

Chantilly CONNECTION

Fair Oaks ♦ Fair Lakes

From left - Sully District Commissioner Dave Weisz, Sully District Chairman Dave Carmichael, Sully District Vice Chairman R. Hondo Davids, and special honoree Bernie Barston of Sully District.

Sully District Presents Awards

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Former Teacher Convicted Of Soliciting Minor

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Murder Charged after Chantilly Man's Death

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Murder Charged after Chantilly Man's Death

Fairfax County police have charged a Manassas man with last week's fatal shooting of Miguel Angel Leiva Hernandez, 30, of Chantilly. The suspect is Steven A. Green, 51.

The tragedy occurred Friday, May 24, around 1:30 a.m. in a Chantilly shopping center in the 14500 block of Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy. According to police, officers called to the scene found Hernandez's body in the parking lot, where he'd been shot.

He was then taken to the hospital and pronounced dead. Two other victims, who were not shot, were transported to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. Green – who waited for police to arrive – was charged with murder, malicious wounding and use of a firearm in the commission

of a felony.

Police recovered a firearm when they arrested him. Green was then taken to the Adult Detention Center and held without bond. Meanwhile, detectives are continuing their investigation into the events leading up to the shooting. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner planned to conduct an autopsy on the victim.

Meanwhile, police are asking anyone with information regarding the shooting to call the Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800. They may also call police at 703-691-2131, or notify Crime Solvers at www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org or by texting "TIP187" plus the message to CRIMES (274637).



Steven Green

— BONNIE HOBBS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The District Award of Merit this year was presented to Tim Cline (Cubmaster of Pack 146), left, and Thad Palmer (Scoutmaster of Troop 1826).

Sully District Holds Awards and Recognition Program

On May 8, 2019, Sully District held their Annual Awards and Recognition Program at St. Timothy's School Cafeteria. Many adults received Certificates of Appreciation, recognized for their service to their respective Units. The District Award

of Merit this year was presented to Tim Cline (Cubmaster of Pack 146) and Thad Palmer (Scoutmaster of Troop 1826). A special award was given to Bernie Barston (Sully District Committee) for a Lifetime Achievement in supporting Sully District.



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‘I Could Get in a Lot of Trouble’

Former teacher convicted of soliciting a minor online.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION



Norman Achin

“I told him, ‘I could get in a lot of trouble; I’m taking a big risk.’”

—Norman Achin

“His statements [about] trying to help this boy were just a cover.”

—Elena Lowe, prosecutor, re Achin

For 30 years, Norman Achin was a respected teacher in Fairfax County high schools, including both Westfield and Chantilly. Now, though, he’s also a convicted felon.

After a two-day trial last week in Circuit Court, he was found guilty of using a communication device to solicit a minor. As a result, Achin, 51, of Woodbridge, will face as much as 10 years in prison when he returns in August for sentencing.

During a police interrogation following his July 23, 2018 arrest, he said he was only trying to help a troubled boy he’d met online and believed was just 14. He also claimed a pornographic photo he’d sent the teen reached him accidentally and was actually meant for someone else.

But neither the prosecutor nor the judge bought it. “The defendant’s testimony wasn’t particularly credible,” said Assistant Commonwealth’s Attorney Elena Lowe. “And when he sent the picture, he knew who he was talking with, consistent with their text messages.”

In 2017-2018, Achin taught Latin at both Westfield and West Springfield high schools. Before then, he did so at Chantilly and McLean high schools. He even tutored – often in students’ homes. But his own, extracurricular activities got him into trouble and, after his arrest last summer, FCPS suspended him without pay.

THE GRAND JURY indicted Achin in November 2018, and the details of his offense were revealed, last Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 20-21, during his nonjury trial in Circuit Court. Testifying against him was a male, police detective with the FCPD’s Child Exploitation Unit. When he and Achin made contact via the Grindr app, the detective was posing online as a teenager named Alex, hoping to catch predators preying on children. To protect his undercover status, this newspaper is not revealing his identity.

The detective told Achin his father was gone, his mother lived out of state, and his aunt – who worked nights – watched him. He also said he was in high school and would be “15 very soon. I used abbreviations, misspellings and emojis, like teens do, and was kind of emotional.” The court heard a phone call between them, saw transcripts of their text messages and Grindr exchanges and also saw a 2-1/2-hour video of the detective’s interrogation of Achin following his arrest.

