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HomeLifeStyle
PAGE 8

Fairfax
CONNECTION

Mason School Of Dance To Present Gala

ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 13

Carlos Martinez and Jovick Pavajeau
will be performing in the 2019 Mason
Dance Gala Concert Friday, March 29
and Saturday, March 30 at 8 p.m.

Students Who Work For Peace Honored

NEWS, PAGE 3

'Build Community and Improve People's Lives'

NEWS, PAGE 4

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WEEK IN FAIRFAX

Check Out the Fairfax Academy

The Fairfax Academy at Fairfax High has just unveiled a new, promotional video featuring all 10 of the classes it offers. It also highlights several Academy students and was created from concept to completion by the Academy's own Professional Television Production students and their instructor, Matthew Balthrop. To view it, go to <https://bit.ly/2HmUBR1>.

BULLETIN BOARD

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 ST. PATRICK'S

Free Sober Rides. Sunday, March 17, 4 p.m. through Monday, March 18, 4 a.m. 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. WRAP's St. Patrick's Day SoberRide promo code will be posted at 3 p.m. on March 17 on www.SoberRide.com.

WINTER SHELTERS

Find homeless and cold weather drop-in centers and shelters that serve Northern Virginia at www.novaregion.org/174/Homeless-Shelter-Lists.

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. Parents who choose to delay enrollment in kindergarten by one year are required to notify the school in writing of their intent. 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.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 5

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Students Who Work for Peace Honored

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

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."

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 "spe-



The winners of the 2019 Fairfax Student Peace Awards. The students from all around the county are honored for the work they do to sow the seeds of peace, resolve conflict, and promote understanding among the diverse people of Fairfax County, in their schools and in the community.

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION



U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) offered his congratulations to the winners of the 2019 Fairfax Student Peace Awards at their reception on March 10. "Standing up for peace takes courage and commitment."

cifically 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."

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



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Lara Demir (fourth from left) with elected government and school board officials as a winner of the 2019 Student Peace Awards.

2019 Peace Awards Winners

Area students who received Peace Awards include:

❖ **Lara Demir**, a Senior at Fairfax High School, helped found a local chapter of Fairfax Minds Matter, seeking to reduce the stigma of mental health issues, increase help-seeking and coping skills and promoting positivity and social connection for teenagers. In addition, she volunteered at a community center in Turkey last summer, serving more than 200 displaced Syrian families trying to rebuild their lives and solicited donations for school supplies from local businesses in Istanbul.

❖ **Xuan Huynh**, a Junior from W.T. Woodson High School, was unable to attend the Awards reception, but her efforts were recognized by the attendees. Xuan is a participating artist in the Youth Art Re-Imagining Community Program, which uses art to address social and racial inequities. She also served as a U.S. Student Ambassador in the cross-cultural Tech Girls summer program, in which girls from the Middle East and North Africa were exposed to STEM studies and completed leadership training seminars.

❖ **Kora Coker**, Annandale High School Senior. Inspired by her own family (her father being Nigerian) and experiences of immigrant friends in the Annandale community, Kora wrote, illustrated, and published a children's book, titled "Cassi and Issac," that explored the concepts of immigration and discrimination through the eyes of elementary school children.

Kora has read her book to elementary school children, and after each reading she leads a discussion on the issues and



Kora Coker, Annandale High School senior, at the Peace Awards reception. The young activist wrote, illustrated and published a book about immigration issues from the perspective of elementary school children.

asks the children to relate the story to their own experiences and views. She feels it is important to be an example to younger children, to model values and beliefs that are positive and unbiased, and celebrate cultural differences.

❖ **Laura Kirk**, from West Springfield High School (not pictured), is a co-founder of the DMV chapter of Students Demand Action, an organization focused on eliminating gun violence. She helps connect students with legislators and recruits and trains volunteers to learn to lobby. She also organizes town halls, school walk-outs, marches, and vigils to reduce gun violence. As co-president of the Young Democrats, she and her cohort with the Young Conservatives brought both groups together during January's government shutdown to serve dinner to furloughed government employees and their families.

—ANDREA WORKER

'Build Community and Improve People's Lives'

One-on-one with Fairfax City Manager Rob Stalzer.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

At Rob Stalzer's welcoming reception, in January, as City of Fairfax's new City Manager, Mayor David Meyer said, "Our staff are in good hands with Rob's leadership. He is the right person, in the right place, at the right time."

And since Stalzer spent the past 18 years as Fairfax County's deputy county executive, it's easy to see why Meyer feels that way. He also said Stalzer has the "professional credentials, depth and synthesis of experience, prudent judgment, ability to conceptualize, and imagination" to help lead the City forward.

Stalzer replaced former city manager, Bob Sisson, who retired after 27 years. And last week, Stalzer spoke with The Connection about his career to date and his feelings about the City of Fairfax.

BORN AND RAISED in Wilmington, Del., he intended to become a psychologist. But at Clarke University in Massachusetts, he instead majored in geography, which he liked better. He used his degree to go into urban planning and, in 1979, obtained a masters in regional city planning from the University of Oklahoma.

At the time, he lived in Greensboro, N.C., and, that summer, he and a friend rode bikes across the U.S., going 3,300 miles in 40 days.

"I dropped off resumés, like breadcrumbs, everywhere we went," said Stalzer. And he struck pay dirt in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, where Buena Vista hired him as its first city planner and zoning administrator.

He was there 14 months and then went to a small, family-owned, urban planning/consulting firm, Balzer and Associates in Roanoke. He did Comprehensive Plan updates, applied for Community Development Block Grants and then managed the programs those grants funded, including housing and neighborhood rehabilitations.

In 1983, Stalzer became planning director of Roanoke County for 5-1/2 years, before leaving in June 1988 to become Herndon's assistant town manager. But after eight weeks, the town manager was let go, and he took over the reins until June 2000.

After that came his 18 years with Fairfax County. In addition, he's taught 16 graduate-level semesters of urban planning and economic development, plus local-government issues, at GMU and Virginia Tech.

So it's no wonder he's so well-qualified to be Fairfax's city manager.

