

and Oakton
Vienna
CONNECTION

Cooking Up
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The World Comes to Wolf Trap

A+, PAGE 14

Although these young ethnic dancers from Poland knew little English, they were delighted to be photographed following their participation in the 40th International Children's Festival at Wolf Trap.

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To have community events listed in the Connection, send to vienna@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 23

Open House and Registration for Adventures in Learning. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Classes will be Thursdays from Sept. 30-Nov. 11, including Socrates' Cafe, T'ai Chi, bridge, national/world affairs, health series and computer classes. For adults 50 and older. www.scov.org or 703-281-0538.

Beulah Road Al-Anon Group. 7:30 p.m. at the Antioch Christian Church, 1860 Beulah Road, Vienna. Practicing the Twelve Steps, welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics, and giving understanding and encouragement to the alcoholic. revku@cox.net.

Beating the Sugar Blues. 7 p.m. at The Women's Center, 127 Park Street, N.E., Vienna. Register at www.thewomenscenter.org or 703-281-2657.

CFCC Fall Into Giving. 7-9 a.m. at the Fairfax County Health Department Building, Rowland Conference Center, 10777 Main St., Fairfax. Join the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce and Our Daily Bread to learn how your business can help the community. Admission is one \$25 grocery gift card, to be donated to Our Daily Bread to assist with their holiday programs. Continental breakfast served. Info@cfcc.org.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 24

VTRCC Executive Level Leadership Development Program. 7:30 a.m. at The Tower Club, 8000 Towers Crescent Drive, Vienna. Learn the 6 keys to a winning team, how to get the right people on the bus and get them in the right seats. Discover how to source, select, develop a position agreement, and sell A players on merits of your business. Members \$39, non-members \$49. Complimentary breakfast buffet. www.vtrcc.org.

McLean Art Society Meeting. 10 a.m. at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. With artist Rachel Collins, a realistic painter of nature's abstract forms. 703-790-0123.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 25

T'ai Chi Beginners' Practice. 8 a.m. on the outdoor basketball court behind Dolley Madison Public Library at 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. 703-759-9141 or www.FreeTaiChi.org.

Brinker Toastmasters. 9:30 a.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. N.E., Vienna. Meets second and fourth Saturday of the month. brinker.wordpress.com.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 26

Electric Sunday TV and Computer Recycling Event. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. I-66 Transfer Station, 4618 West Ox Road, Fairfax. 703-324-5052.

MONDAY/SEPT. 27

Northern Virginia Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness Meeting. 7 p.m. at First Christian Church, 6165 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. 703-256-2908.

Pilates Mat Class. 7:45 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Learn to engage core abdominal muscles, improve posture and create a longer, leaner, stronger body. First of ten weekly sessions. \$230, \$170 McLean district residents. 703-790-0123.

NEWS



Bob Martel of McLean had a stroke at age 15. He relearned walking, talking and fine motor skills. Now, he's mastering cooking at the Stroke Comeback Center.

PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION



Geeta Ghose (front, right), **Mary Ross** (seated left), **Karen Rasmussen**, **Bob Martel** and **Patrick Knight** (seated, back) prepare a meal in their adaptive cooking class. Intern **Rachel Brumbaugh**, a student at James Madison University, is fulfilling her speech therapy practicum at the Stroke Comeback Center in Vienna.

Cooking Up Independence

Adaptive cooking class nurtures skills, confidence.

BY DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

Bob Martel of McLean had a stroke at the age of 15. He has spent most of his life relearning basic life skills such as walking and talking. As a mature man today, Martel credits Arlington Hospital for his earliest achievements. Yet, Martel pushes himself to master all the activities of everyday living. To that end, he participates in the programs offered by Vienna's Stroke Comeback Center. Beyond the boundaries of speech therapy groups, computer class or motor skills groups, Martel has added a new skill, that of adaptive cooking.

"We're all about life participation and independence," said Stroke Comeback Center Executive Director Darlene Williamson, who lives in Oakton. "They're learning to follow directions, to organize, to use motor skills, to prepare food."

"One of the other things this class brings is talking in a natural environment, not sitting around a table in a more formal setting."

ON A RECENT THURSDAY, the five-member class was fixing the makings for a tailgate party. They worked together chopping and cutting, frying and mixing, to prepare pieces of barbecued chicken and a salad of coleslaw with apples in it. Each weekly class has a theme that the members choose. Williamson was filling in for Center staffer Suzanne Redmond.

"This particular group has different communication levels," said Development Director Carol Kelly of Oakton.

"They're relearning cooking skills and taking charge of food preparation, and talking in the way that goes along with the process," Kelly said.



Stroke Comeback Center Executive Director Darlene Williamson (left) and **Development Director Carol Kelly** give support to cooking class participant **Bob Martel**.

Many stroke victims suffer paralysis on one side of the body. In the Center's adaptive cooking classes, participants work with their non-affected hands while also strengthening their impaired sides. The participants use specialized equipment. There are cutting boards with spikes in the center to hold food securely in-place, a rocker knife which does not require a back-and-forth sawing action, and gripper mats to prevent bowl slippage. All the bowls have rubber striping on the bottom to prevent slippage, as well.

The aprons participants wear were custom-made, designed and donated by a local supporter. The aprons are unique in that they can be pulled on using just one hand.

It's about gaining confidence, said Williamson.

Martel, who grew up in McLean and whose father was a Vienna obstetrician and gynecologist, started the adaptive cooking classes in mid-summer. He said he's learned to make pizza, to use equipment, to organize ingredients and preparation materials and to follow recipe instructions.

SEE LESSONS, PAGE 17

VIENNA/OAKTON CONNECTION EDITOR KEMAL KURSPAHIC
703-778-9414 OR VIENNA@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

Ketterman's staff, **Deborah Finleon**, **Bobby Greene**, **Stanley Greene**, **Michael Harris**, and **Ali Malone** talk with customers **Torrie Perkins** and **Roderick Harris**.

Vienna Jewelers Made Memories

Ketterman's Jewelers closing after 59 years in town.

BY DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

although he has been living in Washington, D.C. of late.

"I want to thank everybody for an amazing 59 years," said 35-year-old Greene. "It's been one heck of a ride."

GREENE GREW UP in the Ketterman shop. When he took over as manager in 1994, it was, to him, just a change of title. There's been a lot of tears shed on both sides of the counter the past few days, Greene said, once the family came to its decision to close down permanently. Neysa Ketterman's health is failing, and the family decided it was in the best interests of the business to consolidate their inventory in the Leesburg Ketterman's which opened approximately 20 years ago.

Richard and Neysa Ketterman son-in-law Stanley Greene, Bobby and Ricky's father, has filled in at the store for approximately thirty years.

Sales consultant Deborah Finleon agrees that it is the family environment, among staff members, and between staff and public, that inspired cus

SEE JEWELERS, PAGE 7

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WEEK IN VIENNA

Halloween Parade Entry Deadline is Sept. 30.

Thursday, Sept. 30, is the entry deadline for the 64th annual Vienna Halloween Parade. Entry application forms and information about the parade can be downloaded from the Town's website, www.viennava.gov, or call the Vienna Parks and Recreation Department at 703-255-6360. Because space is limited to the first 90 approved applicants, the parade may fill before the entry deadline. Completed applications do not guarantee entrance.

