

E *njoy*

ARTS ♦ ENTERTAINMENT ♦ LEISURE



The American Dream

Joyce McCarten exhibits
“Joy” at the Torpedo Factory..

ART, PAGE 3



U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8) prepares for a segment with producer Holly Stadler and director Victoria Hughes.

Profiles in Conflict

New documentary features those who found their voices by speaking out against the war in Iraq.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE

Most of the action in “Finding Our Voices” takes place before the March 2003 invasion of Iraq, a time when speaking out against the rush to war was likely to invite accusations of being un-American. The 70-minute documentary by Dream Catcher Films features the personal stories of resistance and opposition by people who questioned the wisdom of invading a country that had not attacked America. Now, with popular support turned against a military occupation that has dragged on longer than World War II, those who opposed the war before it began have a newfound cache. This film chronicles how they found their voice.

“This is a film about courage of individual people to take risk to stand up for their beliefs,” said Victoria Hughes, a longtime Alexandria resident who directed the film. “We wanted to show that dissent was patriotic.”

A native of Washington, D.C., Hughes has been an independent filmmaker for 12 years. The child of a United States diplomat, she spent her childhood in far-flung locales experiencing the international scene. By the time she graduated from the University of Virginia, Hughes had a wanderlust that landed her a teaching gig in a Scottish high school in Israel. After returning to America in the 1980s, she began writing and directing documentaries for the Educational Films division of National Geographic. In the past 12 years, she has worked on more than 60 hours of programming for the Discovery Channel, BBC, PBS and National Geographic.

“There are great policy wonks out there right now, but we wanted to do something

that was different,” said Hughes. “We wanted to do something different. We wanted to do a story about people.”

THE FILM FEATURES a mother who lost her son in the World Trade Center, three soldiers who participated in the 2003 invasion, peace activists and U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8). Their personal stories are interspersed with footage of street protests in New York, insurgent explosions in Baghdad and political arguments in Washington. The cumulative effect is one of exasperation, with the voices of dissent moving from a shunted minority to a disgruntled majority. The ending of the film will leave viewers with a feeling that the narrative is largely unresolved even as a coda awaits on Election Day in November.

“The war was wrong. The war was immoral,” said John Bruhns, an infantryman who took part in the invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003. “I’m proud of my military service, but I’m not proud of the Iraq war.”

Congressman Moran acts as a sort of Greek chorus for the argument of the film, which is that the invasion of Iraq was an illegal action that has now caused irreparable harm to the diplomatic reputation of the United States. He is seen opposing the war on the floor of the House of Representatives and in the community room at St. Elmo’s Coffee Pub in Del Ray. Much of the footage featuring him was recorded during an extended interview in his Capitol Hill office.

“When I took a strong position against the war I wasn’t necessarily doing it to represent my constituents but rather to represent my own beliefs,” Moran says in the film. “There are some issues that are important enough that you’ve got to take a stand.”

Father’s Day Events

Visit Mount Vernon, Gadsby’s among others.

Dad Can Be “Chief” On Father’s Day

Once again Friendship Firehouse, 107 S. Alfred St, will host dads for free on June 15 in honor of Father’s Day with special tours from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. One of America’s oldest fire service organizations, Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association will make every dad an honorary chief of the Friendship Fire Company Bucket Brigade on “his” day.

Every dad, with his children, will receive a certificate, get to ring the fire bell, and have his picture taken with the Friendship Fire Engine. Known as George Washington’s Fire Company, it was originally organized in 1774 and moved to its present location in 1851.

The Friendship Firehouse Museum includes equipment and apparatus dating back to the colonial era. Each year the Association, prior to Alexandria’s George Washington Birthday Parade and celebration, hosts a breakfast honoring outstanding Alexandrians and honoring the parade’s Grand Marshal.

For additional information call 703-838-3891 or visit www.friendshipfirehouse.org.

A Father’s Day For History Buffs

Make Father’s Day an historic event with visits to Mount Vernon Estate & Gardens, plus three historical sites in Alexandria — the Lee-Fendall House Museum and Gardens, Gadsby’s Tavern, and Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary. The Alexandria sites are free June 15 to dads and grand dads accompanied by their families.

At Mount Vernon “General Washington” will greet visitors and pose for photographs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Father’s Day, June 15. He will also discuss his role as husband, stepfather, and Father of the Nation at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., and 3 p.m. in the Little Theater during the program “Father to the First Family.”