Achin, himself, went by his middle name, Mike, during their online conversations, which ran from July 11-23, 2018. “I’m very

concerned about your age,” Achin told “Alex.” Achin also asked if they could meet, “at a McDonald’s, or something,” during the day so they could talk in person.

“Just talk?” asked “Alex?” Replied Achin: “Well, maybe more.”

“I’ve never done this before, so I’m nervous,” said “Alex.” To which Achin answered: “Me, too. I could get in trouble, even for what we’ve done so far.”

They eventually arranged a meeting in an Annandale park where, instead, police arrested Achin. During his interrogation, Achin said, “I was not soliciting a minor. Alex answered my [Grindr] ad and, initially, I was interested, until I heard his age – 14.

“I’ve been a teacher a long time, and this boy said his mother and father left, so he lived with an aunt. And every school I’ve been at, with kids like this, they’ve committed suicide. I was looking for some kind of relationship, but not with a boy. I really did want to help him.”

Achin said he’d hoped to meet with Alex and tell him he was “too young to do this. I was also talking with other people [on Grindr and Tinder] and I got confused between the sites I was on. I didn’t want anything from him – 18 or 19 years old, fine – but not a kid.” He said he worried that Alex might kill himself, so he “wanted to talk to him, maybe as a father figure, because I thought this was a fragile, young man.”

However, Achin also sent two photos of himself to “Alex” – one showing his bare torso and abs, and the other, his penis. Saying he could only access Grindr on his phone, not his computer, he told the detective, “I couldn’t see the pictures I sent, at times, so sent the wrong pics to the wrong people at the wrong time.” He said he thought he’d sent the penis photo to a man, not “Alex.” (But in court, Lowe noted that Achin never apologized to “Alex” or said he’d sent it by mistake).

Achin said he worried that such a young teen was on Grindr. “I’m not proud of my judgment here, but I was really concerned,” said Achin. “I told him I was worried he might get taken advantage of...I know about sexual abuse – I’ve been abused, myself.”

Eventually, “Alex” said to him, “You want to be with me, or you don’t.”

The detective then asked Achin, “Why didn’t you say, Alex, you misunderstood me; I don’t want to be with you that way?”

“I thought I’d clear this up with a single phone call,” replied Achin. “I probably

shouldn’t have contacted him again, [but] I thought, maybe he’d freak out.”

THE DETECTIVE also asked Achin if he was attracted to children or watched child porn, and Achin – who has an ex-wife and a daughter – said, “No, I would find that revolting. I like women; I’m just trying to experiment on the other side.”

Then, apparently still not realizing “Alex” wasn’t real – or, at least, trying to make it seem that way – he asked the detective, “Is this kid OK?” The detective answered affirmatively, and Achin said, “I wasn’t going to do anything physical [with him]. I was only interested in talking to him as someone vulnerable.”

“I don’t think he really wanted sex,” continued Achin. “Sometimes, if you talk to [teens] as an adult, you can say, ‘You [just] want someone to talk to and to care about you.’ I wanted to tell him this was inappropriate and couldn’t go anywhere. I told him, ‘I could get in a lot of trouble; I’m taking a big risk.’ I wanted to resolve this; I [was] in a position of trust with children.”

But, referring to the photo that the trim Achin sent to Alex showing his abs, the de-

tective asked, “Is this an appropriate picture to send a 14-year-old boy?” Achin said he couldn’t see it when he sent it, but the detective stressed that Achin never corrected it or told “Alex” he’d sent the wrong photo.

Furthermore, he said Achin already acknowledged he knew it was “Alex’s” account, from his photo. “If you thought this kid was in trouble, you never contacted his aunt,” said the detective. “And he never made any reference to killing himself.”

Noting he didn’t say sexually explicit things to “Alex,” Achin said, “I’m not an evil person.” When he testified in court last Tuesday, his attorney, Stephen Sheehy, asked if Achin had requested to be alone with Alex. “No,” replied Achin. “If I were to meet him, I wanted a public place.”

During closing arguments before Judge Michael Devine, Lowe said, “You can clearly see how pictures are sent, and the name of the person [receiving them]. He never said how concerned he was to ‘Alex.’ I ask you to find him guilty.”