The parade will step off on Wednesday, Oct. 27, at 7 p.m., on Maple Avenue.

The theme of this year's parade is "Pride of Vienna: Sportsmanship through Players, Coaches and Fans" and the Co-Grand Marshals are Bill Cervenak, Chairman of the Vienna Little League and member of the Baseball Foundation and Vienna Youth, Inc., and Mark Meana, First Vice President of Vienna Youth, Inc., Chairman of the Fairfax County Athletic Council and Chairman of the Fairfax County Youth Football League. An awards ceremony will be held at the Nov. 15 Town Council meeting.

Body Elements to Celebrate Anniversary, New Facility

Body Elements, LLC is celebrating its seventh anniversary and relocation to a new Vienna facility with a public ribbon cutting ceremony on Saturday, Sept. 25 at 2 p.m. in its expanded new location at 8230 Old Courthouse Road.

The celebration will include prizes, raffles and nutritional tastings, as well as a meet-and-greet with health and wellness guru and radio personality Jessica Cash, a longtime on-air presence in the Washington metropolitan area. Formerly co-host of top-rated morning shows on WMZQ and Big 100, and currently the morning host on country station WFLS, Cash is also a dedicated golfer, marathoner and devotee of Body Elements. Her participation highlights Body Elements' expansion of key services to include health and wellness products and personal training services, with renowned area trainer Damien Woodson of the Personal Training Company. Woodson and the Body Elements staff will be on hand, along with members of the Vienna Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce, who will cut the ceremonial ribbon to officially open the new facility.

Since opening in July 2003, Body Elements has evolved from a small, two-person operation started by sisters Eva Swersey and Leslie Robertson, to a full-service, 12-person firm today. The small, woman-owned company has established itself as a center providing Endermologie, a technology-based, deep-tissue massage process delivered by certified technicians to tighten and tone the skin, increase metabolism and energy.

Historic Vienna to Hold Fall Membership Meeting

Historic Vienna, Inc. will hold its Fall Membership Meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 12, at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers at Town Hall, 127 Center Street South, Vienna. Following a brief business meeting, the speakers for the evening will be Town of Vienna Director of Planning & Zoning Greg Hembree and Director of Parks & Recreation Cathy Salgado, who will speak and answer questions on the history of the Town and its parks and public properties. The meeting is free and open to the public, refreshments will be served. For more information call 703-938-5187 or www.historicviennainc.org.

Volunteers Needed for AIDS Fundraising Event

NOVAM is seeking volunteers for the Red Ribbon Gala fundraising event on Sept. 23, from 4-11 p.m. Assistance needed with set-up/breakdown, registration, silent auction, raffle, and food and drink assistance. Shifts will be two to four hours long depending on the assignment. For information, or to volunteer, email GetInvolved@novam.org or phone 703-533-5505, ext. 14. Gala location: Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court in Vienna.

Scrapbooking Fun at Fire Department

The Vienna Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary is hosting two days of scrapbooking fun. Bring your supplies and set up on Friday, Oct. 15, then crop the night away until midnight, come back and do it all over again on Saturday, Oct. 16 until 9 p.m.

Enjoy low cost meals and lots of good company.

There will be vendors on site so you may purchase supplies and/or get advice from the experts. The Vendors will be: Creative Memories, Close to My Heart and Stampin' Up!

The event will be held at Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center Street, South. Registration fees: \$50 Register by Oct. 1, \$55 after Oct. 1.

The registration fee includes space for the entire time, lunch on Saturday, snacks, coffee, tea and lemonade and a goody bag filled with free products and coupons. Dinner will be available for purchase on both evenings for \$7 each night if purchased separately. If you pre-purchase dinner tickets, you pay \$12 for dinner for both nights.

For more information contact amy.vernon@vvfd.org, 703-281-5797, or lisaemerson3@verizon.net, 703-938-3627.

NEWS

Gift of Comfort

When Gary Graff, owner of Vienna-based Pro Energy Consultants, completed an energy audit of the Alternative House Emergency Shelter for Teens, his report revealed serious problems with the home's aging systems. Alternative House Development Director Gina Cocomello, herself an Air Treatment Company customer, turned to Kathryn Whitecotton for help.

"Air Treatment Company was the first company I thought to call," said Cocomello. "Last year, they replaced the furnace and hot water heater at my home, so, I know from experience that they are very good at what they do. I also know from their involvement with the Vienna Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce and local events that they are very supportive of the community."

Kathryn Whitecotton, president of Air Treatment Company, responded right away, sending technicians Carl Depner and Phu Do to perform the repairs. "We are



Kathryn Whitecotton of Air Treatment Company, Gina Cocomello of Alternative House, and Gary Graff of Pro Energy Consultants.

proud to support Alternative House," said Whitecotton. "Their hard work and dedication to improving the lives and opportunities of at-risk teens enriches our whole community." Whitecotton also expressed gratitude to Pro Energy owner Gary Graff, who donated his services for the energy audit. "Gary's work streamlined the repair process and helped our

technicians pinpoint exact repair locations," she said.

"Alternative House appreciates the support of Pro Energy Consultants and Air Treatment Company. Both of these Vienna businesses stepped up to help us, and they are perfect examples of good corporate citizens: giving back to the community where they do business," said Cocomello.

Two ways to get your paws on great deals!

Shop our HUGE Variety Sale Oct. 16 10am - 5pm

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OPINION

Vote Nov. 2

In an unpredictable year, all the more important to turn out to vote, no matter what your beliefs.

With political extremes on all sides getting most of the attention in this run up to midterm elections, most voters in Northern Virginia are far more moderate. It would be easy to decide that this election really isn't for you if you're not way out on one side or another. (We suspect that there are more than two extremes at play this year.)

There isn't too much on the ballot, how much can it matter if you just decide you're tired of the hyperbole and you'll just sit this one out?

It matters more now than ever that elections actually demonstrate the priorities of the electorate. If voters who feel very strongly about a few issues turn out strongly to vote, and voters whose views are more general stay home, the results could be quite surprising, even here in Northern Virginia.

Mark your calendar. Absentee ballots are already available, so if you think Nov. 2 that you

EDITORIAL

might not be available to vote, you can vote absentee, or you can vote early. See your local elections board website or call for details. There is no excuse for not voting.

Every year is an election year in Virginia. This combined with a bevy of special elections in some areas can result in voter fatigue.

This year, every voter in Virginia will vote for a candidate for U.S. House of Representatives plus vote yes or no on three statewide constitutional questions.

Voters in Fairfax will also vote yes or no on a transportation bond referendum.

Voters in Arlington will also choose one member of Arlington County Board, one member of the Arlington School Board and vote yes or no on four bond questions, one for Metro funding, one for "county infrastructure," one for schools and one for parks.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Elect Gerry Connolly

To the Editor:

What is a single element that unites most drivers in the Washington, D.C. area? Would not most agree that the ever-enlarging mix of cars, trucks and buses that choke most roads is number one?

But what to do? U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11), accepting suggestions from one and all, has concluded that simply relaxing rules about the use of HOV lanes on Interstate 66 and the Interstate 495 Beltway would greatly improve traffic flow and markedly reduce congestion and driver frustration. In Virginia, VDOT acted accordingly on Interstate 66.