"City managers have to be comfortable with planning and zoning, so that's been a great background for me," said Stalzer.



At Rob Stalzer's welcoming reception from Fairfax City were (from left) Council members Jennifer Passey, So Lim and Jon Stehle; Mayor David Meyer; Stalzer; and Council members Michael DeMarco, Janice Miller and Sang Yi.

New City Manager Rob Stalzer stands in front of a map of the City.



City Manager Rob Stalzer at his desk inside Fairfax City Hall.



"Planning teaches someone to think externally into the community, vs. internally into the organization."

He said Fairfax elected officials and people in the community care about what's going on in the street – not necessarily in

City Hall. And what's really important, said Stalzer, is "How are we building community and improving people's lives? That's been my focus, my entire life. That energizes me, and I find it a lot of fun. When you call 911, local people respond. We do

things state and federal governments don't do."

So why leave the county for the city?

"I had a really good career in Fairfax County, was involved in memorable projects and I enjoyed it," he said. "But there's a difference in being the assistant and being the leader. And I felt like I had more to offer and needed to go somewhere else to do it."

Pleased to be in Fairfax, Stalzer said, "I feel grateful and fortunate that the City picked me. This is a desirable location and it worked out well. When I was in Herndon, there was a sense of intimacy between the people who lived, worked and owned businesses in the town, and the town government. And the welcome I received in the City was immediate."

He said his calendar is packed, morning to night, because there's so much going on here. And, he added, "I'm happy to be a part of it. Since the City and county partnered on some things, I already knew some of the City staff. And the senior leadership seem to have great chemistry and genuinely know and like each other, so I'm glad the mayor and City Council picked me."

Stalzer began the job Jan. 7, but he found out it was his in late October. "I knew the City had some pretty qualified candidates," he said. "So I was pretty doggone happy."

He and wife Cathy, an elementary-school reading specialist, have two sons, both attending GMU. Tim, almost 25, is a geography major, and Matt, 23, is majoring in computer science. Rounding out the family are dogs Quincy and Chaz, plus cat Stripes, all rescues, and they plan to move to the City soon.

Regarding Fairfax's future, Stalzer said, "Economic development, in various forms, has got to be – if not the number-one priority – at the top of the list. We need to continue developing the tax base in terms of the Comprehensive Plan and the parameters the Council and residents have set: To provide the kind and level of services the people want."

But it's not one-size-fits-all. Stalzer said economic development will look different in different parts of the City. "Because the City is small and so compact, everything is redevelopment," he explained. "What we do downtown will be in keeping with the historic core; but what happens in Northfax will certainly look different."

He said it's important for City government to continue being "customer-centric," focused on building community in partnership with the people who live and work here and "just want to be here. To be economically successful, you have to create and sustain those relationships. People need to be happy living in their community and feel safe here."

So Stalzer has been meeting with individuals, community leaders and groups. And he's been identifying and more narrowly defining the strategic directions economic development and redevelopment can take. "We also need to focus on our City

SEE MANAGER, PAGE 7

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 2

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 13

Paving and Restriping Meeting.

6:30 p.m. at Providence Community Center, 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax. The Fairfax County Department of Transportation is planning to host community meetings in every district of the county this spring with the Virginia Department of Transportation to discuss proposed 2019 paving and restriping projects. State and county agencies coordinate restriping efforts to address safety issues for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians through the creation of bike lanes, parking lanes, crosswalks and more. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/2019-paving-and-restriping.

Fairfax County Park Authority

Board Meeting. 7:30 p.m. in the Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 941, Fairfax. The Park Authority Board is a 12-member board appointed by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to set policy and establish strategic policy and direction for the Park Authority. Open to the public. For information regarding meeting agendas, Park Board members, opportunities for public comment, or to view meeting materials, board minutes and archival materials, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/boardagn2.htm or call 703-324-8662.

FRIDAY/MARCH 15

Technology Fridays in March. 10 a.m.-noon at the Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9



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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)



COMMENTARY Our 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. 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 recog-

nized 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 Emer-

gency 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.

Women's History Month

Eleven new women members were elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 2017, all of whom ousted male incumbents.

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



March is Women's History Month. Before women had the whole month, the U.S. recognized Women's History Week; before that, a single International Women's Day. Dedication the whole month of March in honor of women's achievements was seen "as a way to revise a written and social American history that had largely ignored women's contributions," according to an article in Time magazine. The first Women's Day took place on Feb. 28, 1909 to honor the one-year anniversary of the garment workers strikes in New York, when thousands of women marched for economic rights and to honor an earlier 1857 march when garment workers rallied for equal rights and a 10-hour day, according to the article.

Recognizing the achievement of Virginia women goes beyond naming a month. A monument is under construction on Capitol Square,

"Voices from the Garden," which will be the first monument of its kind in the nation. Representative of the state's regions, the monument recognizes the 400-year history and the diversity of achievement, ethnicity and thought that women have made to the Commonwealth.

Even more significant in recognizing women in Virginia is the fact that there is historic representation of women in the Virginia House of Delegates, including the election of 11 new women members in 2017, all of whom ousted male incumbents. The House Democratic Caucus is almost 45 percent women, including 11 women of color. The House Republican Caucus is less than 10 percent women. Caucus Chair Charniele Herring is the first woman to chair a caucus in the House of Delegates throughout its 400-year history. Leader Eileen Filler-Corn is the first woman to be elected leader of a caucus in the General Assembly.

Recently I served on a panel, "Can Women Save Democracy? We're counting on it!" at the

Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University along with Charniele Herring, Eileen Filler-Corn, and Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton. There was a clear consensus in the room that women will play a pivotal role in getting our country back on the right track. Witness this year's state and local elections when there are record-breaking numbers of women lining up to run in primaries and the general elections.

Not only are women running and winning races, but they are determining the outcome of elections with their tireless work in making calls, knocking on doors, and working on behalf of the candidates they support. Organizations like Indivisibles, with Herndon-Reston Indivisibles being a model organization, and Moms Demand Action among others are making their influence felt on policy issues like ending the epidemic of gun violence.