With a purchased ticket to the Estate, which is open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., April through August, fathers will receive complimentary admission to Washington’s Distillery and Gristmill, located three miles from the Estate on Route 235 South. At the Distillery demonstrations by costumed distillers take visitors through the process of 18th century whiskey-making.

Visitors to the Gristmill watch as water from Dogue Creek turns the large indoor water wheel that powers the process of turning grain into kitchen ready cornmeal. Bags

of the finished meal, milled on site, are available for purchase.

Both the Distillery and Gristmill are open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily through October 31. Picnic tables are available for family use and relaxation.

Admission to Mount Vernon Estate is \$13 for adults and \$6 for children, five and older. Admission to the Distillery and Gristmill is \$4 for adults and \$2 for children five and older.

Alexandria’s Lee-Fendall House Museum and Garden, 614 Oronoco St., will offer free Father’s Day tours from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. to fathers and grandfathers accompanied by their children. The last tour of the day will commence at 3 p.m.

As Alexandria’s oldest Lee family home, Lee-Fendall House served as home to 37 members of the Lee family from 1785 until 1903. Now restored to its early Victorian elegance, the house is interpreted as a Lee family home from 1850 to 1870 and presents an intimate study of 19th century family life.

Guided by its 1852 inventory, the house is furnished with Lee Family heirlooms as well as period pieces produced by Alexandria furniture manufacturers. It is owned and operated by the Virginia Trust for Historic Preservation. Admission is \$4 for adults and \$2 for students, 11 to 17. Children under 11 are admitted free.

Gadsby’s Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St., and Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary, 105-107 S. Fairfax St., are both offering complimentary tours June 15 to honor dads and grand dads. Gadsby’s was one of George Washington’s favorite stopping off spots for food and drink and the site of Thomas Jefferson’s inaugural ball.

The recently restored Apothecary is one of the last remaining examples of an 18th and 19th century predecessor to the modern drug store remaining in the nation. After continuously operating for 141 years it closed in 1933.

Both the Lee-Fendall House and Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary will be conducting tours from noon to 4:45 p.m. Admission prices for each site, except for fathers and grandfathers, is \$4 for adults, \$2 for children 11 to 17, and children under 11 free.

—CHUCK HAGEE

PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/
GAZETTE

ON THE COVER: Joyce McCarten and one of her pieces of art.

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Omission

In last week’s edition, we regretfully did not identify the girl on the cover of E. Nell Hutchinson was the ballet dancer.

ART

Target Gallery Features 'Artist Of The Year'

Joyce McCarten returns to her "first love— painting" for her solo exhibit.

BY CHUCK HAGEE
GAZETTE

After a hiatus of 12 years, Joyce McCarten returned to her first love — painting. Tonight, June 12, her work will be featured during a reception and award ceremony in the Torpedo Factory Art Center's Target Gallery from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. McCarten is the 2008 Torpedo Factory Artist of the Year.

As part of the Friends of the Torpedo Factory Art Center's annual programming, competition for the annual honor is open to Torpedo Factory Artists Association members only. In addition to the month-long, Target Gallery solo exhibition, the award includes a monetary prize. McCarten's show opened June 11 and runs through July 13.

An award winning artist whose works are part of private and public collections not only throughout the United States

"I knew I had to study. Painting is not easy."

-Joyce McCarten,
Artist of the Year

but also in Europe and South Africa, McCarten teaches art classes at the Art League School and in her private Falls Church home studio.

Her original painting career started in 1971 when she took classes from Evelyn Turner, an early Torpedo Factory artist. Since ending her hiatus, she has been painting since 1988.

"I knew I had to study. Painting is not easy. You have to have a lot of patience. In fact, one of my teachers said that one of my greatest qualities was my patience," McCarten said sitting in the Target Gallery among the painting now on display.

In addition to the Art League, McCarten has studied painting at NOVA, George Mason, and the Corcoran Gallery. She started by taking classes in oil painting and doing a lot of drawing. Now she specialized in mixed media based in either oil or acrylic.

"I had a career in publishing and painted just at night. But, then I realized that the art was too demanding to combine with my career so I stopped painting altogether for 12 years," she said. Her first husband, who died unexpectedly five years ago, was a graphic artist and painter.

Now married to a stage, screen, and television actor, Walter Smith, they reside in Falls Church. Her two grown daughters are also into the arts. Michele

is a musician in the Washington area and Melissa is a dancer living in Philadelphia. "A love of the arts runs throughout the family," she said.