Keenly sensitive to our transportation needs, Connolly has supported other reasonable alternatives: (1) "slugging" or ride sharing; (2) increased and monitored telework, following a balanced pattern of "at home" work; (3) developing and expediting Rail to Dulles; and (4) better coordination of alternative work day hours — allowing options for personal needs and preferences.

What does our area need? Leadership such as that of U.S. Rep. Connolly that helps find reasonable solutions to problems that plague our area. Therefore, come Nov. 2, I will gladly vote for Gerry Connolly as congressman from the 11th District and urge others to join with me in reelecting a

thoughtful, experienced, and active public leader.

Estella H. Worley
Dunn Loring

Wall Street Reform Bill

To the Editor:

I would like to announce my support for U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) and applaud his vote for the Wall Street reform bill. Gerry Connolly understands the strain placed on consumers from Wall Street financiers, and I'm pleased to see him support a piece of legislation that the country needs to rebuild the economy.

At a time when the economy is slowly recovering from the worst recession since the Great Depression, this new law protects Americans from questionable Wall Street practices. For everyday Americans, the benefits are significant. (Many Wall Street firms have conducted closed-door deals, have paid their executives unjustifiable salaries paid for by all Americans and were a major factor in the economic crisis.) Now, those on Wall Street will have to conduct their operations within the public's view, and must adhere to a policy of transparency in their internal procedures.

Thanks to U.S. Rep. Connolly, the Wall Street reform bill puts a stop to taxpayer-funded bailouts. The bill assures that taxpayers will not pay for the mistakes of Wall

Street; the companies will. (When Connolly voted for this bill, he was clearly looking out for the best interest of the economy and American consumers. Add this effort to his others—enforcing Pay-As-You-Go legislation and fiscal responsibility, supporting an extension of the Bush tax cuts, and voting against costly spending bills—and it becomes obvious that Connolly is helping America work toward a strong economic recovery

Laura Stokowski
Fairfax Station

Time to Act Is Now

To the Editor:

For Virginia, the Census Bureau recently released preliminary state-level data, statistics indicating an increase in the poverty rate from 10.3 percent to 10.7. Nationwide, the poverty rates jumped to 14.3 percent in 2009 from 13.2 percent in 2008.

As reported by the Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis: "Over 157,000 Virginians have joined the ranks of the poor since the recession began in 2007. In addition, more Virginians lack health insurance. Census estimates indicate that over one million Virginians are currently uninsured."

These statistics tell us the numbers, providing us what is measurable regarding those in our state and nation who live in poverty, but

it does not measure the suffering of those who are poor and vulnerable, and also uninsured. Matters could have been much worse had it not been for the 2009 Recovery Act.

The poverty level is most certainly to increase unless the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), one of the programs encompassed in the Recovery Act, is renewed and the tax benefits for low-income families is extended.

The highly successful TANF emergency fund is about to run out. Congress must extend these benefits before Sept. 30 to help those who have been most affected by the recession.

Congress also can make a difference in the lives of the working poor by extending the tax benefits for low-income families. These benefits help keep even more families—already very vulnerable economically stretched families in our communities—from experiencing economic disaster.

Joblessness has had a destructive effect on families, as we all surely know, and will continue to cause harm to the most vulnerable Americans if no action is taken to continue certain programs such as those referenced above. While our economy is in recovery, our elected officials have an opportunity to make a difference, but time is running out.

John Horejsi, Coordinator
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NEWS

Vienna Jewelers Made Memories

FROM PAGE 3

Customer loyalty over the years. "Our customers are our extended family," Finleon said. "Most have been coming for generations."

"The store has been a part of the community for so long."

The Ketterman watchmaker, a World War II veteran, has worked with Ketterman's for 50 years. His son, a goldsmith, worked with the store for 35 years.

There are no huge "going out of business" signs on the windows or doors. In keeping with the store's culture, Ketterman staff personally tells customers of the store's closing.

Bobby Greene said that when the doors shut on Sept. 25 at 5 p.m., the closing will really hit

him. "I'll probably lock the doors and just stay in here for an hour or two," he said. The inventory will be moved to the Leesburg Ketterman's.

OVER THE SPAN of its Vienna lifetime, Ketterman's sponsored youth sports teams, special events and sold wedding rings to the parents of young people shopping at the store nowadays. Some customers, like the Kennedys, don't know where they will take their business now, but they are respecting the recommendations of Ketterman's staff.

"We consider these folks to be our friends," said

Skip Kennedy, tilting his New York Giants cap upward for greater visibility. "The fact they're Redskins fans doesn't matter."

"I'll probably lock the doors and just stay in here for an hour or two."

—Bobby Greene, on Ketterman's permanent closure on Sept. 25.

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One Strike, They're Out

Some call the school system's policies on marijuana punitive and ineffective.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE CONNECTION

Under different circumstances, Josh Anderson would have been headed to college this fall, likely joining a college football team.

His parents, Tim and Sue Anderson, had been looking forward to this time in their lives. Josh was the youngest of their four children, leaving Tim and Sue Anderson as empty nesters.

Instead of planning trips to watch Josh play his first season of college football, the Andersons are left with sadness and despair.

One morning in March 2009, Sue Anderson went to rouse her son from bed and found him dead in their Vienna home. Josh, then a junior at South Lakes High School, died of suicide the day before he was to face expulsion from the Fairfax County school system at a disciplinary hearing.

Earlier that month, Josh and his friend smoked marijuana on a car ride back to school from lunch at Taco Bell. A South Lakes assistant principal smelled marijuana on the students when they arrived back on campus and Josh was immediately placed on home suspension.

This was Josh's second violation. In 2008, he had been kicked out of Langley High School when a school official found a small amount of marijuana in his bag.

A lawyer told Josh and his mother that it was unlikely Fairfax County Public Schools would allow him to return to South Lakes or another general education program.

His best hope was to be offered a program at one of the county's alternative high schools. Otherwise, his parents would have to consider moving, sending him to a military academy or enrolling him in another type of private school, said Sue Anderson.

In a statement written immediately after the incident, Josh wrote: "I'm honestly going to try my hardest to fix this, help my parents, they haven't raised me to be like this in any way. I'm so scared for the future, this wasn't worth any of it at all. I've only recently been thinking I could make college football and I've gotten so excited about it and now everything is ruined."

Tim and Sue Anderson took Josh's first marijuana offense seriously as a mental health matter. After the incident at Langley, he also enrolled in drug counseling and attended regular appointments with a therapist and psychiatrist.

The Andersons agreed with the school system on some levels. What Josh did was wrong. His actions should have had consequences.



PHOTO BY GILLIAN ANDERSON/CONTRIBUTED

South Lakes Junior Josh Anderson died of suicide the night before he faced expulsion from the school system in 2009.

Josh may have used marijuana, but he was not accused of trying to sell or distribute it to other students. Yet the Andersons' son was treated as if he was a dangerous criminal, they said.

"The school system doesn't distinguish between a bad kid and dumb kid when it comes to these types of cases. Josh was a dumb kid making a dumb mistake," said Tim Anderson, who thought obligatory community service, perhaps cleaning the cafeteria at school for awhile, would have been a more appropriate punishment.

Several school administrators considered Josh an asset, not a threat, to the school community, said the Andersons.

