

Great Falls CONNECTION

Family and friends of Eleanor Weck, co-founder of the Great Falls Trailblazers who passed away last year, gather at a bench dedicated to her honor in Riverbend Park Saturday, April 28.

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PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

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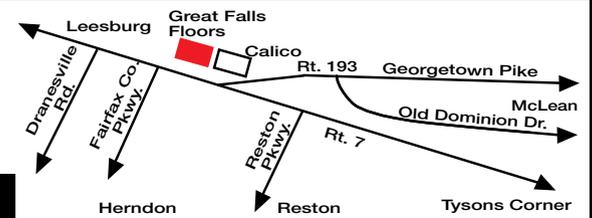
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From left, Karen, Frederick, Jennifer and Christopher Weck sit on the bench at Riverbend Park dedicated to Eleanor Weck, founder of the Great Falls Trailblazers.



PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Memorial Dedicated at Riverbend

Bench memorializes Trailblazers' founder Eleanor Weck.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

Eleanor Weck, or Ele to her friends, spent more than four decades in Great Falls. As a tireless advocate for nature and trails, she spent much of her time in Riverbend Park. Weck passed away last May at the age of 72, and on Saturday, April 28, family and friends gathered to dedicate a permanent tribute in the park.

A few hundred yards from the visitor center, along the river, a memorial bench for Weck was installed, the inscription of which reads, "Walk gently on the Earth, Ele Weck 1939-2011."

Weck's husband Frederick, daughters Karen and Jennifer and son Christopher joined members of the Great Falls Trailblazers, which she co-founded in 1999 in dedicating the bench. Current president Mary Cassidy Anger remembered the first time she met Weck.

"I was both incredibly impressed and quite a bit overwhelmed by her vast knowledge," she said. "I probably would have just walked away, but it was Eleanor that really motivated me to stay. She was so proactive, so positive about what could be done and how much impact we could make."

Anger said she was always impressed with the dedication and motives of Weck's extensive work in the community.

"I learned very early on that here's this woman who was doing basically a full time job with the amount of hours she would put in, but she wasn't doing any of it for herself, but for her community," she said. "That selflessness was a part of her entire life."

Robin Rentsch, a friend of Weck's and member of the Trailblazers, called her "a treasured friend whose loss cannot be measured."

Joan Barnes met Weck soon after moving to Great Falls, and found the two had much in common.

"It was exciting to talk to another woman who was a physical scientist," she said. "One of the joys of being with her was not only the work we did on the trails, but because she was a great person to have a conversation with."



Karen Weck, daughter of Eleanor Weck, speaks to family and friends at the dedication of a bench April 28 in memory of her mother, who helped create trails throughout the Great Falls community.

SINCE ITS FOUNDING, the Great Falls Trailblazers has grown to more than 750 members, and has obtained almost \$2 million in grants for the construction of trails along Georgetown Pike and Walker Road.

Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) worked with Weck on many local projects, and he also had many fond memories of Weck and her passion for trails.

"What made Ele so special was that she took the time and made the effort to learn about trails, the way they were planned and built, and then used that knowledge and passion to make good things happen," Foust said. "Sitting along this beautiful trail in a park Ele loved is the perfect way to remember her."

Marty Smith, manager of Riverbend Park, said the location for the bench was carefully chosen.

"Ele loved the bluebells," said Smith, referring to the spring flower that covers much of Riverbend Park every Spring. "So we chose a spot where people could sit along the river and look at the bluebells."

Weck's husband and three children were the first to sit on the bench that bears her name, and Frederick Weck said he knew what her reaction would be.

"She would not have liked all the attention, but I know she'd love the view," he said.

More information on the Great Falls Trailblazers can be found at www.greatfallstrailblazers.org.



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

From left, Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) awards Great Falls resident Bob Lundegard Community Champion for the Dranesville District Friday, April 27 at the Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards.

Lundegard Named Community Champion

Recognized for efforts with community groups at annual awards ceremony.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

Great Falls resident Bob Lundegard was awarded Community Champion for the Dranesville District during the 20th annual Volunteer Fairfax Service Awards Friday, April 27.

Lundegard was recognized for his efforts "locally, regionally and nationally," according to the citation. He works with local organizations such as the Great Falls Citizens Association, Great Falls Historical Society, the Friends of Colvin Run Mill and nationally for the Society for the Preservation of Old Mills.

