

CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station

SENIOR LIVING

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'Renovation Will Completely Transform this Facility'

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(From left), Priscilla Kneisley, Tuck Wilson and Andrew Carle break ground on The Virginian's massive renovation.

PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION
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Donated Practice Gear Gets Hayfield Hawks Jumping

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Donated Football Practice Gear Gets Players Jumping at Hayfield

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

Parent turns a donation into a lesson on positivity for others.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The bake sales and car washes that provide funding in the past for extra sports equipment has fallen victim to the pandemic this year so in stepped a parent at Hayfield Secondary School, and the team spent Monday afternoon, March 23, hitting brand new tackling dummies, blocking sleds and crossover cushions to make this football season work.

“Attention players, what you see here is a generous donation,” said Coach Eric Henderson to all the Hayfield Hawks players on the field. “You’ve got to understand, this makes you better,” the coach said, making the connection between practice and actual games on the football field.

Then Janelle Lei-Sam, the mother of one of the players, grabbed the mike. She’s the president and CEO of Kristen Stevens, the company that made it all happen with a donation of \$21,000 worth of field equipment that the team needed. She made a lesson out of it for the team. “My point is, anytime you get a chance to make a positive step in someone’s life, you’ve got to jump in,” she said.



New jumping pads are there to improve the line shuffle.



Players bring in the new tackling dummies.



One of the player’s mother, Janelle Lei-Sam, has a few words of encouragement for the team. She worked with her company to make the donation happen.

Lei-Sam’s son Amani, who is a linebacker on the team, got the honor of cutting the ribbon around the blocking sled before the team broke up into practice squads and put the new equipment to use. One of the old pads they used before showed all the signs of wear and tear with padding leaking out and duct tape covering holes. The team did not have the tackling dummies and blocking sleds in previous years, so to get that practice in, they tackled each other which sometimes led to injuries that could have been avoided. Coach Henderson mentioned that he felt it was better to spend the money he’s allotted from the county on helmets and uniforms instead of tackling dummies.

There isn’t enough in the budget for both.

“With all this new equipment, practices will go a lot smoother,” said assistant coach Terrell Wheeler, who played on the Hawks when he was a senior in 2016.

All the Fairfax County high school football teams are playing this spring, which is a big change from previous years, and the bleachers are not as full on game night due to the measures taken to avoid spreading COVID-19.

“In the middle of this pandemic, this is something positive,” Lei-Sam said.

The Hawks are 0-4 this season so far, but that may change now that the practices will be upgraded.

Ten Enthralling Minutes

BY KAITLYN (KATIE) WOOD
CENTREVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

P Schuy wants everyone to know that she is not a part of the triangle, her dress is yellow not red, and that she now has found her voice in Robinson Secondary School’s production of Dear Diary...Love, P Schuy. Inspired by a fanfiction-like thread of tweets about the famous third Schuyler sister, Peggy Schuyler, it puts American history into a modern filter. Coming in at only ten minutes of length, the show is a part of Robinson’s 10-in-10 productions, and more specifically one picked for the theme of “giving a voice to the female perspective.”

Constantly alluding to Lin-Manuel Miranda’s musical phenomenon, Hamilton, the show gave the seemingly neglected Schuyler Sister, Peggy Schuyler, a mighty voice while also giving Hamilton fans a fresh view on the story. The cast and crew skillfully addressed the many difficulties in Peggy’s life like her frustrations with sisters Angelica and Eliza, and how unlike her sisters, she was not in the love triangle between her sisters and Alexander Hamilton. Within all these seemingly

dark topics, a satirical style was used which kept the mood light and upbeat. The quick pacing of the show also helped attribute to the character’s personality and helped to keep the show engaging. At its core, the show was about Peggy’s self-exploration.

Emma Fleck portrayed Peggy Schuyler, or P Schuy; a nickname Peggy created for herself. She created a one woman show, and Fleck shined greatly with her ability to create variation in a repetitive script. The energy of each diary entry heightened as she spoke about her day-to-day encounters. Showing further understanding of her character, she embraced the vibrant youth that radiates from Peggy’s yellow dress with exuberant facial expressions, artistic phrasing, and an overarching sense of wonder. Fleck was also able to seamlessly incorporate parody-like lyrics of Hamilton songs into a spoken format.

Being an at-home production, technical aspects of a show are limited, but creativity in those aspects are pivotal. Robinson’s tech team of students Beau Baldassari, Abby

Robinson Secondary presents ‘Dear Diary...Love, P Schuy.’

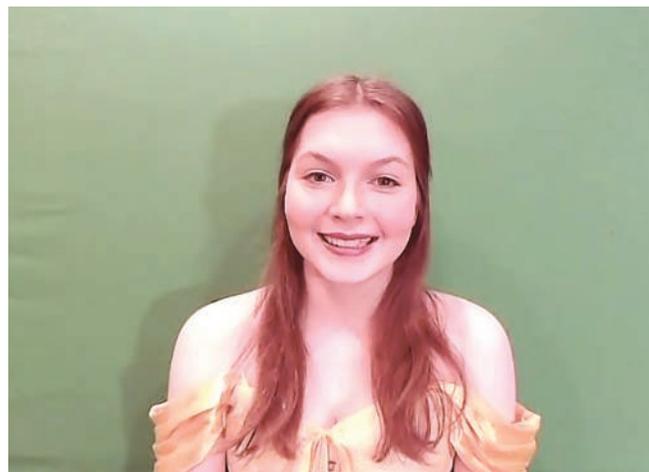


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Emma Fleck as Peggy Schuyler in Robinson Secondary’s ‘Dear Diary.’

Camp, and Harry Glicklin showed just that with their attention to detail and innovative choices. Filmed on Zoom, the show had clear audio and video which was an impressive accomplishment and refreshing to see. Tech also made excellent use of green-screen Hamilton sets as the background to create the show’s environment. A tech standout, Beau Baldassari created the unique versions

of Hamilton songs that suited Peggy’s perspective. Baldassari’s contributions also helped identify when in the plot of the Hamilton musical it was taking place.