BUT, HER IMMERSION into social commentary and involvement is not limited to her canvas. Although some of her art work speaks to her most recent venture into another element of teaching — that of English as a second language to recent immigrants.

She began her ESL teaching at The Falls Church in Falls Church just last year. "We have people from all over the world in the class who are to become citizens. It's amazing when you really get to know them one on one you see a common thread — the dream of becoming an American citizen," McCarten said.

That thread has inspired a new series of McCarten's paintings entitled "The American Dream." Reflecting on that personal interaction with her students she said, "They want a better life and a better education for their children. It's in their eyes, the way they almost seem to be looking into the future."

Several of her works in the solo show catches that dream very poignantly. But, not in a lighthearted or dream chaser way, rather in a very realistic manner, conveying almost contemplative fixation — from a man reading with a book to a woman who commands a sense of presence and purpose.

McCarten works an array of images into her paintings, whether the medium is oil or acrylic. There is a piece of circular metal from the garage that resembles a filter, a scrap of paper with analytical notations, the head of a woman with a 1920's hair style, a piece of corrugated cardboard, a post mark, and a curvaceous torso.

Elements of her work are like an artistic scavenger hunt daring the viewer to find a common thread in order to solve the intertwined puzzle. Even the format seems to be part of the challenge whether it be canvas, wood or paper.

"I like to mix it up a lot. I want it to be quite challenging. I like layers. I like to use abstract shapes, colors, images and change the medium," McCarten said. Each piece on display seems to embody the exhibition theme — "Don't Postpone Joy."

Two of her favorite works are "Innocence Lost" and "Yaking In The Wilderness." The first draws the viewer's attention to two dominate images that seem in juxtaposition to one another— the head of the woman with a 1920's hairdo and a piece of black paper with white analytical notations. They are joined by the image of a butterfly and an "all seeing" eye.

To the female image McCarten has added lipstick and rouge. "In our culture today we have lost the ability to blush. It seems we have lost the innocence. That's why I added

the lipstick to her lips and the rouge to her cheeks," she explained.

"Yaking In The Wilderness" is based on a quote from the late American writer S.J. Perelman. A large, very busy painting, it presents a silent commentary on "how much we deal with in this life that, in the final analysis, is not very important," McCarten explained.

One very noticeable characteristic to her work is the abundant use of yellow



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Pieces from the "Don't Postpone Joy."

low mixed with wheat and earth tones. It plays either a major or minor role in many of her works. Perhaps that is because, by the artist's own admission, "I love painting grain fields. During a trip through the west and midwest I sketched many wheat fields," she said.

Perhaps one of the most intriguing aspects of her work is that even within her most abstract there are elements of the here and now that reach out to the viewer with a dualism rarely so tangible. Even "Yaking In The Wilderness" makes one long for some of that "yaking" in this era of computer "no speak."

Looking forward to her solo exhibition McCarten admitted to being "a little nervous" and very surprised and honored at being chosen Artist of the Year. "Having your

work out there in a solo exhibition makes you very vulnerable. I was also surprised by being chosen because the two semi-finalists are friends of mine and very good artists," McCarten said.

This is an exhibition that is well worth any Torpedo Factory visitor's time and contemplation. McCarten's works range in price from \$350 to \$2,500. Beginning in July visitors will find her in Studio 301 at the Art Center, which she has sublet.

Target Gallery's solo exhibition of her work is free and open to the public. For additional information contact Mary Cook, director, Target Gallery at 703-838-4564, Ext.4 or by logging onto www.mcook@torpedofactory.org. The Torpedo Factory Art Center is located on Alexandria's waterfront at 105 N. Union St.

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CALENDAR

E-mail announcements to the Gazette, gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Photos and artwork are encouraged. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Call Rebecca Halik at 703-917-6407 with questions.

OTHER ITEMS

The City of Alexandria will host its Second Annual Film Festival at the Lee Center's Kauffman Auditorium (1108 Jefferson St.) from Sept. 25 through Sept. 28. The deadline to submit a film entry is June 16. To receive a submission form, visit www.alexandriacommissionforthearts.org.

ONGOING

Visit **George Washington's Distillery & Gristmill** through Oct. 31 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. See how whiskey got started. \$4/adult; \$2/child. Get discounts with admission to Mount Vernon Estate. Visit www.mountvernon.org for more.

