the 2019 Sully District Pinewood Derby.

- Edward L., Pack 1860, and Third Place - James K., Pack 1459; Pies winners were First Place - Dominik C., Pack 146, Second Place - James W., Pack 1862, Third Place - Bryan A., Pack 1859; Breads winners were First Place - Ethan M., Pack 1860, Second Place - Scott P., Pack 146, Third Place - Oliver V., Pack 1859; Cakes winners were First Place - Ethan H., Pack 1860, Second Place - James A., Pack 1860, Third Place - Ben W., Pack 1459. Decorative / Creative winners were First Place Audrey S., Pack 1860, Second Place - Michael R., Pack 1860, Third Place - Adrian B., Pack 1459.



2019 Overall Pinewood Derby Winners (from left): Third Place Overall Finisher - Ben M., Pack 1860; Second Place Overall Finisher Zaid K., Pack 127, and First Place Overall Finisher - Hadrian A., Pack 146, with 2019 Sully District Pinewood Derby Chairman R "Hondo" Davids.

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com

Steven Mauren
Editor, 703-778-9415
smauren@connectionnewspapers.com

Jean Card
Production Editor
jcard@connectionnewspapers.com

Bonnie Hobbs
Community Reporter, 703-778-9415
bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com

Andrea Worker
Contributing Writer
aworker@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk
National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment Advertising
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Executive Vice President
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor in Chief
Steven Mauren
Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic
Art/Design:
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
Ali Khaligh
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

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Students Who Work for Peace Honored

BY ANDREA WORKER

It's not easy to be the peace maker. Sometimes it is really hard, especially when you make those around you, even friends, angry when you speak out and stand up for what is right. And sometimes it can be dangerous. But in all instances, being the peacemaker "requires courage and commitment," U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) told the crowd gathered at the Sherwood Community Center in Fairfax on Sunday, March 9.

Connolly, along with a host of sponsors, elected officials and a cheering collection of family and friends, had come together to honor the 23 young recipients of the 2019 Student Fairfax Peace Awards at a ceremony led by Margaret Fisher of program-founder Herndon Friends Meeting.

In addition to garnering kudos from the congressman, state Del. Ken Plum (D-36), Fairfax County Supervisor Penny Gross (Mason District), Scott Brabrand, Fairfax County Public Schools superintendent, and Karen Corbett Sanders, Mount Vernon District representative and vice chair of the FCPS board also officially offered their congratulations and admiration for the young activists.

Ryan McElveen and Ilryong Moon, members-at-large of the FCPS board, and Tamara Denerak Kaufax, FCPS board Lee District representative were also on hand to show their support.

THE EVENT'S KEYNOTE SPEAKER was David Swanson, an author, activist, journalist, radio host and co-founder and director of World Beyond War, a "global nonviolent movement to end war and establish a just and sustainable peace."



Yahang "Annie" Wang has faced discrimination as an immigrant from China. She is determined to help others feel more welcomed and assimilate more easily. She delighted the reception crowd with a performance of one of her own Rap-style musical creations.

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Swanson, a 1987 graduate of Herndon High School who identifies as a "world citizen," presented his argument of "no justification for war, ever," while admitting that his remarks could make his audiences uncomfortable, but asserted that they were words that need to be said and a conversation that needs to happen.

The Fairfax Student Peace Awards started in 2006 as one school, Herndon High School, and one sponsor, the Herndon Friends Meeting, but has grown to 19 sponsors and is now offered to every public high school in Fairfax County, as well as two private schools.

The goal of the program is to encourage young people to think more about peace "both as a means and as an end" and to recognize their achievements when they turn those peace-making thoughts into actions in their schools, their communities, and even around the world.

The program is open to area high school juniors and seniors. In October, each school is invited to choose either an individual or a group recipient with the guidelines that the students have worked "specifically for peace or to identify and resolve conflicts ... demonstrating commitment to peace by engaging in activities that strive to end conflict ... seeking to bridge language, ethnic, racial, religious, gender, sexual orientation, or class differences ... and/or assist to resolve conflicts among students or members of the community who feel isolated or alienated."

THE WINNERS received certificates of achievement, a monetary gift and an additional \$100 to be donated to any nonprofit organization of the student's choice that operates in a spirit that is in keeping with the Peace Awards and this year, an autographed copy of the book, "Sweet Fruits From The Bitter Tree" by Mark Andreas, stories of "creative and compassionate ways out of conflict."