The most notable moments in this production were truly when the work of the tech and actor were combined, showcasing all of their talents. More specifically, the end product of Emma Fleck’s acting and Harry Glicklin’s costuming was accurate to both the representation of Peggy Schuyler in the Hamilton musical and to the time period Peggy was alive in.

All the way through the final moments of the show the energy never dissipated, and it stood as a shock when it concluded after ten enthralling minutes. In the end, Dear Diary...Love, P Schuy was a lighthearted show that was able to bring joy in these troubling times.

The video can be watched at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Os5b7N2fE-vY&feature=youtu.be>



Artist's rendition of the new front plaza at The Virginian senior-living community in Fairfax.



(From left) Sharon Jessup, Curt Schaller, Michael Feinstein, Dalia Palchik, Priscilla Kneisley, Tuck Wilson and Andrew Carle wield shovels during The Virginian's groundbreaking.

'Renovation Will Completely Transform this Facility'

The Virginian in Fairfax is undergoing \$56.5 million revamping.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

It's not every day you see a 99-year-old woman hoisting a shovelful of dirt at a groundbreaking. Yet, there was Tuck Wilson, joining in the ceremonial start of the renovation of The Virginian, a senior-living community in Fairfax.

But then, she has a vested interest in the place – it's been her home since it opened, 40 years ago. She even planted a tree out front in memory of her late husband, Hank. The couple moved there after he retired from the Air Force, and their daughter now lives in the building's healthcare section.

"The employees are like family," said Wilson. "I've seen their children graduate from high school and college, marry and bring their grandchildren here. I know all the residents here, too, and I like them all. I make cards for everyone in the healthcare center – and I used to deliver mail, which was fun. I took balance class in the gym and played golf, until a few years ago. But tennis was my main thing."

Wilson – who's sharp as a tack and, as a former military wife, wears high heels, a dress and pearls every day – was president of the Residents Assn. and heads The Virginian's library. And she's so beloved there that, in the revamped lobby/library, the new study will be called, "Tuck's Study."

The \$56.5 million renovation should take 18 months and will transform the existing building into new, luxury, independent-living apartments with a continuum of care, including assisted living, memory care, long-term nursing and skilled nursing. The seven-story, 367,000-square-foot building will have four wings featuring 155 independent-living apartments, 56 assisted living and 38 memory care residences. And it'll all be LEED-certified.

It sits on 32 wooded acres along the Acotink Creek, yet is just a few minutes from Fairfax City. The facility already offers a wide variety of activities, both on and off site, but the renovation will bring even more

amenities that Baby Boomers expect as part of an active-aging lifestyle.

These include multiple dining venues, a wine cellar, sports bar, indoor golf simulator, a fitness center with trainers and state-of-the-art equipment, a theater, entertainment venues, three salons, technology areas, spa and an indoor swimming pool. Outdoor areas will provide space for pickleball, bocce ball, a putting green, dog park and fire pit. There'll also be a front plaza with benches and a waterfall.

Elements Hospitality is doing the interior improvements, and Wohlsen Construction, the exterior. Although some work inside began in late 2020, the pandemic delayed the official groundbreaking until March 11, when it was safer, and when the outside work was beginning.

ATTENDEES included Supervisor Dalia Palchik (D-Providence), plus representatives of The Virginian, operating partner Life Care Services (LCS), and Focus Healthcare Partners, which owns the facility. Curt Schaller, with Focus, was the first speaker.

Thanking Palchik for working closely with them, Schaller said, "This is the most remarkable project I've ever been a part of. It's a beautiful building with a great reputation for quality of care. But it's 40 years old, and this was an opportunity to be a leader in this industry. The renovation will completely transform this facility into the premier, continuum-of-care operation on the East Coast." "I live right down the road, in Mantua, and I'm delighted to be here today," said Palchik. "You've always been a beloved part of our community, and I'm excited about the new partnership [between Focus and LCS] – and, also, about the pickleball court and Zen garden.

"I'm honored to join you and meet with you, so you feel connected to every part of Fairfax County and the Providence District. And I'm looking forward to the year ahead and seeing what this will bring to the residents and the community."

Since The Virginian opened in December



Tuck Wilson has lived 40 years at The Virginian.

"I took balance class in the gym and played golf, until a few years ago. But tennis was my main thing."

— Tuck Wilson, 99

1980, said Andrew Carle, its executive director, "It's improved the quality of life for thousands of older adults, across two generations. And today represents not only the start of our third generation of service, but a complete reimagining of literally every square inch of the inside, outside and 32 acres of grounds."

Speaking in front of the building, Carle said, "Where we're standing will be built a beautiful park where residents, families and friends can relax among water features, trees

and a pergola or enjoy our outdoor grill, putting green and dog park, 'Central Bark.'

He then listed the many amenities the building will contain, including five dining venues, two movie theaters, art studios and a full-service health spa and fitness center with indoor pool. There'll also be high-speed internet, voice-recognition technology, circadian lighting for the memory care residents, electric-car charging stations and state-of-the-art, indoor air-quality and infection-control technology.

Noting that 2020 was the toughest year in the community's history, Carle said, "We're proud that 100 percent of our eligible residents received the [COVID-19] vaccine in January, and more than 80 percent of our employees – when the national average in nursing homes is 40-50 percent. It's one thing to put up a sign saying, 'Heroes work here,' and another to actually see them working here daily – and it's something that'll never be forgotten."

He then thanked all those involved with The Virginian, plus the residents and their families. And he praised the residents' strength and resilience throughout the pandemic. "On many days, they sustained us," said Carle. "They told us they'd lived through wars, the Depression, polio and the turbulent '60s, and that it was going to be all right. And they thanked us for our efforts in keeping them safe. So we rightfully dedicate this new Virginian to them, and we look forward to serving the next generation of seniors."

LAST AT THE PODIUM was Tuck Wilson, who reminisced about her time there, yet said she likes progress and is enjoying watching the renovation take shape. "During the pandemic, the employees slid in on icy roads and did things not in their job descriptions," she said. "They did what they were mandated to do – and they were here. But one of these days, this thing is going to pass, so I think I'll stick around to see what the end of this story will be."