The big disappointment in celebrating women in history is the refusal of the Virginia House of Delegates to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. Ratification failed on a tied vote on a procedural matter that makes it even more frustrating that the amendment was not allowed to be debated on the floor of the House of Delegates. There is more women's history to be written in Virginia, and I suspect the next step will be election of even more women this fall and ratification of the ERA next year!

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Meet New Fairfax City Manager

FROM PAGE 4

government building partnerships with GMU, our businesses, chamber of commerce and the City schools,” he added. “I think there are a lot of opportunities for us to do things together that we might not be able to do individually.”

His philosophy of leadership is based on building trust and creating a “collaborative, communicative culture.” He also believes in sharing information openly and widely, as well as in joint ventures involving the City and other regional governments and nonprofits. And, said Stalzer, “Preparing the next generation to be local government leaders and service providers is a huge part of what we do.”



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Rob Stalzer is the new Fairfax City Manager.

CALLING FAIRFAX CLOSE-KNIT, he’s been impressed with “the positives I’ve heard from everyone who lives and works here. They’re genuinely glad to be part of this community.” He says the toughest part of his job will be “making decisions around resource allocations – we’re not going to be able to do everything ev-

erybody wants.”

His greatest satisfaction, said Stalzer, is “Whenever I walk out the door, knowing I’ve been part of developing people in the organization professionally who’ll be able to step up into roles of greater responsibility. Most people who do

what I do want to be part of building the community – for example, a park, transportation improvement or other amenity contributing to the quality of life. My mantra is ‘Build community and improve people’s lives’ – that’s what I’m all about.”

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Home LifeStyle



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

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 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 options 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, Crypton 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."

"Rugs made from sisal are also good choices if you have pets."

— Rochelle Clark

Stepping Up to Help the Homeless

Local business funds City/Lamb Center day-work program.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The Lamb Center in Fairfax is a daytime, drop-in shelter offering hot meals, showers, laundry services, and recovery and employment counseling for poor and homeless. The guests come from all walks of life and, for a variety of reasons, have fallen on hard times.

The faith-based, nonprofit also offers counseling, dental services, clothing, haircuts and Bible studies and even helps with job and housing searches. And during its annual banquet last October, Lamb Center Board Chairman Tara Ruskowski announced the creation of Jobs for Life, a jobs partnership with the City of Fairfax.

"It's a four-month, pilot program to offer part-time, day work to Lamb Center guests," she said. "There's dignity in work; and if you give a homeless person a job, you build them up and make them a part of the community."

Modeled after a successful program in Albuquerque, N.M., this one was funded by a \$15,000 grant from the City to the center. And since its inception, it's proven to benefit both the City and the participating workers. However, the money for this program ran out in February and the City couldn't fund it again until the next fiscal year, starting July 1.

Fortunately, though, a local business has stepped up to keep it afloat until then. On Feb. 28, real estate team LIST WITH ELIZABETH presented Lamb Center Executive Director John MacPherson and Fairfax Mayor David Meyer with a \$15,000 check to The Lamb Center for this very purpose.

LIST WITH ELIZABETH team members recently toured the Lamb Center and were impressed with what they saw. And when CEO and President Kevin Kline and his wife Elizabeth – co-owner, lead agent and face of the company – learned that funding for the jobs program was about to end, they decided to take action and provide the money, themselves.

"The generosity of Elizabeth and Kevin Kline is inspiring, and it came at a critical time of need for The Lamb Center," said Meyer. "The work program that The Lamb Center created last year has been a game-changer for many of its guests who participate."

"When the original funding was nearly depleted, the program was at risk of ending, just as lives were changing and hope was taking root for many in The Lamb Center community," continued Meyer. "The Klines' gift was just at the right time, for which we are all very grateful. Their com-



The check presentation: (From left) David Meyer (Fairfax Mayor), Denise Johnson (team agent), Xenia McGregor (team agent), Kevin Kline (CEO/President), Elizabeth Ann Kline (team leader), John MacPherson (Lamb Center Executive Director), Sharon Mills (team agent), and Tara Ruskowski (Lamb Center Board Chair).

mitment has made all the difference."

Kevin Kline explained that, "While our real-estate agents enjoy helping our clients buy and sell their homes in Northern Virginia, D.C. and Maryland, Elizabeth and I make sure never to forget that there are many in our community that do not have a place of their own to call home. These are people within our community that want to work and to use this experience on their own resumes to find more permanent employment elsewhere. Stopping this would do a lot of harm to individuals actually trying to do the right thing."

Jobs for Life is managed by Lamb Center staff and Fairfax's Parks and Recreation Department and initially ran for 16 weeks. Via this innovative initiative, Lamb Center guests were employed cleaning and beautifying City parks and doing public-works tasks.

Eight to 10 people worked two days/week in four-hour shifts. The Lamb Center registered the participants, provided transportation, supervised job sites and paid workers in cash (\$10/hour) at the end of each shift. Fairfax City provided the learning opportunities and a pathway back into the workforce.

"We're extremely proud to offer a program like this in Fairfax City," said Mayor David Meyer at the outset. "It's an approach that not only assists those who need help, but also benefits the City and its residents by providing valuable services that we need every day. It's truly community in action."

THE PROGRAM began in November 2018. And, said Ruskowski, "For some, it's a stepping stone onto more permanent work with the City's Public Works Department. For others, it's an entrée into our

jobs program."

But without further money, the paid City jobs offered to the homeless guests of The Lamb Center would have ceased to exist for several months, until funded in the City's next budget. This situation would also disappoint and create financial hardships to those looking forward to and depending on those jobs for both a sense of self-esteem and a source of income.

But now, thanks to the money from LIST WITH ELIZABETH, the funding gap through June 30 is filled and the day-work program will continue unimpeded. Pleased to help out, Kevin Kline said he and his wife wanted to confirm their commitment to The Lamb

Center and to the community where their family lives, works and plays.

Grateful for the help, MacPherson said, "Jobs for Life provides both the dignity of work to those who – while willing to work – often find obtaining work a challenge, and a tangible benefit to the City and its fellow citizens. The program has been a transformation in the lives of our guests."

