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Vienna and Oakton CONNECTION

Sarah Turner of The Oakton Condos, a volunteer to Save Blake Lane Park, plays with a dog in the Dog Park. More than 50 people attended a rally to Save the Park on Saturday, April 27, in Oakton.

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PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Residents take a guided walk through the nature trail at Blake Lane Park on Saturday.



Supervisor Jeff McKay, who is a candidate for the Board of Supervisor Chairman, addresses the rally to Save Blake Lane Park in Oakton on Saturday.

Rally to Save Blake Lane Park

40-year-old, 10-acre park may be demolished to build a school.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

On a sunny and windy afternoon, more than 50 people attended a rally to Save Blake Lane Park on Saturday, April 27, in Oakton. The 40-year-old, 10-acre park on Blake Lane has a dog park, soccer field, trails and open green space that Fairfax County Public Schools wants to turn into an elementary school. About a dozen people spoke at the meeting, including candidates for the Board of Supervisors from the Providence District; candidates for Board Chairman; and School Board candidates as well. Currently, there are six elementary schools in the Vienna-Oakton area; the land was deeded to Fairfax County Public Schools in 1977 and transferred to the Board of Supervisors in 2006.

According to Sarah Turner of The Oakton Condos and volunteer to Save the Park, the surrounding neighborhood has high-density townhouses and condos without backyards; this is the only green space in the area that is still available for recreation.

"People use this park all the time for soccer leagues, kite flying, just relaxation; it's a great place for people to relax," she said. "We also have a dog park that's been here for 20 years that was started by Congressman [Gerry] Connolly so we want to preserve that as well."

Speaking to the crowd, Del. Mark Keam (D-35) said: "If you want to save Blake Lane Park, you have the power to do so... If open space is important, conserving nature is important, protecting our environment is important, keeping sustainable climate is important, and making sure that the future generations have more than what we have, then you have to step up. We have to put our foot down and say no more development; our schools can be found in different ways."

Added Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay,



Linh Hoang, candidate for the Board of Supervisors, Providence District.



Paul Bolon of Oakton, Republican candidate for the Board of Supervisors, Providence District.

who is running for Board Chairman: "Clearly we all know that green spaces are limited and seem to be getting limited more and more every day, and so where we have opportunities like this to protect an envi-



Erika Yalowitz, candidate for the Board of Supervisors, Providence District.



Edythe Kelleher, candidate for the Board of Supervisors, Providence District.

ronmental treasure in a community, we need to be able to do that. And frankly, we need to hit reset on evaluation of schools and capacity in this area; make sure the community is involved in the process and

that we do it right... Let's save our green spaces in Fairfax County."

Paul Bolon of Oakton, Republican candidate for Providence District member of the Board of Supervisors, added: "Our schools are very overcrowded and I think we've done a really bad job of increasing facilities, but I really question, I really don't like the idea of taking parks away in order to solve the problem of school overcrowding. There's got to be another place to build out and create space."

Added Linh Hoang, candidate for Board of Supervisors, Providence District: "For me, this is about protecting our natural environment and our quality of life. We only have so much green space that's left and we need to protect the green space that's already here in our community. As Supervisor, I will fight to make sure we continue to keep Blake Lane Park as natural as possible and accessible to everyone in the county."

Erika Yalowitz, candidate for Board of Supervisors, Providence District, added: "I believe that saving Blake Lane Park is the right thing to do. Because 40 years ago when the plans started, it seemed like a good idea to build a school in this area. However, now that the whole neighborhood is developed, this is the back yard of these condos and townhouses. So, we can't bring a fifth school to the area and remove the only park that's left, that's why I'm supporting Saving Blake Lane Park."

Added Edythe Frankel Kelleher, candidate for Board of Supervisors, Providence District: "Just like New York City preserved space for Central Park even when there was a lot of pressure to develop it — because they realized it was important for the quality of life to have that green space in the urban environment; we need to preserve Blake Lane Park. The neighborhood here is denser than in a lot of other parts of the county and Blake Lane Park is the back yard for the neighborhood and it is an essential part and I fully support retaining it as a park."

For more information, visit <https://www.saveblakelanepark.org/>

OPINION

Black or Blue: Lessons Learned from How Virginia Democrats Handled the Ralph Northam Debacle

Let's get something straight, this is not a blackface controversy, this is a KKK controversy.

By KOFI ANNAN
PRESIDENT, FAIRFAX COUNTY NAACP

During a 1960 speech to a mixed audience in New York City, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "There is a pressing need for a liberalism in the North which is truly liberal." While Virginia is a southern state, it gets bluer with each election, therefore we should take heed to MLK's words, which essentially challenges liberals to fight the gravitational pull to the right on issues of civil rights and equity. It is difficult to see both the election of Ralph Northam, his subsequent actions, and the actions of the party to protect him as anything but the party signaling to the center-right that they have their back and are willing to sacrifice a few black voters if need be.

Liberals have long sought to convince African Americans that they alone can shield us from conservative's intent on rolling back the hands of time. And African Americans normally respond to that message, having never wavered in our loyalty for the last half century. Every election cycle we make or break elections in favor of the Democratic Party, even though for the most part we get marginal improvement in our quality of life overall, and in many measurable ways we actually regress. Our average collective net worth remains a fraction of whites, our employment rate remains half that of whites, our neighborhoods are still gentrified in the name of progress, predominantly black public schools are still underfunded, we still make up 40 percent of the nations' incarcerated, and school administrators still consistently dole out harsher punishments to our kids compared to their white counterparts, even in districts dominated by Democratic Party leadership. A report from the Institute for Policy Studies, released to coincide with what would have been MLK's 90th birthday, demonstrated that over the past few decades, black wealth actually fell by 50%.