The Virginian is at 9229 Arlington Blvd. in Fairfax. For more information, go to liveat-thevirginian.com.

zMOD Approved at Board of Supervisors

BY JEFF MCKAY, CHAIRMAN



What happened? The Board approved zMOD, a wholesale change to our zoning ordinance for the first time in over 40 years. This process included over 100 meetings for Board members and the community. It was well past time that our ordinance was updated, modernized, and made more user-friendly.

Why? The goal of zMOD was to create a cleaner and more straightforward document that is more accessible to the general public in understanding the County's zoning ordinance.

Anything else? The Board of Supervisors made adjustments to, in my opinion, address many of the concerns. This was a major undertaking, but most community concern was over only three changes to the ordinance.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ALUs): ALUs allow people to house additional residents in their existing home while still adhering to County regulations, so long as no exterior changes to the home are made and parking can be accom-

modated. With our previous ordinance, permitting for ALUs was financially unobtainable for most people (costing over \$16,000 a permit) and only allowed with residents over the age of 55. zMod allows residents the flexibility to make changes within their own home, while protecting neighborhoods, simplifying the process, and lowering the cost. Homeowners take on tenants to offset their mortgage, or help them earn some extra income during hard times. To be approved, a homeowner must reside at the property with an ALU, they may not be distant landlords. ALUs will also be important to meeting our affordable housing goals because increased housing availability helps lower the cost of housing.

Home Based Businesses (HBBs): We also worked to simplify the process and lower the permitting costs associated with establishing HBBs. HBBs are an important part of the County's economy and in the midst of the pandemic, I'm pleased we can find more avenues to empower residents to open a business, but still fol-

low County regulations. For example, the Board did agree to restrict administrative approval to HBBs that generate no customers coming to the home, except for instructional activities. Other HBBs would still need to go through a public hearing process.

Flags: I do not support regulating the American flag. After listening to the concerns of the community we have reevaluated the original staff recommendations. The primary changes voted on will allow all homes to have 25-foot flag poles and 60-foot flag poles for all other areas. Should residents wish to have taller flagpoles, they can apply for a special permit. The amendment also includes no minimum flag size, and the limit for flagpoles was kept at the current maximum of three flagpoles.

It's also worth noting that all of the above changes are in alignment with virtually every jurisdiction around us in our region and in some cases throughout the state.

Finally, the Board instructed County staff to monitor and evaluate ALUs and HBBs in the County, with a report to be prepared for the Board in 18 months of the effective date to ensure compliance with County regulations.

TAKING EXCEPTION

Moral Bankruptcy

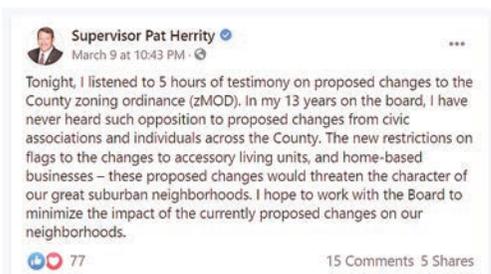
BY SEAN T. RASTATTER

On Tuesday, March 23, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors passed a much debated zoning modernization (zMOD) change in a 7-3 vote. The 700 page omnibus zMOD can be described as nothing less than a boondoggle, including changes to accessory-living units, home-based businesses, freestanding accessory structures, food trucks, and much more. These changes will affect traffic, housing density, schools, and parking for years to come.

One particularly contentious provision restricts the freedom of citizens to fly American flags outside their homes. Under the new ordinance, homeowners are restricted to 3 flags, which includes state, military, or college flags. They must also apply for a special permit if they wish to have flagpoles over 25 feet in height. This in effect limits the size of flags that can be flown. Chairman McKay made it clear that he, "[does] not support regulating the American flag." He then proceeded to do precisely that.

The new changes passed despite an overwhelmingly negative reac-

tion from the community. Homeowners associations throughout the county were strongly opposed to zMOD. Citizens sent thousands of emails to their local supervisors. A petition opposing the flag ordinance was signed by 1750 people. Over 100 people attended a rally outside the county government center to voice their concerns. The opposition to the measure was unprecedented. Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity, who opposed the changes, had the following to say:



Let's discuss a little bit about this flag situation. The county government has now made an unconscionable decree which they know they cannot enforce. Imagine the controversy that will ensue the moment an American flag is pulled down because it is being flown too high. Worse than the ordinance being unenforceable, though, is the cost paid by the county board.

Financially, it costs them nothing. Morally, it costs them everything; the county board simply cannot afford the cost.

Freedom isn't free. Our freedoms were bought with a steep price. American soldiers die every day defending the very same flag that has now been relegated in Fairfax County. Is the county board willing to carry that burden; are they willing to pay that price? It is a truly sickening display of irony that our government will accept the sacrifice of our young men and women, but will not accept the manner in which we choose to honor that sacrifice unless it falls under their 25 foot limit.

Over the past year, I have seen families struggling to survive in the midst of this pandemic. I have witnessed unspeakable misery on account of our predicament. I have experienced the pain caused by suicide and mental illness. There is an epidemic in our community; like COVID, it is insidious because it is impossible to see. We have a growing mental health crisis on our hands. One would think the county board would be inclined to do something about it.

You know what we don't have in Fairfax County, or anywhere in Northern Virginia for that matter: an epidemic of flags in our communities. Perhaps the size of flags isn't the problem. Perhaps the real

problem is the size of the county supervisors' inflated egos. The zMOD changes are just the latest display of hubris: a chronic inability to admit, just for once, that they are in the wrong on this issue. To the county board I say: your arrogance blinds you. Can you not see how your policies are morally offensive, not to mention undesirable, to a large swath of citizens who you purport to represent?

Rather than admit that, they have declared bankruptcy and defaulted on their promise to fairly represent the concerns of the community.

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Herrity Explains His 'No' Vote on zMOD



FILE PHOTO
Herrity

Today (Tuesday, March 23) the Board of Supervisors passed a modification of its Zoning Ordinance (zMOD) by a vote of 7 to 3. The zMOD process began in 2017 and has included several Board committee meetings, public meetings, and a public hearing. When undertaken in 2017, zMOD was described as a reorganization and simplification of the current Zoning Ordinance which has not been overhauled since it was adopted in 1978.

While Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) supported much of the zMOD package including the simplification and reorganization, he voted against zMOD because it was more than a reorganization and included significant changes that impact our suburban communities and watersheds.

"This is not what was promised to our residents when we started the zMOD process – reorganization, not changes. There are some material changes that could have a significant impact on our suburban communities and the Occoquan watershed." Herrity commented further, "This is the first time in my 13 years on the Board that I have seen such deep and broad opposition from resident and civic

associations across the county to the changes incorporated in zMOD because of their impact on our neighborhoods. We should be listening to our residents.

"I was pleased to see the progress on removing many of the restrictions on flags but did not support the remaining ones on the number of flags and height," said Herrity, who has a constituent that occasionally flies a garrison flag without issue. "It remains a solution in search of a problem."

"While I supported much of the zMOD package including the simplification and reorganization parts, I voted against zMOD because it was more than a reorganization and included significant changes that I believe will negatively impact our suburban communities and watersheds."

With regard to allowing Accessory Living Units (ALUs) by administrative permit and without the age and disability restrictions, Herrity commented, "Allowing ALUs without the age or disability restrictions and by administrative permit only, not only takes our residents out of the process: it opens up our neighborhoods to increases in density and the problems that come with increased density, including the impacts on traffic, schools and parking."

"There are some material changes that could have a significant impact on our suburban communities and the Occoquan watershed."

— Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield)

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PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Contractors shred cleared trees into mulch as part of site development for new police station/animal shelter in Lorton.

Police Station, Animal Shelter Site Development Begins

In recent weeks, activity is ongoing at the future site of the South County police station and animal shelter. A construction entrance and trailer is in place along Lorton Road just east of the intersection with Ox Road. Work is underway to clear standing trees along the back and side borders, turning the trees into wood mulch. Construction barriers now protect the historic “Physician’s House” or “Lipscomb House” which faces the new Workhouse Road. The

historic home, built in 1928 to house the doctor who served the prison, was last occupied in 1995 by Ronald Lipscomb. A new housing tract is under current development further along Workhouse Road, and a new development stands along the back border of the County facility site.

For more information on the facility and site plans see Connection, Feb 18-24, 2021, and Feb 15, 2020)

GreenDrop Charitable Donations Opens in Springfield

The GreenDrop Charitable Donations grand opening was held on Saturday, March 13 at the Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Department. In the first three days more than 300 bags and boxes of donations of clothing and household items have been received and will all help the Purple Heart, the National Federation of the Blind or the American Red Cross. Pictured at the ribbon-cutting ceremony, from left: Dave Lomborg (GreenDrop Regional Logistics Manager), Lauma Wingrove (Greater Springfield Chamber Board Director), Fairfax County Supervisor Rodney Lusk, Anthony Boston (GreenDrop Attendant), Matt Lomborg (GreenDrop General Manager), Maurice Martinez (GreenDrop Regional Manager) and Jennifer Rose (Central Fairfax Chamber’s Executive Director).



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

PHOTO BY ROBERT MAXWELL



Pickleballerz co-owners Greg and Beverly Raelson (left and right, respectively) present a check to Food For Neighbors Executive Director Karen Joseph.

Pickleballerz Help Provide Food For Neighbors

Pickleballerz, the Mid-Atlantic region’s first and only dedicated indoor pickleball facility, presented Northern Virginia charity Food For Neighbors a check for \$600 Saturday at Pickleballerz.

The money was raised in conjunction with a St. Patrick’s Day pickleball social event at Pickleballerz, March 17.

Food For Neighbors’ mission is to end child hunger in the Northern Virginia area by raising awareness and community involvement.

Upon receiving news of the donation, Food For Neighbors Executive Director Karen Joseph thanked Pickleballerz for their support, “We appreciate you serving local teens with a donation to Food For Neighbors. It’s going to be a busy spring and summer as we continue to distribute food, and your generous contribution will help immensely.”

Pickleballerz owners Beverly and Greg Raelson chose Food For Neighbors because of their previous involvement in the organization’s Red Bag Program with other community members.

“Food security is so important to live an active, healthy life,” said Greg Raelson. “We felt that as a local business in the area,

helping another local organization like Food For Neighbors who work so hard to get our area’s youth their nutritional needs met is so important. No child should struggle with hunger.”

Many of Pickleballerz’s players contributed to the effort, with support from local businesses such as Mobius Records in Fairfax, ACME Pie Co. in Arlington, Glory Days Grill, and Craftsman Auto Care, amongst others, who all donated prizes for the social.

“We are so thankful for the generosity of our players and sponsors who helped make this possible,” said Beverly Raelson. “We are lucky to have such vibrant and active participation amongst our area’s pickleball players and supporters.”

Pickleballerz, open to members and non-members, offers the pickleball community various ways to play America’s fastest-growing sport, including drop-in play, competitive and recreational leagues, private and group instructional lessons, youth programs, tournaments, socials, corporate events, and more.

Pickleballerz is located off Routes 28 and 50 at 14424 Albeamle Point Place, Chantilly.

Fairfax City Police Narcan Program Success

When Fairfax City police recently responded to a local hotel after learning of an overdose victim there, they found a female lying unconscious on the floor. Her story could have ended there in tragedy. Instead, after a friend told officers the victim had taken heroin, they quickly administered Narcan and saved her life.

Police had arrived on the scene prior to the medics. But because of special training

they’d already received, they knew exactly what to do – and they did it immediately.

Starting in September 2020, the City of Fairfax Police Department began training its officers in the administration of Narcan – which can reverse overdoses from heroin and other painkillers. Now, all of the City’s sworn officers are qualified and certified to administer this medication.

The training program’s overall goal is to treat and reduce the number of injuries

and fatalities resulting from opiate-involved overdoses, when law enforcement encounters suspected overdose victims.