Take a **seasonal walking tour** from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Mount Vernon Estate. This 30-minute tour explores a variety of contributions. Free. Visit www.mountvernon.org for more.

On **Sundays** take a Potomac River Sightseeing Cruise at 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 1 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. \$9/adult; \$5/child in addition to Mount Vernon Estate admission. Visit www.mountvernon.org for schedules.

Every **Tuesday and Thursday** through October from 5-8 p.m. at Hotel Monaco Alexandria, enjoy **Doggie Happy Hour**. Enjoy doggie treats and human treats.

Join City archaeologists and trained volunteers for an exciting program for kids of all ages at **Alexandria Archaeology Family Dig Days**. Be part of the fascinating archaeological investigation and discover firsthand the hidden clues left behind by the people who lived and worked there hundreds of years ago, by helping screen excavated soil. Monthly Family Dig Days will be held from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. on the grounds of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, in Alexandria. The 2008 dates are on Saturdays: June 14; July 12; Aug. 16; Sept. 20 and Oct. 18. \$5/person and spots fill up fast. Call 703-838-4399 or visit www.alexandriarchaeology.org to reserve a spot.

On **Sundays** from noon-5 p.m., visit the Waterfront and see **history-inspired performances** near the Torpedo Factory; do a "meet and greet" of early Alexandria residents and travelers near the Waterfront and lower King Street. Free. Visit www.historicalexandria.org for more.

In celebration of the exhibition "**Setting the President's Table: American Presidential China**," visitors to Mount Vernon will have a chance every day from June 1 to Aug. 31 to win a piece of porcelain featuring the Martha Washington "States" pattern. Drawings occur daily at 3 p.m. in the Shops at Mount Vernon, and the grand prize will be drawn on Aug. 31. No purchase is required, and visitors do not have to be present to win. Visit www.mountvernon.org or 703-780-2000.

On weekdays from **June through August**, from 10-11 a.m. or 11 a.m.-noon., children ages 6-12 can **hunt for Harry Potter's** favorite plants and explore their lore. Learn how to craft a wand and make potions. Groups welcome. \$6/student. 703-642-5173. At Green Spring Garden,

4603 Green Spring Road.

On Saturdays from **June 7 through Aug. 16** from 1-3 p.m., children ages 8-12 years can learn how to **create a garden** with hands-on activities and will be able to grow a garden. \$10/student. At Green Spring Garden, 4603 Green Spring Road. To register, 703-642-5173.

See Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St., in a whole new light - **lantern light**. Tour the 1785 tavern and 1792 City Hotel during the summer season with costumed guides as you experience the tavern as patrons did more than 200 years ago before the advent of electricity. Tours are every Friday night, **June through August**, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$5 per person ages 5 and up. Tours last approximately 30 minutes, with the last tour starting at 9:15 p.m. Call ahead to confirm tour date. For more information, call 703-838-4242 or visit www.gadbsbytavern.org.

FRIDAY/JUNE 13

Mount Vernon Nights. Listen to a variety of music at 7:30 p.m. on Friday nights at Grist Mill Park, 4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway starting June 6. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance for more.

Lunch Bunch. Children up to age 5 can bring a lunch and enjoy stories at noon at John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive. Free. 703-971-0010.

Familial Fairy Tales. 10:30 a.m. at Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road. Children ages 2-5 can enjoy stories, activities and a craft about princes and princesses. Free. 703-768-6700.

SATURDAY/JUNE 14

Concert. 8-10 p.m. at Minnie Howard Middle School, 3801 W. Braddock Road. Presented by Destiny's Dream. Visit www.destinysdream.org or 703-360-1599.

Local Authors. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Meet authors such as Charnika Louise Hayes, Beverly Babin Woods and more. Free. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org or 703-838-4356.

Lee District Nights. 7:30 p.m. at Hayfield Elementary School, 7633 Telegraph Road. Hear Russikey Musikant perform. Free. 703-324-SHOW (7469).

Landscaping. 9 a.m.-noon at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Learn how to create a garden. \$160/two sessions. 703-642-5173.

Trash and Treasures. 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at St. James' Episcopal Church of Mount Vernon, 5614 Old Mill Road. Baked goods, toys, books, food and more will be available. Enjoy prizes, raffles and more. Free. 703-780-3081.

Saturday Stories. 2 p.m. at Burke Library, 4701 Seminary Road. All ages. Free. 703-519-6000.