"It isn't as much the money that they get paid, but how they feel better about themselves, because they are working," he added. "The Klines' generous gift will allow the program to continue without interruption, until Fairfax City funds it as a part of its regular budget in FY 20."

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

Road, Dunn Loring, Entrance 1, Room 100. Join the Parent Resource Center for this series of technology workshops presented by FCPS Assistive Technology Services. Register for one or all of the workshops. Explore a variety of technology tools to support student success and independence with reading and writing in the digital classroom and at home. Register at www.fcps.edu/index.php/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center. Call 703-204-3941 or email prc@fcps.edu for more.

- ❖ March 15 - Technology Tools to Support Executive Functioning
- ❖ March 22 - Assistive Technology to Support Communication

FRIDAY/MARCH 15

Film and Discussion: "What Lies Upstream." 6:30-9 p.m. At Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road., Oakton. The filmmaker takes his investigatory grit to West Virginia where he looks into a mysterious chemical spill that left 300,000 people without drinking water for months. As the story

deepens, we discover scientific cover-ups and political malfeasance across all levels of government, poisoning the entire system meant to protect drinking water. Waste water environmental experts will provide background on how water contamination affects Virginia. This event is free of charge and open to the public. Contact sbonney001@aol.com.

Scholarship Application Deadline. The Optimist Club of Central Fairfax is sponsoring the Optimist International Oratorical Scholarship Contest. The purpose of Optimist International is "Bringing Out the Best In Kids." The contest is open to any student under age 19 as of Oct. 1, 2018 and not enrolled in a degree seeking program at a post-secondary institution. Interested students should email sharon.debragga@gmail.com.

SATURDAY/MARCH 16

Children's Consignment Sale. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. At Grace Presbyterian Church, 7434 Bath Street, Springfield. The Children's Consignment Sale is sponsored by Grace

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

NEWS

Keynote speaker Bryan Terrell Clark taking a selfie of him and the Fairfax Academy group at the Expo.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ERIN MOLEK



A dance instructor takes a master tap-dance workshop with the students,

Fairfax Academy Students Learn from Experts

The Fairfax Academy marked a milestone in February by holding its first-ever Career Experience Expo. And it was a fun-filled and creative, all-day learning opportunity for the students.

The keynote speaker was Bryan Terrell Clark – an actor, singer, songwriter and philanthropist. He shared lessons from his career on Broadway, as well as from his work in arts education and philanthropy, to empower young people to leave their mark on the world.

His mission is to help as many of them as possible find their purpose in life. He connects his experiences on Broadway and the entertainment industry to relatable, real-life issues, such as tackling insecurity and finding motivation, while inspiring audiences to use their past to fuel their future and discover the best version of themselves.

After his speech, Academy students selected three workshops from local and global industry professionals. They included: The Screen Actors Guild-AFTRA; Audi of America; Volkswagen; the History Channel; Cortina Productions; the FCPS Office of Communication and Community Relations; a Korean movie director; the Human Factor; George Mason University's Korean Literature and Studies; the Confucius Institute; and the University of Maryland School of Languages; as well as casting/talent agents, a professional photographer and people teaching master dance classes – including Broadway, jazz and hip-hop.

The event then culminated with a fun, Academy-wide activity directly correlated to all the careers the students learned about during their sessions.

—ERIN MOLEK



The school cafeteria provided an extra lunch period just for the Academy students during the Expo.

THE CONNECTION

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SPORTS

Local Talent on Global Stage

USA Special Olympic Team heads to Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates for World Games 2019.

By MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

With many hugs, high-fives and applause, five of the seven Special Olympics Virginia athletes and a coach boarded a United flight out of Dulles International Airport on Wednesday, March 6. The athletes would be part of the 215-athletes in the Special Olympics USA delegation headed to World Games Abu Dhabi 2019. Opening Ceremony is March 14 followed by six days of competition for the reportedly 7,000 plus participating athletes from 190 delegations competing in World Games 2019. Closing Ceremony is Thursday, March 21. Of the five Virginia athletes who departed Dulles, four came from the Northern Virginia area and one from Fredericksburg.

❖ Dylan Joseph “Joey” Roney, 21, of Herndon, will compete on the world stage in swimming, the 100m freestyle, 4x100m freestyle relay and 200m freestyle. Roney currently swims with the Oakton Swim Club that practices alongside the Oakton High School swim team. “This is an incredible opportunity for Joey,” said his grandfather, Chuck Roney, as team members met up at Dulles International Airport. “None of this would be possible without Special Olympics and the thousands of volunteers,” he said. Although athlete Roney said he was excited, he confided, “I’m feeling a little nervous and scared because this is my first time.”

❖ Victoria “Tori” Martin, 24, of Woodbridge, swam before she could walk. Through swimming, Martin reportedly found purpose, routine and stability according to Special Olympics. “In preparation for this event, she has worked out six days a week in addition to practicing with her coaches three times a week,” said, Bob Martin, her grandfather. “She is the most dedicated athlete I have ever seen,” he said. “I’m feeling nervous, anxious and pressured,” athlete Martin said. She added that she couldn’t wait to explore Abu Dhabi.

❖ Karen Dickerson, 33, of Springfield, will run the Half marathon, the 10,000m and the 4x100m relay at the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi. Athlete Dickerson has run 27 marathons across the globe. “I cannot say enough about Karen’s determination and dedication,” said her mother, Ernestine Dickerson. “It is amazing what she has accomplished not only through sports but in life.” Athlete Dickerson provided guidance to her fellow Special Olympics Virginia athletes while waiting to leave Dulles. “You don’t have to have a good or a bad competition or race. Just know you did the best you could. All athletes go through ups and downs. Don’t



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

From left, Special Olympic Athletes Grace Anne Braxton of Fredericksburg, Dylan Joseph “Joey” Roney of Herndon, Jenny Mitchell of Alexandria, Karen Dickerson of Springfield and Victoria “Tori” Martin of Woodbridge prepare to depart Dulles International Airport to head to the Special Olympic World Games Abu Dhabi 2019.

put yourself down,” she said.