Sheehy said there was no solicitation and Achin “never wavered in maintaining his innocence. This was entrapment; we ask you find my client not guilty.”

But, added Lowe, “The detective was just doing his job. There’s salacious content; [Achin] sends a picture of his penis twice to someone he knows is a minor. His statements [about] trying to help this boy were just a cover.”

Ultimately, Devine agreed with her, found Achin guilty and set sentencing for Aug. 16. Until then, he’s free on bond, provided he has no contact with children.

CRIME REPORT

The following incidents were reported by the Sully District Police Station.

MAY 23

LARCENIES:

6000 block of Rosebud Lane, property from vehicle
14300 block of Round Lick Lane, package from residence
14100 block of Saint Germain Drive, groceries from business
STOLEN VEHICLES:
14800 block of Willard Road, 2009 Chevrolet Silverado

MAY 22

LARCENIES:

4300 block of Chantilly Shopping Center, ammunition from business
4300 block of Chantilly Shopping Center, merchandise from business
13900 block of Sawteeth Way, property from vehicle
13900 block of Water Pond Court, cash from vehicle
13900 block of Water Pond Court, credit card from vehicle

MAY 21

LARCENIES:

4300 block of Chantilly Shopping Center, ammunition from business
4300 block of Chantilly Shopping Center, merchandise from business
13900 block of Sawteeth Way, property from vehicle
13900 block of Water Pond Court, cash from vehicle
13900 block of Water Pond Court, credit card from vehicle

MAY 20

LARCENIES:

14700 block of Cardigan Square, bicycle from location
14600 block of Compton Road, copper from construction site
4900 block of Stonecroft Boulevard, pistol from vehicle
4900 block of Westone Plaza, jewelry from location

OPINION

Help the Class of 2019 Celebrate Graduation Safely

BY SUPERVISOR
JOHN C. COOK
BRADDOCK DISTRICT



The last month of Senior year in high school is an exciting time for students and their families. Our children are moving on to a new stage in life after four years of hard work and intensive studies. When one considers the caliber of our schools, graduation is an even more impressive milestone. Amidst these great achievements, I urge parents to talk to their teens about the dangers of alcohol and to prohibit teens drinking in their own homes.

The Fairfax County Police Department will arrest parents who knowingly host teen parties with alcohol.

This may seem harsh to some, but this is a public safety issue. Teens are not yet ready to make good choices about alcohol. When adults serve it to them they send the wrong message and encourage the wrong choices.

It is no secret that teen drinking is wrought with dangerous consequences. Since teens who drink are more likely to binge drink, they are also more likely to make poor choices, such as drunk driving. In fact, the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that every year hundreds of young people get behind the wheel intoxicated and cause deadly accidents: 648 people aged 16-20 were involved in a fatal accident with a BAC higher than .08 in 2017. Furthermore, teen drinking can also lead to sexual assaults and other crimes.

I cannot remember one year without hear-

ing of a tragic local teen death caused by drunk driving. It is up to us as parents to do everything we can to encourage smart choices and safe celebration. That starts with clearly setting the boundary with your children that no alcohol will be served at any parties your family is hosting.

This is a community wide problem and will require community support. If you suspect there is underage drinking happening in your neighborhood, you can call the West Springfield Police Station at 703-644-7377 (or your District station).

Graduation season should be a time of merry making, reveling, and kudos for all the hard work our children have done. It should not include jail cells, ambulances, or coffins. Please join me in promoting a safe environment in our community by keeping alcohol out of teen parties.

Mental Health Awareness Month

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



Before we tear off the remaining couple of pages on the May calendar, I want to address the important recognition of May as Mental Health Awareness Month. While Virginia is credited with having the first mental health hospital, or asylum as they were called in the eighteenth century, the Commonwealth has had difficulty in recent times coming to grips with the enormity of the need and the provision of funds to respond to those needs. In fact Virginia is ranked 40th in the nation in mental health care according to the results of a national study of the issue. It took a state senator's mentally ill son attacking his father with a knife to shock the state to greater action. That father now chairs the Joint Subcommittee on Mental Health Services in the 21st Century, or the Deeds Commission, that includes Senator Janet Howell as a member and has made critically important recommenda-

tions on which the state has made significant progress.

