

Great Falls CONNECTION



(From left) Great Falls Friends and Neighbors member Sally-Anne Andrew Pyne, who spearheaded the establishment of a GFFN Scholarship Fund in the memory of selfless club member Holly Ann Kuga (1947-2020), joins Kuga's daughter Katherine Kuga Wenner and husband of 50 years, Dr. Robert E. Kuga of Great Falls, at the GFFN Scholarship Fund Spring Tea 2021.

Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Hosts Spring Tea

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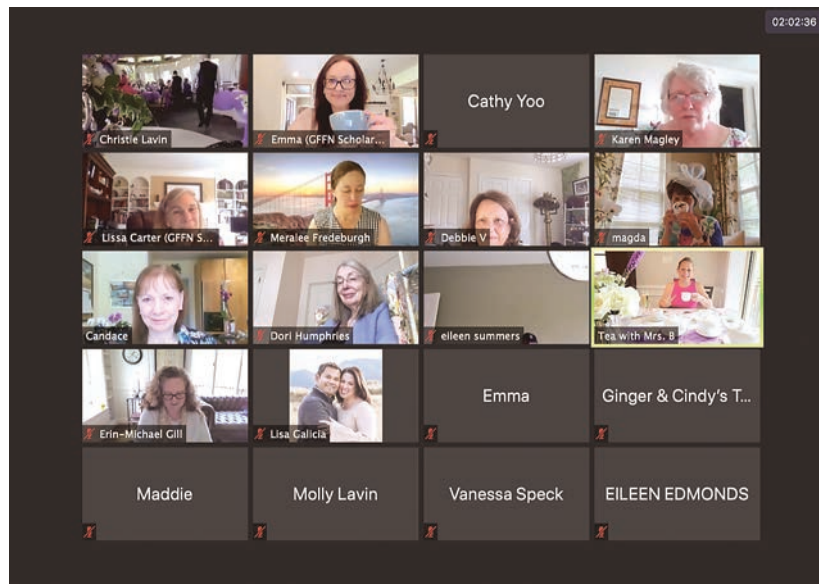
PHOTO COURTESY OF GFFN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

APRIL 28 - MAY 4, 2021

ONLINE AT WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Participants at the Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Scholarship Fund Spring Tea 2021 fundraiser held Sunday, April 25, virtually and at River Bend Golf and Country Club in Great Falls.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GFFN SCHOLARSHIP FUND



Virtual participants at the Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Scholarship Fund Spring Tea 2021 fundraiser on Sunday, April 25, 2021.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GFFN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Hosts Spring Tea

New scholarship established in Holly Ann Kuga's memory.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Scholarship Fund held its Spring Tea 2021 fundraiser on Sunday, April 25. According to member Emma Reynolds, seventy-nine individuals attended the ticketed, hybrid event, some virtually and some in-person, under Covid-limited capacity at River Bend Golf and Country Club in Great Falls. In conjunction with the 2021 Spring Tea, the Scholarship Fund is establishing a scholarship in memory of Holly Ann Kuga, a long-standing member of GFFN and a beloved friend and supporter of the Fund, according to a press release.

The event included comments, a talk about tea and a tea tasting, and a raffle to benefit the Scholarship fund. The Fund's directive is to award scholarships to deserving women over the age of 25 who are Northern Virginia residents. They must demonstrate a financial need and be in good academic standing.

CO-PRESIDENT of the Scholarship Fund, Christie Lavin, welcomed guests saying, "I've been thinking and dreaming about this event for a long time. It's such a joy to see it all come together on this beautiful day." This year's Spring Tea started simple and well-defined, according to Lavin, then grew into something much bigger.

There was a tremendous amount of interest and support for the women students and then for Holly Ann Kuga, an active volunteer for the Scholarship Fund who passed away after a tragic car crash in December. "This outpouring of love for her from her friends here in Great Falls and in Great Falls Friends and Neighbors led to our decision to establish a scholarship in her name, spearheaded by Sally-Anne Andrew Pyne, who has been working with us behind the scenes for months," said Lavin.

Through donations, contributions from the Scholarship Fund, and the Kuga family, a scholarship in Kuga's name totaled \$7,200 the evening of the tea, according to Reynolds, with funds still coming in.