In the recent case at the hotel, an officer administered one dose of Narcan to the female and then reevaluated her. After she didn’t respond to the first dose, a second dose was given to her. Approximately 30 seconds later, her condition improved, and she regained consciousness. She was then treated by medics and released.

“The use of Narcan in this incident demonstrates the success of this new program and the exceptional dedication of our employees to improving the lives of all citizens who enter the City,” said Sgt. Brock Rutter, City police spokesman. “This commitment to the job is evident in every aspect of our work with the community and in the support we receive in return.”

— BONNIE HOBBS

SENIOR LIVING

Style After Retirement

Great fashion sense is possible at any stage.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

At 78, Winifred Rosenberg has always been known for her impeccable style and taste. An extensive collection of designer shoes, particularly stilettos, were items around which the Potomac senior's wardrobe was built. That changed when she developed an Achilles tendon disorder and needed surgery.

"She was told that she was going to lose her ability to walk, but after some very significant surgeries is able to continue walking and maintain her sense of autonomy," said Joseph Rothstein, a private fashion and personal style strategist, who added Rosenberg to his clientele. "She felt grateful, but the type of shoes she wore needed to become sturdier. She had always been so stylish."

Rosenberg cringed at the idea of sensible shoes, so she tasked Rothstein with creating a wardrobe that would allow her to maintain her sense of fashion while not damaging her feet.

"I told her that we needed to turn the issue into something exciting. I knew right then that the limited range of footwear that her foot surgeon told her that she could wear would be mission critical to developing her new look," said Rothstein. "What I did was start with the shoes and build the rest of her wardrobe around a new assortment of footwear."

The tools that Rothstein used to redefine his client's style are applicable to other seniors, he says. "When we are ready to face the music that our bodies have changed, or that we have physical changes that require adjustments to our clothing, it can impact our personal style."

Part of that transition is a style adjustment, and that begins with a few wardrobe staples, suggests William Allen, Professor in the Fashion Design & Merchandising program at Marymount University. "I advise both women and men to buy a few basic pieces that can be dressed up or dressed down," he said. "Keep existing pieces or buy a few new classic pieces of clothing. Purchase 10 to 15 pieces that you can mix and match and build a wardrobe around. Look for simple, clean lines in neutral colors like tan, black and gray."

"Add classic accessories like watches, handbags and jewelry to add interest," Allen continued. "These should be items that never go out of style. You can dress them up with accessories so they don't become boring."

Fashion adventure, tempered by sophistication and maturity, is what design consultant Michelle Vaughn of Chantilly encourages for her clients. "Don't be afraid to take risks and try some of the new trends," she said. "Trends are not just for the 25 and under crowd but can be flattering on many different age groups."

Take chances with color, especially as seasons change, added stylist Elizabeth Hoenscheid of Top it Off, in Alexandria. "For spring and summer, it's all



PHOTO COURTESY OF TOP IT OFF

Elizabeth Hoenscheid of Top it Off, in Alexandria recommends clothing with generous cuts that can be layered over slim cut pants or trousers.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TOP IT OFF

Build a wardrobe with classic pieces that are on trend but not trendy.

about fun pieces to add a pop of color and print to white jeans or capris."

Retirement does not have to mean giving up on style, says Vaughn. "The need to dress up might change and personal style might change as one ages," she said. "But be sure to invest in higher quality items even if that means purchasing fewer items. They last longer and you will not need to replace them as often."

From undergarments to pants, clothes should fit properly, advises Vaughn. "Make sure your garments have a perfect fit and are properly altered to fit your body type, she said. "Undergarments should give clean lines."

When feeling unsure about shopping for clothes, Vaughn suggests developing a support system. "Shop with someone you trust and whose style you admire," she said. "Find a sales associate, friend, family member or hire a personal stylist who will be honest with you and show you things that work best on you."

"As people get older, they want to be more comfortable," said Allen. "You can be comfortable every day and still be well-dressed and look pulled together."

"As people get older, they want to be more comfortable. You can be comfortable every day and still be well-dressed and look pulled together."

— William Allen,
Marymount professor

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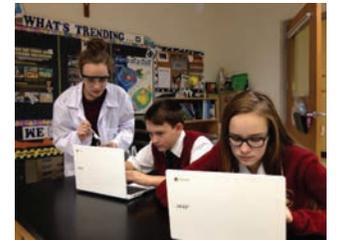
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Go Ape Course at South Run Puts Adventure in the Treetops

Nationwide adventure course uses ropes and pulleys to challenge participants.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

It takes adventure and a strong stomach to do the “monkey drop,” at the Go Ape Treetop Adventure course at the South Run Park in Springfield. Although the participants are outfitted with ropes and a vest, a six to 10 feet freefall can be a challenge, said course manager Nikki Kiwus.

“It’s more of a psychological challenge,” said Kiwus, a West Springfield High School alumna that’s been with Go Ape since 2017. The Monkey Drop is among the options along with the Journey Course and Adventure Course at South Run.

Go Ape started in the mid 2000s, when the “founders were looking to launch a business with a vision of giving back to our local communities through outdoor adventure and environmental stewardship,” company information stated. They created a network of zip line and aerial adventure courses in the United Kingdom and formed a partnership to bring the idea to the United States. Frederick, Maryland became home base for the team and their vision became reality with the very first Go Ape USA course in Rockville, Md.

Go Ape Treetop Adventures can be found throughout the country in thirteen states, and Kiwus worked at their facility in Nebraska before becoming permanent in South Run.

South Run opened in 2017, and Kiwus has seen many go through the course and come out with a different mindset about heights and their own ability to conquer. “It’s a great way for people to do something challenging outdoors,” Kiwus said. Especially during the pandemic because it is already socially distanced, and outdoors to lessen the spreading of COVID-19. She’s noticed that there are now smaller groups, but “people need gloves and masks,” she said.

It takes all types too, ranging from scout troops, sport teams, birthdays, bachelor parties and bachelorette groups. “They have a lot of fun,” she said. It’s a shared experience that bonds guests and the instructors aim to create a safe and positive environment where guests can challenge themselves and push beyond their comfort zones, Go Ape said. “We’re passionate about motivating people to swap ‘I can’t’ for ‘I can,’” their motto reads.