❖ Jenny Mitchell, 39, of Alexandria, is a Special Olympics USA swimmer and one-time silver and two-times bronze medalist at Special Olympics World Games in Shanghai and a participant in Special Olympics World Aquatics Invitational in Puerto Rico. Athlete Mitchell will compete in 1600m open water swimming and 800m freestyle at the Special Olympics World Games in Abu Dhabi. “She has been training hard for this,” said her father, Terry Mitchell. “She is the first Special Olympian athlete to swim across the Potomac from Jones Point to National Harbor,” he said. “I’m ready to go,” said Jenny Mitchell.

❖ Grace Anne Braxton, 43 of Fredericksburg, Va., is looking for a top spot

on the Special Olympics podium in Abu Dhabi as she was the top-rated female Special Olympics golfer in the world 2007 and 2001 according to Special Olympics. “Special Olympics has helped me become an active person in my community. I help out as a volunteer with Basketball Championships and as a volunteer with new local golfers,” Grace Anne Braxton wrote in her Special Olympics profile. “I’m expecting a new adventure,” she said at Dulles International Airport.

The Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation created Special Olympics. Special Olympics Team USA is authorized and accredited by Special Olympics, Inc. for the benefit of persons with intellectual disabilities.

Keep up-to-date on all of the information

Schedule

(USA- EST is 8 hours behind Abu Dhabi)
HERNDON-Dylan Joseph “Joey” Roney-
Swimming

Sunday, March 17, 9 a.m., 200m freestyle

Tuesday, March 19, 3: p.m., 100m freestyle

Wednesday, March 20, 3:40 p.m., 4x100m

freestyle relay

WOODBIDGE-Victoria Martin- Swimming

Saturday, March 16, 3:20 p.m., 100m

individual medley

Wednesday, March 20, 3:40 p.m., 4x100m

freestyle relay

Wednesday, March 20, 10:10 a.m., 100m

breaststroke

Sunday, March 17, 9 a.m., 200m freestyle

SPRINGFIELD-Karen Dickerson- Athletics

Saturday, March 16, 6:30 a.m., Half

marathon

Wednesday, March 20, 8 a.m. 10000 m run

Wednesday, March, 20, 4 p.m., 4x100m relay

ALEXANDRIA-Jennifer Mitchell- Open Water

Swimming

Saturday, March 16, 10 a.m. 1500m Open

Water Swimming

Tuesday, March 19, 9:20 a.m. 800m freestyle

FREDERICKSBURG- Grace Braxton- Golf

Sunday, March 17, 8:50 a.m., Level 5 -

Individual Stroke Play



Athlete Dylan Joseph “Joey” Roney of Herndon gets a good luck hug from his grandfather, Chuck Roney, before he departs to Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates to represent the USA in the Special Olympic World Games 2019.

about the Special Olympics World Games with televised schedule and results by visiting, www.abudhabi2019.org.

ENTERTAINMENT

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

THURSDAY/MARCH 14

Shen Yun. Thursday at 2 p.m. At GMU Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. This epic production immerses you in stories reaching back to the most distant past. You'll explore realms even beyond our visible world. Featuring one of the world's oldest art forms—classical Chinese dance—along with patented scenographic effects and all-original orchestral works, Shen Yun opens a portal to a civilization of enchanting beauty and enlightening wisdom. Traditional Chinese culture, with its profoundly optimistic worldview and deep spiritual roots, was displaced by communism in China. Tickets are \$180, \$140, \$120, \$100, \$90, \$80. Visit www.cfa.gmu.edu.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/MARCH 14-17

Citrus Fruit Sale. 9 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Blue and White Sales Van in Parking Lot, 3251 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Charity fund raiser selling Valencia Oranges and Ruby Red Grapefruit fresh from Florida. Also buy Virginia peanuts, Vermont maple syrup, or discounted carwash tickets. Visit fairfaxlions.org or call 703-745-9140.

FRIDAY/MARCH 15

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Enjoy free coffee, entertaining callers, a friendly atmosphere, \$1,000 guaranteed jackpot, treasure chest progressive raffles, and good food available for purchase. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit www.fairfaxvfd.com or call 703-273-3638.

SATURDAY/MARCH 16

Pet Adoption Event. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Pet Supplies Plus, 11054 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Find a new forever animal friend with the help of the City of Fairfax Animal Control and Animal Shelter. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/government/police/programs/animal-control/adopt-a-pet.

Chorale Concert. 4 p.m. at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 5800 Backlick Road, Springfield. Join the Northern Virginia Chorale as it performs Beethoven's 9th Symphony ("Ode to Joy"), Morten Laudridsen's O Nata Lux from Lux Auterna and other choral works. Adults \$20 in advance (\$25 at the door), students with ID \$10, Children 12 and under are free. Order tickets online at www.northernvirginiachorale.org.

Fairfax Band Concert. 7:30-9 p.m. at Fairfax High School Auditorium, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Visit various times, places and adventures through the scores to Silverado, The Captain from Castille, Jurassic World, Titanic and Far and Away, and On the Waterfront. \$15/\$10. Call 571-336-CFBA (2322) or visit www.fairfaxband.org/event/city-of-fairfax-band-goes-hollywood/.

Ballroom Social Dance. 7:30 p.m. at in the McGuire-Woods Gallery (second floor of W-16), Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. The night begins at 7:30 with a complimentary 30-minute mini-lesson led by a professional dance instructor, versed in ballroom, Latin and social dance styles. General dancing begins at 8 p.m. Music, dance, food and fun continue until 10pm. All skill levels welcome. \$10 per person. Visit www.workhousearts.org/.

KODO. 8 p.m. at GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Experience the electrifying



Desert Rain by Jeanne Pacheco.

Spring Marches On

The Artists' Undertaking Gallery in Historic Occoquan, presents "Spring Marches On," an exhibit featuring paintings by Jeanne and David Pacheco of Springfield. The exhibit runs through April 1 at 309 Mill St. in Historic Occoquan. Visit artistsundertaking.com.

wall of sound that completely fills the hall when the athletic artists of Kodo take the stage to perform the ancient Japanese art of taiko drumming. Audiences are captivated by the visually stunning performance, the astonishingly precise movements of the drummers, and the sheer beauty of the sounds created with these traditional instruments. A pre-performance discussion with a member of the company begins 45 minutes prior to the performance. \$30-\$50. For tickets, call 703-993-2787.