"This will fund a \$1,000 scholarship to a deserving student every year, which means that we will have seven years ahead of us to grant these awards in her name," said Lavin. "The family intends to set this scholarship in perpetuity," she said.

Katherine "Katie" Kuga Wenner, Holly Ann Kuga's daughter, thanked everyone for supporting her and her father, Dr. Robert Kuga, and celebrating her mother. "On behalf of my father and me, it means the world to us you are all here... (My mom) was a person of extraordinary generosity, compassion, wits, and intellect...She always thought of others and never herself." Wenner said that the Scholarship Fund was a perfect way to remember her mother. It recognizes extraordinary women and provides them financial assistance to pursue a degree in higher education.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE Yewon "Cathy" Yoo over-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Holly Ann Kuga: A scholarship fund is organized in her name to support the education of deserving women students seeking upper-level degrees.



2020-2021 Academic Year Scholarship recipient, Yewon "Cathy" Yoo.

came obstacles due to family obligations. She is a full-time undergraduate student and majoring in accounting at George Mason University. She is partic-

ipating in a program called Accelerated Master's in Accountancy. During her comments at the tea, presented virtually, Yoo said she is a daughter in an immigrant family and was in charge of running the family business since her parents spoke little English. They depended on her. She held off on her education until two siblings finished college and her father studied for his Ph.D. Working part-time at a public accounting firm, she put funds aside for education. As her first step, she attended Northern Virginia Community College and earned an Associate Degree in Business with a 4.0 GPA.

Yoo said she works 30 hours a week to take care of her housing and tuition while studying full-time. She anticipates earning her master's degree by May 2021 and CPA license by spring 2022. She thanked the organization for the (\$1,500) scholarship. It will make a difference.

In addition to granting scholarships generated from its endowments, the Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Scholarship Fund grants individual scholarships from money raised through its annual fundraisers. Over the past four years, it has awarded scholarships to 32 students for a total of \$40,900. To learn more about the Scholarship Fund, visit www.GFFNSF.org.

Many individuals, businesses, and others supported the GFFN Scholarship Fund Spring Tea 2021. A list is provided on the organization's website.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GFFN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Christie Lavin, GFFN Scholarship Fund Co-president

NEWS

Kevin Davis Appointed Fairfax County Chief of Police

Supervisors respond to a new era of policing.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Coming out of a closed-door session on Friday, April 23, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors prepared, as Supervisor Penny Gross (D-Mason) said, “to select one of the most important hires it undertakes.”

“I am pleased to move the appointment of Kevin Davis, as the next police chief, effective May 3, 2021, with an annual salary of \$215,000,” Gross said. The motion unanimously carried. Davis is a Maryland native.

“After thorough interviews, the entire board is confident that Kevin will continue Fairfax’s work on police reform, build on the deep community involvement and relationships with stakeholders, and improve morale within the police department,” said Jeffrey McKay, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, in a statement.

Davis called in to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors’ meeting. He heard as McKay officially welcomed him in his new capacity to Fairfax County, saying that they were delighted to have him on board after the “long exhaustive process.” McKay added that the Board looked forward to working with him on this new journey.

DAVIS spoke directly to the supervisors. “This is a humbling moment for me. I take it very seriously, and I promise not to let you down,” he said. “I look very much forward to working with the women and the men of the Fairfax County Police Department and several employee groups. You guys are a great agency; I want to say that loudly and clearly.”

Questioning if there was room for improvement in the Fairfax County Police Department, Davis said absolutely. He acknowledged change is sometimes hard and challenging.

“But if you didn’t know you were in a difficult position, you wouldn’t be here. So, we have to seize this moment and continue to get better,” he said. Davis added he looks forward to working with the diverse communities in Fairfax County.

As his first step, Davis said, the Department must establish legitimacy to earn trust, which takes hard work. “It takes showing up every day and doing the work, and we have to pay keen attention to vulnerable communities, underserved communities, and communities of color. We have to meet you where you are. We have to be better listeners. We have to be less defensive, and we have to, quite frankly, see you. ... You have my word that I am committed to doing that on behalf of Fairfax County.”

As for accountability, Davis said he would call “balls and strikes.”

“No one hates a bad cop more than a good cop (does). You have my word that those accountability systems will be in place,” he said.