A special thanks goes to the The Commonwealth Institute (thecommonwealthinstitute.org) for documenting recent progress and remaining opportunities in behavioral health in a recent edition of *The Half Sheet*. The Institute which is a nonprofit organization focusing mostly on human service needs used the term "behavioral health" to be more comprehensive than "mental health" to include mental health services and supports such as substance abuse treatment. The Institute recognized accomplishments this past year to include a 21 percent increase in Medicaid reimbursement to encourage more licensed mental health professionals to accept Medicaid thus increasing access to services for people with low income. Additional funding for emergency opioid kits will expand the access to and availability of Naloxone which is used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. The General Assembly also passed and the Governor signed my bill to expand the health care providers authorized to dispense Naloxone to make it more readily available.

Increased funding was provided to increase

staffing at state mental health facilities that are struggling to keep up with demand. Funding was also approved to replace the aging mental health facility Central State Hospital. In addition, monies have been made available for transportation of persons needing mental health hospitalization from having to be transported by law enforcement.

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services indicates that there is a need for 5,000 permanent housing units for those who need supportive housing in the state. This year's funding along with an increase last year will provide 1,300 units of supportive housing. Obviously, there is a severe need to do more in this area with a price tag of about \$47 million.

Challenges remain to be addressed in providing greater access to programs and services for those who live in rural areas and to those who have experienced the trauma of having been exposed to the immigration and refugee system. A task force is looking at ways to increase the number of mental health professionals in the state.

Our awareness of mental health needs cannot end with the month of May. More needs to be done!

Health Insurance Tax: An Attack on Seniors?

To the Editor:
Regarding The Connection's recent article on health

disparities in Virginia (March 25, 2019, "Report Shows Geographic Disparities in Health in Virginia,") I want to highlight another threat to care in our region: the Health Insurance Tax.

As a senior who depends on Medicare Advantage for affordable health care to help manage debilitating chronic migraines and back pain, I am appalled by the lack of congressional action on the Health Insurance Tax (HIT).

Medicare Advantage coverage

has helped me get my life and my health back, but the HIT is nothing short of an attack on seniors. It would raise annual costs for more than 22 million Medicare Advantage beneficiaries by as much as \$241 per person annually, imposing a huge

burden for those living on fixed incomes. Seniors on Social Security often live on significantly less than the mean income in Appalachia.

Key legislation before Congress (H.R. 1398 and S. 172) would stop the HIT and protect seniors, but Senators Kaine and Warner and Congressman Connolly have re-

fused to sign on as co-sponsors. It seems like Congress

has forgotten we are here. If Congress allows a tax on my healthcare premiums, I won't be able to afford coverage. If costs go up, I'm out of the game. Senior health isn't a game – and the HIT is a multi-billion-dollar tax on health insurance premiums that will go into effect in 2020 unless Congress acts soon.

It's time for congressional action to stop the HIT and protect our care.

Carol Frysinger
Herndon

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue.

The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

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By email:
editors@connectionnewspapers.com

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A Connection Newspaper

CALENDAR

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

THURSDAY-FRIDAY/MAY 30-31

Broadway Pops Concert. 7:30-10 p.m. at Centreville High School Auditorium, 6001 Union Mill Road, Clifton. The CVHS choir's annual Broadway Pops concert features music from the Broadway musicals "The Lion King," "Mama Mia!" "Guys and Dolls," "Dreamgirls," "Motown," and "On Your Feet!" as well as a composition by Francisco Núñez and solos from several seniors. Admission is free, however on-site donations will be greatly appreciated. Email slsweetman@gmail.com or call 703-389-1676.

SATURDAY/JUNE 1

Clifton Caboose Run. 6-9 p.m. in the Town of Clifton, at the intersection of Clifton Road, Newman Road and Main Street. A 5K Run and 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk beginning in the turn-of-the-century town of Clifton. A post-race party with refreshments, live music and an awards ceremony will take place at the Red Barn near Clifton's Main Street area. 5k run, \$21; 1-mile fun run/walk, \$15. Call 703-968-0740 or visit www.facebook.com/cliftonva.org.