Since it does require a certain physical stature to complete the courses, there are size requirements. At the Journey Course, the participant must be three foot, three inches tall. On the Adventure Course, the size goes up to four foot seven inches tall. They’ve had participants as young as three. At some facilities, they incorporate axe throwing too.

There have been times when the harness is on,



Life in the canopy.



The kid sized zip line.



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they’re up in the tree, and the participant chickens out, it’s not a big deal. “We’re here to help them out the rest of the way,” Kiwus said.

The Go Apes company has partnerships with public parks and they participate in a revenue share plan. The Fairfax County Park Authority receives a percentage of each ticket sale to reinvest back into their local communities. At South Run, the county made between \$10-\$28,000 pre-pandemic, said Cindy Walsh, the director of Fairfax County Park Services. At Richard Jones Park in the Reston area, the Pleasant Valley Golf Club is another situation where a commercial entity is working with the parks.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Ryleigh and her mother Courtney Hemperly with Beth Holst who is Anna Maria Fitzhugh chair for the Essay Contest.

Lake Braddock Eighth Grader Wins History Essay Contest

Each year the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) conducts an American History Essay Contest, which is open to all fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade students in public, private, parochial schools and home schools. The title for the 2020-2021 contest was “The Boston Massacre” whose 250th anniversary is commemorated this year. Students were asked to imagine living in Boston and, after witnessing the event on March 5, describe their family’s discussion about the Boston Massacre and what role it played in organizing the Colonist against the British King and Parliament.

Anna Maria Fitzhugh Chapter of Springfield, announced not only the Chapter but also the District V, Virginia DAR, winner Ryleigh Hemperly, who is an eighth grader at Lake Braddock Secondary School. Miss Hemperly received the DAR American History Bronze Medal and winner’s certificates from the Chapter and District V.

Amphibian’s Spring

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Among the iconic harbingers of Spring, first, we hear the wood frogs’ hoarse clucking raucous chorus. They often gather in March through April, when temperatures begin to moderate around 50 degrees, to mate and deposit their egg masses. They use a limited space in their breeding site for “communal nesting” and tadpoles appear in about 50 days.

Following close behind is the voice of the Spring peeper. A small frog with a loud piping whistle call, emitted as a clear single note repeated at regular short intervals.

Also common throughout the Commonwealth, the little frog is rarely seen except during mating season. She may deposit up to 1,000 eggs in wet areas and vernal pools, with tadpoles presenting in about 90 days.

Finally the large American Toad, complete with requisite toad warts, has a long trill which can last up to



SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

An American Toad, common throughout most of Virginia, hiding out during the day in debris, is active at night for breeding now, often into late summer.

half a minute. This toad is mostly nocturnal, and may be found hopping around yards and driveways at night. They often breed late into the summer, the females depositing long gelatinous strands of eggs, producing toadlets in about 60 days, from 2,000-20,000 eggs.

Susan Laume is Virginia Master Naturalist.
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

PEOPLE

He Holds 9 Guinness World Records

Springfield Uber driver is sixth-degree black belt in American Marine GoJu-Ryu Karate.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Ujjwal Sharma Thakuri, 46, of the Leewood community of Springfield has broken an amazing nine Guinness World Records. A World Martial Arts Champion with 25 years of experience, the Nepali native recently broke the world record for the most martial arts kicks (83 kicks in one minute) -- one leg full contact knee strikes wearing 5 kg ankle weights (11.023 pounds), and another world record for three minutes using the same weight (143 kicks), both on Oct. 11, 2020 in Springfield. He had to perform four-foot high kicks.

“I feel very blessed by God for the hard work and I’m very proud that I represent nine events for the United States of America.”

— Ujjwal Sharma Thakuri of Springfield

“I trained regularly for three years every day. I started with one pound, two pounds, three pounds. I would recommend one special thing, if you don’t have a Master please don’t try this at home. If you are not trained well, it will crack your hips. It’s 11 pounds you are using with your leg. It’s very hard and very dangerous,” said the Uber driver by day.

He continued: “I feel very blessed by God for the hard work and I’m very proud that I represent nine events for the United States of

America. Thanks to my wife and daughter and family friends for supporting me for this.”

He set another world record for the most one leg full contact knee strikes (157) wearing 5 kg ankle weights in three minutes in Corona, N.y., on Feb. 29, 2020. He beat out the Pakistani athlete named Muhammad Rashid with 152 strikes. He also beat out an Indian Tae Kwon Do player named Bode Sai Deepak who had 87 strikes. His training for the Guinness World Records started in 2014.

The sixth-degree black belt (“Roku”) in American Marine GoJu-Ryu Karate has been written about hundreds of times in Nepali and American newspapers for his accomplishments. He came to the U.S. 19 years ago after spending his childhood in Kathmandu, Nepal. Today, he lives on Leebrad Street in Springfield with his wife Priyanka and daughter Elizabeth, 14.

He performs his Guinness Record feats in front of several judges, two time-keepers, as well as a crowd of spectators for evidence of the record. But with the Coronavirus, it has been difficult gathering the spectators. He trains in Springfield with his master Lt. Col. Garry Klaus, USMC Ret., of the Soki American Marine GoJu.

Thakuri is an expert in American Marine GoJu-Ryu Karate and also does Shito-Ryu Karate, which means karate with empty hands or no weapons. Strictly an amateur fighter, he receives no monetary rewards and has no sponsors but holds more than 30 national trophies, medals, belts and cups for competitions.

What is his motivation? “It’s the history for the martial arts. Because I know if you check that, sports is a discipline. I want to make martial arts history, history for the nation, and if you see the amount of strikes you’ll see my name. If you see splitting legs, you’ll see my name, even though I am an immigrant,” he said.

He hopes to earn his 10th Guinness world title soon. That will be for the most knee strikes for one hour (2,000 strikes using 5 kg weights). “I’m doing 1,000 now. I have to cross 2,000. Hopefully, I will do it this year,” he said.



Guinness World Record holder Ujjwal Sharma Thakuri of Springfield with his world record certificates.