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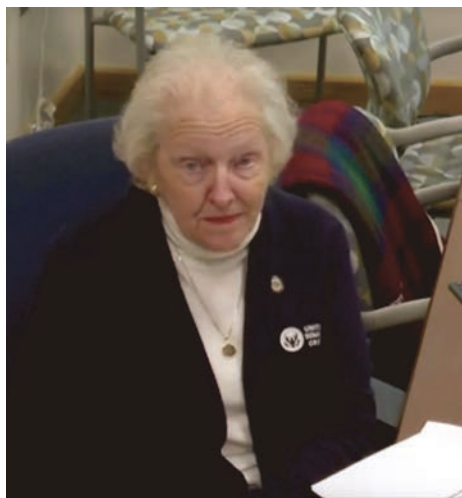


Kevin Davis calls in to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors meeting following the Board’s unanimous vote of approval to appoint him the next Fairfax County police chief effective May 3, 2021.

Biography

Kevin Davis is fourth-generation public safety, born and raised in College Park, Md. Most recently, Davis worked as Director of Consulting Services at GardaWorld. Davis served as City of Baltimore’s 39th police commissioner from 2015 to 2018 after the in-custody death of Freddie Gray and the riots that followed. According to a Fairfax County press release, he established a Department of Justice Compliance and Accountability Division and a fully implemented body-worn camera program during Davis’s tenure at the Baltimore Police Department. Davis worked to build trust with the community and foster transparency, providing information about internal policies and all police-involved shootings. He expanded the Department’s police chaplains’ program, which trained more than 100 faith community leaders to serve as ambassadors in the community.

Before that, Davis served as Anne Arundel County police chief from 2013 to 2014 and as assistant police chief of the Prince George’s County, Maryland police department, 1992 to 2013. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and the FBI National Executive Institute. Davis holds a master’s degree in Management from Johns Hopkins University and a bachelor’s degree in English from Towson University.



Supervisor Penny Gross (D-Mason) introduces the motion to appoint Kevin Davis as the next Fairfax County police chief.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors appointed former Baltimore Police Commissioner Kevin Davis as the new police chief effective on May 3, 2021.



Jeffrey C. McKay, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, calls the vote on the appointment of Kevin Davis as the next Fairfax County police chief.

Davis added that Fairfax County already had common sense police reform underway, but it would be a constant conversation. Davis said reform is something done for police officers, not to them. “It makes you better. It earns you a better relationship with the community,” he said.

Davis said he looked forward to the journey. It would be an opportunity to work with the community, residents, elected officials, and community leaders in the agency.

AMONG HIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, Davis thanked the Board for their trust in him, County Executive Bryan Hill for his continued leadership, interim Chief of the Fairfax County Police Department, David M. Rohrer, and his predecessor Fairfax County Police Chief Edwin C. Roessler Jr. for his leadership. Roessler stepped down in January 2021.

According to World Atlas, the Fairfax County Police Department, which has roughly 1,400 full-time sworn-in officers, is Virginia’s largest police department and ranked 33 in the top largest police departments in the United States in August 2020.

“No one hates a bad cop more than a good cop (does). You have my word that those accountability systems will be in place.”

— Kevin Davis,
New Fairfax County Chief of Police

Braddock District Supervisor James R. Walkinshaw issued the following statement regarding the Board of Supervisors’ selection of Kevin Davis as Chief of Police.

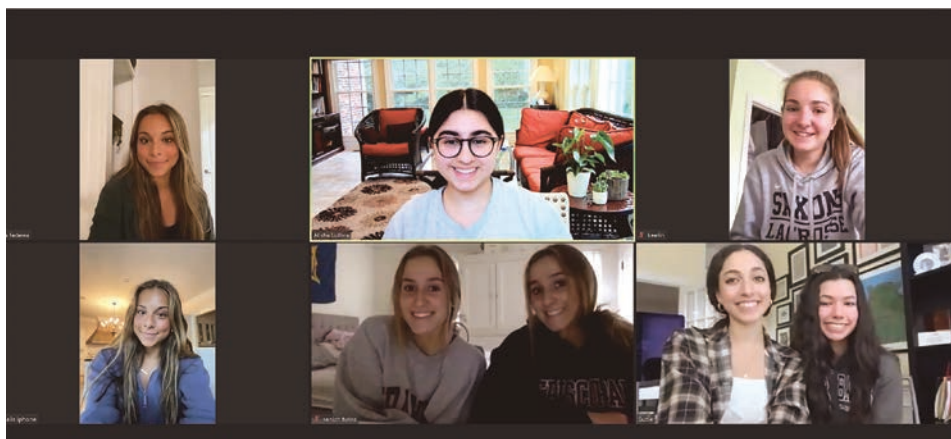
“Many law enforcement leaders have learned to talk the talk of police and criminal justice reform, but very few have actually done it. In Kevin Davis, we have selected someone with a proven track record of implementing meaningful reforms in the face of fierce resistance. That’s why the Open Society Foundation -- an organization working to develop policing systems that treat everyone equally -- asked him to write the book on consent decrees and police reform. With Chief Kevin Davis, Fairfax County is poised to build on the accountability measures already in place here and lead the nation in ensuring that the law is employed as an instrument of justice.”