HOW LOCAL RECIPIENTS WORK FOR PEACE

Four local students from Centreville and Chantilly were honored as recipients of the 2019 Peace Awards.

❖ Romina Soleimani from Mountain View High School started her peace work in her home country of Iran, where she worked with Youth Spiritual Empowerment, a global Bahá'í-inspired program which encourages

SEE HOW LOCAL, PAGE 8



Romina Soleimani (fourth from left) started her work for peace when she was still living in her home country of Iran, then in Turkey and now the Mountain View High School student continues her commitment to being an agent of peace



A senior at Centreville High School, Deepika Joshi (fourth from left) was born in Nepal. She is the founder of her school's chapter of Students Together Assisting Refugees - STAR.



Maxihikio "Makee" Neeves (fourth from left) became an instant minority when he switched schools from one in Colorado to Westfield, where he is a junior, but he is making his experience a learning one for himself and his peers, bringing a better understanding of Native Americans and indigenous people.

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER

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THURSDAY/MARCH 14

Pi Day. 3:14-5 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Celebrate Pi Day at Sully Historic Site. Join a gathering of celebrants who understand that Pi is a number that goes on forever. Real pie may not go on forever, but it does have a very long history as a classic food made at Sully in the 1800s. Visit their 1794 kitchen and see interpreters bake traditional recipes over an open-hearth fire, and sample a piece as you learn about this historically delicious food. The program cost is \$3.14. Walk-in only; registration not required. Call 703-437-1794 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site.

SATURDAY/MARCH 16

St. Patrick's Day / St. Joseph's Day Party. 6-9:30 p.m. at St. Veronica's Church parish hall, 3460 Centreville Road, Chantilly. This is a family event that includes food, drink, sing-alongs, Irish dancers and plenty of smiling Irish eyes. Adults \$8, Children \$6, drinks extra. Visit www.stveronica.net/ or call 703-773-2000.

SUNDAY/MARCH 17

NTRAK Scale Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold a N gauge Model Train Display. Ages



'Fifty Shades of Green'

Founded in 2016, Nova Plein Air Artists (NPAA) has evolved into a creative, educational and social network of local artists committed to painting weekly at organized "paint-outs." Shades of Green showcases artwork from 11 active, local artists. The exhibit runs through April 15 at the Caton Merchant Family Gallery, 9419 Battle St., Manassas. A reception is planned for Saturday, March 23, 6-8 p.m. Visit center-for-the-arts.org or call 703-330-2787.

Tranquility by Rachel Garcia Palmer

16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfaxstation.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, or call 703-425-9225.

Green Campfire Adventure. 5:30-6:30 p.m. at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Slip into something green for the "Wear Green Campfire" and help find all things wearing green in the meadow. After exploring, return to a campfire to toast marshmallows. Program is designed for participants age 4- adult. \$8 per person, and children must be accompanied by a registered adult. Meet at Cabell's Mill. Call 703-631-0013 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence.

MONDAY/MARCH 18

Centreville Garden Club. 7-9 p.m. at Sully Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Guest speaker will discuss the Growing and Care of Hydrangeas at our monthly meeting. Group meets every third Monday. Come out and join other gardeners. Free. Email centrevillegardenclub@gmail.com or visit centrevillegardenclub.blogspot.com for more.

TUESDAY/MARCH 19

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Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our **A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun** pages, the third week of every month.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Amphora's Diner Deluxe, 1151 Elden St., Herndon. Acoustic duo Ryanhood got their first break more than a decade ago as street performers at Boston's Quincy Market. Ryanhood is on tour promoting their latest album, Early Best. Suggested donation is \$10 for members of the Folk Club of Reston/Herndon and \$11 for non-members. Visit www.restonherndonfolkclub.com for more.