"The guidance counselor and the football coach, even the guy who caught him, were totally devastated," said Tim Anderson.

School officials cannot comment on individual students' records, which makes it difficult for the school system to defend its approach to cases like Josh's, or respond publicly to complaints like the Anderson's, said Paul Renier, spokesperson for Fairfax County Public Schools.

JOSH ANDERSON was among 154 students who faced expulsion from Fairfax County Public Schools for marijuana during the 2008-09 school year alone.

Possession of marijuana was, by far, the most common reason students faced expulsion. The second most frequent offense — an umbrella category called "prohibited conduct" that includes fighting, causing a disruption and defying staff — resulted in 84 recommendations for expulsion during 2008-09.

The vast majority of students recom-

mended for expulsion are not kicked out of the school system entirely, though those charged with violations related to drugs almost always face stiff consequences.

Violators frequently are removed from their base school, subjected to random drug tests and required to attend counseling, said School Board members familiar with the process. Some parents believe that punishment, particularly for those students who are caught with marijuana for personal use and not intending to sell it, is too harsh and more consideration should be given to the student's overall conduct and community support.

CHARACTER REFERENCES, personal accomplishments and endorsements from the community appear to have little bearing on the outcome of disciplinary hearings, particularly in matters related to drugs, according to the Andersons and some other families who have encountered the process.

The cases of students facing serious consequences, like a long-term suspension or expulsion, are typically reviewed during a disciplinary hearing, when members of the school system's central administration staff recommend a punishment for the student. The School Board also reviews and votes on all expulsions individually.

But some parents complain the hearing officers largely ignore the testimony of the student and his or her supporters.

When Josh first faced removal from Langley High School, the Andersons worried their son had given a bad impression at his hearing because he was intimidated by the situation, they said.

Tim Anderson called a school official the

Consequences: Marijuana verses Alcohol

The consequences for Fairfax County Public Schools' students caught with alcohol are not as severe as those related to marijuana in many cases. According to the Fairfax County Public Schools website, students who are caught:

- ❖ **in possession of alcohol and nonalcoholic beer**, must serve a minimum suspension of five days and a maximum suspension of 10 days; prohibited from participating in student activities, including sports, clubs and the performing arts, for 30 days; must participate in a substance abuse prevention program.
- ❖ **in possession of alcohol and nonalcoholic beer for the second time in 12 months**, serve a suspension of 10 days and prohibited from participating in student activities, including sports, clubs and the performing arts, for one year.
- ❖ **distributing or manufacturing alcohol**, serve a suspension of at least 10 days and automatically recommended for expulsion from the school system.
- ❖ **under the influence of marijuana but not in possession of the drug**, serve a minimum suspension of five days and a maximum suspension of 10 days; prohibited from participating in student activities, including sports, clubs and the performing arts, for 30 days; must participate in a substance abuse prevention program.
- ❖ **under the influence of marijuana (without possession) for the second time in 12 months**, serve a 10-day suspension and removal from student activities for one year. They are also automatically recommended for expulsion from the school system.
- ❖ **in possession of marijuana or imitation marijuana**, serve a 10-day suspension and an automatic recommendation for expulsion.
- ❖ **distributing marijuana or imitation marijuana**, serve a 10-day suspension and recommended for expulsion from the school system.

What Happens?

SOURCE: Fairfax County Public Schools website.

❖ If school administrators catch a child engaging in behavior that warrants a disciplinary hearing, they contact Superintendent Jack Dale's office. The school principal then forwards a packet of information, including details about the incident concerning your child and the student's overall disciplinary record, to the hearing office.

❖ If a child has been recommended for expulsion from the school system, he or she will have to serve an automatic 10-day suspension in the days leading up to the disciplinary hearing.

❖ A child recommended for expulsion cannot set foot on any Fairfax County public school campus and cannot attend school functions while they are serving their suspension.

❖ The school principal and assistant principal usually attend disciplinary hearings. The parents and child are permitted to bring one other witness, such as a clergy member, psychiatrist or family friend, to the event. Families are discouraged from bringing a lawyer.

❖ The school system notifies the family about a child's punishment through a letter following the disciplinary hearing.

❖ If the hearing officers have endorsed the expulsion recommendation, then the student's case is automatically forwarded to the school board for consideration.

❖ Panels of three school board members typically hear and vote on individual disciplinary cases. In cases where all three school board members vote in favor of expulsion, the family is not allowed to appeal the decision. However, if the school board panel voted in favor of expulsion though not unanimously, the family can request that the full school board hear the case.

next day to express concern. "We had the hearing and we felt like Josh hadn't been heard," he said. The official told him not to worry about the impression Josh made on the officers because it was essentially a "done deal" once a student was caught on school grounds with drugs.

"His fate was determined before the hearing," said Tim Anderson.

SEE PUNISHMENT, PAGE 9

EDUCATION

Weighing Punishment

FROM PAGE 8

School Board members denied that the outcome of student disciplinary cases are predetermined. "In my experience as a School Board member, every case has been decided on the individual facts of that case," said Stuart Gibson (Hunter Mill), who has presided over 1,000 different disciplinary proceedings.

But Gibson and other School Board members said they also try to be consistent when it comes to consequences for student violations. They make an effort to dole out the same punishment for similar offenses.

"I cannot remember a situation where a kid was caught with drugs at school when they were not sent to another school," said School Board member Dan Storck (Mount Vernon). ... "I can count on one or two hands the number of times we voted for a student not to receive services. The vast majority of students stay in the system."

FAIRFAX COUNTY Public Schools used to take a more flexible approach to some drug violations. Until 10 or 12 years ago, students caught with a small amount of marijuana at school were only subjected to a five-day suspension and then allowed to return to their base school, said Gibson.

Then, Virginia enacted a new law that required schools to automatically expel students for a variety of offenses, including the possession of marijuana. There are special circumstances School Board members can use to justify a "modified expulsion," where the student is allowed to stay in the school system with a less severe punishment.

In fact, the Fairfax County School Board rarely expels students outright for drug offenses according to data provided by the Virginia Department of Education. From 2004 to 2009, 905 Fairfax County students caught with drugs at school for personal use received "modified expulsions." Only nine students were expelled from the school system entirely.

Gibson said allowing a student to return to their classes after he or she has been caught with drugs on campus could send the wrong message to other teenagers and children.

"I don't think there is any question about whether learning can go on in an environment that is infused with drugs," he said.

Last year, a student from a public school in McLean who admit-

Recommended for Expulsion

Fairfax County school administrators recommended 683 students for expulsion during the 2008-2009 school year. Only 161 were expelled in the end, but students who are initially recommended for expulsion often face other types of sanctions. About 84 of these were transferred to another high school, about 94 moved to an alternative high school and 99 were placed on long-term suspension. Several students are also enrolled in an alternative learning center or program, including those at juvenile facilities.