SUNDAY/JUNE 2

"Memory Lane Day" Tours. 1-4 p.m. at The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum will conduct short walking tours (about 45 minutes each) of the immediate historic neighborhood around the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. The tours involve moderate walking. There is no extra charge for the tours. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

Heritage Nepal Festival. 4-8 p.m. at Centreville High School, 6001 Union Mill Road, Clifton. America Nepali Society Heritage Festival will showcase Nepali Heritage, Traditions and Culture. The Cultural Program will be organized by kids from the community which will last approximately one and half hours. Free. Call 571-331-5412 or visit www.americanepalsociety.org/ for more.

MONDAY/JUNE 3

African-American Genealogy. 7-8:30 p.m. at Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive, Centreville. An African-American Genealogy study group meets the first Monday of the month (except September and November). Participation in the study group is free but registration is requested. To register, or for more information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/events or call 703-830-2223.

THURSDAY/JUNE 6

Westfield All Night Grad Party. 11 p.m.- 4 a.m. at Uptown Alley, 8300 Sudley Road Suite Unit A-7, Manassas. Westfield High School will be hosting an All Night Grad Party at Uptown Alley. Registration for Seniors and donations is now open (register by May 31). \$75, includes food, drinks, and all activities. Email bocm61@gmail.com or visit www.ptsa.westfieldhs.org/parents/angp-homepage/.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/JUNE 7-9

Celebrate Fairfax! Festival. Northern Virginia's largest community-wide event, the 38 th annual Celebrate Fairfax! Festival, is set to take place on the grounds of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. The Celebrate Fairfax! Festival features 25 acres of concerts, family programs, exhibits, carnival rides and nightly fireworks. Among the festival's highlights are more than 120 performances on seven stages, including Better Than Ezra and Smash Mouth. Call 703-324-3247 or visit www.celebratefairfax.com.

SUNDAY/JUNE 9

T-TRAK Scale Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. at The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia T-TRAK members will hold an



Clifton Caboose Run

A 5K Run and 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk beginning in the turn-of-the-century town of Clifton. A post-race party with refreshments, live music and an awards ceremony will take place at the Red Barn near Clifton's Main Street area. Saturday, June 1, 6-9 p.m. in the Town of Clifton, at the intersection of Clifton Road, Newman Road and Main Street. 5k run, \$21; 1-mile fun run/walk, \$15. Call 703-968-0740 or visit www.facebook.com/cliftonva.org.

N gauge Model Train Display. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

SATURDAY/JUNE 15

Live Music: Andy & Judy. 2-3 p.m. at Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive, Centreville. Enjoy live folk music with Boston-based musical duo, Andy & Judy. They will perform traditional and folk music with influences of country, gospel and blues. All ages. Free. Call 703-830-2223 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/4534779 or www.andyjudyding.com.

SUNDAY/JUNE 16

Sully Antique Car Show. 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Take Dad for a stroll down memory lane this Father's Day with a visit to the Antique Car Show at Sully Historic Site. Relive a time when chrome was king and V-8 engines ruled the land. Car show tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and \$6 for children, and will be sold at the gates. Call 703-437-1794.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/JUNE 16-17

Two-Day NTRAK 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 two day N gauge Train Show. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

MONDAY/JULY 5

African-American Genealogy. 7-8:30 p.m. at Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive, Centreville. An African-American Genealogy study group meets the first Monday of the month (except September and November). Participation in the study group is free but registration is requested. To register, or for more information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/events or call 703-830-2223.

ONGOING

Fitness for 50+. Daytime hours, Monday-Friday at Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. Jazzercise Lite, Zumba Gold, Hot Hula Fitness (dancing Polynesian style), Strength Training, Qi Gong, Tai Chi and more. Membership is \$48 a year, and waivers are available. Email lynne.lott@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-322-4475 for more.

History Volunteers Needed. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum needs history buffs. The Museum offers a variety of volunteer opportunities in Museum events, programs and administration. Email volunteers@fairfax-station.org or call 703-945-7483 to explore opportunities. The Museum is located at 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. It is open every Sunday, except holidays, from 1-4

Live After Five. Fridays at 5:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Every Friday night a band plays on the patio of the winery. Free to attend. Visit www.wineryatbullrun.com for a full schedule.
Mondays are Family Night. 5-7 p.m. at Villaggio, 7145 Main St. \$45 for a family of four. Call 703-543-2030 for more.