THURSDAY/MARCH 21

Weekend Food for Kids. 10-11:30 a.m. at Dominion Energy, 3072 Centreville Road, Chantilly. Assistance League of Northern Virginia, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization, invites community members to help pack food for its Weekend Food for Kids program. This critical program provides nonperishable food over the weekend to children who receive free or reduced-price meals during the school year at Title I schools in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. May arrive at 9:30 to help with setup. Free. Visit www.alnv.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 23

Friends of the Fairfax Station. 11 a.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Richard Slattery, Senior Director of Policy and Research of the National Railroad Passenger Corp. (AMTRAK) will discuss the current state and future prospects of passenger rail services in the U.S. Slattery's presentation will take place as the keynote speaker following the annual membership meeting of the Friends of the Fairfax Station. The meeting and the Forum are free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be available. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

Reception: "Fifty Shades of Green." 6-8 p.m. at the Caton Merchant Family Gallery, 9419 Battle St., Manassas. Founded in 2016, Nova Plein Air Artists (NPAA) was initiated due to a shared desire to explore the idea of painting outdoors. Since then, NPAA has evolved into a creative, educational and social network of local artists committed to painting weekly at organized "paint-outs." Shades of Green showcases artwork from 11 active, local artists. Visit center-for-the-arts.org or call 703-330-2787.

SUNDAY/MARCH 24

Spring Make 'n Take Activity. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Make tissue paper flowers to welcome spring. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, or call 703-425-9225.

Live Music: Valerie Smith & Liberty Pike. 7 p.m. (doors open at 6) at Frying Pan Farm Park Visitor Center, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Make plans to "hitch up the team" and head to Frying Pan Farm Park this season for Bluegrass Barn. Food and beverages available for purchase. \$18 in advance, \$20 at the door. Purchase tickets online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park/bluegrass-barn or by phone at 703-222-4664 or 703-437-9101.

SATURDAY/MARCH 30

NoVaTEEN Book Festival. 9:30 a.m. at Marshall High School, 7731 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. The NoVaTEEN Book Festival is back with a day full of panels, games, and signings with over 30 bestselling and emerging Young Adult authors. Learn more on the official festival website. The event is free and open to the public; tickets and a full schedule are available at novateenbookfestival.com.

Lecture: The Power of Objects. 1 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Come for a discussion with Dr. Jennifer Van Horn on her book, "The Power of Objects in Eighteenth-Century British America." In the book, Van Horn investigates Anglo-American items to discover the importance of objects in the formation of a new society. Light refreshments will be available before and after the presentation. This talk is sponsored by the Sully Foundation, Ltd., and donations will be gratefully accepted. Space is limited, so please reserve a seat by March 14. For reservations or for more information, call 703-437-1794 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site/.

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Talk About Wishful Thinking



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Every morning, at the very least, I look into the bathroom mirror to brush my teeth and shave my stubble. And there, right below my Adam's apple, in plain site, is the tumor we're attempting to stabilize, and in a perfect scenario: shrink.

As I've said many times before during my 10 years of treatment: "I can live with 'stable,'" and/or "Stable is my new favorite word." But the only way I find out if my lung cancer tumors are stable/have shrunk/grown is when my oncologist tells me/I read the radiologist's report.

During this quarterly interval between scans, I'm like Sergeant Schultz from "Hogan's Heroes": "I see nothing." The tumors in my lungs are "like weeds," (meaning they're everywhere), said my oncologist at the initial Team Lourie meeting in response to one of my wife, Dina's, questions about whether surgery was an option; "no" was that answer. But obviously, I can't see them and what feelings I've experienced in my mediastinum have likely been scar tissue forming (according to my oncologist) and not indicative of too much too often.

So, I've learned to not overreact to any discomfort I might experience. It might mean something or it might mean nothing. I've been to both places already.

However, the "Adam's apple" tumor is front and center. When I brush my teeth, I see it. When I shave I have to nearly shave over it. It's impossible to miss. It's not exactly a goiter but it's more than a lump.

It's not painful, but it's completely opposite to the tumors in my lungs; they're out of sight and because of that, occasionally out of mind. The "Adam's apple" tumor is totally in sight and because of that, is always on my mind. It's how I start my day and how I finish my evening. And in the hours between, I'm touching my throat to feel what I can feel and hope what I can hope. The effect is I'm reinforcing a negative every time I touch the tumor.

If I can't see the tumor (like the ones in my lungs), and I can't touch the tumors (like I can the "Adam's apple" tumor), I can delude myself more easily into not thinking/remembering I even have cancer; and more importantly, not thinking that I'm "terminal" as my oncologist characterized me all those years ago when he gave me a "13 month to two year" prognosis - on Feb. 27, 2009. Then I can pretend to live life as if the Sword of Damocles is not hanging over my head.

But, being able to touch the very thing that might be shortening my life makes it more real than it's ever been. And it's that reality that is making Kenny a very dull boy (no comments from the peanut gallery, please?).