Reasons students were brought up for expulsion during the 2008-2009 school year:

Violation	Number of Cases
Possession of Marijuana	154
Prohibited Conduct (disruptions, fighting, and defiance of staff)	84
Possession of a Knife, Blade More Than 3 Inches	59
Possession of Other Drugs (Heroin, Cocaine, Prescription, Ecstasy)	38
Assault Against Student As Part Of A Mob	37
Assault Against Staff	30
Threatening Staff	28
Distribution Of Marijuana	27
Assault Against Another Student As An Individual	26
Possession Of A Razor Blade	25
Possession Of Other Weapon	25
Distribution of Other Drugs	19
Sexual Assault	17
Possession of Drug Look-A-Like	17
Inappropriate Sexual Behavior	13
Possession Of A Pneumatic Gun	13
Gang Activity	9
Outside-Of-School Court Charges Or Convictions	8
Theft	8
Vandalism	6
Threatening Another Student	5
Found Under The Influence For The Second Time	4
Distribution of Alcohol	3
Possession of Drug Paraphernalia	3
Arson	3
Possession Of A Chemical Substance That Could Be Used As A Weapon	3
Distribution of Over-The-Counter Drugs	2
Bomb Threat	2
Possession Of A Firearm	2
Possession Of Nonprescription Drugs	1
Robbery	1
Possession Of A Taser	1

ted to smoking marijuana on a school trip garnered support from teachers, coaches and other students' parents.

According to the student's family, many members of their school community did not think the teenager should be forced to transfer schools for a first-time offense.

Several people wrote letters of support on behalf of the student to the hearing officers presiding over his case but the school system still removed the student from his base school. According to the student's family, the hearing officers appeared to ignore or disregard information about their son.

"Over 90 percent of the time, we accept what the hearing officer has sent us," said Storck.

This is just another indication that the process disenfranchises students and parents, said Caroline Hemenway, founder of Fairfax Zero Tolerance Reform, a community group.

"The hearings themselves are a kangaroo court. Principals call the hearing officer and make a recommendation for expulsion or suspension way before the hearing. Right from the beginning, the students don't get the same opportunity to present their case," said Hemenway.

And there are few positive outcomes that appear to derive from having harsh consequences for

marijuana use in particular, Hemenway said.

In 2008, approximately 38 percent of 12th graders responding to the Fairfax County Youth Survey reported that they had used marijuana at least once. Seventeen percent said they used it at least once in the last 30 days.

"You cannot claim that a child caught smoking a joint is a danger to the community when something like 40 percent of seniors have used it," she said.

Removing a child from their friends and support network and sending them to a different school is not going to help those who might have depression, low self-esteem or other mental health issues, she said.

But during the 2005-06 school year, the Fairfax County hearing office considered 154 students for expulsion related to the possession of marijuana and just one student for the possession of alcohol, despite the fact that approximately 72 percent of 12th graders who answered the 2008 Fairfax County youth survey reported using alcohol at least once in their lifetime.

Twice as many 12th graders (43 percent) said they had used alcohol over the past month when compared to 12th graders who said they used marijuana during the same time period.

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CALENDAR

Send announcements to vienna@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit www.connectionnewspapers.com

THURSDAY/SEPT. 23

Mark Olson CD Release and Vandaveer, 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

Friends of Oakton Library Used Book Sale, 10 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. 703-242-4020.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 24

The Frost/Nixon Tapes, 8 p.m. at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. 703-790-0123.

"Mauritius", 8 p.m. at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Estranged sisters discover a book of rare stamps after their mother's death, then three seedy collectors arrive. \$25 adults, \$15 students. www.1stStageTysons.org/mauritius or 703-854-1856.

Dia, Mista Forty and Socz, 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

Used Book Sale, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Books and more. 703-293-6227.

Friends of Oakton Library Used Book Sale, 10 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. 703-242-4020.

Chamber Music Concert, 8 p.m. at the Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park Street, Vienna. Clarinetist Jean-Francois Bescond, cellist Igor Zubkovsky, pianist Diane Winter Pyles



PHOTO COURTESY 1ST STAGE

Leigh Taylor Patton (as Mary) tries to sell her rare stamps to Roger Payano (as Phillip, left) and Edward Daniels II (as Dennis) in the 1st Stage production of 'Mauritius,' Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through Oct. 3 at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. \$25 adults, \$15 students. Contact www.1stStageTysons.org/mauritius or 703-854-1856 for tickets.

and soprano Danielle Talamantes performs works by Beethoven, Schumann, Franck and D'Rivera. Donations accepted. 703-255-2576.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 25

The Frost/Nixon Tapes, 8 p.m. at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. 703-790-0123.

"Mauritius", 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Estranged sisters discover a book of rare stamps after their mother's death, then three seedy collectors arrive. \$25 adults, \$15 students. www.1stStageTysons.org/mauritius or 703-854-1856.

Caroline Herring at 7 p.m., Jason Reeves and Trent Hancock at 10 p.m. Vienna. jamminjava.com.

Propagating and Growing Salvias, 10 a.m. at Meadowlark Botanical

mauritius or 703-854-1856.

Think Outside the Breadbox, 10:30 a.m. at Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Learn how to evaluate different types of breads, sample up to eight types of bread with accompaniments such as spreads, veggies and fruit to evaluate scent, color, texture, taste, complexity and aftertaste. \$22 per person. Register at 703-759-2771. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/crm.

Cardinal Hill Swin Team Community Yard Sale, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at the swim club, 9117 Westerholme Way, Vienna. Baked goods and coffee available. chyardsale@gmail.com.

Friends of Oakton Library Used Book Sale, 10 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. 703-242-4020.

Artists' Reception, 6-9 p.m. at

Gardens, 9570 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Join Tammy Burke, Horticulturist, as you tour the extensive Salvia Collection and learn about their care, propagation and use in the garden. \$5. Reserve at 703-255-3631.

Dulles Day Family Festival and 18th Annual Plane Pull, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Washington Dulles International Airport. The Plane Pull pits teams of 25 people in a game of "tug of war" against a FedEx jet.

Proceeds benefit Special Olympics Virginia. Kids' Bus Pull, a similar event where teams of children pull a yellow school bus; \$10 donation per kids' pull. Children's games and activities. Live music. Cas, show, including top 30 and "Best in Class" people's choice awards for classic, street rod, truck, motorcycle and import. Military, civilian and World War II-era aircraft on display. Free admission and parking. 703-359-4301 or www.planepull.com.

Used Book Sale, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Books and more. 703-293-6227.

Fairfax County Master Gardeners, 10 a.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Horticultural tips, information, techniques and advice to home gardeners. Adults. 703-293-6227.

Concert on the Lawn, 12:30 p.m. at New Life Christian Church, 1988 Kirby Road, McLean. Classic rock band Natural Selection and free food. annamarig@newlife4me.com.

Used Book Sale, 1-4 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Books and more. 703-293-6227.

Amadeus Orchestra and Pianist

Sara Daneshpour, 4 p.m. at St. Luke Church, 7001 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 (K. 466), Gluck's "Overture to Iphigenia in Aulis" and Beethoven's Symphony No. 7. Admission \$25, age 17 and under free. Tickets available at the event or online at www.amadeusconcerts.com.

Birding in the Gardens, 2 p.m. at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9570 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Search the Gardens for migratory birds. Led by Casey Petrizzi, Naturalist for the NVRPA. Bring field guides and binoculars. Free and open to the public. 703-255-3631.

MONDAY/SEPT. 27

Math, Music & Mayhem Tour with Score 24 and Eleven

Math, Music & Mayhem Tour with Score 24 and Eleven

Score 24 and Eleven

Rock-a-Bye Baby, 10:30 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Rhymes, stories and songs. Birth-12 months with adult. 703-938-0405.

