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Marin Heberlig holding Whiskey: The Heberlig family of McLean got their first and only dog in May of 2020. They named their Bernedoodle Whiskey. Whiskey loves playing in the backyard, swimming, and meeting new friends. The Heberlig family enjoys taking Whiskey on long walks, bringing him to the beach, and cuddling with him in bed.

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PET CONNECTION

'Unbreakable Bond'

Chocolate labrador Taylor has been with her owner, Cherith Harrison of McLean, for three years. At five and a half years-old, Taylor was adopted in the summer of 2017.

"It had been two and a half years since I'd lost my last dog, Rocky at age 15. I desperately wanted to adopt a dog and I had been approved by the NOVA lab rescue group - but I was on a waiting list because I lived in a high rise apartment building."

At a barbeque, Harrison received an email from NOVA Lab Rescue saying they were still finding her a dog. She mentioned it to a friend and he happened to know someone giving a chocolate lab away.

"Three days later, I picked Taylor up and she was mine! She is the sweetest girl - I am so lucky!"

Senior Turtle Yertle Thriving both Indoors and Outdoors.

As a senior member of the family, Yertle is older than both Megan Yu of McLean and her younger brother. He's not a grandparent though, instead, Yertle is a turtle from Chinatown, New York. Although his exact species isn't known, Yu says Yertle was predicted to stay small.

"When my parents got Yertle, the person selling to them told them Yertle would stay tiny forever. However, he lied. Yertle grew quite a bit."

Turtles aren't very common pets but according to Yu, they're one of the best. She lists her favorite aspects of owning Yertle.

"He moves slowly so he can't run away, we don't have to walk him, and we don't have to feed him in



Shortly after arriving in Virginia from New Jersey, Taylor and owner Cherith Harrison pause for a picture.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



In his tank, Yertle submerges himself underwater. His tank has rocks above ground and plenty of open water for him to swim around.

the winter because he hibernates. We don't take him out much but sometimes we let him walk around in the backyard."

— JESSICA FENG

Max Scherzer Signs Baseball for Women's Education Fundraiser

There is an opportunity to own a baseball signed by Nationals pitcher Max Scherzer with "2019 World Series Champs!" and at the same time support women's and girls' education. With the cancellation of McLean Branch AAUW's Used Book Sale, its annual charitable fundraiser, a substitute fundraiser will feature the Scherzer baseball opportunity along with a request for contributions to support education and local scholarships for women. In 2019 the proceeds of the book sale enabled the branch to fund scholarships for women returning to college at George Mason, Marymount, and Trinity universities and also support women's education through AAUW Funds, a 501(c)(3) entity.

Donors will get on base with a contribution of \$20 or more and also have the opportunity to hit a home run and own the baseball signed by Max Scherzer. In fact, three donors will have the opportunity because Max gave the branch three signed balls. For each \$20 contribution, the person's name will be listed. Multiples of \$20 will enhance the opportunity,



Donors will get on base with a contribution of \$20 or more and also have the opportunity to own the baseball signed by Max Scherzer.

and the owners will be selected randomly.

Contributions can be made until Aug. 31 through GoFundMe at <https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/aauw-mclean-areas-home-run-fundraiser-for-women-and-education>. Donations may also be sent with full name, address, and phone number to McLean Branch AAUW (American Association of University Women) at P.O. Box 1002, McLean, VA 22101. A receipt will be sent for each contribution. The \$40,000 goal will enable the branch to fund the scholarships and AAUW fellowships and grants as in the past. Last year's book sale netted \$47,000.

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(File Photo) Fairfax County School Board.

County Pivots Back to Virtual Learning

Superintendent sought Board consensus.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Members of the Fairfax County School Board reached a consensus during its July 21 Work Session and accepted Superintendent Scott Brabrand's recommendation to begin the 2020-21 school year 100 percent virtually. The surprise item on the Board's agenda came six days after the deadline passed for students, teachers and school-based technology specialists (SBTS) to respond to two Instruction Options for the 2020-21 school year, in-person or online for the academic school year.

Brabrand said, "The bottom line is this. We must place the health and safety of our teachers, our students and our families first. The COVID-19 pandemic looks much different than it did even three weeks ago. Then, the science told us we could offer in-person instruction safely if we took the right precautions."