I'll know something definitive on March 18, five days after my March 13 CT scan, the first scan I will have had since I began the immunotherapy. That's when we'll have our usual post-scan appointment with my oncologist to learn results and discuss alternatives, if necessary.

Surgery, as we've inquired about previously is out of the question. Therefore, we'll either continue to do what we've been doing, or start doing something we've never done before (you have to keep the cancer guessing).

On my most recent appointment, when asked by yours truly, my oncologist said we have lots of non-surgical options should change be warranted. (There was a time in the past when I asked my oncologist a similar question and he was not nearly so encouraging. In fact, he was downright discouraging when he told me that the drug he was giving me at the time was the last drug he had for me.) Having been dangling previously at a near end, I'm sure you can appreciate how a patient knowing there are other choices available should a drug fail to stop the growth, is very reassuring.

Nevertheless, facing off with this tumor every day and being able to touch it morning, noon and night, presents a real problem: how do I avoid thinking I have cancer?

It's always been my goal to try and assimilate the facts and hope not to be overwhelmed by the feelings. But how do I think it's nothing when it's obviously something?

I mean, it wouldn't be there if it was just minding its own business, would it?

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

'The Wise Build Bridges, the Foolish Build Barriers'

FROM PAGE 3

Much can be accomplished, said Roisman, by "ordinary people doing extraordinary things." She belongs to two groups encouraging women to run for political office or just become involved in the political process. Quoting Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, she said, "Women belong in all places where decisions are being made."

Roisman said women can engage in the world in many ways. "Just do it – jump in," she urged. "You don't have to have experience. If you believe something has to change, just do it." She also referenced two quotes from the movie, "Black Panther." They are: "We will work to be an example of how we, as brothers and sisters on this earth, should treat each other;" and "In times of crisis, the wise build bridges while the foolish build barriers."

Finally, quoting Martin Luther King Jr., she said, "If you can't fly, then run; if you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then



The Rev. Ellen LaCroix-Fillette, a Centreville United Methodist Church pastor, speaks at a women's interfaith event.

crawl. But whatever you do, just keep moving forward."

Presenting the Islamic perspective was Sahar Choudhary, regional president of the Women's Association of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Born in Pakistan, she has a degree in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from GMU. She said Islam means faith and submission to God and to work for the betterment of humanity.

"The Holy Quran is my code of conduct, telling us, 'Do not forget to do good for each other,'" said Choudhary. "Service of mankind is the essence of Islam, and an Islamic community that doesn't believe this way isn't truly Islamic. So I try to be an agent for good."

She said women "need to become empowered to become the change agents, and my faith empowers me with the rights to do this." Stressing that there have been great Muslim women trailblazers throughout history, she mentioned some of them and told

how they improved society in areas including math, science and education.

"Muslim women are still involved in leadership and politics, and some are even Nobel Prize winners," said Choudhary. "But they wouldn't have gotten where they are if their faith was an obstacle to them." She also called mothers nation-builders because they raise children who grow up to be leaders and to excel in their fields. "They share the values they received from their mothers," she said. "So the role women play in nation-building starts at home."

"When we teach the values of love, sharing and service of mankind – blind to color, religion, culture, etc. – we do a great service to others," continued Choudhary. "Mothers sharing their skills, volunteering in schools, beautifying their communities and helping the most vulnerable is public service."

And despite our minor religious and cultural differences, we're all here today because we care about service to others."

'Despite Our Differences, We Are All Americans'

FROM PAGE 3

she was raised Catholic, her husband is Jewish and they celebrate both Christmas and Hanukkah.

"I find faith in other women – the trailblazers who paved the way for me and others to run for office," she said. "But progress is not inevitable, and we're still fighting for things including reproductive freedom and paycheck equality."

Also important, said Wexton, are all the

women who advocate passionately for issues they believe in.

"You don't have to run for office to make a difference," she said. "An example is the group, Moms Who Demand Action for Gun Sense. Just last year, the House of Representatives passed a background-check law, and that's an example of how women in action can make an impact."

She, too, went to Alabama in 2018, and stood on the Edmund Pettus Bridge with

U.S. Rep. and former Civil Rights leader John Lewis. It was there that, on March 7, 1965, some 600 Civil Rights marchers were brutally attacked by state and local lawmen and driven back to Selma, where they'd begun.

"John Lewis told me how faith got women through their toughest times," said Wexton. "He said the Civil Rights movement was born in black churches, and people's faith gave them strength." So, she told the gath-

ering on Saturday, "There are always challenges – but our faith in ourselves, our community and our future will get us through."