Game On Afternoon Edition, 3:30 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Wii Mario Kart or Super Smash Bros. Age 6-16. 703-938-0405.

As They Conduct Fall Telephone Survey

Don't hang up! We want to hear from you! If you are a resident of Small District One A-Darnesville and receive a telephone call from George Mason University's Center for Social Science Research asking you to participate in our survey, please participate. The survey begins the week of Sept. 26 and only takes 10 to 15 minutes to complete. It will help us find out how to better meet your needs. You may also self-select to take the survey online at our Web site.

Help Keep our Connection Clear---Participate in the MCC Survey!

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Applegate Gallery & Custom Framing, 101 Church St. N.W., Suite C, Vienna. Works by students of Sunset Hills Montessori School. Proceeds benefit TheReadingConnection.org. info@applegateframing.com.

The Optimist Club of Greater Vienna's 5th Annual Walk for Growing Hope, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. along the W&OD trail near Church & Dominion Streets N.E. in Vienna. A 3-mile walk and fundraiser for the Childhood Cancer Campaign. Moon bounce, balloonist, "The Story Lady", fortune teller, silent auction, live music, refreshments, raffle and more. All proceeds support Growing Hope and Johns Hopkins University & Medical Center. Register at info@optimistclubofgreatervienna.org or 703-281-1335.

Parkland Habitat Restoration, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. at Nottoway Park, 9537 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Students and scouts can earn community service hours. More information on the Fairfax County Park Authority's Invasive Management Area Program and Nottoway workdays at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resources/ima, 703-324-8681 and friendsofnottoway@gmail.com.

Joe Brooks, 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

Virginia Chamber Orchestra 40th Anniversary Season

Opening Concert, 4 p.m. at Ernst Community Cultural Center, Northern Virginia Community College Annandale Campus, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Themes from the British Isles, including "Enoch Arden" by Richard Strauss in the premiere of an arrangement for chamber orchestra by Music Director Emil de Cou. Tickets \$10-\$15, students free. 703-758-0179.

Used Book Sale, 1-4 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Books and more. 703-293-6227.

Concert on the Lawn, 12:30 p.m. at New Life Christian Church, 1988 Kirby Road, McLean. Classic rock band Natural Selection and free food. annamarig@newlife4me.com.

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1511 Gingerwood Ct.....\$639,950...Sun 1-4...Eugene Curtin.....Weichert.....703-856-3416
9602 Counsellor Drive.....\$649,300...Sun 1-4...Melissa Dabney.....Long & Foster.....703-795-5923
2022 Carrhill Road.....\$875,000...Sun 1-4...Betsy Carson.....McNearney.....703-599-9494

Oakton

10528 Elmsway Court.....\$639,900...Sun 1-4...Ray Leahey.....Weichert.....703-403-2579

Oak Hill/Herndon

1011 Charlton Pl.....\$389,999...Sun. 1-4...Robert Collo.....Global Link.....703-619-5019
12828 Kettering Drive.....\$469,850...Sun. 1-4...Kathleen Tuthill.....Long & Foster.....703-945-4966
13210 Windy Oak Way.....\$522,500...Sun. 1-4...Priti Malhotra.....Weichert.....703-536-5800
12407 Myterra Way.....\$549,000...Sun. 1-4...Bernice Maddox.....Long & Foster.....703-328-1205
12007 Meadowville Ct.....\$765,000...Sun. 1-4...Irene Schiffman.....Weichert.....703-593-7848
11917 Richland Lane.....\$997,000...Sun. 1-4...Eddie Seymour.....Samson Properties....703-989-1598
12833 Rose Grove Dr.....\$1,399,900...Sun. 1-4...Sue Chong.....Countrywide.....703-941-8575

Reston

11608 Ivystone Court.....\$315,000...Sun. 1-4...Carol Ellickson.....Weichert.....703-862-2135
11500 Fairway Drive, Unit 208...\$429,900...Sun. 1-4...Abbey Siciliano.....Long & Foster.....703-861-4024
11559 Brass Lantern Ct.....\$534,950...Sun. 1-4...Judy Gruner.....Long & Foster.....703-517-2464

Great Falls

11109 Farm Rd.....\$739,000...Sun 1-4...John Murray.....Long & Foster.....703-608-4004

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3039 Franklin Park Rd.....\$1,589,000...Sun 2-4...JD Callender.....Weichert.....703-606-7901

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302 Lillard Road\$350,000...Sun. 1-4...Young Yim.....Century 21.....571-215-9417
46605 Hampshire Stn Dr ...\$479,900...Sun 1-4...John McCambridge.....Samson Properties....703-906-7067
10865 Monticello Ct.....\$539,900...Sun 1-4...Betty Plashal.....Long & Foster.....703-926-8177
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All listings are due by Monday at 3 p.m.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 11

TUESDAY/SEPT. 28

Maria Muldaur and Her Red Hot Bluesian Band

7:30 p.m.
Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E.,
Vienna. jamminjava.com.

Great Decisions Seminar

2 p.m.
Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Roundtable discussion of U.S. foreign policy. The subject of this session is the U.S. and the Persian Gulf. Adults. 703-938-0405.

Book Talk for Book Lovers

7 p.m.
Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library,
7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Book discussion. Call for title. Adults.

703-790-8088.

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 29

Music Together

11:30 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Music and movement for toddlers and parents with Ms. Susan. Age 6 months-5 with adult. 703-938-0405.

Trickster Tales from Latin America

10:30 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. Age 4-5 with adult. 703-242-4020.

English Conversation Group

12 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. English

practice for adult non-native speakers. 703-242-4020.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 30

Patrick Henry Book Club. 1 p.m.
Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Book discussion. Call for title. Adults. 703-938-0405.

FRIDAY/OCT. 1

ValeArts 15th Annual Fall Art Show and Reception. 7-9 p.m. at Historic Vale Schoolhouse, 3124 Fox Mill Road, Oakton. With local artists, including Oakton residents Linda

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 13

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 12

Lovell and Jenna Klimchak. Exhibition also open from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Oct. 2-3. 703-860-1888 or www.valearts.com.

'The Frost/Nixon Tapes'. 8 p.m. at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. 703-790-0123.

"Mauritius". 8 p.m. at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Estranged sisters discover a book of rare stamps after their mother's death, then three seedy collectors arrive. \$25 adults, \$15 students. www.1stStageTysons.org/mauritius or 703-854-1856.

Claude Moore Colonial Farm Oktoberfest Fundraiser. 7-10 p.m. at The Pavilions of Turkey Run, Rte. 193 and Colonial Farm Road, McLean. Feast on brats, grilled chicken, traditional German potato salad, sauerkraut, soft pretzels with brown mustard and warm apple cobbler with ice cream. Enjoy music, dancing and an auction. Cash bars for beer and wine. \$25. Reserve at www.1771.org/oktoberfest.htm or 703-442-7557.

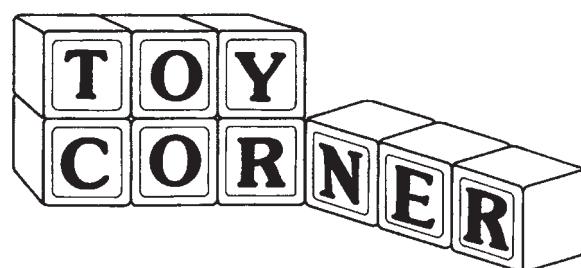
SATURDAY/OCT. 2

Vienna Oktoberfest. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. from Center St. to Mill St., Vienna. Live music, a beer garden, food vendors, children's entertainment and activities, and a festival marketplace. Sponsored by the Vienna-Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with the Town of Vienna. 703-281-1333 or viennaoktoberfest.com/.