LIBRARY FUN

Toddlin' Twos. Tuesdays, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Early literacy storytime with songs and activities included. Age 2 with caregiver, free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Storytime for Three to Fives. Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Stories and activities for children age 3-5 with caregiver. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Plant Clinic. Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. A neighborhood plant clinic with horticultural tips, information, techniques, and advice. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a space.

Lego Block Party. Every other Saturday at 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Legos will be provided for an afternoon of building. Grades 3-6. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Duplo Storytime. Every other Wednesday, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Develop and reinforce early literacy skills for reading success. Ages 1-3 with adult. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Legos Kids Club. Every other Tuesday, 10:30 a.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Thousands of Legos for children to play with. Ages 6-12. Free. Call 703-830-2223 to reserve a space.

Starlight Storytime. Every other Wednesday, 7 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Stories under the stars for ages 4-8. Wear pajamas and bring stuffed friends. Free. Call 703-830-2223 to reserve a space.

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-Werner Heisenberg

Announcements

Announcements

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Announcements

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Board members Bo Davis, Carol Ashworth, Jean Ku, Anupam Kumar (LCNV Board President), Gene Durman (Rotary), Paul Byrne, Jan Auerbach (Rotary), John Thomas (in back) and Michael Gavin.

McLean Rotary Provides Funding for Literacy Council of Northern Virginia

McLean Rotary President Gene Durman and member Jan Auerbach attended the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia Board Meeting on May 20 to present a check for \$1250 which coupled with another check

for \$1250 earlier in the year was a grant to support a class which is conducted onsite in cooperation with Doubletree Hilton of Tysons to improve the English of the hotel's banquet and housekeeping employees.

Assistance League of Northern Virginia: Fundraising to Support Low-Income Children

Assistance League® of Northern Virginia, an all-volunteer nonprofit organization, held its annual Spring Fundraiser on April 26 at the Country Club of Fairfax to raise funds for its programs that serve the needs of low-income children in 11 Title I elementary schools in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. During the pre-luncheon reception, the 145 guests in attendance had an opportunity to bid on an array of silent auction items donated by local businesses.

Kathryn Jackson, president of the Northern Virginia chapter of Assistance League, emceed the event and described the positive impact the organization's ongoing programs, including Weekend Food for Kids, New Clothing for Kids, Literacy for Kids and Hugs Pillows, have in the community. Attendees were treated to a slide show that provided a visual portrayal of the nonprofit's programs and activities.

During the current school year, Weekend Food for Kids will deliver 18,000 bags of nonperishable food items to students at risk of hunger to take home on weekends when school meals are not available. The New Clothing for Kids initiative provides essential clothing items, and personal grooming products to improve the well-being of students, and layettes to help new mothers in need. Literacy for Kids delivers individualized tutoring to first graders and supplies books to support summer school reading programs, in addition to providing books to allow individual students to build their home libraries. Hugs Pillows distributes hand-made pillows to comfort children undergoing treatment at a local clinic.

Key sponsors of the charity luncheon were recognized for their support: Quadrant, Inc., Panda Stone-wall, Bob's Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation, Marines Plumbing, and Spine Care of Manassas Chiropractic Center. Several partners that have pro-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Kathryn Jackson, president of the Northern Virginia chapter of Assistance League, emceed the event.

vided support for the organization's food program, including Dominion Energy, Allstate, Intelsat and Sandy Spring Bank, also received praise. A special thank-you was extended to principals and other representatives from the schools served.

For the ninth year, Auctioneer Daniel Sanders, with Four Sales Ltd., donated his services to help raise funds during the live auction and special appeal segment of the program. Two luxury South African Photo Safari packages were just some of the items available for bid this year.

Christopher Baity, a veteran Marine Corps dog trainer and Founder and Executive Director of Semper K9 Assistance Dogs, delivered the keynote address.

For further information, visit: www.alnv.org.

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 30

Interfaith Ramadan Dinner. 7:30 p.m. (registration); 8 p.m. (program starts) at Fairfax County Government Center – Cafeteria, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Join for an Interfaith Ramadan Dinner hosted by Fairfax County Chairwoman Sharon Bulova. Call to prayer and dinner are at 8:30 p.m. Register at bit.ly/fxcounty2019.