On the other hand, Republicans haven't presented a particularly appealing message to African Americans voters at any point during this time period either, and even less so during the Trump Administration, which uses racism and xenophobia to collect votes as effectively as any administration in recent history. However, what's more intriguing is the possibility that Democrats like Northam view Trump's success as a reason to shift focus on securing the white middle-class vote even if that means sacrificing some of the African American vote, or at least taking the black vote for granted. After all, the politics of "fear the racist Republican" is a lot easier to sell today than it was just a few years ago. This might explain why presidential favorite Pete Buttigieg felt comfortable proposing that he would undo decades of work to expand voting rights to those convicted of crimes, who are disproportionately represented

by minorities.

This certainly appears to be the case in Virginia. Most of us are familiar with the controversy surrounding Governor Northam and his possible Ku Klux Klan (KKK) affiliation by now, right? Perhaps I shouldn't assume. Maybe you were one of those that ignored the Klan member in the photograph, and instead saw this incident as a [less harmful] 'blackface' controversy that could be explained by innocent cultural insensitivity. But let's get something straight, this is not a blackface controversy, this is a KKK controversy. A lot of people - including the governor - would rather focus on the person in blackface because it's a slightly more tolerant form of white supremacy, and conveniently ignore the terrorist next to the individual in blackface. But the governor should not be let off the hook that easily. The KKK is America's original domestic terrorist group (despite what the laws say), having killed well over 4,000 Americans that we know of, and our governor either is or was associated with them. Let that sink in, particularly as we still mourn the loss of another group of innocent lives at the hands of other terrorist groups in New Zealand a few weeks ago, Pittsburgh, Charlottesville, and most recently Sri Lanka. The leader of the Democratic Party in Virginia has yet to offer a sensible explanation for why a terrorist was in his yearbook, and the Democratic Party is okay enough with this that they're now openly not only defending him but trotting him out at political fundraisers.

To most the case against Northam seemed open and shut, and his resignation seemed inevitable. One would imagine that an elected official who represents the party which prides itself on its diversity, that routinely secures over 90% of the African American vote, and counts on that constituency to win key battleground territories in a purple state that was red just a few elections ago, would certainly recognize that defending the governor is not a hill worth dying on and step aside as quickly and as gracefully as possible.

Well we're now approaching May and not only has Northam refused to step aside, but even more unfortunate the Democratic Party has begun to rally around him in a show of solidarity. First came the slow drip of messages of appreciation from members of the General Assembly for one bill after the other on social media. Then the ridiculous Michael Jackson impersonation story that once seemed straight out of a bad SNL skit became the official party line. As for the "Coonman" nickname in his VMI yearbook that never received a formal explanation from the governor? Well one explanation floated to me by a Democratic member of in the Virginia House of Delegates - who happened to be African American - was an even greater insult to our intelligence, and full of even more racist stereotypes. According to the delegate the governor's nickname stemmed

from the fact that he had a lot of black friends due to his love of basketball.

As if insulting our intelligence wasn't bad enough, many within the Democratic Party felt it necessary to go after those amplifying the call for the governor's resignation. Following a protest led the Fairfax County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) at a Democratic fundraiser where the governor was scheduled to attend, Democratic Party loyalists and leaders alike attacked the NAACP for doing the very thing the organization was founded for - standing up against racism. Its members were described as "troublemakers" and "bullies"; and the nation's oldest and most successful civil rights organization is described as a "fringe element" by one party leader.

One of the talking points coming from Virginia's Democrats is that "the governor isn't going anywhere, so we might as well work with him." This intentionally alleviates the burden of responsibility from the rest of the party leadership, because it makes them seem powerless, when in reality they really don't want to challenge him anyway. As the reaction to the protests demonstrated, real challenges to the governor will not be looked upon favorably by the Democratic Party. If they'll publicly assassinate the NAACP, one could only imagine what private pressure is being placed on African American legislators who dare break ranks. This likely explains the deafening silence and acquiescence from most black elected officials on this issue.

Not enough black leaders (elected and community leaders alike) stand with the black community on principle when it matters most; and if they can't stand on principle when it comes to the KKK, when will they? If they can't break ranks with the party now, when will they? Black leaders stood next to Hillary Clinton when she called our youth "super predators", and they stood next to Bill when he doubled down on Reagan's mass incarceration policies. We're often told that the solution is electing more African American to office; but if this is the best they can do when faced with a such a clear-cut choice in a time of crisis, then their true value to the African American community is questionable.

If these officials don't have what it takes to tackle overt headline-grabbing racism within their own ranks, how can they be trusted to tackle systemic racism that doesn't make headlines. The numbers highlighting African American wealth decline speak for themselves. They can't.

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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.

THURSDAY/MAY 2

Caregivers Support Group. 10-11:30 a.m. at UUCF Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. For caregivers to adult family members with dementia. First and third Thursdays of every month. Hosted by Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna, scov.org. Contact facilitator Jack Tarr at 703-821-6838 or jtarr5@verizon.net.

Memory Cafe. 2-4 p.m. at Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. Connect with others living with loved ones with dementia. Helping those with dementia and their caregivers find fun, resources and "family." Email Carol Blackwell at lovriver@aol.com or call at 571-236-6933.