"He's absolutely the youngest 85-year-old I've met, and he has my total respect and trust—not just because of his dedication but his intellect."

— Linda Fernald, a member of the GFCA Seniors Group

Currently president of the Friends of Colvin Run Mill, Lundegard assisted with last year's bicentennial event, and helped raise \$50,000 for a new visitor's center at the park.

"Bob's efforts are instrumental in what we've been able to do here at Colvin Run Mill, and what we're going to do in the future," said Colvin Run Mill manager Mike Henry.

Lundegard has also contrib-

uted more than a dozen essays to the Great Falls Historical Society's website, covering the mill's history, as well as essays about George Washington's land ownership in Great Falls.

He is also active in the GFCA's Seniors Group, which is currently holding a survey to assess needs to seniors, families

and caregivers in the community in order to provide the activities, assistance and facilities they might require.

"He's absolutely the youngest 85-year-old I've met, and he has my total respect and trust—not just because of his dedication but his intellect," said Linda Fernald, a member of the GFCA Seniors

Group. "I've been involved in the Seniors Group from the beginning, and Bob has been a driving force. His leadership abilities and his sensibilities, along with his depth of community contacts, have enabled us to get as far as we have. He has been our prime contact with the County, which has been so receptive and responsive. He's focused and singularly driven."



Mike Palermo of Great Falls, has been bringing his sauces and rubs to the market for three years.

Great Falls Farmers Market Highlights Local Produce

Local farmers and vendors from Great Falls make up nearly half the vendors.

BY MEREDITH BILLMAN-MANI
THE CONNECTION

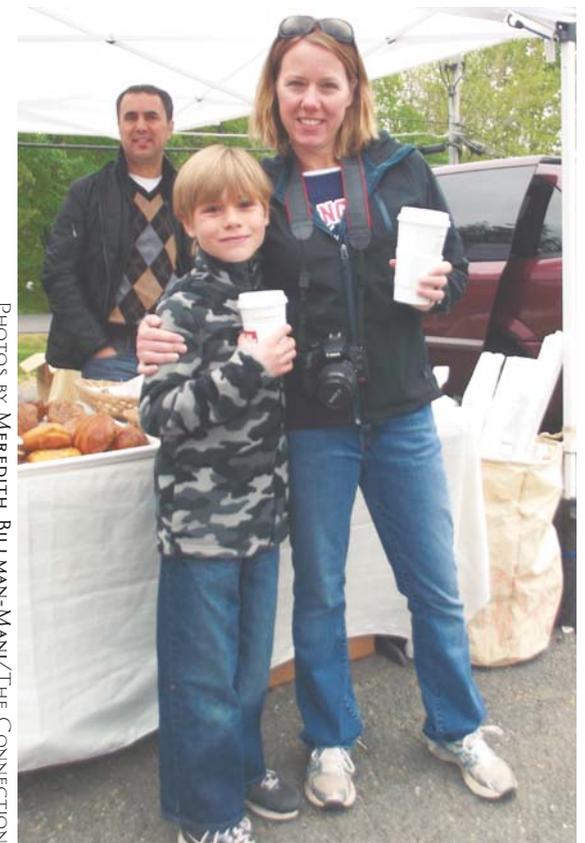
From honey to honey buns, from produce to pickles, the newly located Great Falls Farmers Market has it all. They go be-

yond many other local farmers markets because they are able to offer many products that are grown and produced in the village of Great Falls, taking local a step further.

This year the market is located in the parking lot of the Village Center. Its previous location had



Jennifer and Clara Clark stroll their local market.



PHOTOS BY MEREDITH BILLMAN-MANI/THE CONNECTION

Lynn Oettl and son Walker enjoy the pastry vendor at the market.

created traffic problems so the new location was found. It's open every Saturday morning from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the months of May to October. There are nine vendors currently and several more are expected to attend in the next few weeks.

Maple Avenue Market Farm is a prime example of local food at the market. Sara Guerre and her husband farm five acres in Great Falls off of Riverbend Road. They bring fresh eggs and produce, such as leafy greens, baby beets and salad mixes to market each week. "We

bring whatever we're growing right now. Now it's the spring vegetables but that changes with the growing season," said Guerre.