Board of Supervisors Appoints Kevin Davis as Fairfax County’s New Chief of Police. - YouTube can be found online <https://youtu.be/Ii020GkUzvM>

Langley Students Create Virtual Career Connections Event

When faced with cancelling their traditional in-person Career Day, due to the on-going pandemic, a group of Langley High School students pivoted and created an all-virtual event – re-branded and newly named, Langley’s Career Connections. After months of coordination, on Monday, April 12, thirty-five professionals from a wide variety of career fields joined Langley students on-line, to host the 45-minute virtual presentation/question and answer sessions.

Creating a virtual event was no small task and truly a team effort. Langley High School Senior and Career Connections Co-Chair, Danielle Grieco, said the biggest challenge was learning the online platform and trusting its functionality. “However, going virtual enabled us to give the students more freedom on which profession they wanted to learn more about. Whereas, in person, the (past) Career Fair was more of a walk-through.” Grieco and her co-chair, Ariana Sanjideh, organized and led weekly meetings with the student committee to coordi-



COURTESY PHOTO

Langley High School Career Connections Committee created a new virtual event. Committee members included: Ella Fedewa, Anjali Fedewa, Alisha Luthra, Keelin Byrne, Caroline Senich, Katherine Senich, Dani Grieco (co-chair), Ariana Sanjideh (co-chair).

nate the school-wide event.

During the virtual setting, students had a front row seat to meet, and listen to, dozens of professionals, including an epidemiolo-

gist, a chief scientist for a military lab, fashion industry specialists, news reporters and producers, commercial artists, marketing and financial analysts, just to name a few.

A foreign service officer joined the discussion from Tokyo, Japan, where it was 1 a.m., to give his presentation and take questions from students. Sanjideh was particularly interested in the presentation from one of the engineering professionals. “He talked about how his electrical engineering degree led him to artificial intelligence and working with the military,” Sanjideh said, and she believed it gave her a whole new insight into engineering career paths.

One of the parent advisors, Sonaal Luthra, was impressed with how the students transitioned to the virtual event. “They exhibited unparalleled professionalism as they worked with the various aspects of the virtual platform,” Luthra said. “Introducing professionals, transitioning from the main room to breakout rooms, moderating sessions, communicating with volunteers, and engaging with our presenters – they did this all effortlessly in a calm, composed, and effective manner.” Career Connections, as with previous Career Fairs, is sponsored by Langley High School’s PTSA organization.

Conley’s Wish: To Help Horses and Riders at LiftMeUp!

Teenager Conley Rohall donates ‘Make a Wish’ to horses and riders at LiftMeUp! In Great Falls.

BY ABIGAIL DAWSON

Conley Rohall, 16, who suffers from multiple medical conditions and disabilities, decided to donate her wish from the Make-A-Wish Foundation to LiftMeUp!, a therapeutic riding and horsemanship program in Great Falls. Knowing how great an impact horses can have on those in need, Conley decided to pay her wish forward to help others in her community at LiftMeUp!

Conley and her twin sister, Nora, suffered from Twin-to-Twin Transfusion Syndrome (TTTS), a rare and potentially life-threatening condition that caused Conley to be born prematurely with Cerebral Palsy, seizures and Chronic Kidney Disease. When she was in end-stage renal failure in 2018, Conley became eligible for the Make-a-Wish program, and she eagerly began planning for her wish—a trip to London where her favorite BBC show “Sherlock” was filmed. In December 2018, Conley was fortunately able to receive a kidney transplant from her mother, Anne, and reservations were made for her special trip to London.