SUNDAY/JUNE 15

Father's Day Tours. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Mount Vernon Estate. Listen to General Washington discuss his role as husband, stepfather and Father of Our Country. \$13/adult; \$6/child. Visit www.mountvernon.org or 703-780-2000.

Bridge Club. 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2500 Sherwood Hall Lane. Beginners and advanced players age 12 and up can learn. Free. 703-765-3645.

Father's Day Tours. Gadsby's Tavern, 134 N. Royal St., and Apothecary Museum, 105 S. Fairfax St., are giving free tours to fathers. \$4/adult; \$2/child. Visit www.historicalexandria.org for more.

Cruise To Future

BY GREG ROSENSTEIN
GAZETTE

Come June 25, it's time to break out the Hawaiian shirt and flip-flops for a tropical-themed charity benefit on the Potomac waterfront.

Parrothead Paradise, the 5th annual Fostering the Future Cruise, is an event hoping to raise money for children in foster care. Hosted by the Advisory Council of The Fund for Alexandria's Child at the Department of Human Services, Parrothead Paradise is a night full of music, food and drink.

"Helping kids in foster care is very important because these children are in the custody of the government, but the only thing the government can pay essentially is room, board and medical care," Suzanne Kratzok, Coordinator of Community Resources for the Department of Human Resources, said. "Everything children would have, in a normal situation, is not available to them unless we raise the money to help."

Father's Day Tours. 1-4 p.m. at Friendship Firehouse, 107 S. Alfred St. Every father, with his children, will receive a certificate, get to ring the bell and get his picture taken. Free. Visit www.friendshipfirehouse.org for more.

MONDAY/JUNE 16
Book Discussion. 7 p.m. at Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. Discuss "Consequences" by Penelope Lively. Free. 703-838-4566.

TUESDAY/JUNE 17

Pinwheel Baby Blanket. 7-9 p.m. at Knit Happens, 127A N. Washington St. Learn to work in the round and increase with this project. \$70. Register at 703-836-0039.

Baby Booties Crash Course. 7-9 p.m. at Knit Happens, 127A N. Washington St. learn to increase and decrease. \$50. Register at 703-836-0039.

Mother-Daughter Book Discussion. 7 p.m. at John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive. Enjoy a lively book discussion. Call for title. Ages 9-11 with adult. Free. 703-971-0010.

On the Farm. 10:30 a.m. at Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre. Children ages 13-23 months can enjoy stories and activities about barnyard friends. Free. 703-339-4610.

SummerQuest Jr. 10 a.m. or 11 a.m. at Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. Children up to age 5 can enjoy Kaydee Puppets. Free. 703-838-4566.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 18

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at Lee District Park Amphitheater, 6601 Telegraph Road. Hear Flat Foot Sam and the Educated Fools perform. Free. 703-922-9841.

A cocktail reception will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the dock at Cameron and Union Streets behind the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Between 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., attendees will board the "Cherry Blossom" for dinner and dancing to the island-style music of the Nautical Wheelers Band on the Potomac River.

Nautical Wheelers Band lead singer Mike Philip said the opportunity to play for this particular cause was too much to pass up.

"If they are raising money for a good charity, then we definitely go out of our way to accommodate them," Philip said. "It seemed like a great way to 'party with a purpose.' Go out and have a good time while you are raising money for a good cause. Should be a great time."

Mango Mike's Restaurant will provide a buffet of tropical cuisine and Whole Foods Market Old Town will offer desserts.

The cruise is for adults only, with tickets \$65 per person. Dress attire for the benefit is casual and flip-flops are optional.

Lutindo! 2:30 p.m. at John Marshall Library, 6200 Rose Hill Drive. All ages can stomp feet and clap with Suuna, as he presents traditional African music, dance and stories. Free. 703-971-0010.

Book Discussion Group. 7:15 p.m. at John Marshall Library, 6200 Rose Hill Drive. Adults. Free. 703-971-0010.

Natural Wonders. 10:30 a.m. at Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road. Children ages 3-5 can enjoy stories, activities and a craft about the Big Top Circus. Free. 703-768-6700.

Film Screening and Dance Workshop. 7 p.m. at Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Explore Gumbo dance through film, dancing and more. \$15/person. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org or 703-838-4356.

Pajama Story Time. 7 p.m. at Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. Children ages 3-6. Free. 703-838-4566.