"We're in a village that has agricultural zoning. The intent is to

SEE FARMERS, PAGE 5

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Farmers Market Reopens

FROM PAGE 4

encourage agriculture. We would like to encourage people with an access to the market," said market manager Kathleen Murphy. "We asked ourselves how we could have a really special market, something really unique. It's by being local, truly local," said Murphy. Jennifer's Pastries makes and sells their delectable sweets in Great Falls. So does Bad a Bing Hot Sauces.

Lynn Oettl, of Great Falls, strolled the market with her son on an unseasonably cold opening day. "This is so nice to have here. We went to the car show and then walked over here. It's a nice little outing," Oettl said.

Murphy said the market is currently setting up an advisory council of people who live in Great Falls, to brainstorm and come together to make the village market one of the most unique in the area.



PHOTO BY MEREDITH BILLMAN-MANN/THE CONNECTION

Quilter Fran Fister samples fresh horseradish.

"How local can we be is the question."

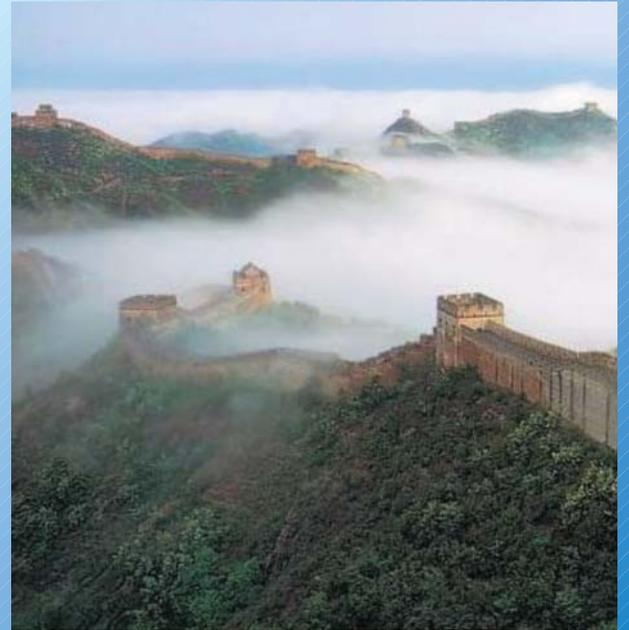
— Kathleen Murphy, Market Manager

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Or to mail photo prints, send to:

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FAITH

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community. Send to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls, offers three Sunday services and a host of musical, educational, outreach, and fellowship ministries to enrich spiritual growth. 7:45 a.m. Worship Service without music; 9 a.m. Worship Service, Children's Chapel and Children's Choirs; 10 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Forum; and 11 a.m. Worship Service with Adult Choir. 703-759-2082.

Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean, Sunday worship services are at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday School for adults is at 9:30 a.m. and for children during the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Youth Group for grades 7-12 meets Sundays at 6 p.m. A 20-minute service of Holy Communion is held each Wednesday at 12 p.m. 703-356-3312 or umtrinity.org.

The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. www.jssa.org/growth-learning.

HAVEN of Northern Virginia offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. Contact 703-941-7000 or www.havenofnova.org for schedules and registration information.

McLean Bible Church Fitness Class at Body & Soul Fitness. Balance is key, energy is renewed and strength is gained. 9:45 a.m. Mondays and Fridays. Free childcare for registered students. bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org.

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center offers ongoing classes on meditation and Buddhist philosophy, Mondays at 7 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. \$10 per class. 202-331-2122 or www.meditation-dc.org.

St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, 1830 Kirby Road in McLean. The third Sunday service every month at 10:15 a.m. allows children to play active roles in the music and as greeters and ushers. Traditional services are every Sunday at 8:15 and 10:15 a.m.

Vienna Assembly of God has a ministry to children on Wednesdays, 7-8 p.m. at the corner of Center N and Ayr Hill Avenue, N.E. Children's Church on Sundays also available. 703-938-7736 or www.ViennaAG.com.

Vienna Christian Healing Rooms, every Saturday, 1-5 p.m., at 8200 Bell Lane. A team of Christians is available to anyone requesting prayer. Free and open to the public. 703-698-9779 or www.viennachristianhealingrooms.com.

Correction

In the story "Young Poets Recognized" in the April 25-May 1 issue, it was incorrectly stated that sixth grader Nicole Medina wrote her winning poem about her father who was deceased. Medina's father is not deceased, she used artistic license for her poem.

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BULLETIN BOARD

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Dog and Cat Adoptions. 1-4 p.m. PetSmart, 8204 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. Every Sunday. Sponsored by Lost Dog & Cat Rescue Foundation. www.lostdogrescue.org.