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 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.

Danu. 7 p.m. at GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with an authentic Irish music experience the whole family will enjoy. Take a musical journey across the Emerald Isle with one of today's leading traditional Irish ensembles as they perform timeless Celtic works along with fascinating, powerful new melodies. The award-winning Danú features lush vocals and poetic lyrics sung in English and Gaelic and impressive virtuoso playing of traditional Irish instruments — flute, tin whistle, fiddle, button accordion, and bouzouki. \$30-\$50. A pre-performance discussion with a member of the company begins 45 minutes prior to the performance. For tickets, call 703-993-2787.



Live Music: Lesson Zero

The Mixing Bowl (formerly J W and Friends) presents live music with Lesson Zero. Saturday, March 30, 8 p.m.-midnight at The Mixing Bowl, 6531 Backlick Road, Springfield. Free. Visit www.jwandfriends.com for more.



Jeremy Filsell

Organ Music

Internationally acclaimed organist Jeremy Filsell will perform Marcel Dupré's extraordinary Le Chemin de la Croix (The Stations of the Cross), interspersed with the Paul Claudel poems that inspired the work. Free (donation appreciated). Sunday, March 17, 5-6:30 p.m. at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 3022 Woodlawn Ave., Falls Church. Visit www.holytrinityfallschurch.org/music for more.

MONDAY/MARCH 18

Mother Daughter Sister. 7:30-9 p.m. at Merten Hall 1201, George Mason University, Fairfax. Screening and Q&A with filmmaker Jeanne Hallacy. Short documentary exposes the Burmese military's use of rape as a weapon of war, through interviews with Kachin and Rohingya women activists. Free. Email cfuchs@gmu.edu or visit fams.gmu.edu/events/9099.

FRIDAY/MARCH 22

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit www.fairfaxvfd.com or call 703-273-3638.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/MARCH 22-23

Bye Bye Birdie. Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 2 p.m. at Church of the Good Shepherd (in the Grand Hall), 9350 Braddock Road, Burke. A musical comedy for the whole family. \$15 adult, \$10 student (18 or younger). Purchase tickets at www.goodshepherdplayers.com or call 703-323-5400.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/MARCH 22-24

Marvel Universe Live. At EagleBank Arena, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Marvel Universe LIVE is performing at EagleBank Arena. \$20. Show times Saturday, March 23 at 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Sunday, March 24 at 1 p.m., 5 p.m.; Saturday, March 30 at 11 a.m., 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, March 31 at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Visit www.marveluniverselive.com/tickets.

SATURDAY/MARCH 23

MCAA-Faculty Chamber Ensembles Recital. Noon at George Mason Community Arts Academy, 4260 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. At Monson Grand Tier III. Free. The Mason Community Arts Academy brings enriching arts instruction to the community through inspiring and innovative lessons, classes and summer programs in music, theater, visual arts, and film and video, which are open to all ages and levels. It also offers programs focused on teacher education and enrichment. Additionally, extensive outreach programs in music and theater have been established to reach under-resourced populations both in our area and abroad.

Off the Wall. 2-5 p.m. at the Art and Design Building, George Mason University Fairfax Campus, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Family-friendly digital and fine arts festival featuring a mac-and-cheese bar and local brewery tastings. Every Spring Mason opens its state-of-the-art Art and Design Building to alumni, parents, and the public for a family-friendly celebration to benefit the visual arts at Mason. \$30 regular; \$20 Mason alumni, faculty, and staff; free for children 13 and under. Email kfranko@gmu.edu.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/MARCH 23-24

Virginia Opera: Madama Butterfly. Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. at GMU's Center for the Arts' Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Virginia Opera closes its season with Puccini's magnificent tragic masterpiece, *Madama Butterfly*. Revealing the depth of human emotion through lyrical duets and heartbreaking arias including the famous "Un bel di," this poignant and

timeless tale of unrequited love and betrayal is riveting, gripping audiences right up to the intense, emotional finale. Sung in Italian with English supertitles. \$54-\$110. Visit cfa.calendar.gmu.edu/virginia-opera-madama-butterfly.

SUNDAY/MARCH 24

Winterfest – Ham Radio Fair. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus, Richard J. Ernst Cultural Center, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. The Vienna Wireless Society, an amateur radio club, will hold Winterfest, the National Capital Area Ham Radio Fair, featuring: Ham Radio and Electronics vendors and flea market; amateur radio licensing exams; large indoor and outdoor exhibit areas, with free parking. \$10. Email winterfest2019@viennawireless.net or visit www.viennawireless.net.

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.

Faculty Artist Series: Jim Van Slyke. 3 p.m. at the Harris Theatre on GMU's Fairfax Campus. Professor Jim Van Slyke is a nationally recognized vocal coach and performing artist with successful studios in the Washington D.C. area and New York City. Free and open to the public. Visit cfa.calendar.gmu.edu/faculty-artist-series-jim-van-slyke-musical-theater

Kings Park Band Concert. 3-4 p.m. at Lake Braddock Secondary School, Auditorium, 9200 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Kings Park Concert Band, in its 54th year, presents a Spring concert with selections such as The Marriage of Figaro overture, Merry Wives of Windsor overture, selections from My Fair Lady, Mancini's Mr. Lucky, Grofe's On the Trail, and others. The auditorium is in Door #14 near the athletic fields. Free. Call 703-569-3090 or visit www.kingsparkband.org.

Faculty Artist Series: Anna & Friends. 7 p.m. at the Harris Theatre on GMU's Fairfax Campus. Anna Balakerskaia has shared her mastery of the piano around the world from the great concert halls of her native Russia to the great halls of Europe and the Americas. Her versatility has made her much in demand as soloist, collaborator and chamber musician. In addition to her active performance schedule, she has nurtured several generations of extraordinary musicians as teacher, collaborator and coach. Free and open to the public. Visit cfa.calendar.gmu.edu/faculty-artist-series-anna-amp-friends.