PHOTO BY
STEVE HIBBARD

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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

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Let us know about an upcoming event

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THURSDAY/MARCH 25

NAACP Hosts Women Who Lead. 6-7 p.m. Virtual. This virtual conversation will feature six women in Fairfax County who are leaders in their respective fields. This event is an opportunity to honor six inspirational Black women who provide invaluable leadership right here in our community.

Panelists:

- Michelle Leete, 1st Vice President, Fairfax County NAACP (Moderator);
 - Karen Keys-Gamarra, Member at Large, Fairfax County School Board;
 - Valencia Martin Wallace, Deputy Commissioner, International Patent Cooperation;
 - Evelyn Spain, Co-Chair, Women in NAACP, Fairfax County NAACP;
 - Judge Jane Reynolds, First African American Female Judge, Virginia's 15th Judicial District.
 - Dr. Uchechi Wosu-Isirimah, Medical Director, MedStar; Owner, Bright-hope Home Health Care.
- Visit the website: tinyurl.com/fairfax-naacp-womenwhohead

SATURDAY/MARCH 27

Unique Yard Sale. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Fairfax Salvation Army Corps, 4915 Ox Road, Fairfax. The Fairfax Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary will hold a "Unique Yard Sale" March 27. Items on sale are new items from the cancelled 2020 Silent Auction. Also donated new and lightly used items.

NOW THRU APRIL 13

Free Finance Classes. 7-8:15 p.m. Via Zoom. Sponsored by St. John's United Methodist Church, Springfield. Free Personal Finance Mgmt Classes, taught by accredited finance counselor. Classes deal with budgeting, credit/debt management, saving and investing, etc. These are individual classes taught once a week. Register at website www.saintjohnsumc.org to receive Zoom link from the instructor.

April 6 -- 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Investing for Retirement

April 13 -- 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Tax Efficient Charitable Giving

OLD COLCHESTER BRIDGE CLOSED

The Old Colchester Road (Route 611) bridge over Pohick Creek will close at 8 p.m. Friday, March 19, until further notice due to the results of the latest safety inspection, according to the Virginia Department of Transportation. Crews will be developing a plan for a long-term solution in the coming weeks. Drivers are asked to use an alternate route.

SUE JOHNSON'S EXHIBITION AT WORKHOUSE

In celebration of Women's History month, the Workhouse Arts Center presents Sue Johnson's new solo exhibition Hall of Portraits from the History of Machines which will be on display in the McGuire Woods Gallery. This timely exhibition which explores the relationship between women, consumer culture, and machines will include works that have never been seen before and will feature paintings and three-dimensional objects. Located at Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Building W16, Lorton.

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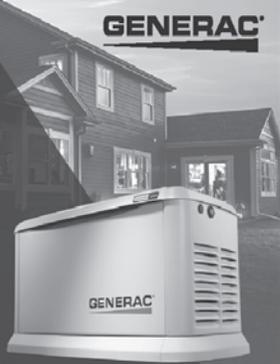
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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg

CALENDAR

MARCH 20 TO APRIL 11

The Science Behind Flowers. Join the Children's Science Center virtually to explore the chemistry at work behind the petal and witness how capillary action can help flowers become acid-base indicators. Hear from a celebrity scientist to learn more about invasive and native plants, and the science of ecological restoration. Then, join in on the fun at home by trying out an experiment of your own. Program will be streamed online from March 20 - April 11. (<https://childsci.org/>; 703-648-3130)\

In addition, visitors can plan self-guided tours of the region's splendid gardens, including these sites:

Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, a 90-acre oasis featuring more than 100 cherry trees surrounding a lovely lake, plus an extensive shade garden, native wildflowers, gazebos, birds, butterflies, seasonal blooms and the very unique Korean Bell Garden.

Green Spring Gardens, an outdoor classroom, national historic site, and museum featuring a wooded stream, a valley with ponds, a native plant garden, over 20 thematic demonstration gardens, and a greenhouse filled with tropical plants.

George Washington's Mount Vernon, the home to America's first president, features four beautiful gardens to explore and enjoy. In addition, experience wide-open spaces, wooded landscapes, and a quarter-mile-long forest trail - not to mention the vast educational resources available on site.

MARCH 20-APRIL 17

The 2021 Vienna Photo Show will be on display at the Vienna Community Center March 20 through April 17. The exhibit will be open 8 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturdays. Applications to the annual photo show will be accepted 3-8 p.m. Thursday, March 18, and 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday, March 19. The entrance fee is \$5. Assigned drop-off times will be staged in 10-minute intervals to allow for social distancing and to keep the number of people in the Vienna Community Center at one time to a minimum. Due to space limitations, only 62 photographers will be accepted into this year's competition, and each photographer will be limited to one photo in the exhibit. Applications to the annual photo show will be accepted 3-8 p.m. Thursday, March 18, and 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday, March 19. The entrance fee is \$5. Assigned drop-off times will be staged in 10-minute intervals to allow for social distancing and to keep the number of people in the Vienna Community Center at one time to a minimum. All participants are asked to wear a face covering and practice social distancing at all times when in the community center. Ribbons will be awarded in seven categories: animals, architecture, nature, pictorial, photojournalism, portraiture, and scenic. Visit viennava.gov/photo to register and for additional instructions and details.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 24

The Unruly Theatre Project's Virtual Improv Show. 7 p.m. Sponsored by The Alden. Join us for (the) Unruly Theatre Project's virtual improv shows from the comfort of your couch! Register online and a Zoom link and password for the show will be emailed to you. Participants must register two hours in advance of showtime. Register online at www.aldentheatre.org.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 24

Spring Art for Adults. 12 - 1:15 p.m. Instructor Carol Zeitlin, drawing, watercolor, Chinese Brush and portfolio development. Visit www.czartlessons.com for more. Call 703-250-6930.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 24

Green Festival. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Via Zoom. Presented by Northern Virginia Community College. The theme for this year's event is "Restore the Earth." A Discussion of the Interconnections and Relationships Between Humans and Natural Processes." The festival

will be a combination of presentations and panel discussions. Ideally, it will help the audience recognize ways they can conserve resources, promote change, and make a difference as individuals. More information and Zoom registration links at www.nvcc.edu/green-festival/2021