TUESDAY/MAY 8

Vienna Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce TIPS Luncheon. 12:15 p.m. Shula's Steakhouse, 8028 Leesburg Pike, in the Tysons Corner Marriott. Every Tuesday. 703-862-4895.

Great Falls Citizens Association Meeting. 7:30 p.m. The Grange, 9818 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. How residents can take advantage of summer programs in Riverbend, Turner, Colvin Run and Great Falls National Parks. With presentations by park staff. bcanis@yahoo.com.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 9

Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group Meeting. 1:30 p.m. at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

Multiple Sclerosis Support Group. 7 p.m. Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St., NE, Vienna, VA. A group for anyone with multiple sclerosis, their family and friends. Sponsored by the National Capital Chapter of the MS Society. The group meets the second Wednesday of every month. Free. 703-768-4841.

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OPINION

Reminders to Press Ahead for Housing

Spring discussion on hypothermia shelters could help preparations for winter.

In February, 2007, 59-year-old Robert Bruce Miller was found dead outdoors in Chantilly. Miller was homeless, known to businesses and residents in the area. He died of hypothermia, exposure to the cold.

Since that time, houses of worship and non-profit organizations have stepped into the gap, providing shelter from the storm on a “no-turn-away” basis from November to March.

In Fairfax County, about 35 houses of worship provide shelter to approximately 1,000 homeless men and women during the winter months. Each year, various churches, synagogues, mosques and temples take turns providing space to provide food and shelter for the homeless population during the winter months. Last year, there were no hypothermia-related deaths reported. Similar programs operate in Arlington and Alexandria.

An alarm went up over the past month as some churches that have been providing hypothermia shelter heard that they could be barred from providing the service due to fire-

code violations. While some faith leaders said they had heard as many as 18 would be unable to reopen, Sharon Bulova said that just four might have insurmountable fire code violations for serving as emergency shelters. Obviously no one wants to put both church volunteers and those seeking shelter at risk.

“Fairfax County has a unique partnership with our faith communities and non-profits. We are committed to serving the homeless population in a way that is compassionate and ensures their safety,” Bulova said.

It’s important to recognize that providing shelter from life-threatening conditions is in fact a government function. Faith-based organizations and nonprofits are stepping in on this issue and many others to provide leadership, inspiration and services, saving local governments enormous sums of money.

The county should consider if it might be appropriate for firehouses with capacity might be open in rotation as hypothermia shelters,

staffed with church volunteers, if some churches cannot make the changes needed by fire code regulations.

More important is to recognize the need for hypothermia shelters as an indicator that we have not ended homelessness. Providing housing first to people who need a variety of services saves money and makes the most effective use of scarce resources.

Amanda Andere, head of FACETS, Catherine Hudgins, member of the Board of Supervisors, and others reminded the group concerned about the shelters that the real issue is housing.

“Shelter is a temporary solution. We need housing,” Andere said.

It is telling that many services are provided to the homeless men and women who come to the hypothermia shelters.

Housing advocates continue to press for more affordable housing. It’s a goal that is urgent to keep in mind as Fairfax County looks at what is likely to be its last massive growth in development, the increased density and building around the county’s coming Metrorail stations.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

EDITORIAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Is it Worth it?

To the Editor:

I read with interest your recent report of the news conference held by VDOT officials on the roadway now named the 495 Express Lanes [“Fasten Your Seatbelts,” Connection, April 4-10, 2012]. Your story quotes Tim Steinhilber, Transurban-Fluor’s Express Lanes manager, saying that “drivers on 495 will have faster, more reliable and more predictable trips on the Capital beltway.” That is welcome news since that’s just the opposite of what motorists have experienced over the past several months. To be fair, things have gone better than I expected, but I have been driving frequently from my home in Great Falls to my mother’s house in North Springfield and back again and long ago concluded that efforts to reduce construction impacts to drivers were too often being coordinated by the Keystone Cops. Being able to get somewhere on 495 in a timely fashion is a roll of the dice. Again, I am glad it may soon be over but will it have been worth it? Gone will be traffic lanes reduced to one or less without adequate notice. I know there were scheduled closings posted on the Internet but there were plenty of others that clearly seemed more improvised or spur of the moment. Scheduling a road closing is one thing. Carrying it out in an orderly fashion often seemed too much of a burden on construction crews.