TUESDAY/MARCH 26

"Say Her Name." 7:30-10 p.m. At Johnson Center Cinema, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Free. Visiting Filmmakers Series: "Say Her Name: The Life and Death of Sandra Bland." Screening/Q&A. Investigation into what happened to Bland, who died in police custody after a traffic stop.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 27

Jazz Combos/Latin American Ensemble Concert. 8 p.m. in the deLaski Performing Arts Building on GMU's Fairfax Campus. Performance by the Mason Jazz Combos, under the direction of jazz pianist, Wade Beach. Free. Visit cfa.calendar.gmu.edu/jazz-combos-latin-american-ensemble-concert.

ENTERTAINMENT

Mason School of Dance to Present Gala

The concert will spotlight talented dancers for area audiences.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

One of the nation's top university dance programs is located in Northern Virginia: the George Mason University School of Dance. The highly selective Mason School of Dance accepts fewer than two dozen new dance majors each year. The program's national reputation is such that the School of Dance performed at a major celebration for master choreographer Lar Lubovitch; a rare event for a university dance company.

Now area performing arts audiences will have the opportunity to see Mason School of Dance students showcased. The annual Mason Dance Gala will feature "a dynamic performance of technically demanding and intensely driven work by talented students as they embark upon their promising dance careers," said Susan Shields. Director, Mason School of Dance

This year's Dance Gala will include student performances choreographed by guest choreographers Lucinda Childs, the American postmodern dancer/choreographer and actress, Spanish modern ballet dancer and choreographer, Nacho Duato; and Greek choreographer Andonis Foniadakis, who has collaborated with ballet companies worldwide as both dancer and choreographer.

The Mason Dance Gala program includes "works that are vastly different, so I am certain it will be a stimulating evening," said

Where and When

2019 Mason Dance Gala Concert, George Mason University/Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performances: Friday, March 29 and Saturday, March 30 at 8 p.m. Tickets \$25 for adults; \$15 for students, staff, and seniors; special ticket prices for groups of 10 or more. To purchase tickets visit www.cfa.gmu.edu or call 703-993-8888.

Note: There will be a special event beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 30, 2019, to support Mason School of Dance scholarships. It is the 2019 Mason Dance Fete. The event takes place in locations in the George Mason University/deLaski Performing Arts Building. The events showcase Mason Dance students. Patrons can meet the students, get a dance expert's insight into choreography, and learn about the works in the Dance Gala. There will be hors d'oeuvres, dessert and wine reception with faculty, students, and other supporters as well as a presentation by choreographer Lucinda Childs. For more information about tickets and sponsorships to support Mason School of Dance scholarships contact Alice Magelssen-Green at amagelssen@gmu.edu.

Shields. The program is: "Dance #1 by Childs, "Na Floresta" by Duato, and "Kosmos" by Foniadakis.

Mason senior Madison Long is a Lake Braddock Secondary School graduate. She applied to the "the highly competitive challenging Mason School of Dance because of the caliber of the faculty, dance mentors and the opportunities Mason offered to learn from guest artists."

Long spoke eloquently how dancers learn not only to move in solo, but with a partner with this key element; "building trust; dancers



Mia Brice will be performing in the 2019 Mason Dance Gala Concert.

PHOTO BY
TIM COBURN/
COURTESY GMU

ers learn to silently feel each other's breath as we perform together." She said, "there is no right or wrong and no one way you are supposed to feel or think about a dance performance ... simply allow yourself to be open to the experience."

Sarah Zuccherro, from Cape Elizabeth, Maine, will perform in Childs' Dance #1. "While the audience is witnessing a trance-like sweeping of bodies across the stage, there is this other profound dance occurring simultaneously behind the wings. The dancers are keeping track of the mesmerizing Philip Glass composition by cueing each other and con-

ferring with the work's written score."

Ariel Goussak, a dance major originally from Las Vegas, Nevada invited guests to the Dance Gala event, adding, "I am really excited by how diverse all of the pieces in this year's Gala."

2019 Mason Dance Gala Concert, George Mason University/Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performances: Friday, March 29 and Saturday, March 30 at 8 p.m. The 2019 Mason Dance Fete will be a special event beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 30, 2019, to support Mason School of Dance scholarships.

Heartbreaking Tragedy Takes Centerstage

Virginia Opera to present "Madama Butterfly" at Center for the Arts.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Giacomo Puccini's masterwork, "Madama Butterfly," has endured as a beloved opera for over a century for a reason. It is a tragic opera propelled forward with glorious music that navigates an unsettled world of love and betrayal, all surrounded by vast cultural conflicts. It will be presented by the Virginia Opera at the Center for the Arts.

"Madama Butterfly" spotlights the heights and depths of human emotions in an epic story about a young Japanese geisha named Cio-Cio-San (Madama Butterfly) who surrenders herself in the intense hope for a new life, a life married to American Naval Lieutenant Pinkerton who sees love through his own limited viewpoint.



In rehearsal for "Madama Butterfly": Danielle Pastin as Cio-Cio-San (Madama Butterfly) and Matthew Vickers as Naval Lieutenant Pinkerton.

Is Madama Butterfly's love for Pinkerton fully reciprocated? Is he an honorable man? As the famous aria title sung by Madam Butterfly says, *Un bel di vedremo* ("One fine day we shall see").

The role of Madama Butterfly is performed by soprano Danielle Pastin, seen in Virginia Opera's productions of Puccini's "Turandot." The role of Naval Lieutenant Pinkerton is sung by tenor Matthew Vickers.

Richard Gammon, a Filipino-American New York City-based stage director, known



PHOTOS BY BEN SCHILL PHOTOGRAPHY/
COURTESY VIRGINIA OPERA

In rehearsal for "Madama Butterfly" (from left): Kristen Choi as Suzuki and Danielle Pastin as Cio-Cio-San (Madama Butterfly)

for the use of modern dance and movement in his contemporary interpretations of classic operas, directs the "Madama Butterfly" production. Mezzo-soprano Kristen Choi portrays the key role of Suzuki, a confidant of Madama Butterfly. Choi has performed at The Kennedy Center with the Washington National Opera. Tenor Julius Ahn portrays marriage broker Goro and bass Hidenori Inoue, who hails from Japan, is The Bonze, a Buddhist monk and Butterfly's uncle. Baritone Levi Hernandez is Ameri-

can Consul Sharpless. The Richmond Symphony Orchestra is conducted by Adam Turner.