'The Frost/Nixon Tapes'. 8 p.m. at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. 703-790-0123.

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The World Comes to Wolf Trap

Arts Council of Fairfax County produces 40th International Children's Festival.

The 40th International Children's Festival, produced by the Arts Council of Fairfax County, took place on Sept. 18 and 19 at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts. Performers came from local cultural and dance academies, from the east coast and from as far away as Poland and Mexico. Stages were set up under tents, in the meadow pavilion, patio pavilion and in the Theatre-in-the-Woods. Families watched modern dance, classical dance, ethnic dance, tae kwan do set to music, puppets, and Mariachi musicians. There were hands-

on activities for children, from an instrument "petting zoo" to screen-printing art.

The weather was the kind of weather that gives September its good name. The sky was blue, the sun strong, the temperature comfortable. Five stages set throughout the park featured all-day music and culture. From jazz to Asian sounds to the Latin beat and European melodies, the festival offered programming for every cultural taste.

For more information on the Arts Council of Fairfax County, see ArtsFairfax.org.

— DONNA MANZ



Eight-year-old second-degree black belt
Sara Toner of Reston has studied with the H.K. Lee Tae Kwan Do Academy in Herndon for three years. Sara said she is learning tae kwan do to protect herself should she ever be attacked. With Sara is Master Jun Hak Lee who choreographed the school's program at the Children's Festival.



Eva Varghese, a Wolf Trap Elementary School sixth-grader, has danced with Center Stage of Fairfax since she was three years old. Said Eva, "it's really fun and I love being with the people and learning new stuff."

PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/The Connection



Victoria and Lily Yacobucci of Great Falls said they had a lot of fun at the children's festival. They made tissue paper flowers and screen-printed poster art.

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Why Me?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

"Why not?" is the short answer. The long answer is the rest of this column, and it's not what you think.

I have never, in my cancer-affected life, asked this question of myself or anybody else. Nor have I ever "woe is me'd." I have accepted my circumstances and attempted, through my treatment and miscellaneous health and fitness, lifestyle and diet changes, to fight this fight and try not to get bogged down by the physical and emotional toll a terminal disease can take.

Moreover, my mental approach in dealing with all the medical tests, scans, appointments, chemotherapy (which continues still, every three weeks) has been to roll with the punches; take the good with the bad and more importantly, take the bad with the good. I have tried to maintain a balance in my life believing that it is nothing until it is something, rather than being something until it's nothing. Anyone who knows me would say I've mostly succeeded in this effort over the past 18 months. I can't do much, but this I can do.

As you regular readers know, or presumably have determined, I am a rather thoughtful and introspective person. I think through my decisions – and assessments, rarely "knee-jerking" a decision but certainly trusting my instincts. If certain options seem reasonable, all things considered, I can decide quickly. As a result, my care has not been about fits and starts or changes in direction; it has been fairly routine and predictable, a pattern that suits me.

Part of my regular, recurring role as a cancer patient has been to be diagnostically updated quarterly; to include a CT scan, an MRI and a bone scan, to give my oncologist a current picture, "radiologically" speaking, as to what my cancer is doing – or hopefully – not doing.

And amazingly, I am here to report that, according to my oncologist, my most recent scans showed no growth and no movement, in effect: no activity. Dumbfounded – and incredulous – by what my oncologist was telling us, and what we (my wife and I) were hearing, especially after the mention of scar tissue and my sternum, we asked him for a simpler, more straightforward explanation, something us lay persons might understand. Which led me to ask the doctor my "Am I still in the woods?" question (as opposed to out of the woods, meaning safety, to me; metaphorically speaking). Sensing our confusion – or non-belief, my oncologist said the following: "Let me summarize for you: partial stable remission. You may be one of the lucky ones and live five years."

WHAT?! I thought. Why is this happening to me? What did I do? Now what? As odd as it may sound, it was a little difficult to process what we were hearing. But for the moment, I was given a reprieve. In three months, when I'm scanned again, I could be writing a very different column. But for the present, at least, I'm off the endangered species list. Now, as my publisher joked, I have real problems. Everything else in life that I had "back-burnered," – for obvious reasons, I may have to reposition.

And one of those problems is, I now find myself saying something, or not being able to stop myself from saying, something, that I had never said the previous 18 months: "Why me?" Yet I can't stop from saying it now. And it feels like a betrayal of sorts, a betrayal of the self-discipline I've maintained since Dec. 31, 2008 when I first went to the Emergency Room due to the pain in my side. There's a Yiddish word that explains perfectly the confusion I feel: "farmisht," meaning "mixed up emotionally."

Certainly the news could have been worse. Still, I'm struggling a bit, and I find myself asking, of all questions: "why me? Why me?" I don't mean to look a gift horse in the mouth, but apparently, I need an explanation.

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

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Lessons for Life

FROM PAGE 3

"This class taught me how to be more precise in what I'm doing," Martel said, as he carefully measured out lemon juice for a cole slaw recipe.

The Center is writing its own adaptive cooking cookbook, called "OK, I Can Cook." In essence, Williamson said, "it will include recipes that stroke survivors can do independently."

Mary Ross, whose idea the cooking classes were, lives alone in Chevy Chase and said she really wants to be independent. She has been a member of the Stroke Comeback Center for three years and participates in other groups besides the cooking classes. "I used to like to cook but I can't do it anymore. I'm learning to do it again."

ANY CIVIC GROUPS who would like to lend material support to the Center are welcomed to do so. "Because we're a 501 (C)(3), we operate very tightly," said Williamson. Counted among the items that are currently needed are a box grater, traditional and non-skid cutting boards,

kitchen scissors, rubber spatulas, and, always welcome, gift cards from local grocery stores to purchase the food used in the adaptive cooking classes. "Any community donations we get are greatly appreciated," Williamson said.

Martel was directed to the Stroke Comeback Center at the suggestion of his brother and he now attends classes two days a week there. Another two days a week, he volunteers at Arlington Hospital as a gesture of appreciation to the hospital that helped him.

"This teaches me how to do things for myself and to interact with people, even though I interact with them at Arlington Hospital," Martel said.

"I think this entire establishment is very good for me."

The Stroke Comeback Center (SCC), located at 145 Park Street, SE, Vienna, provides speech and language therapy programs for stroke survivors. It is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit serving the Washington D.C. metropolitan region.

To learn more about the center, call 703-255-5221 or e-mail info@strokecomebackcenter.org.

"They're learning to follow directions, to organize, to use motor skills, to prepare food."

— Stroke Comeback Center Executive Director Darlene Williamson

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SPORTS

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Photo Courtesy/TJ Sports

The Jefferson girls' varsity cross-country team is made up of athletes from throughout Fairfax County, including Reston, McLean and Vienna.