SATURDAY/MAY 4

UUCF Yard Sale. 7 a.m.-1 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. All proceeds benefit - UUCF Social Justice Council; Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna & National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI-Northern Virginia). Email UUCFYardsale@gmail.com or call 703-281-4230.

Mindful 365 Meditation. 10 a.m.-noon at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Monthly meditation group focused on mindfulness. Newcomers welcome. \$10. Visit www.unityoffairfax.org/events for more. Reserve a spot at sittinggroup-2019.eventbrite.com.

Peripheral Neuropathy Support Group. 2-4 p.m. at Mason District

Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale. The Peripheral Neuropathy Support Group for greater Washington meets the first Saturday of the month. All are welcome. RSVP for available seating. Call 301-263-0616 or visit www.dcpnsupport.org for more.

District Supervisor Candidate

Meet and Greet. 4-6 p.m. at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Meet the candidates who are running for the Fairfax Board of Supervisors: Dranesville District; Hunter Mill District; Providence District; and Sully District. Free. RSVP at www.eventbrite.com/o/naacp-fairfax-county-12397167937.

SUNDAY/MAY 5

Eclectic Accessory Extravaganza

Sale. 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. at Temple Rodef Shalom, 2100 Westmoreland St., Falls Church. Wide assortment of previously owned "treasures" such as ladies' fashion accessories (designer handbags; scarves; high quality costume jewelry), decorative home and household accessories and children's play items. Free admission. Email burkittjudithhp11@comcast.com or call 571-319-0587 for more.

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Noon-2 p.m. at Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria. Cost is \$15 per pet, cash and check only. Dogs, cats, and ferrets may be vaccinated at the clinic. Dogs must be on leashes; cats and ferrets must be in carriers. All pets will receive a 1-year rabies vaccination. To obtain a 3-year vaccine, bring pet's rabies certificate (not tag) showing the current rabies vaccination expiration date. 2019 county dog licenses will be sold for

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

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Schar Cancer Institute rendering.

Schar Cancer Institute Opens to Patients May 13

Institute becomes a landmark for health care and research in Fairfax County

The Inova Health System will usher in a new level of medical treatment and patient care when the Inova Schar Cancer Institute opens to patients May 13 on its Merrifield campus.

"The Schar Cancer Center raises the already-high level of health-care facilities in Fairfax County," said Catherine W. Riley, interim president and CEO of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. "As part of the Inova Center for Personalized Health it can make Fairfax County a destination for world-class research and clinical work."

Dedication ceremonies took place Wednesday, April 24, for the \$150 million center for care and research that is anchoring the 117-acre Inova campus, fulfilling a vision that began with the acquisition of the former Exxon Mobil site. The institute was made possible, in part, by a \$50 million contribution from Dwight Schar and wife Martha, whose legacy will extend beyond Fairfax County-based NVR home builders.

MEMBERS OF THE SCHAR FAMILY were joined by others, including U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy and wife Marcelle, political commentator Cokie Roberts, and Lara Hopewell, a local hockey mom-turned-crusader for cancer research — all cancer survivors. Also participating in the ceremonies were U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova and Inova CEO Dr. Stephen Jones. The ceremonies featured more than 100 cancer patients and their family members, who became the first to walk through the front door of the newly-dedicated facility.

"We are so fortunate in Fairfax County to have access to such world class medical care and treatment," said Bulova, who presented a proclamation from the Board of Supervisors congratulating Inova. "We have amazing facilities, doctors and cutting-edge technologies that are right here, literally in our own backyard, and that is so incredibly valuable."

Riley echoed the importance of having a first-class cancer facility in the county, offering residents the highest quality care without requiring them to travel, often hundreds of miles for treatment. She also emphasized the importance of the research that will take place at the facility, creating a new horizon in the

diversification of Fairfax County's workforce.

"We're very excited about the research and development aspect of the Schar Institute and the ways in which it will help diversify our local economy," Riley said. "It will attract new doctors and scientists. In partnership with facilities like the University of Virginia Medical School, those researchers will be applying for new grants and developing the kinds of programs that will make Fairfax County known as a medical research and development center."

"We are so fortunate in Fairfax County to have access to such world class medical care and treatment."

Sharon Bulova, Chairman, County Board of Supervisors

DURING THE DEDICATION, Jones announced that Dr. John Deeken, who had been serving as acting president of the Inova Schar Cancer Institute, is named permanently to the president's role. Deeken said the institute would continue stress its "patient-first" philosophy, building on its ability to provide one-stop care through teams of doctors, nurses, therapists, researchers and specialized counselors.

"The vision and the spirit is that the patient is at the center of everything we do," said Deeken, who previously served as COO of the Inova Translational Medicine Institute. "Fundamentally, that's the difference in the model of care at Inova."

"This is the culmination of years of effort in planning and design and recruiting — to make real what we'd hoped to have for all the patients in Northern Virginia, which is expert care close to home. Nobody in Northern Virginia should think they need to go to Houston, New York or Baltimore to get world-class cancer care. We have it right here."

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Public Information Meetings

Attend one of two public information meetings near you.
All meeting times are 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Presentation starts at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 7, 2019

Forestville Elementary School
1085 Utterback Store Road, Great Falls, VA 22066

Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Colvin Run Elementary School
1400 Trap Road, Vienna, VA 22182

Find out about the latest design and construction plans to widen about seven miles of Route 7 (Leesburg Pike) from four to six lanes between Jarrett Valley Drive and Reston Avenue. The project also includes shared-use paths along both sides of the road, turn lanes at intersections, and a bridge replacement over Difficult Run.