When the COVID pandemic hit, however, Conley’s trip to London was abruptly canceled due to international travel restrictions. Conley was devas-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Conley Rohall and Finn getting ready for their lesson at LiftMeUp!

tated. One day while visiting the horses at LiftMeUp!, Conley saw that the pandemic not only affected her Make-A-Wish plans, but also had an impact on the horses and riders at LMU. Without being able to hold in-person fundraisers or continue lessons for several months during the nationwide shutdowns, the therapeutic riding program was suffering financially, and the barn and horses needed help. Knowing how great

an impact LMU’s riding and horsemanship programs have on individuals like herself, Conley decided to donate her wish to LMU to help the horses and other riders in need.

“I just want people to know that it’s a great place. Everybody is very kind, loving and supportive,” Conley tells Great Day Washington, who filmed a news segment on Conley’s Make a Wish donation. Therapeutic riding at Lift Me Up! gave Conley a chance

About the Author

Abigail Dawson is the Director of Communications at Lift Me Up!, a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center in Great Falls. Abigail has been riding horses since she was seven years old and enjoys jumping, dressage and trail riding, but has also competed in hunters with her own horse and in equitation with the Earlham College IHSA Equestrian Team. She became a PATH Intl. Certified Instructor in November 2019, and has been working as Barn Manager at Lift Me Up since January 2020. She currently cares for all of Lift Me Up’s equine residents and can be reached at Abigail.Dawson@liftmeup.org.

to participate and compete in an activity just like her peers, while helping her to improve her balance, physical strength and self-confidence. While riding at LMU, she developed a special relationship with a Norwegian Fjord pony named Delfinia. Together, they competed in the Therapeutic Riding Association of Virginia’s annual horse show, and came in second place!

During the celebration of Conley’s wish at LMU, Apple Federal Credit Union, where Conley’s parents Anne and Jose have been banking for years, presented Conley with a special gift: covering the cost of her riding lessons for the Spring and Summer sessions.

Conley’s story is a testament to the resiliency and selflessness of individuals and the community during a year that has been difficult for everyone. Despite facing many challenges in her own life, Conley saw a need in her community and felt moved to help. With the encouragement of her instructor Maya Grigorovich-Barsky, her friends at Lift Me Up! and the support of Apple Federal Credit

SEE RIDER, PAGE 5



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Conley takes a lesson on Finn with instructor Maya Grigorovich-Barsky (right) and LiftMeUp! Executive Director Georgia Bay (left).

Teenage Rider Supports LiftMeUp!

FROM PAGE 4

Union, Conley is hoping to be able to compete again next fall.

As of April 16, Delfinia, Conley's favorite

horse at LMU, is in the hospital for colic and laminitis. LMU is currently fundraising to pay for her medical expenses and ongoing treatment. Donations are being accepted at liftmeup.org/delfinia.

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Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

NATIVE PLANT SALE AT RIVERBEND PARK

Friends of Riverbend Park in Great Falls is hosting its Native Plant Sale on Saturday, May 1 at 8 a.m. at the Riverbend Park Educational Pavilion, which is located halfway down Potomac Hills Street from the park entrance on Jeffery Road. They will have a limited number of plants available for sale because of the enormous numbers of pre-orders this year and all of the bluebells sold on the deck of the Visitor Center on April 10th. So come early to get the plants you want. They will have lots of phlox, which is currently in bloom and iris cristata, which will be blooming shortly. Parking is available next to the Educational Pavilion, and payments may be made by cash, check or credit card.

VIENNA BINGO IS BACK

The Vienna Volunteer Fire Department Bingo will be opened beginning Sunday, May 2. Doors open and sales begin 4 p.m. Early Birds begin 6 p.m. The Auxiliary will be offering a limited menu of basic prepackaged snacks and drinks. Outside food is permitted but refrain from bringing large amounts to share with others outside your family. On Mothers Day, Sunday, May 9, they will still only be offering a limited menu of snacks and drinks. A small dessert item will be provided to guests.

APRIL 28-JUNE 16

Virtual Active Aging Exercise Classes sponsored by Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia (SCNOVA). Wednesdays, 10:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. Exercise class for older adults focusing on low impact aerobics, balance, coordination and stretching. Class meets for 1 hour, once a week, for eight weeks. Cost: \$50 for 8 week session - payable to Sun Fitness LLC. To register or for more info, contact Casey Tarr at 703-821-6838 or eileentarr1@verizon.net. After registering, you will be contacted with payment instructions and will be provided with an invitation link to connect to the Zoom virtual class.