A Great Start

The Thomas Jefferson High girls' cross country season got off to a great start on Saturday, Sept. 11 by winning the Monroe Parker Invitational at Burke Lake Park. Jefferson squad, made up of numerous local runners, scored an impressive victory with its first place finish in the 23-team field of Northern Region schools.

The Colonials placed five runners among the top 16 and scored a meet-best 44 points to finish well ahead of second place West Potomac (86 points). Four Jefferson runners earned top 15 individual medals -

Lisa Junta (third place) of Fairfax Station; Sarah Stites (fourth) of Reston; Stephanie Marzen (seventh) of McLean; and Rekha Schnepf (14th) of McLean - while the team collected the championship trophy. Other competitive times for Jefferson came from Kelly Rogers (16th) of McLean, Taylor Reffet of Oak Hill and Sarah Neilsen of Reston.

Meanwhile, the Jefferson girls' JV team won its respective team title by placing nine of the top 11 runners, including Elizabeth Ellor (Reston), Charlotte Sheridan (Vienna), Nalini Singh (Vienna), Katie Bailey (Vienna) and Jamie Kim (McLean).

HIGH SCHOOL NOTEBOOK

Oakton 5-2 in girls' volleyball; Madison at .500

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

The Madison High girls' volleyball team lost a tough match at Westfield High, 1-3, on Monday night, Sept. 20. The Warhawks, who have a 3-3 record on the season, are scheduled to play at Edison on Thursday, Sept. 23, at 7 p.m.

Following home losses to Woodson and Oakton to start the season, Madison came back strong with three straight wins, the victories coming over West Springfield, West Potomac and Falls Church.

This Friday and Saturday, the Warhawks will be competing at the Flint Hill Invitational. Madison's next home match will take place next Monday night, Sept. 27 against visiting Liberty District opponent Lee. Three days later, on Thursday, Sept. 30, the Warhawks will travel to district opponent Langley.

OAKTON is off to a solid 5-2 volleyball start. Under head coach Steve Drumm, the Cougars won a match at T.C. Williams, 3-0, on Monday night, Sept.

20. In action last week, Oakton lost at home to West Springfield, 0-3, on Sept. 13 before coming back two days later and defeating guest Marshall, 3-0.

Oakton won its first three matches to start the season, triumphs over South Lakes, Madison and Centreville. The season's first loss came to South County on Sept. 4.

The Cougars are scheduled to play a non-Northern Region match at Heritage High in Leesburg on Thursday, Sept. 23. Next Monday night, Sept. 27 the team will travel to McLean before coming home for a match versus Chantilly on Thursday, Sept. 30.

In girls' field hockey, Oakton entered this week with a 3-6 record. The Cougars lost a close home match to South County, 2-1 in overtime, on Wednesday, Sept. 15. The team's wins have come over Madison, Jefferson and Edison. The wins over Jefferson and Edison took place at the Westfield Tournament, held Aug. 27-28. Oakton, under head coach Kate Ruch, went 2-2 at the Westfield tourney, the losses coming to Chantilly and T.C. Williams.



PHOTO COURTESY/FREEDOM GIRLS

Over Labor Day weekend, the Vienna Youth Soccer (VYS) Freedom Red (girls, 10-under) participated in the Fairfax Police Youth Club Patriot Cup Soccer Tournament. Freedom Red went undefeated in their flight with the team playing strong defensively and creating many goal scoring opportunities. They outscored their opponents 18-5 across four games. Back row, from left, are Jennifer Wiley, Brian Brinkmann, Ray Moutinho; Middle row: MVP Whitney Wiley, Kelly Brennan, Gabrielle Brinkmann, Megan Keady, Isabella Moutinho and guest player Julia Leas; and, front row, Olivia Herbold, Heather Geisler, Amira Endar, Abby Pogreba and Jacqueline Paredes.

SPORTS ROUNDUPS

Marshall High has hired James MacIndoe as its new head boys' tennis coach. MacIndoe comes to the Statesmen from Colorado where he played 3-1/2 years of NCAA Division II men's tennis at Colorado State University-Pueblo, where he was a two-time Academic All-Conference player.

MacIndoe has seven years of teaching and coaching experience in public, private and Nike Tennis Camp settings. In 2009, his USTA 4.5 league team placed second in the Colorado state playoffs.



PHOTO COURTESY/VIENNA THUNDER

The Vienna Youth Soccer (VYS) U12 girls' travel team, the Thunder, participated in and won their age bracket at the FPYC Patriot Cup Travel Tournament over Labor Day weekend. The Vienna Thunder team members include: Rachel Carlton, Nicole Carrillo-Vallejo, Madeline Chiarizia, Celia Dauerer, Audrey Kellan, Meredith Lee, Catherine Maroney, Charis McClain, Vanessa Natale, Kaitlyn Rubley, Gracie Slye, Kate Springsteen and April Williams.

NEWS

Oakton Student Excels at Indian Classical Dance

The James Lee Community Auditorium in Falls Church has been decorated in style for the Indian Classical Dance performance on Saturday afternoon. The guests are welcomed in a traditional manner with kumkum (red powder offered by Hindus on religious and social occasions) and rose water by young students of the Jayamangala School of Music Dance and friends of Priya Ganesh.

Priya, a rising Junior at the Oakton High School, presented a solo Indian Classical Dance performance called the Bharatanatyam. With a live orchestra ready on stage, Priya takes a few moments to connect with her inner self before walking to the stage to begin the performance. After reciting a prayer, she collects the anklets from her teacher (guru) and ties them to her ankles.

Priya enthralled the audience of about 150, with a stunning debut performance. Most of the dances were choreographed to stories of Gods and Goddesses of Hindu mythology.

Priya has been training in

"Bharathanatyam," a classical dance form of Southern India, with Shobha Subramanian, Dance Director of Jayamangala School of Music and Dance, since she was three years old. This dance form has its roots in the millennium old work, Natya Sastra – a theoretical treatise of performing arts – dance, music and theatre, by Bharatha Muni an ancient Indian writer. The dance incorporates footwork, graceful hand movements and facial expression to synchronize to music and rhythm and is known for its grace, purity and tenderness.

In addition, Priya is an active member of the Oakton Media Group and also a member of the Cougar cross country and track team. With the performance behind her, Priya is now focused on her junior year and can get back on track with her running. She hopes to continue dancing and also participate in fund raisers and performing for charities. She also feels strongly about preserving cultural heritage and ancient arts and contemporizing them.



CONTRIBUTED

Priya Ganesh presented a solo Indian Classical Dance performance called the Bharatanatyam.

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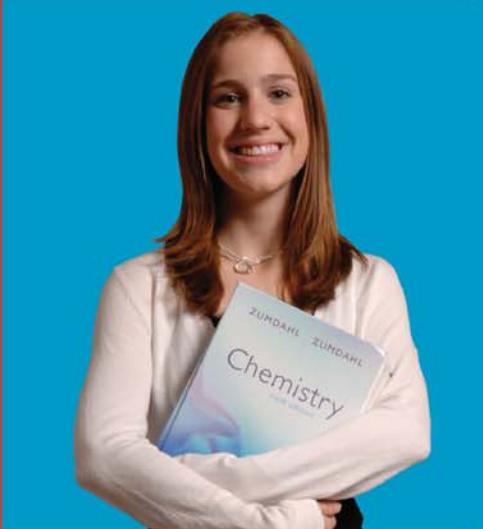
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