At any rate, thousands of motorists seemed to have not read the memos and paid the price. More than once, I found myself unexpectedly diverted late at night to 66 westbound because 495 simply ran out, blocked by orange cones. A single warning sign had been placed before Braddock Road. One night, when roadwork was underway on 66, 495 and Route 7 simultaneously I came upon a scene out of Dante’s Inferno. With miles of traffic in all directions at a complete standstill I came over a rise to see thousands of cars and 18-wheelers stretching into Maryland, heading West and Southbound bathed in the other-worldly glow of construction spotlights. Another night I discovered I couldn’t get onto 495 from Braddock Road near my mother’s house. I parked and walked over to a truck where the driver was asleep and his colleague was reading emails. I asked what I was expected to do. It was suggested that I figure out how to get to Arlington Blvd. After all, there was a detour sign several hundred yards away. I had long before concluded that there was very little concern about the impact Hot Lane construction had on motorists and that they were essentially on their own so this was not a surprise.

With express lane construction winding down, presumably there now won’t be quite as many bonus traffic accidents as motorists won’t have to guess about ever-changing road patterns. Law en-

forcement reports a distinct increase in accidents and the hassle that provides, especially around Tysons Corner. There won’t be power outages or water main breaks due to construction crews not knowing exactly where to dig. (I remember a power outage in the Tyson’s area and the chief VDOT spokesman explaining that’s what we should expect from a major construction project). That’s not what I expected. And hopefully there won’t be any more traffic delays adding up to tens of thousands of man-hours lost. These will all be gained back with the opening of the express lanes.

John Lynch, VDOT regional program director, said at the news conference that with the express lanes, “the transportation picture in Northern Virginia gets another dimension that was not available before.” Rather than a new dimension, how about producing some actual benefits? Is there a study that shows that traffic jams will actually be reduced? 395 is generally a parking lot during rush hour despite the HOV lanes. 95 is the same. Traffic exiting the new express lanes will have to merge with motorists on 495 heading into Maryland just before Georgetown Pike. Traffic exiting in the other direction will likely have the same problem or worse. How is that going to work out? Who owns the express lanes? Why are State Troopers and emergency crews tasked with patrolling the

Express Lanes when Transurban-Fluor gets to keep the tolls for 70-years? I guess the revenue from fines will help pay for the Troopers’ time but it seems like a waste of officer’s time and taxpayer’s money having them sort out how many passengers are in a car. I guess the electronic gizmo that was reportedly going to be used to determine the number of passengers in cars entering the express lanes won’t be perfected in time. The same appears to go for the super duper way of paying fees. Now motorists with three or more passengers will have to “switch off” their EZ Pass transponder to avoid tolls. More than likely they will just put it under their seat. Questions remain because, as one official put it early on, the public should not have expected to be privy to the details of negotiations between the state and Transurban-Fluor.

Some time ago, The Great Falls Connection suggested that the state could have floated the bonds and negotiated the federal loans to build the express lanes, owned the highway outright and kept the tolls. That logic seems to have been lost on the public officials at the time this scheme was cooked up who, like the pharaohs, wanted to leave a monument behind. A monument to what is still to be determined. Hot lanes on I-95 anyone?

Arthur Kingdom III
Great Falls

Great Falls CONNECTION

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Northern Virginia Residents Honored for Volunteer Efforts

Four locals receive Community Champions Awards for Health Care and Social Services to the Community.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Four Northern Virginia volunteers were honored for their charitable efforts recently. Edward Shahin of McLean, Marie Markey of Alexandria and Mattie Palmore and Kari Warren of Mt. Vernon received the Molina Healthcare Community Champions Award during a ceremony at the at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center in Fairfax.

"We are pleased to celebrate Marie, Ed, Mattie and Kari — individuals who have made such a positive impact in the lives of others through their selfless work," said Dr. Jean Glossa, medical director of the Fairfax County Community Health Care Network (CHCN) for Molina Healthcare. "Each of their stories is so inspiring, and the work

that they do to better the health and well-being of their communities is so important. It is our pleasure to not only recognize these four winners, but also to be able to support their worthy causes."

Palmore and Warren were honored for their work to support victims of domestic violence through their organization, the Women's Group of Mt. Vernon.

"This award means that the work that we do is not done in vain," said Palmore. "We don't do the work that we do for recognition. We do it to help the victims."