BRABRAND shared the situational analysis that led him to the recommendation starting with



Scott Brabrand, Superintendent, Fairfax County Public Schools



Karl Frisch, Providence District Representative



Megan McLaughlin, Braddock District Representative



Rachna Sizemore Heizer, Member-at-Large

PHOTOS COURTESY FCPS

health conditions, the impact of those conditions on operations, technology readiness, and more. "There is a record number of new (COVID-19) cases in the country and the mortality rate is rising. Governor Northam stated last week that he would be prepared to go back to Phase Two if needed. Last night, multiple health officials and Maryland's most populous jurisdictions asked the state to reconsider its in-person activities. We have also seen today that the U.S. Surgeon General has said that transmission rates must be lowered before schools can reopen. Just hours ago, the CDC reported

data that the actual number of coronavirus infections is probably 10 times higher than the reported cases in Fairfax County. We have seen some declines... But more recently, the decrease has stopped. Our numbers have remained steady or sometimes have increased each day." Brabrand said several regional school divisions recently announced virtual starts to their school year due to those concerns, including Arlington and Manassas schools. Brabrand added that one-third of FCPS employees live outside Fairfax County, with the number for teachers at 37 percent and principals, assistant

principals and directors of activities at 40 percent. "We know that the coronavirus does not recognize boundaries, and we have thousands of employees who live in other jurisdictions but come in daily to Fairfax." Another reason Brabrand said he sought the Board's consensus to open 100 percent virtually was that health conditions impacted operations. Data received the week before from the Enrollment Form Choice revealed 60 percent of students preferred in-person learning, yet only 48 percent of teachers signed that choice as their preference. Brabrand said substitute applications

were down by a third compared to last year, and ADA accommodation requests for teachers with medical needs soared to 1522 in June. "Ten percent of the teaching workforces may not return in person... This number remains fluid and it's expected to increase throughout the year." Brabrand said there were not enough teachers to meet in-person student needs.

AS FOR TECHNOLOGY READINESS, Brabrand assured the Board that when the students return in September, there will be "robust virtual instruction that will be the pride of this country." He underscored a new help desk for children, a project team, and directions in eight languages to use the new computers. "We have ways to make the links easier in Google and Blackboard Collaborate ... We can share with the Board later about how we're going to teach teachers best instructional practices in virtual instruction." He said the division now had the latest updates for load capacity, noting that Blackboard Collaborate was now in the cloud, and there would not be security issues either as they fixed that.

Highlights of School Board Member Questions

Q: We've got a significant portion of our school staff population that has not yet been surveyed for their views on returning to work and are obviously impacted in a virtual environment. What considerations are being made for them, and when can we expect to plan for them? (Karl Frisch, Providence District Representative)

A: We're looking at ways that we can ensure that our employees can come to work safely and engage in social distancing... typically, because the current phase three that we're in. And so, we would certainly want those employees to

come into work and work on the site. Those employees who could continue to telework can certainly continue to take advantage of our telework regulation. And then looking at ways that we could utilize that for different functions of the school system. We also know that with our lack of distribution. We've held back a portion of approximately 3000 laptops for our school-based support employees who can also engage in and support things and activities in the classroom. (Sean McDonald, interim assistant superintendent, Department of Human Resources)

Q: I need to know more about what we're going to do to make sure that we can have

a robust education for our students, not the ones who are going to log on all the time, but the ones who are disconnected. (Rachna Sizemore Heizer, Member-at-Large)

A: I will work to provide that; I appreciate it and we are going to find ways to connect with those that have not been connected from the spring and to reconnect with them, and I'll be glad to bring updates to the Board on how that will be. (Superintendent Scott Brabrand)

Q: What are we going to do in partnership with the county to help our working families, so that they have a way to have their

children be safe for those who have to return to their jobs, and do it in light of this decision? (Megan McLaughlin, Braddock District Representative)

A: We (will) continue to have conversations with SACC and our early childhood.

I recognize that virtual may make the needs for childcare even greater... We're working on childcare with in-person, and when we pivot to in-person, we still want to offer our teachers and all of our school-based staff...the opportunity for the four-day in-person instruction. (Superintendent Scott Brabrand)

Virginia Is for Dog Lovers, Too

December designated Puppy Mill Awareness Month.

SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Recognizing Virginia's proud agricultural heritage, its citizens' proud tradition of animal stewardship, and the value and service of dogs as companion animals, in law enforcement, the military, and in therapeutic situations, the Commonwealth will recognize December as "Puppy Mill Awareness" Month for the first time this December, and in each succeeding year.

The Senate's Joint Resolution (SJ68), introduced by Senator Linwood Lewis Jr (D-6), of Accomack, which passed the 2020 General Assembly by unanimous vote in both the House and Senate, notes the jeopardy to these traditions brought by out-of-state, large-scale commercial dog breeding operations, commonly known as puppy mills, which produce more than two million dogs each year into the pet trade. Many of these dogs come into the Commonwealth from Ohio and mid-western states and many are often underdeveloped, sick, or suffer from genetic deformities or behavioral defects, including poor socialization.

In designating Puppy Mill Awareness Month, legislators resolve that Virginians are encour-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Puppy mills produce about 2 million dogs annually in the United States

aged to observe the month "by supporting efforts to raise awareness of puppy mills, support rescue organizations, and promote responsible dog breeding and responsible pet adoption."

During December, public shelters and animal

advocacy groups will promote public education and better understanding of such questions as, "What is a puppy mill?"; "Where do puppy mill puppies end up?"; "What to expect when adopting a puppy?"; and "What can you do to help?"

Puppy Stores Face Higher Scrutiny

New law mandates regular inspections.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

During its January 2020 session, the Virginia General Assembly passed several animal protection bills, including one to establish inspection criteria and regular inspection of retail stores which sell dogs and cats for profit. Animal advocates and consumers had long sought better protections for animals after incidents of poor treatment and on-going buyer reports of poor health in animals purchased in stores. A bill sponsored by Senator Dave Marsden, D-37, found favor in this year's Assembly; passed by the Senate 38-2, by the House 64-35, and signed by Governor Northam. Most provisions go into effect on July 1, 2022, after the criteria development process.

The State Veterinarian's office is charged with adopting a set of comprehensive regulations governing the keeping of dogs and cats by any pet shop. The regulations are to be aligned with existing provisions for keeping companion animals in the Commonwealth; agricultural animals are excluded. Standards of adequate care will address exercise, feed, water, shelter, space, treatment, and proper cleaning and lighting, and provide guidance on how to comply.

The standard criteria developed through the Commonwealth's regulatory process will include an opportunity for interested members of



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Pups seized from Manassas pet shop found adopted homes.

the public to comment prior to final adoption.

Of the hundreds of retail pet stores located in Virginia, only 17 across the Commonwealth now sell puppies and kittens. Instead, many stores selling pet merchandise and services, but not dogs and cats, have agreements with their local pet rescue organizations to display animals in need of adoption.

Under the new regulations, State Animal Welfare Inspectors will conduct at least one unannounced inspection of each pet shop selling dogs and cats annually. Pet shops are subject to losing or limiting their required registration, or probation, for violations. Local animal police and animal control officers continue to have authority to prosecute for violation of animal care and treatment laws.

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
vienna@connectionnewspapers.com

Kemal Kurspahic
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

Andrea Worker
Contributing Writer
aworker@connectionnewspapers.com

Jean Card
Production Editor
jcard@connectionnewspapers.com

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

Don Park
Display Advertising
703-778-9431
donpark@connectionnewspapers.com

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

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

Classified & Employment Advertising
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
[@MaryKimm](https://twitter.com/MaryKimm)

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

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

CIRCULATION
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



PET CONNECTION



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Laura and Sharon Lautz of Vienna with their dog Bolt.

Playing with Mazie and Bolt

Laura, Colin, Sharon, and Aiden Lautz of Vienna are the proud owners of two pets. They rescued their dog in 2017 from a shelter in New York. His name was originally Humbolt, but the Lautzs shortened it to Bolt. When the Lautz Family saw Bolt in the Shelter they immediately knew they could not leave without him. Bolt is a three year old mixed breed dog. The family's other pet is

a six year old tabby cat named Mazie. The Lautzs saw Mazie at a pet store in 2014, and Aiden, 11, persuaded his parents to buy her. Aiden and his twin sister Sharon love to play with both Mazie and Bolt in the yard. Sharon's favorite part about her two pets is that they are both very cute!