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 24

NVCC 2021 Green Festival. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Via Zoom. The theme for this year's event is "Restore the Earth: A Discussion of the Interconnections and Relationships Between Humans and Natural Processes." The purpose of NOVA's Annual Green Festival is to increase awareness of regional, national, and global environmental issues and provide information regarding ways that individuals can help preserve the environment. The festival will be a combination of presentations and panel discussions. Visit www.nvcc.edu/green-festival/2021

THURSDAY/MARCH 25

Monticello's African-American History. 7-8 p.m. Via Reston Regional Zoom. Public historian Niya Bates for a talk about her work on Monticello's Getting Word African American Oral History Project. Ms. Bates will share research and photographs from Monticello and answer questions after her talk. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/7510799>

MARCH 26-APRIL 3

"Dear Elizabeth." Presented by The Vienna Theatre Company. The play by Sarah Ruhl is drawn from one of the greatest correspondences in literary history between two of the 20th century's most brilliant American poets, Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell. Sarah Ruhl adapts more than 400 published letters spanning decades, continents and political eras, tells the tale of an unconventional friendship and intimacy both platonic and romantic, and brings it all to life on the stage. This moving, innovative play starts in 1947, ends in 1977 and describes a love that resists easy definition. The performance will be filmed live and aired online as follows: Friday and Saturday - March 26 and 27, April 2 and 3 evenings at 7:30 p.m. Ticket Prices: \$15. Purchase online at <https://vtc.booktix.com>.

FRIDAY/MARCH 26

Old Firehouse Family Event. 7-9 p.m. Gather the whole family around the computer or tablet and get ready for some socially distant trivia. Prizes for winning teams! To register, visit: www.oldfirehouse.org or call 703-448-8336, TTY: 711.

MARCH 26-27

Eggster Bunnies at Historic Sully. What's soft, small and rolls, instead of hops, around? An Eggster Bunny. Visit Sully Historic Site to make and decorate your own Eggster Bunny using the wet-felting technique. This hands-on, crafting style doesn't require any tools, just your hands and soapy water. And the Easter Bunny will be there, too. Hop to Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way in Chantilly, either Friday or Saturday, March 26-27, to join the fun. Program is for a family or pod of up to four people and is suitable for ages 5 to adult. Tickets are \$20/family or pod. Register at https://fairfax.usedirect.com/FairfaxFCPAWeb/Activities/Search.aspx?search_text=eggster. For more information, call 703-437-1794.

SATURDAY/MARCH 27

Birding By Kayak-Single. At Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Lake Accotink Road, Springfield. Park Authority lakes are home to more than 100 species of birds and hold many unique habitats. With a naturalist as your guide, discover how a kayak can provide a closer look into the world of birds. Travel in a one-person kayak at Lake Accotink from 8 to 10 a.m. and see how many species you can spot. The cost is \$42 per person, and the program is designed for participants age 13 to adult. Call 703-569-3464.

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Time Will Tell



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Ordinarily I'd be writing this column this weekend - after this week's events. Events, and I use that term loosely, that will either sustain my good fortune - or change it for the worse. What I'm referring to are results from my bi-monthly/quarterly diagnostic scans. This week I'll be CT-scanned from the pelvis to the neck and will have had my bones' scanned as well. The associated lab work and blood pressure check required pale in comparison to the significance of the findings from these two scans. Scan results which will tell me how I feel, a day or two later when I will receive electronically the radiologist's assessment/interpretation of the scans. But since I'll be out of town, with limited computer access and only a "stupid" phone (no internet capability), not a smart phone to use, I'll be left to my own devices - literally, until I return home Sunday afternoon.

Since I'll likely not receive any results before we leave on Friday, and moreover, not have the time to write a column this coming weekend (last weekend when the paper publishes on the 24th), I am minding my own business six days earlier than usual in hopes that what I don't know now won't hurt me later. And given that I take my avocation/column writing seriously, rather than reprint an old column, I am writing a new/current column in advance to continue to lead you regular readers down my garden's path.

The path to which I refer hopefully will be a path of least resistance that will enable me to assimilate all my forthcoming medical data into some coherent assessment of where I am, healthwise. Will I be able to maintain my status quo: 10 MG of levamisole or will I have to change protocols and no longer stay on the horse that brought me? I have to hope I can continue on at my present pace because the 14 MG and 24 MG doses each had unpleasant side effects which lead to the reductions in the first place. And to complicate the dose possibilities, each of the higher doses lead to stable/some shrinkage on the CT scan and a significant reduction as well in my cancer markers, down from 200 to 4. This will be my first scan since I've taken the smaller dose. To say I'm somewhat invested in the outcome of this week's scans would be the understatement of the universe.

Unfortunately, none of this information will likely have been emailed to me - at home before we leave town, and I'll not have time and place to write a column this weekend while out of town. Therefore, I am submitting this column, written six days ahead of my typical deadline, with the best of intentions. In effect, today becomes just another day ("the daze of my life") of a person undergoing treatment for an incurable form of cancer; that type being papillary thyroid cancer stage IV versus the original/indisputable diagnosis: non small cell lung cancer, stage IV.

It will definitely be awkward knowing that diagnostic information about my health/presumptive welfare is in an inbox waiting for my log-in information. It's hardly ideal, but as a long-time cancer survivor, I have been here before and have done that. I'm not thrilled about being away when my life might possibly be hanging in the balance. I guess that's what cell phones are for: reaching out and sort of touching someone. If my doctors really need to talk with me, they are welcome to call. You can be sure my phone will be fully charged and with me at all times. After all, it might be good news, too. I mean, stranger things have happened: being diagnosed with "terminal" lung cancer after never having smoked cigarettes. Granted, upwards of 25% of new lung cancer cases are never-smokers, but still, with no history of cancer in my family and never having been a smoker, I kind of figured I had a fighting chance to avoid this disease. I guess my reward is 12+ years after my initial "13 month to two year" prognosis, I'm still alive and writing.

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



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