Stop by between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. to view displays and learn more about the project and upcoming construction activities. VDOT will hold a presentation beginning at 7:30 p.m. Project staff will be available to answer your questions.

Review project information on the project website (www.connectroute7.org), at the information meetings, or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive in Fairfax. Please call ahead at 703-259-1940 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions.

Give your written comments at the meeting, or submit them by **May 24, 2019** to Mr. Arifur Rahman, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030, or email ConnectRoute7@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "May 2019 Public Information Meetings" in the subject line.

VDOT ensures non-discrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact Arifur Rahman at 703-259-1940.

State Project: 0007-029-942, P101, R201, C501, B610, D606, D608;
0007-029-225, P101, R201, C501, D607
UPC: 99478, 106917
Federal: STP-5A01 (745), STP-5A01 (790)



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CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Student Art Exhibit. Through Wednesday, May 8 at Starbucks, 9863 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Currently exhibited at the Great Falls Starbucks are 15 examples of students at Colvin Run Elementary. Call 703-438-8389.

Art Exhibit: “Taking Territory.” Through June 1, gallery hours at MPA@ChainBridge, 1446 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Taking Territory: New Works by Susan Goldman, Barbara Kerne, Eve Stockton and Patricia Underwood. Visit mpaart.org for more.

THURSDAY/MAY 2

Business Leadership Luncheon: Mental Health in the Workplace. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Hyatt Regency Tysons, 7901 Tysons One Place, Tysons. CEOs, managers, HR and other professionals will take away ideas for developing and strengthening workplace mental health initiatives. Attendance is open to anyone with an interest in mental health in the workplace. Visit www.NAMI-NorthernVirginia.org.

FRIDAY/MAY 3

McLean Farmers Market Opens. Fridays, through Nov. 15, 8 a.m.-noon at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Sixteen local farmers and producers will sell fresh produce; meats; breads, pastries; jams; dairy products and eggs; herbs; flowers, coffee, more. The Market will be closed on May 17 for McLean Day setup. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/mclean.

Intro to Djembe Drumming and Drum Circle. 7-8:30 p.m. at McLean Community Center’s Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Join The Alden for a creative (and de-stressing) Friday evening master class for families. Participants will learn the elements of Djembe Drumming from artist Kofi Dennis and then use those skills in a group drum circle. \$12/\$8 MCC district residents, includes admission and drum rental. Call 703-790-0123 or visit www.mcleancenter.org for more.

Old Firehouse 5th and 6th Grader Parties: Luau. 7-9 p.m. at the Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Participants will enjoy free catered food and beverages, an open dance floor with music played by a popular DJ and a variety of party attractions. \$35/\$25 MCC district residents; preregistration is highly recommended. Call 703-790-0123 or visit www.mcleancenter.org for more.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/MAY 3-5

“Ripcord.” Friday-Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., SE, Vienna. The Vienna Theatre Company’s production of Ripcord centers on retirement home roommates, Abby and Marilyn, who mix together about as well as oil and water, getting into Odd Couple-esque situations. Tickets are \$14 at viennava.gov/webtrac or in person at the Vienna Community Center.

SATURDAY/MAY 4

Native Plant Sale. 8-11 a.m. at the Riverbend Park Outdoor Classroom picnic shelter, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Native plant sale from the Friends of Riverbend Park supports Riverbend Park. These plants thrive in Northern Virginia because they are native to the area, which means they’re good for the plants and wildlife around them, too. Call 703-759-9018 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend.

World Vision Global 6K for Water. 8:30-10 a.m. at W&OD Trail (Vienna West), Ayr Hill Road, Vienna. Vienna Presbyterian Church partners with World Vision to provide children in developing countries access to clean water in their villages. Food, face-painting, educational tent, music and information about World Vision. Walk, run, or stroll this 6K and invite family, neighbors, and friends. \$50 Race registration fee. TeamVienna by registering at www.teamworldvision.org/team/10917.

Ribbon Cutting and Open House. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Oak Marr Golf Complex, 3136 Jermantown Road, Oakton. Discover the new and improved double-decker driving range, learn more about offerings and instruction and then help officials cut the ribbon at Oak Marr Golf Complex. The Burger Shack food truck will be on-site for lunch. Call 703-324-8662 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/golf/oak-marr.

Live Music: James Fernando. 1 p.m. (doors at noon) at Jammin’ Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. James Fernando is a pianist and



‘I’ve Got a Little Twist’

New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players present “I’ve Got a Little Twist,” a cabaret evening featuring rewritten lyrics for G&S tunes, G&S numbers that are juxtaposed with more modern musical theatre and sometimes, classic Gilbert and Sullivan that is left intact and allowed to speak for itself. Saturday, May 4, 7 p.m. at The Alden Theatre at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. \$40/\$30 MCC tax district residents; running time: 120 minutes (all ages). Visit www.aldentheatre.org for more.



PHOTO BY LUCIA BACON

Hundreds of healthy, beautiful and well-priced plants donated by Club members will be offered at the plant sale.

Plant and Yard Sale

Not sure what to get for Mother’s Day? Come to the Great Falls Garden Club’s popular plant and yard sale for a new plant or item for mom’s garden. Saturday, May 11, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Free admission. Call 703-757-7360 or visit gfgardenclub.org for more.

composer whose music lies at the intersection of jazz, classical, and electronic music. All ages. \$15-\$20. Call 703-255-1566 or visit www.jamminjava.com for more.