— MARIN HEBERLIG

MCLEAN PEOPLE AND PETS

Unconditional Love

Jane Fennell, 17, of McLean and her family are the proud owners of four mixed breed dogs. Her oldest dog, Cookie, is 14 and was added to the family in 2008. Jane's second oldest dog, Sam, is four years old. Most recently, in 2018, Jane adopted two more dogs through Wolf Trap Animal Rescue. Those two year old dogs are named Beans and Sweet Pea. Jane's favorite activity with her dogs is going on walks in Great Falls Park. Her dogs also enjoy swimming in the ocean when Jane brings them to the beach. Jane's favorite part about being a pet owner is the unconditional love that she shares with her dogs.

— MARIN HEBERLIG



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Sweet Pea and Beans going for a drive.



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Spencer Stouffer, 17, of McLean with his dog Rambo.

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Obituary

Alfred (Fred) Mathias Erling

went to be with the Lord Sunday morning, July 19, 2020. He was 90 years young.

Fred was born on February 26, 1930 in Cumberland, MD. He joined the US Naval Reserves in 1947 and moved to Washington DC. He attended Strayer Business College. He took a job at Loews Theaters as an usher, and before long became an Assistant Manager. His career was interrupted in 1952, when he was called up for active duty during the Korean War. He served his country well and was honorably discharged.

When he returned in 1957, he became the Eastern Seaboard Division Manager for Loews Theaters. MGM was a subsidiary of Loews, giving Fred the opportunity to meet an array of Hollywood stars. He helped launch countless world premieres.

Fred's contacts extended throughout the government and many sports leagues. He was a lifelong Washington Redskins fan. Fred served on many government committees including the Presidents Inaugural and Beautification Committee. He also served as a liaison between Loews Hotels in the White House. In 1978, Loews sold the Washington, DC theaters and Fred was transferred to Fort Lauderdale where he spent the remainder of his career. He was thrilled about that because he was an excellent golfer. Some called him "Fairway Freddie". He and Mary moved to Great Falls, VA, in 1995 to spend more time with family. He made many friends there. Fred loved people. Wherever he went, he would say, "what a beautiful smile". He was quite the dresser. It was not unusual to see him in shirt, tie and cufflinks no matter the occasion; including his workouts. He will forever be remembered for his signature Jovan Musk. He loved his Cadillacs, but most of all, he loved "His Mary." Fred was a peacemaker. His famous line, "Hey Gang, Just Enjoy". Fred will be interred in Arlington National Cemetery. Date unknown at this time. He is survived by his loving wife, Mary Erling, daughters Camille Williams, Lauren Mencia, Barbara Dilday, and his son, Gregory Erling. He has 9 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

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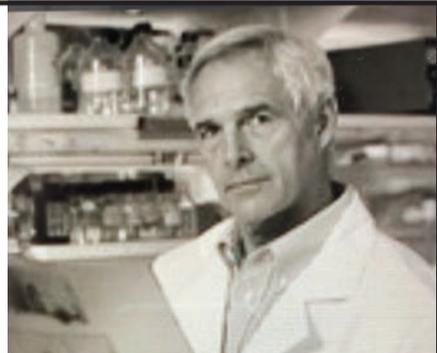
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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.

-Werner Heisenberg

Vienna Man Pleads Guilty to Swatting Conspiracy

A Vienna man pleaded guilty July 21 to charges related to his role in a conspiracy that conducted multiple swatting events targeting journalists, a Virginia university, a historic Virginia church, and a former cabinet official.

According to court documents, John William Kirby Kelley, 19, conspired with John Cameron Denton, a former leader of the Atomwaffen Division in Texas, and others to conduct "swatting" calls. Swatting is a harassment tactic that involves deceiving dispatchers into believing that a person or persons are in imminent danger of death or bodily harm and causing the dispatchers to send police and emergency services to an unwitting third party's address.

Kelley managed the online chatroom where conspirators chose targets and orchestrated the swatting calls. Many of the conspirators held white supremacist views and targeted individuals because they were motivated by racial animus. Kelley communicated with these white supremacists and used racial epithets.