SATURDAY/JUNE 1

Yard Sale. 8 a.m.-noon at Centreville United Methodist Church, 6400 Old Centreville Road, Centreville. Centreville United Methodist Church's annual yard sale will take place rain or shine. Call 703-830-2684.

MONDAY/JUNE 3

DiabetesSisters PODS Meetup. 7-9 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Join the first meeting of this brand new PODS Meetup for an evening of sisterhood, encouragement, and peer support. Women living with any type of diabetes are warmly welcome. Free. Email sara@diabetessisters.org or visit diabetessisters.org/pods-part-diabetessisters-meetups for more.

SATURDAY/JUNE 8

Caregiver Workshop. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Join this Caregiver Workshop with Pete Shrock, nationally known grief and crisis responder, focusing on building resilience through caregiving challenges. This is a free event, and all caregivers and family members are invited to attend. Lunch will be provided. Visit insightmcc.org, to register or contact Lindsey Vajpeyi at 703-204-4664 or lindsey.vajpeyi@insightmcc.org.

TUESDAY/JUNE 11

Park Authority Summer Jobs. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. This year the Fairfax County Park Authority's Rec-PAC summer camp program will operate at 45 elementary school locations around Fairfax County on weekdays from July 1-Aug. 8, 8:15 a.m.-3:45 p.m. Applicants are required to bring an original Social Security Card and a DMV photo ID. Only those who are 18 years of age and older will be considered. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec-pac/jobs or email Recpac@fairfaxcounty.gov.

FRIDAY/JUNE 14

Application Deadline: Fire Academy. The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department is now accepting applications for its Girls Fire and Rescue Academy summer camp, which will take place July 11-13, 2019. The Academy is open to female students who will be in grades 7-12 in the upcoming 2019-2020 school year. Participants must be a Fairfax County resident. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire-ems.

SATURDAY/JUNE 15

Volunteer Habitat Heroes. 10 a.m.-noon at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Volunteers will remove non-native invasive plants to protect native species and support wildlife habitat and will use tools to pull or cut invasive plants in the natural areas. Volunteers may take part in a small planting of native trees and shrubs to help the forest regenerate. Volunteers must be at least 13 years old, and those 15 years and younger must be with an adult. For more information or to volunteer, contact Kiersten Conley at 703-631-0013.

MONDAY-FRIDAY/JUNE 24-28

Young Actors Workshop. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Westfield High School. This camp is for rising 1st-7th grade students. For more than a decade, this dramatic arts camp has offered students the chance to sing, dance and participate in theatre games and performances. Through words, music and movement, students engage in activities that culminate in a presentation of songs and dances from popular Broadway shows. Visit www.westfieldtheatre.com to register.

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The Weak That Was



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

All's well that ends well.
 The fortnight or so from you-know-where has finally ended and I am here to write that my warranty has been extended for another two months. The CT scan showed no tumor growth or movement. The "promise" of immunotherapy so far is keeping its 'promise' – keeping the tumors stable.
 Throughout my extremely fortunate cancer experience, I have felt reasonably well and manifested few symptoms/side effects; at least the kind of symptoms/side effects: shortness of breath, coughing, expectorating blood, mind-numbing neuropathy and headaches, among others, about which my oncologist regularly inquires.
 Generally speaking then, my health status has always been about the tale of the tape – to invoke a boxing reference – meaning the diagnostic scans: brain MRI, CT scan of the neck/lower abdomen, PET scan and the initial X-Ray which started the whole adventure, to determine my fitness for duty, so to speak.

It is not until my oncologist shares/summarizes the radiologist's findings – and occasionally shows us the actual computer images themselves, that yours truly/Team Lourie knows where we stand.
 And, where we stand typically is where we are sitting, in a cramped exam room, face to face with the man who holds my life in the palm of his hand – or more specifically, in the words that he chooses and the gesture/body language he exhibits. It's not exactly "Bath Fitter," but "the reveal" is imminent.
 It never gets easy, but it does get easier to endure this kind of potentially life-altering/life-ending moment. Though the familiarity of it hasn't dulled the pain, it has enabled us to balance the pros and cons, up and downs and all-arounds, as we anticipate the words we are about to hear.