GIANT FOOD OFFERS COVID VACCINE

Giant Food announced that all 152 of its in-store pharmacies throughout Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware are offering the COVID-19 vaccine to eligible residents. Since late 2020 Giant has been administering vaccinations and is continuing to work closely with local and federal authorities to receive additional doses on an ongoing basis. Giant's pharmacies are currently utilizing the Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson vaccines, dependent on specific location. Residents can check for eligibility and schedule first dose appointments at giant-food.com/covid-info.

GOLDEN GIRLS SEEKS PLAYERS

The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia, a senior women's softball league, is looking for players. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. They play on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna. For more information, visit the website www.goldengirls.org.

CALENDAR

The Unruly Theatre Project's Virtual Improv Show will be held on Wednesday, April 28 in McLean at the Alden Theatre.



NOW THRU JUNE 26

Ken Britz, Artist of the Year. At VAS Gallery in the Village Green, 513 Maple Ave. W, Vienna. The Vienna Arts Society is thrilled to present a collection of "Favored Subjects", artworks by Artist of the Year Ken Britz. The exhibition is open April 12 through June 26, Mon. - Sat., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Discover more about Ken on the website: www.ViennaArtsSociety.org

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 28

(The) Unruly Theatre Project's Virtual Improv Show. Virtual. Sponsored by the Alden. 7 p.m. Join them for (the) Unruly Theatre Project's virtual spring improv shows from the comfort of your couch. You can register for one show or as many as you like, but participants need to register at least two hours in advance of a show to see it. A Zoom link and password for the show will be emailed to registrants. For more information or to register, visit: www.aldentheatre.org.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 28

Topics in Astronomy Webinar: Stargazing. 7:30-8:30 p.m. Virtual Program. Grab your binoculars and pull up a seat for April's "Topics in Astronomy Webinar." These monthly webinars explore everything from space missions to planets, stars and galaxies. See how much can be seen in the night sky, even if you don't have a telescope. These presentations are for the general public and do not require any specific knowledge of astronomy. This virtual program will be hosted in an online Zoom meeting by staff and volunteers of the Analemma Society. The cost is \$8 per person. Call Colvin Run Mill at 703-759-2771.

FRIDAY/APRIL 30

Old Firehouse Friday Night Trip -- Top Golf. 4-10 p.m. Come eat, drink and golf like a pro! Experience a new state-of-the-art Angry Birds golf game. Golf, food and a free Top Golf membership is included. Come have fun and perfect your golf swing with us. For more information or to register, visit: www.oldfirehouse.org or call 703-448-TEEN (8336).

FRIDAY/APRIL 30

Father-Daughter Silent Disco Dance. 7-8:30 p.m. Join MCC for a socially distanced, outdoor, Father-Daughter Silent Disco Dance with DJ BigCourt. We will transform the MCC parking lot into a dance floor with each father-daughter group having its own space. Price includes the use of headphones with the option of one of three family friendly music genres, snack bags and glow products to add to the fun. Get outside, get moving and spend some time with your little princess. For more information, visit www.mcleancenter.org or call 703-790-0123, TTY: 711.

APRIL 30-MAY 14

Art as Life Vale Arts. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. More than 160 works of fine art will be on exhibit in the virtual "Art as Life" ValeArts show April 30-May 14, 2021. Normally held at the Vale Schoolhouse in Oakton, the online show will show all types of abstract, representational, and impressionist art. Guest Artists Deb Keirce and Andrea Cybyk join the core Vale-

Artists Laura Barringer, Linda Bullen, Lorrie Herman, Kim Richards, Diana Eichler and Jenna Klimchak. Visit www.valearts.com

MAY 1 AND MAY 2

"Twelfth Night." 5-7 p.m. At Arts Herndon Lawn, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Herndon Community Arts Lab, in association with Arts Herndon and Dark Horse Theatre on Arts Herndon Lawn Stage, starts Friday at 7 p.m. Pay what you can (but reserve 'Bubble') Saturday, May 1, Sunday, May 2 - all at 5 p.m. Book tickets now www.darkhorseva.com. Cost: \$50 per 4 person Bubble, \$15 Single.