Kelley is a former student at Old Dominion University. In early November 2018, he asked conspirators to swat Old Dominion University, which conspirators did ultimately swat on Nov. 29 and Dec. 4, 2018. In response to the bomb threat on Nov. 29, 2018, university officials issued a shelter in place order and law enforcement were forced to search and clear every building on campus.

During the course of the conspiracy, members placed at least 134 swatting calls to jurisdictions across the country. In addition to the swatting calls against Old Dominion University, conspirators conducted two additional swatting calls in the Eastern District of Virginia, including a call to a former Cabinet official living in Northern Virginia in January 2019 and the Alfred Street Baptist Church in November 2018.

Kelley pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit an offense against the United States, interstate threats to injure. He faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison when sentenced on November 24. Actual sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after taking into account the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

G. Zachary Terwilliger, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, and James A. Dawson, Special Agent in Charge, Criminal Division, FBI Washington Field Office, made the announcement after Senior U.S. District Judge Liam O'Grady accepted the plea. Assistant U.S. Attorney Carina A. Cuellar is prosecuting the case.

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Wait. What?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

"Thyroid cancer." Again? I thought the point of last week's surgical biopsy was to genetically-sequence a lung cancer tumor. Now you tell me the radiologist/pathologist found more thyroid cancer. As it already has happened, my oncologist - in coordination with my endocrinologist, said that my most recent CT scan showed "excellent results" (from my previous thyroid cancer treatment - which ended with radioiodine therapy), and furthermore noted that the thyroid cancer was confined to my neck. Yet a few weeks later, the thyroid cancer is back in my lungs. What happened? Or more importantly perhaps, what didn't happen?

Well, if I understand what my oncologist said to us over the phone on Wednesday, disappointing as it initially sounded, it might not be at all bad. Apparently, the dose of radioiodine (nuclear medicine) I received had been modified (reduced) due to my pre-existing kidney function issue. Since this modification was not a "normal" dose, it didn't locate all the thyroid cancer tumors; the smaller ones, that is, so the presumption was that all the thyroid cancer had been found, identified and eliminated. Until last week's biopsy found otherwise. What does it all mean? I'll try to explain, although I'm sure I'll get lost in the science somewhere.

I still have two types of cancer: non small cell lung cancer and papillary thyroid cancer. However, I may have thyroid cancer in the lungs which actually may be better than having lung cancer in the lungs. The reason being: papillary thyroid cancer is curable whereas non small cell lung cancer is not (it is treatable though). Moreover, thyroid cancer is slow-growing and at present, so small that there may not be any treatment to follow. To learn more definitively what is happening in my body, I'm scheduled for a PET scan this week and then another surgical biopsy the following week. This time the biopsy will be a lung biopsy. This will get tissue from within the lung (a bit of a lung-collapsing risk), not from the periphery (the lymph nodes). Presumably, this biopsy will provide some clarity.

According to my oncologist, I have a dozen or so tumors in my lungs, some of which may be thyroid cancer. Unfortunately, it's not practical or prudent to biopsy all of them so a complete assessment will not be possible. Therefore, an educated guess will have to be made: continue to treat the lung cancer with immunotherapy or not, and/or only treat the thyroid cancer which given its small size and slow-growing nature wouldn't require any treatment - for now. And might not for years.

But if there are more tumors that are lung cancer - which the doctors can't confirm, and I'm not receiving any treatment for them (because of the thyroid cancer diagnosis), won't my lung cancer tumors grow? And since one medicine doesn't work against two types of cancer, I may not be receiving treatment for the cancer that's really active and receiving treatment for the cancer that is not active. And the only way to find out what types of cancer exist is to biopsy each and every tumor - which is not going to happen. As my oncologist said in response to our characterization of this damned if I don't and damned if I do scenario as being very complicated: "Mr. Lourie has always been a complicated patient."

As I review this column and reconsider what my oncologist has advised going forward, it's not only complicated, it's confusing and a bit disorienting. What exactly do I have and what are the risks, and more importantly: what is my life expectancy? Nevertheless, as my oncologist said: "I'm glad we did this biopsy." Me, too.

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



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Direct: (703) 606-7901
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