During most of these post-scan visits, we've exhaled in relief, but we have had our share of disappointment.

On one occasion, back in late July 2013, I was hospitalized for a week when my lungs accumulated 4.5 liters of fluid, among more significant internal problems (lung collapsing).

Externally, I was unable to speak more than a few words before needing to regroup. As a matter of humorous fact, when my long-time oncology nurse, Ron, saw me that infusion day, he thought I "was a goner," since my oxygen level was so low.

Within a few hours, I was a 'goner' in an ambulance to Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, Md. where I was eventually admitted. Two days later, a thoracic surgeon operated, and a day or two after that, my lung amazingly reinflated.

As a result, in my head and in my gut, (though I'm no Jethro Gibbs from NCIS), when I show up for my infusions and for my post-scan appointments, there's always a part of me that thinks I might not be spending that evening in my own bed.

When you're a cancer patient/survivor, and this kind of whisking off not to Buffalo but instead to the local hospital affiliated with your HMO has happened once, it's only a matter of time (it's impossible not to believe it's inevitable when you've been staged a IV) before it will happen again. I'm not being negative. I'm just saying.

As we sit and wait at home for my oncologist to email us the scan results, or whether we sit and wait in the on-site exam room, I wouldn't say our respective lives pass before us, but I will certainly admit to the total unpleasantness of it.

That being said, we're the lucky ones. There are nearly 160,000 lung cancer patients who succumb to this terrible disease every year who aren't nearly so lucky.

So when I hear the words "stable" from my oncologist, I am humbled as much as I am relieved, that I have lived to fight another eight weeks until my next scan is scheduled and my next fortnight is fought.

And that's how I live my life: in increments. Increments which I'm grateful to have. It may not be ideal, but it's a living, and it sure beats a dying.

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

A Call For Peace

By Nick Soto



HWPL Volunteers outside of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C. - Hundreds gathered at U.S. Capitol on Saturday, May 25 to mark the 6th Annual Commemoration of the Declaration of World Peace. The anniversary was marked by a peace walk that began outside the U.S. Capitol, where participants urged heads of state from 193 countries, political leaders, and community leaders to support the Declaration of Peace and Cessation of War, or, the DPCW.

A diverse group of over 500 citizens from the D.C. metropolitan area and representing 21 countries walked for peace in conjunction with 52 other major cities including Boston and Atlanta. Volunteers from the D.C. Heavenly Culture, World Peace and Restoration of Light (HWPL) have also been working in various countries within the Caribbean such as Haiti, Belize, Guyana and Grenada to help host local peace walks in each respective country.



Peace Walks were held in major cities like Busan, South Korea

Many participants wore traditional clothing to display their cultural differences and to convey that many countries, cultures, and ideologies are actively working together to achieve peace through the DPCW. Individuals from countries such as Madagascar, Guatemala, and India held large, colorful peace signs and props, and chanted, "The people, united, will never be divided!"

Sara Fawn, an HWPL volunteer, said she attended the event to ensure she could be part of a movement that is bigger than herself. "That's why we have all come together today to urge our elected officials — the public servants that have been put in position by the people and for the people — to support the DPCW. We all want the same thing."

The DPCW serves as the solution for worldwide peace and conflict resolution, and is a legal framework for spreading the culture of peace on a local, national and international level.



Citizens outside of the U.S. Supreme Court urging the enactment of the DPCW

"I think our differences are what unite us - it's our strength. There is no religion, no nation that doesn't want peace" says local Woodbridge native, Michael Sarpong.

The DPCW has already been enacted as a National Declaration in various countries around the world including Antigua, eSwatini, and Seychelles. It is currently being presented to pass as law through the United Nations, and citizens around the world are urging their legislators to support the DPCW on a local and national level.

The group sponsoring the event is the "Heavenly Culture, World Peace and Restoration of Light (HWPL)". The organization was founded in 2013 to build a worldwide network of people dedicated to achieving global peace in communities around the world.

HWPL is a peace NGO associated with the United Nation's Economic and Social Council (UNESCO), as well as the UN Department of Global Communications. Amidst rising global tensions, HWPL is engaging political and community leaders, journalists, and young people draw attention to its cause.