New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players. 7 p.m. at The Alden Theatre at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. “I’ve Got a Little Twist,” See above, Visit www.aldentheatre.org for more.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/MAY 4-5

Book Sale. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Featuring thousands of quality used books, CDs, DVDs, and audiobooks. Prices remain the same: hardbacks \$2, trade paperbacks \$1, pocket paperbacks 50 cents, children’s books 25 and 50 cents. CDs and videos \$1-\$2. Credit cards accepted. All proceeds benefit the library.

SUNDAY/MAY 5

Visit Colvin Run Mill. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Don’t miss the chance to see, hear and taste history with a Sunday visit to Colvin Run Mill. Stop by the mill for a grinding demonstration

from noon-3 p.m. See 19th century technology at work as the miller grinds wheat or corn into flour and meal that can be purchased at the park’s General Store. Call the site to confirm grinding is on. \$8 for adults, \$7 for students 16 and up with ID, and \$6 for children and seniors. No reservations are required. Call 703-759-2771 www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/colvin-run-mill.

Gardening With Kids. 1-4 p.m. at the Freeman Store, 131 Church St. NE, Vienna. The Ayr Hill Garden Club, in celebration of 90 years of gardening in Vienna, presents Gardening With Kids. Free and open to the public. RSVP to Monica.anschel@hotmail.com.

Teen Acting Audition. 2-5 p.m. at Old Firehouse Teen Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Audition for Traveling Troupe, a pre-professional summer theatre program for 9th – 12th graders. Perform Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night on tour throughout Virginia. Prepare a Shakespearean monologue (min. 14 lines). \$50 in advance, \$60 at the door. Call 703-987-1712 or visit www.travelingplayers.org.

TUESDAY/MAY 7

Historical Society Presentation. 7-9 p.m. at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Join the Great Falls Historical

Society to hear local historian and award-winning author, Greg Wilson, discuss “Conflict and Rebellion in Fairfax County, 1860-1861.” Free and open to the public. Visit gfh.org

WEDNESDAY/MAY 8

Bike to School Day. Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) will participate in Bike to School Day to promote physical activity and reduce traffic congestion and pollution near schools. Parents are encouraged to work with their school and PTA or PTO to assemble bike trains or walking groups for the event. Visit www.walkbiketoschool.org/.

Movie Series: New Disney Classics. 12:30 p.m. at The Alden Community Hall, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. The Alden is kicking off a new film series with “new Disney Classics” – those that were loved during the 1990s. The films will be shown at 12:30 p.m. on the 2nd Wednesday of the month through June. Free admission. Visit mcleancenter.org/performing-arts for more.

THURSDAY/MAY 9

Historian William Connery. 7:30-9 p.m. at Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Meet the author of Civil War Northern Virginia 1861 as he recounts the notable events and battles that occurred in Northern Virginia after the firing on Fort Sumter in 1861. Books available for sale and signing. Free. librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/4878628 or call 703-938-0405

FRIDAY/MAY 10

6th Annual Casino Night. 6-10 p.m. at Volkswagen Group of America Headquarters, 2200 Ferdinand Porsche Drive, Herndon. 6th Annual Casino Night fundraiser supporting the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington/Fairfax County Region. Hosted By LaVar Arrington with special guest “Secretary of Defense” Dexter Manley. Visit one.bidpal.net/casinonight2019 for tickets.

Movie: Instant Family. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Join Unity of Fairfax on the second Friday of the month for mindful movies. “Instant Family” A couple adopts three young children. Free, donations welcome. call 703-281-1767 www.unityoffairfax.org/events

SATURDAY/MAY 11

Plant Sale. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Freeman Store, 131 Church St. NE, Vienna. The Ayr Hill Garden Club will host its annual spring plant sale with a focus on plants native to Virginia. Plants available include those that thrive in sun or shade, are deer resistant, and tolerate drought. Native plants attract beneficial birds and insects to your garden. Proceeds help maintain five Vienna area gardens. Free admission. Email monica.anschel@hotmail.com.

Learn About Pollinators & Build a Bat House. 9-10:30 a.m. at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Pollinators power food production. Bats help eat mosquitoes, as well as pollinate plants, but they are having a hard time. Help these animals thrive by building a bat house to hang at home. For participants 3-adult. \$8 per person, and everyone must register. A fee of \$15 per bat house should be paid to the instructor Call 703-759-9018 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend.

“All the Way Live.” 1 p.m. at The Alden, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. In this interactive show, world-renowned hip-hop artists collaborate on the spot to “remix” everything from the alphabet to folktales. \$15/\$10 MCC district residents. Visit mcleancenter.org.

Mad Hatter Tea Party. 2-4 p.m. at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Calling all children age 4 through grade 6. Bring a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or some other significant adult to the Mad Hatter Tea Party. Reservations are required and space is limited. Reservations close May 8. Visit www.lewinsville.org/event-items/mad-hatter-tea-party.

PRS’ Springtopia. 6-9:30 p.m. at Hyatt Regency Tysons Corner, 7901 Tysons One Place, McLean. PRS, Inc., a nonprofit helping those living with serious mental illness or facing life crises, is hosting its 2nd annual Springtopia: A Season of Hope. \$175. Call 703-531-6321 or visit prsinc.org/springtopia for more.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/MAY 11-12

Relay for Life. At Langley High School, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Relay for Life of Langley McLean will have its 2019 relay, an all night event to raise money for the American Cancer Society. Planned by students from McLean and Langley but open to the entire community. Free registration. Call 703-213-5386 or visit secure.ascevents.org.