THURSDAY/JUNE 19

Summer Solstice Concert. 7-8 p.m. at Green Spring Garden, 4603 Green Spring Road. Bring a picnic or order one and listen to music by the Fairfax Symphony Dixieland Band. \$45/picnic for two. Concert is free. 703-642-5173.

Garden Stroll and Tea. 1-3 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Take a relaxing stroll through the gardens and enjoy a tea. \$25/person. To register, 703-941-7987.

Garden Sprouts: Tops and Bottoms. 9:30 a.m. or 11 a.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Children ages 3-5 years can learn about plants we eat and then enjoy a healthy snack and make a garden. \$6/child. To register, 703-642-5173.

American Wildlife. 2:30 p.m. at Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre. Children ages 6-12 can meet and learn about live

animals from the backyard and beyond. Free. 703-339-4610.

Just Twos. 10:30 a.m. at Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road. Children ages 24-35 months can enjoy stories and activities. Free. 703-768-6700.

Poetry Group. 7 p.m. at Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road. Discuss "Poems" by Anna Akhmatova. Free. 703-768-6700.

Reading Magic. 7 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2500 Sherwood Hall Lane. A magic show full of comedy and fun with Turley the Magician. For children ages 6-12. Free. 703-765-3645.

Community Day. Centura College is holding a "Paying it Forward" to benefit Carpenter's Shelter from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at 6295 Edsall Road. Enjoy hotdogs, massages, raffles and more. Free.

Dance Program. 7:30 p.m. at Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St. Explore the Lesole Dance. \$15/person. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org or 703-838-4356.

Book Discussion. 7 p.m. at Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Discuss "Six Characters in Search of an Author" by Luigi Pirandello. Free. 703-931-3559.

FRIDAY/JUNE 20
Music Performance. The Mount Vernon Swing Band will perform from 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. \$4/person. 703-765-4573.

Art Talk. 7-9 p.m. in the Torpedo Factory Main Hall, 105 N. Union St. Ken Matsuzaki will talk about his career as a potter. Free. Visit www.theartleague.org for more.

Closing Reception. 5-10 p.m., Blueberry Art Gallery, 3112-A Mount Vernon Ave., presents "Delray" by K. Wesley E. Clark through June 21.

Mount Vernon Nights. Listen to a variety of music at 7:30 p.m. on Friday nights at Grist Mill Park, 4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway starting June 6. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance for more.

Closing Reception. 5-10 p.m. see art by Wesley Clark from June 1 through June 21 at Blueberry Art Gallery, 3112A Mount Vernon Ave. Free. 703-894-8854.

Outdoor Symposium. 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Parents, teachers and volunteers can integrate outdoor learning and gardening into the schoolyard and curriculum. \$35/person. To register, 703-642-5173.

Friday Flicks. Noon at John Marshall Library, 6200 Rose Hill Drive. Children up to age 5 can bring lunch and enjoy stories and a short movie. Free. 703-971-0010.

Creatures Great and Small. 10:30 a.m. at Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road. Enjoy a musical review of animal songs and stories for all ages. Free. 703-768-6700.

Comedy Performance. Skippy from "Family Ties" will perform at All Stars Comedy Club, 3100 Mount Vernon Ave. Performances at 9 p.m. and 10:45 p.m. Dinner available. Visit www.allstarscomedy.com for tickets.

Play Performance. 8 p.m. at Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Watch "Running Scared, Running Free." \$10/person. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org or 703-838-4356.

SATURDAY/JUNE 21
Closing Reception. 5-10 p.m., Blueberry Art Gallery, 3112-A Mount Vernon Ave., presents "Delray" by K. Wesley E. Clark from June 1 through June 21.

Soldier-Led Tour. 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum, 4301 West Braddock Road. Learn about Fort Ward, soldier's life and more. Free. Visit www.fortward.org or 703-838-4848.

Closing Reception. 5-10 p.m. see art by Wesley Clark from June 1 through June 21 at Blueberry Art Gallery, 3112A Mount Vernon Ave. Free. 703-894-8854.

Older Cat Care. 1-3 p.m. at Vola Lawson Animal Shelter, 4101 Eisenhower Ave. Learn about adult cats. Free. Visit www.alexandriainimals.org or 703-838-4774.

Lee District Nights. 7:30 p.m. at Hayfield Elementary School, 7633 Telegraph Road. Hear Rumba Club perform. Free. 703-324-SHOW (7469).