SATURDAY/MAY 1

Painting With Nature. 1-3 p.m. At Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Discover what nature can add to your artwork with the "Painting with Nature" class at Colvin Run Mill. Explore the ways you can use natural pigments to create gorgeous hues. Learn how to make paints using organic materials. The class is designed for participants age 13 to adult and the cost is \$25 per person. Call 703-759-2771.

SUNDAY/MAY 2

Tribute to Sonny Rollins. 3 p.m. At Mason Pond Lawn at GMU, across from the Center for the Arts Concert Hall in Fairfax. The talented Mason Jazz Faculty salutes tenor saxophonist Sonny Rollins, long heralded as "the greatest living jazz improviser," who has inspired generations of musicians. \$25/adults. Tickets are now available to the public at cfa.gmu.edu.

MONDAY/MAY 3

Science Enrichment Program. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Hidden Pond Nature Center 8511 Greeley Blvd., Springfield. Explore science beyond the classroom with a "Science Enrichment" program at Hidden Pond Nature Center. These programs are designed to supplement online and classroom science instruction with hands-on activities tailored to specific elementary grade levels. The cost of each is \$6 per child. One parent is required to sign up per household. Call 703-451-9588.

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"My Thoughts to Your Thoughts"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

You know the expression: Can't walk and chew gum at the same time;" a disparaging characterization of a person, company or municipality unable to multi-task or even tasl at all? Fortunately, I've not had much interaction in any of these categories (myself included). I do however, have a similar description of yours truly: I can't write a column and eat at the same time. I can drink (not alcohol) and write. And back in college - in the 70s, while writing a weekly column for "the diamondback" (the college newspaper) at The university of Maryland, I could partake, recreationally, and still write my column. In fact, I still remember what I thought was one of the funniest lines in a column I wrote about my inability to use tools (while under said influence) : "The only power tool I ever used was a hammer." Ah, the good old daze.

Fast forward and I mean fast, to 2021, approximately 45 years, since I was a weekly columnist for the campus newspaper. Time hasn't merely flown by, it has broken all former land speed records. In fictional fact, it hasn't been mach, it has been at "warp" speed, for those of you regular readers who are still trying to "Live long and prosper" while watching cable channel "H&I" Sunday through Friday, off and on between 8pm and 1am. For us "Star Trek" fans, these five hours of nightly programming fill a void that no replicator can match.

Spock could certainly multi-task. How else could he master three-dimensional chess? Perhaps some of his skill set had its origins in the "Vulcan mind-meld" which enabled him to read other's thoughts and gain unique insights into previously unshared experiences. As I think back over the years of previous "Star Trek" viewing (and my current re-infatuation), I can't recall ever seeing Spock eat, or even drink for that matter. Maybe he couldn't eat and be First Officer/second in command at the same time? Not that I'm equating myself with Spock, he was way more intelligent and accomplished than me. But maybe we did share a common affliction: an inability to eat and simultaneously perform other tasks?

And though Spock never seemed any the worse for the wear and tear he endured while rarely eating, I, as a red-blooded human, need to eat. I just can't eat while I'm writing. It seems to take away from my focus and blunt the creative process. Maybe if I were able to "narrow the confinement beam," I could put more of my thoughts down on paper before they're lost in my head. Thoughts which occasionally are fleeting, but usually are pertinent to the column I'm writing. Unlike Spock however, my thoughts are not always logical and though I try to embrace his Vulcan philosophy: "The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few," I think I'm too needy to do so. (My nephew bought me Star Trek pajamas for Christmas. It didn't exactly fill a need but it sure has made me happy to wear them. If you're at all curious they are Spock's rank and color: blue top with black pants, with proper Star Trek insignia.)

As is the case with my weekly column. I deprive myself of nourishment in order to write in a semi-coherent way. Sometimes I fail (perhaps the proof is right here in the words which you are reading), but it's never because I ate while I wrote, it's because the "inertial dampeners" (whatever they are) were not functioning within normal parameters. I just have to hope that my communicator doesn't malfunction or that an ion storm doesn't develop locally and knocks out the power to my house. I don't have a "Scotty" around to transfer power from one system to another. All I have is that hammer. And I know from limited experience, that a hammer is not going to solve my problem. I need a whole crew with all their own tools.

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



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