PEOPLE

Oakcrest Teacher Receives Dissertation Award from Georgetown

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Dr. Celia Zamora, Foreign Languages Master Teacher at Oakcrest, has been named the recipient of Georgetown University's 2019 Harold N. Glassman Distinguished Dissertation Award in the Social Sciences. This award is intended to honor truly distinguished dissertations in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences, with one award available in each of the three broad disciplinary areas.

Dr. Zamora's dissertation is titled "The Secret is in the Processing: A Study of Levels of Explicit Computerized Feedback in Heritage and L2 Learners of Spanish."

She holds several advanced degrees including a Ph.D. in Spanish Linguistics from Georgetown University; M.S. in Spanish Linguistics, Georgetown University; M.A. in Linguistics, Florida International University; and B.A. in English Literature and Japanese Culture Studies, Florida International University. Other publications include Leow, R. & Zamora, C. (2017). "Intentional and In-



Dr. Celia Zamora will be recognized for her achievement at Georgetown's Graduate Commencement Ceremony on Friday, May 17.

cidental Learning" in The Routledge Handbook of Instructed Second Language Acquisition, and "Does, um, the medium, uh, matter? Measuring fluency through filled pauses in Face-to-Face and Teletandem communicative groups."

Dr. Zamora will be recognized for her achievement at Georgetown's Graduate Commencement Ceremony on Friday, May 17.

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OPINION

Blake Lane Park Should Not Be Used as a School Site

BY PHIL NIEDZIELSKI-EICHNER

Fairfax County is at an historic inflection point. Residents are demanding more open space for recreation and leisure enjoyment than ever before. At the same time, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is moving to build a new school on land that has been a public park for decades.

Blake Lane Park is the largest open space available for public use in the Oakton area and is home to the only off-leash dog park in Providence District.

If I am elected to become the Providence Supervisor, I will oppose conveying the property to FCPS for this purpose.

Forty years ago, when development was booming and land was plentiful, the prospect of maintaining in inventory a 10-acre parcel as a school site was appropriately viewed as good planning.

Fast forward to today and the Blake Lane "school site" is surrounded by high-density development, consisting of townhomes, condominiums, and single-family houses that are home to hundreds of families. This area has evolved into one of great ethnic and economic diversity. The area is also an enclave of affordable housing, another increasingly scarce community resource.

What was once for FCPS an easy business decision to build an elementary school on a site dedicated for school use is now a much more complicated one in which community values are in conflict.

Blake Lane Park represents a convergence of Fairfax commitments to (a) quality public education; (b) environmental quality — including protecting the wildlife and natural vegetation; and (c) equity, as espoused through the Board of Supervisors and School Board's joint commitments in their One Fairfax Policy.

In weighing these competing values, the scale tips in favor of maintaining scarce open space over building an elementary school.

❖ Once this "green field" is developed it will be lost forever.

❖ FCPS maintains an imbalance in the use of its school facilities. Simply put, FCPS has overcrowded schools and underutilized schools, often within geographic proximity. The School Board should institute a program to adjust boundaries so that all schools are in relative balance.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Phil Niedzielski-Eichner

❖ Land scarcity and the community's expectation for keeping an inventory of open space and parks should drive a more vertical school design on a smaller footprint.

❖ Additionally, FCPS should consider repurposing empty or obsolete commercial or office buildings and/or reuse already developed "brown fields" to meet its facility needs.

Finally, I was surprised to learn that the decision to transform Blake Lane into a school site — a matter of great consequence to the area residents — was made before the community was informed of the project. The community mistrust and anger resulting from the lack of communication on this matter could and should have been avoided.

FCPS must pursue alternatives to building the new school at Blake Lane Park. The permanent loss of this park land and open space is not justified. Use of park land to meet another public need should only ever be considered as a very last resort and only then after early engagement — and in partnership — with the community.

*Phil Niedzielski-Eichner Providence Planning
Commissioner and Candidate for District Supervisor.*

Free Cinco de Mayo Lyft Rides Offered to Prevent Drunk Driving

Free Cinco de Mayo Lyft rides will be offered to deter impaired driving throughout the Washington-metropolitan area beginning Sunday, May 5, 2019.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the 2019 Cinco de Mayo SoberRide program will be in operation for 12 hours beginning at 4 pm on Sunday, May 5th (Cinco de Mayo) and continue until 4 am on Monday, May 6 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk holiday.

During this twelve-hour period, area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may

download Lyft to their phones, then enter a SoberRide code in the app's "Promo" section to receive their no cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's Cinco de Mayo SoberRide@promo code will be posted at 3 pm on Sunday, May 5 on www.SoberRide.com.

Last year, a record 897 persons in the Washington-metropolitan area used WRAP's Cinco de Mayo SoberRide program rather than possibly driving home impaired. The charity also offers its SoberRide program on St. Patrick's Day, Independence Day, Halloween and the winter holidays.

More information about WRAP's SoberRide@ initiative can be found at www.SoberRide.com.

BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 5

an additional \$10 per license. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter/communityassistance/rabiesclinics for more.