Framed Botanical Art: Pressed Ferns. 9:30-11 a.m. at Green Spring Garden. Learn how to mount flowers on paper and then frame them. \$25/person. 703-642-5173.

Garden Sprouts: Tops and Bottoms. 10 a.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Children ages 3-5 years can learn about plants we eat and then make a garden. \$6/child. To register, 703-642-5173.

Play Ball! 2 p.m. at Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre. Bring a camera and take a photo with Potomac Nationals mascot Uncle Slam, and then hear a baseball story. Free. 703-339-4610.

Book Discussion. Discuss and then get signed copies of "The Dark Before the Light at Dawn" by Vanessa Grace at 10:30 a.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2500 Sherwood Hall Lane. Free. 703-765-3645.

Movie. 7 p.m. at Mount Vernon Rec Center. Watch "Shrek 3." Free. www.delraycitizen.org for more.

Dog Massage Class. 1-2:30 p.m. at Tails of Old Towne in Del Ray. Bring a dog. Register at www.tailsofoldtowne.com or 703-768-0500.



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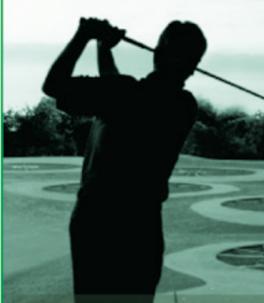
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THEATRE



Cast of "The Underpants" now playing at Little Theatre of Alexandria.

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**Steve Martin's
"Underpants" adaptation
gets lots of laughs.**

Where and When:

"The Underpants" plays through June 28 at the Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe Street. Performances are Wednesday - Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m.. Tickets are \$14 - \$17. Call 703-683-0496 or log on to www.thelittletheatre.org.

BY BRAD HATHAWAY
GAZETTE

That "wild and crazy guy," Steve Martin, first made a name for himself as a comedian, but in 1993 he penned an original comedy for the stage which was a hit. That play was "Picasso at the Lapin Agile." Almost a decade later, he tried his hand at adapting an existing comedy, an early twentieth-century German farce about a civil servant who fears disaster when his wife's drawers descend in public.

The Little Theatre of Alexandria is mounting a very funny production of this comic morsel. Under the direction of Eddie Schwartz, all of the six member cast deliver lines with energy and clarity and find just the right timing to make most of the punch lines evoke real laughter.

The play is "The Underpants," an adaptation of a 1910 farce by Carl Sternheim, whose works were satirical farces holding contemporary values up to ridicule. The play was banned when it was first written probably because of its political views as much as for its supposed indecency. Add a condemnation of sexism as the male civil servant expects subservience from his wife, and there is a very modern feel to the piece.

Part of the reason for that modern feel must be the work of Martin. He doesn't update the story to a more recent time - Germany is still under the Kaiser - and he doesn't sprinkle today's slang into yesterday's speeches. But he does use a vocabulary that falls easily on contemporary ears and makes sure that there are only references that today's audiences will understand with ease.

There's plenty of humor to go around in this story. A staid, stuck up and largely insufferable minor civil

servant (played with ramrod straight posture by James Chandler) is contrasted with his at first subservient wife of one year who, by the end of the play, has come out of her shell and come to believe in her own worth.

She's played with a progressive sense of assertiveness mixed with a great deal of charm by Claudia Love Petty.

The salary of minor bureaucrats being what it was (and still is, for that matter) the couple has to let out a room in their apartment to make ends meet. With the notoriety her undergarment mishap creates, they have two applicants for their room and the husband decides to subdivide the small room and rent to both. They are a barber and a poet. Marcus Dunn is the poet, waxing eloquent over the attraction of his hostess. Mario Font is the barber who has to hide his Jewishness in the Germany of 1910 by asserting that his name is Kohen, "with a K" and not Cohen despite the tzitzit fringes coming out below his proper business coat.

Marianne Meyers is an upstairs neighbor who befriends the wife. In this apartment building, not only the walls but the ceilings and floors are so thin she can hear every word spoken in their home.

The one act comedy calls out for quick pacing and a brand of acting that, in a more subtle play, would be seen as over-acting. Director Schwartz keeps the cast from succumbing to the temptation to underplay. As a result, there are plenty of laughs to fill an hour and a half. It is ninety minutes well spent.