Pastin described her Madama Butterfly character as "incredibly brave. She was truly in love with Lt. Pinkerton in spite of what others said. She had faith in him even if others did not trust him. She was blind to his faults."

For Pastin, audiences including those not regular opera-goers, will relate to the opera and the predicaments that unfold. Not only is Puccini's music phenomenal, but the storyline "will tug at the heart."

Kristen Choi described her character Suzuki as "not a servant but a companion; a confidant, even a friend" to Madama Butterfly. "She must support Madama Butterfly even as she tries to convince her to move on."

Puccini's "Madama Butterfly" is gripping art in which the voices and music convey profound emotions deep into an audience even after a century.

Virginia Opera presents "Madama Butterfly" at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performances: Saturday, March 23 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, March 24, 2019 at 2 p.m.

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SPORTS



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The Lake Braddock Bruins were the Virginia Class 6 State Runnerups.

Bruins Become State Runnerups

The (25-2) Landstown Eagles and the (26-3) Lake Braddock Bruins met up for the Virginia 6A State Championship on March 6, at the Siegel Center on the Campus of Virginia Commonwealth University. The Bruins advanced to the title game after defeating last year's Virginia Class 6 State Champion, South County 78-71. Landstown, from Virginia Beach, arrived at the final defeating Oscar Smith 64-60 in double overtime.

The Eagles started with the game's first two points, but Jimmy Anderson's 3 pointer put Lake Braddock up 3-2 with 6:23 in the opening quarter. That would be Lake Braddock's only lead of the game. The Eagles outscored the Bruins 19-10, after playing the first eight minutes.

In the 2nd quarter Michael Christmas #23 was successful on a 3 pointer to put the Eagles up 22-10 with 6:20 in the quarter. Landstown went up by as

many as 17 points and take a commanding 40-28 lead at halftime.

In the 3rd quarter the Eagles continued to not be phased by Lake Braddock's pressure, outscoring the Bruins 19-16 with quarter to play, leading 59-44.

In the 4th quarter Landstown went up by as many as 21 before game's end, but Lake Braddock would get the game to within 7 points, 59-52 with 6:08 to play. Landstown then scored 10 consecutive points to put the game away. Landstown outscored Lake Braddock 20-16 in the quarter for a 79-60 win. Landstown was led by Michael Christmas who scored 27 points and 8 rebounds. Lamont Oliphant added 13, Christian Jones 11, and Donald Hand 10. Lake Braddock was led by Quentin James 20 points. Nick Margraf added 11.

— WILL PALENSCAR

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BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 9

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The Commonwealth Attorney Candidate Forum. 2-4 p.m. at Chantilly Baptist Church, 14312 Chantilly Baptist Lane, Chantilly. This forum will provide Fairfax County voters an opportunity to hear candidates discuss the issues of importance to them in this critical election. All declared candidates have been invited and are welcome to participate. There will be an opportunity for the candidates to answer audience questions. Admission is free. Register at www.eventbrite.com/e/commonwealths-attorney-forum-tickets-57938565810.

MONDAY/MARCH 18

Transitioning a Loved One to a Dementia Care Facility. 10-11 a.m. at Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St SE, Vienna. Moving into a place can be difficult at any age. Moving a loved one with dementia can be emotional and stressful. Come learn techniques and strategies to help give loved ones the best possible transition. Register online at www.insightmcc.org, or contact Lindsey Vajpeyi at 703-204-4664 or lindsey.vajpeyi@insightmcc.org.

Paving and Restriping Meeting. 6:30 p.m. at Braddock District Governmental Center, 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke. The Fairfax County Department of Transportation is planning to host community meetings in every district of the county this spring with the Virginia Department of Transportation to discuss proposed 2019 paving and restriping projects. State and county agencies coordinate restriping efforts to address safety issues for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians through the creation of bike lanes, parking lanes, crosswalks and more. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/2019-paving-and-restriping.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 20

Education Recruitment Day. 9-11:30 a.m. at George Mason University, Johnson Center, Dewberry Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. This education-focused career fair is an opportunity for graduating students (Mason or non-Mason) or any community member interested in education, to network and discuss opportunities with education recruiters from the DC Metro area and surrounding regions. Recruiters may invite participants back for a 30-minute interviews in the afternoon. Interviews are invitation only, and attendance in the morning session is required to receive an invitation. Open to all Mason students, alumni and community members. No registration required. Free. See who's going to be there gmu.joinhandshake.com/career_fairs/7919/student_preview.

Volunteers Wanted. 10:30 a.m. at the Salvation Army Corp building, 4915 Ox Road, Fairfax. The Fairfax Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary are seeking volunteers for their upcoming events. Meetings are held monthly on the third Wednesday, September through May. Call Lori Smith at 703-830-3520 or Sylvia Laiti at 703-830-8849.

Diagnosis Dementia: Now What? 1-3 p.m. at Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, #100, Fairfax. Start planning for the future, while also adjusting to a new life with someone who has dementia. This program is a part of Insight's ongoing Classes for Caregivers series, held the third Wednesday of the month, all sessions are free. Respite care may be available by request; notify when registering to confirm availability. Register online at www.insightmcc.org, or contact Lindsey Vajpeyi at 703-204-4664 or lindsey.vajpeyi@insightmcc.org.

Smart Growth. 7-8:30 p.m. at City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Join Fairfax City Citizens for Smarter Growth to discuss the Comprehensive Plan and proposed development in the city. Email judyteach912@aol.com or call 703-273-1324.

Paving and Restriping Meeting. 6:30 p.m. at West Springfield Governmental Center, 6140 Rolling Road, West Springfield. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/2019-paving-and-restriping.

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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.

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