22 Proven Processes. 1-3 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. A class that focuses on abundance processes and based on the book "Ask and It Is Given" by Esther and Jerry Hicks. By donation. Visit unityoffairfax.org/events or 22-proven-processes.eventbrite.com.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 8

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.

THURSDAY/MAY 9

The Opportunity in Opportunity Zones. 8-10:30 a.m. at Valo Park - Tysons Corner, 7950 Jones Branch Drive. A new community investment tool was created by the 2017 tax law. Opportunity Zones are census tracts that state and federal governments have targeted for economic development, and several exist in Northern Virginia. Join the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia and learn about this new investment tool. \$40; includes continental breakfast. Visit www.cfnova.org to register.

FRIDAY/MAY 10

Digital Citizenship: Tips for Parents. 10 a.m.-noon at at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 - Room 100, Dunn Loring. As parents in the digital age, being aware, alert and involved in a child's use of the internet is crucial. Digital Citizenship can be described as the norms of appropriate, responsible behavior, its positive and negative impact on self and others, with regard to technology use. Free to parents, educators and community members. Call 703-204-3941 or visit www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center for more or to register.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/MAY 10-11

District 29 Toastmasters Conference. At Capital One Headquarters, 1680 Capital One Drive, McLean. District 29 Toastmasters are having their annual conference (theme: "Embracing Change"). All are welcome. The conference includes speakers, leadership and education sessions, speech contests, food, networking, and more. You do not need to be a current member of Toastmasters International. \$0-\$124. Visit tmd29.org/2019ConfTMD29/ to register.

SATURDAY/MAY 11

Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. Letter carriers will pick up donated food. Leave donations before your typical mail delivery time. All food stays in the local community. The top requested non-perishable food items are: cereal, pasta, pasta sauce or spaghetti sauce, rice, canned fruits and vegetables, canned meals (such as soups, chili and pasta), 100 percent juice, peanut butter, macaroni & cheese, canned protein (tuna, chicken and turkey), beans (canned or dry). You also can donate healthy, low-sodium, low-sugar items such as beans, oatmeal and other whole grains, and canola or olive oil. Specific questions regarding the Food Drive should be directed to 202-662-2489.

Family Caregiver Expo. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Richard J. Ernst Community Cultural Center at Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus. Capital Caring will host its first Caregiver Expo in partnership with AARP and Virginia Hospital Center. The expo is free and will feature information highlighting resources and support programs available to family caregivers, including home care services, financial and estate planning, elder law, and information sessions on such topics as Alzheimer's and Dementia, Preservation of Assets, and Caring for the Caregiver. Free health screenings will be offered as well as free massages. Contact Amy Shields at ashields@capitalcaring.org or call 703-531-6095 for more.

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As Luck Has Had It



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Aside from the fatigue I experienced a few columns ago, this immunotherapy infusion is, and has been, quite manageable.

My biggest take away so far is that I've had no real quality of life issues, as had been the case with my previous chemotherapy/alimta infusions. With that drug, I had post-infusion eating challenges and for nearly a week after the fact, felt less than mediocre.

Moreover, I wouldn't say I felt like I had cancer, but I certainly was reminded of it — if that makes any sense.

And even though I do have some minor side effects from my current immunotherapy infusion, I am reminded nevertheless, that I have cancer. Not because of how I feel, as was the case previously, but because of how I look — and because of what I feel.

I am referring to my "Adam's apple" tumor. Not only can/do I 'look' it all the time but quite often, depending on how I move my head: forward/downward, I can feel it too.

I have to tell you, feeling it as I do, and looking at it as often as I do: every day, is unsettling.

My whole approach to this living-with-cancer life has been to compartmentalize it a la Jerry Seinfeld and "the vault." Out of sight has helped keep some things out of mind. And when things are out of mind, it's much easier to make believe.

And making believe has been one of my methods of "operandi" since Feb. 20, 2009. That's the date (you bet I remember) when my internal medicine doctor called me at work with the results of my previous week's biopsy: "malignant," he said.

Up until that call, the previous six weeks' diagnostic pursuit had been interesting in a curious kind of way wondering what all the goings on were about and when all these inconveniences would end. And not for a minute during this entire process did I ever think I'd be diagnosed with a "terminal" disease: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. I figured, to the extent I figured at all, that the process would result in much having been done about nothing.

Boy was I wrong!

I still remember — and laugh when I recall the phone conversation I had with my thoracic surgeon after he had received the results of my PET scan: "You lit that thing up like a Christmas tree," he said.

Presuming that wasn't good news, I replied: "I hear there are false positives all the time which is why these scans aren't used a lot." (A perfect example of a little knowledge in the wrong mouth.)

I can't recall if the doctor snickered before he said the following: "Well, then your scan was a world record false positive." I don't know if I grasped the obvious at that point but soon a surgical biopsy was ordered and the rest is Kenny-with-cancer history, a history with which many of you regular readers are all too familiar.

And that's a familiarity which I hope has not bred contempt. Because even though it's my life — and I'm stuck with it (as the old saying says), it need not be yours. I can well imagine and appreciate how living with and/or seeking out negativity is not likely to improve any one's lot in life. (I try to avoid it every day.)

To that end, I have always tried to tread lightly and write with a soft touch since I've been cancer-centric beginning June 10, 2009, when I published my first column on the subject: "Dying To Tell You, Sort Of." And in so doing, I've tried to see the light amid the darkness and be thankful for any in between.

I can't say it's been fun, but it's funny how things have turned out: alive and reasonably well, 10-plus years later.