Brad Hathaway reviews theater in Virginia, Washington and Maryland as well as Broadway, and edits Potomac Stages, a website covering theater in the region (www.PotomacStages.com). He can be reached at Brad@Potomacstages.com

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THEATRE

Police Drama With A Twist

Port City Playhouse mounts taut "Split Second."

BY BRAD HATHAWAY
GAZETTE

Some police dramas seem to dwell on the doughnut-eating, group-bonding stereo types of the "Brotherhood" of the force. Television still fills hours of prime time with the other extreme, the bringing bad guys to justice part of that world. But there is another part of the story to be told, and Port City Playhouse is telling it in a drama featuring sharp performances and stark staging.

"Split Second," which plays at the Lee Center through June 21, details the pressures on one cop who gives in for one brief moment to the temptation to react as a human rather than as an instrument of the state when the suspect he is arresting taunts him with racial epithets and dismissive disdain.

The policeman in question is an African-American, the son of one of the few black policemen from Pittsburgh. He's a New York City cop who has chased a white man into a blind alley after interrupting his effort to steal a car. He gets the man in handcuffs and calls for a wagon to take the man to jail, but the man has a foul mouth and won't shut it. The cop tries to silence him up by pointing his gun at him, but he just gets louder, more foul and more insulting. When he gets to the ultimate string of "n-word" insults, the cop can hold his rage in check no more, and pulls the trigger.

That dramatic scene is just the set up for a series of scenes detailing the aftermath of that split second on the lives of the policeman and the people he loves. Author Dennis McIntyre wasn't interested in telling the story of the racist criminal. That side of the story is left for others to tell. In this 1984 play, he concentrates solely on the ramifications of that act on the cop and his world.

The rest of the tense evening consists of scenes

detailing that impact. There's his interview with his superior who doesn't quite buy the story he has devised, but may be willing to accept it in order to protect "the force." There's a park bench conversation with a buddy who probes for details over a can of beer.

In one taut scene, his father finds he can't accept his son's violation of the standards he held when he was a cop. Then there's the confrontation with his wife who wants nothing so much but for him to do everything possible to keep the truth from coming out.

Christopher C. Holbert plays the cop in question with a solid, unmannered straightforwardness. He underplays his own characters emotions which amplifies the impact of the emotional explosions of Donnell Boykin as his father, and especially, Amy Miharu Hard as his wife. Her outburst "I can't live without that man. I won't live without that man" drives home the ultimate consequences that face her husband if he gives in to the temptation to tell the truth about his moment of weakness. (Kathy Nay will play the wife in this weekend's performances before Hard returns for the final week.)

Jackson Dismukes is suitably despicable as the taunting car thief and Jermaine Shorts is smooth as the buddy who urges

the cop to give the system the opportunity to protect him from consequences by telling whatever story will be accepted. This is nicely contrasted by Franklin Walker's portrayal of the police captain who probes as much as duty requires, having seen and heard it all before.

The simple, uncomplicated structure of the play which works so well as a dramatic device, is enhanced by director Ed Bishop's uncomplicated staging.

If Dragnet's Jack Webb were still around, he would recognize the style as a reflection of his famous "just the facts" approach to story telling.

Brad Hathaway reviews theater and edits Potomac Stages (www.PotomacStages.com). He can be reached at Brad@PotomacStages.com.

Where and When

The Port City Playhouse production of "Split Second" plays through June 21 at the Lee Center for the Performing Arts, 1108 Jefferson St. Performances are Friday - Saturday at 8 p.m. with an additional 8 p.m. performance on Tuesday, June 17. Tickets are \$13 - \$15. Call 703-683-0496 or log on to www.portcityplayhouse.com.

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End Note



Bluegrass and Barbeque

Friends, guests and volunteers of the Lee-Fendall House found a little shade, put up their feet or just took out their fans while enjoying the afternoon of Bluegrass and BBQ in the garden on Oronoco St.



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/
GAZETTE

The gates to the garden at the Lee-Fendall House Museum opened up on Saturday afternoon with the sounds of Bluegrass and the smell of BBQ in the air. The temperatures took a turn to the south as records were set again for early June. Many took shelter in the shade of the trees to enjoy the music. Music came from Bob Perilla's Big Hillbilly Bluegrass, Dead Men's Hollow and Herb & Hanson. BBQ was fresh from Dixie Bones in Woodbridge. All proceeds from the event benefit the education and preservation initiatives of the Lee-Fendall House. For more information visit www.leefendallhouse.org.

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