Then, summing up the event's message was Akavish Khan, president of the Women's Association of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, which hosted the program. "Our motto is 'Love for all and hatred for none,'" she said. "Helping others and serving people in need are antidotes to injustice."

How Local Students Work for Peace in Their Schools

FROM PAGE 5

youth to grow spiritually, develop a strong sense of purpose, and engage in meaningful social action. When forced to leave Iran because of her beliefs, she continued her peace work in Turkey, sometimes meeting in parks. She and her mother then moved to the U.S., having been granted asylum as religious refugees. Romina again became a leader in the Youth Spiritual Empowerment Program and hopes to continue her work while in college.

❖ Deepika Joshi, a senior at Centreville High School was born in Nepal and entered U.S. schools in the fifth grade. She is the founder and president of her school's chapter of STAR – Students Together Assisting Refugees. So far, she has recruited 35 mem-

bers to help refugees overcome the hurdles which often cause them emotional, mental and physical distress. Together they fundraise for the UN Refugee Agency, collect clothing for refugees in Bosnia and Syria, and write letters of support and encouragement to Lebanese children.

"If I can inspire just one person," she said, "then that person may inspire another. At the end, this will allow us to forget what separates us and to focus on what binds us together."

❖ Yahang "Annie" Wang, a senior at Chantilly High School, immigrated to the U.S. from China 10 years ago. She and her family faced discrimination due to the language barrier, but Annie says that her discovery of rap music helped her appreciate

the beauty of the English language and helped her to express herself by writing lyrics. She performed one of her compositions at the Virginia Girls State Conference on female empowerment and the inequalities women face in society.

She has been on the FCPS Student Advisory Council for the past two years. "I have been able to advocate for fellow immigrants, inspire low-income families and help empower young women." She feels compelled as a first-generation immigrant to "give back to the community that's helped me thrive in my times of need."

❖ Maxihikio (Makee) Neeves, a Westfield High School junior, is a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation and a descendant from other tribes.

He came to Westfield a year ago, from a school in Colorado where he was one of several Native American students. He turned the experience of suddenly becoming a minority into an opportunity to learn and to help others learn, as well. Organizing the Indigenous Student Union, he and others now prepare displays for Westfield Culture Night and other events.

Upcoming plans include a Q&A Student/Community evening about indigenous people, a coat drive for native youth in need a field trip to the National Museum of the American Indian, and more.

— ANDREA WORKER

Read more about the Peace Awards and the recipients at www.fairfax.studentpeaceawards.org.

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KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Children who will be 5 years old on or before Sept. 30, 2019, are eligible to attend kindergarten. Find the correct neighborhood school by entering your address at boundary.fcps.edu/boundary/. Complete a packet of registration forms found at www.fcps.edu/it/forms/enroll.pdf or in the school office. Gather supporting documents: proof of residence in the school boundary, a

certified copy of the child's birth certificate, parent/guardian photo ID, and any custody orders. Certificate of physical exam and immunization will be required before the student may start school, but is not required for registration. Learn more at www.fcps.edu/registration/general-registration-requirements.

❖ **Union Mill Elementary** is currently registering new students for the 2019-20 school year. Find registration forms in the Union Mill

Elementary office or online at www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/forms/enroll_0.pdf. Call 703-322-8500 or email lrnulla@fcps.edu to make an appointment to bring completed registration forms and supporting documentation to school. Kindergarten Orientation will take place on Monday, April 1, 4-5 p.m.

❖ **Brookfield Elementary School** will host a kindergarten registration for the 2019-2020 school year on Friday, April 5, 2019. Contact the

school at 703-814-8700 to make a registration appointment.

❖ **Colin Powell Elementary School** in Centreville will conduct their Kindergarten registration on Friday, April 5, 9 a.m.-noon; parents may also call 571-522-6008 to schedule an appointment. Due to the time required to register a child, they request that only parents come to school for registration.

❖ **Greenbriar East Elementary School** is now accepting registration

paperwork for rising Kindergarteners. Visit greenbriareast.fcps.edu to make an appointment or call the school office at 703-633-6400. The Kindergarten information session is scheduled for Friday, April 5 from 10-11 a.m.

❖ **Greenbriar West Elementary School** is now accepting information for next year's Kindergarten classes. Families within the school's boundaries should call the school office at 703-633-6700.