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

Bards Alley Celebrates Independent Bookstore Day

BY LISA FAY
THE CONNECTION

Saturday, April 27, marked the fifth annual nationwide Independent Bookstore Day. According to the Indie Bookstore Day website, Independent Bookstore Day is a one-day national party that takes place at indie bookstores across the country on the last Saturday in April.

Vienna bookstore, Bards Alley, took part in this national celebration by hosting activities throughout the day such as talks with authors, children's performances, games, and an all day book scavenger hunt. Books wrapped up in brown paper were hidden in local shops where people could go and find them. "There are so many reasons why this bookstore is important for the community," said Jen Morrow, owner of Bards Alley. "It offers different things for different people. In a town like Vienna, it offers a place where we can celebrate what reading and literature does for the community. It is a place where people can gather, whether it's just for pure entertainment, because they're in a book club, or if they want to learn about something so that they're educating themselves."

Independent bookstores, such as Bards Alley, bring communities together, especially a town like Vienna where it is very community based. "I think it's about, not just the words on the page, but what it does for the sense of community as you connect through books," said Morrow. "I added the wine bar and cafe because I wanted to have event space where people could linger rather than just come to find books. A lot



PHOTOS BY LISA FAY/THE CONNECTION

'Groovy Nate' entertains children in Bards Alley.



Jen Morrow, owner of Bards Alley, and Gina Warner, creator of the 'Bad Ass Women' book club.



Amy Lane, a book buyer at Bards Alley, holds up an appropriate book for the spring weather.

of our customers say they come in because they don't even know what book they're looking for but because we've curated the selection for this specific community, and we employ people who really know books, that's our speciality and that's what differentiates us from Amazon." Morrow says people ask her consistently why she opened Bards Alley in the age of the Barnes and Noble Nook or the Amazon Kindle. "I opened the store because Amazon ... doesn't participate in things that directly impact the community," said Morrow. "I employ people that live in Vienna and I pay taxes to the Town of Vienna, so it generates a lot of a 'shop local' attitude. It's all about our great customers who give back to the store as much as we give to them."

Vienna: International Food Scene

Restaurants Review: Plaka Grill and Istanbul Blue.

BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY
THE CONNECTION

The upscale town of Vienna has become an international food scene—restaurants from Thai, Mexican, American, Japanese, British, and Indian to Chinese, Middle Eastern and Italian—provide a global culinary tapestry. Add to the list the following international eats: the Greek Plaka Grill and the Mediterranean Turkish Istanbul Blue, and you can forget updating your passport. You can eat globally but stay local.

If Mediterranean flavors appeal, plan a lunch or dinner at Istanbul Blue, an upscale, sit-down eatery that proclaims the restaurant's national identity with a menu that features many native dishes—*lahmacun*, falafel, imam *bayildi*, and *yaprak dolma*—that your local American

hangout likely won't offer. But that should not hinder taking chances on the unknown. And after all, their menu offerings are not only tempting but many are self-explanatory.

Take, for example, the appetizer, hummus, a gently seasoned purée of chickpeas that is such a popular offering that most supermarkets carry different brands and flavors. What is on offer here is a blend of fresh lemon juice, tahini (sesame seed paste), and garlic, and is served with pita bread slices. Less well-known appetizers can challenge the palate: *baba ganoush* (roasted eggplant puréed with tahini), falafel (fried balls of seasoned ground chickpeas), and *cigari borek* (cigar-shaped phyllo dough stuffed with cheese and fried.)

Entrées include salads, kebabs, seafood dishes, and lamb, beef, and chicken offerings. But patrons who stop by for lunch get

to select from among six different sandwiches, all of which sound quite familiar. And for a pick that seems totally Turkish, try the *adana* sandwich, made of beef and ground lamb grilled on a skewer and topped with a scoop of their *ezme* salad (mix of chopped tomatoes, onions, and parsley).

And do not skip dessert: Six choices are listed, but the best of the best is the restaurant's baklava. A rectangle of phyllo pastry layered with sweetness and baked with pistachios, it is one of the best treats imaginable. Take two, just for the fun of it.

For a very different and much more casual destination, try the Greek Plaka Grill. It's eat-in or take-out, and if you arrive mid-day, chances are the place will be packed with take-outers, but finding seating may still be a challenge. However, its casual fare, especially the sandwich wraps, are worth the wait.

Dips and appetizers start the meal, and a

good beginning are the zucchini fritters with feta and mint. Somewhat offbeat and Latino sounding is the *tyrokafteria* dip, made with feta cheese, jalapeño, and red pepper and served with pita bread.

For entrées, patrons can make up their own salad bowls, big a main course such as beef souvlaki, mixed grill, or lamb kapama (lamb stew). But skipping by one of their special wraps would be a mistake. Especially good for take-out, one of these sandwich wraps, served with a side of salad or fries, fit the bill. Their featured Plaka gyro with pork is obviously popular, but if a combo of lamb and beef appeals, do order their Chicago Gyro.

Their Greek desserts selection is limited to baklava, *galaktoboureko* (custard), *rizogalo* (rice with cream), and Greek yogurt. Craving a sweet? Go to the baklava!

Istanbul Blue, 523 Maple Ave. West, Vienna, 703-938-8948. Hours: lunch and dinner daily.
Plaka Grill, 110 Lawyers Rd. NW, Vienna, 703-319-3131. Hours: Lunch and dinner daily.