Markey, a volunteer at Annandale Christian Community for Action, is the coordinator and chair for the group's Family Emergency Assistance program. As a retired physical therapist, she also provides free physical therapy for clients at local free clinics.

"I believe that helping people is what one

should do if one has the time and the opportunity," she said. "The 'haves' should help the 'have-nots.'"

Shahin is a senior citizen from McLean who advocates on behalf of other Fairfax County seniors through his volunteer work at Lewinsville Senior Center and as one of the elected members of the McLean Community Center Governing Board.

"We don't do the work that we do for recognition. We do it to help the victims."

— Mattie Palmore, Mount Vernon

"I retired three times," said Shahin. "I was afraid to retire until I could fill my life with worthwhile pursuits. I have taken up causes on behalf of seniors and it is the most worthwhile thing that I have done. I am more proud of this award than any award that I have received for anything in the past because it is giving of myself to help others."



Four Northern Virginia volunteers receive Community Champions Awards for their service to the community. Pictured are: Dr. Jean Glossa of Fairfax County Community Health Care Network; Mattie Palmore and Kari Warren of Mount Vernon; Marie Markey of Alexandria; Ed Shahin of McLean; and Gloria Calderon of Molina Medical Group.

The winners were nominated by community-based organizations and received \$1,000 grants to donate to nonprofit orga-

nizations of their choice. Markey donated her grant to Annandale Christian Community for Action. Shahin gave his to the

McLean Rotary Club Foundation. Palmore and Warren gifted their grant to the Women's Group of Mt. Vernon.

Local Safety Net Clinics Seek a Few Good Doctors

Specialty care physicians and other medical professionals needed to serve low income, uninsured patients.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

When Marie Markey of Alexandria retired from U.S. Air Force as a physical therapist, she rolled up her sleeves and went to work helping those in need. Markey works as a volunteer twice each week at the Arlington Free Clinic, offering physical therapy to the clinic's low income and uninsured patients.

"The clinic fills a huge gap," said Markey. "We have people who walk in who don't have access to medical care for basic illnesses like high blood pressure and diabetes."

Markey is motivated by a sense of responsibility to give back to the community. "If everyone did their part, the world would be better place," she said. "I had a patient once who was a construction worker. He'd had back surgery and needed physical therapy to recover fully. He didn't have insurance and couldn't afford to pay for therapy. If he hadn't received free therapeutic services to help him re-

cover, he would have lost his job."

NOVA SPECIALTY ACCESS, a project of the Northern Virginia Health Services Coalition is looking for more volunteers like Markey to provide medical services to low-income, uninsured patients from local "safety-net" clinics. The project matches patients with local medical specialists who volunteer their services.

The coalition has reserved several days in May and June for medical professionals, such as specialty care doctors, nurses, and nurse practitioners, to volunteer at Head to Toe Specialty Clinics. The clinics will give patients enrolled at area safety-net clinics an opportunity to receive specialty health care services, including diabetic eye screening, foot care, diabetic nutrition counseling and audiology testing.

"The event is ... an important initiative where community members have the opportunity to get the health screenings they need," said Sterling resident Karen Rudat, nurse manager for Fairfax Community Health Care Network.

Project officials say their most urgent

Volunteers Needed

"Head to Toe" Specialty Clinic for low income, uninsured patients.
♦ Saturday, May 19th: Loudoun Free Clinic, 224-B Cornwall St, Leesburg, Va.

♦ Saturday, June 2nd-2: Community Health Care Network, Bailey's Crossroads - 6196 Arlington Blvd, Falls Church, Va.

♦ Saturday, June 30th: Prince William Area Free Clinic, St. Margaret's Clinic, (also for patients of the Family Health Connection) 13900 Church Hill Drive, Woodbridge, Va.

Two volunteer shifts: 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 11:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Volunteers needed to fill the following slots:

- ♦ Registration Volunteers
 - ♦ Translators
 - ♦ Audiologists
 - ♦ Nursing Volunteers
 - ♦ Podiatrists
 - ♦ Ophthalmologist/Optometrists
- ♦ Volunteers must be 16 years or older. For medical professional roles, volunteers will need a valid Virginia license. On-site orientation provided. To volunteer, email

TO VOLUNTEER CONTACT:
manager@novaspecialtyaccess.org or call (571-) 235-3577

shortage is of physicians: "Our greatest volunteer needs are for audiologists, podiatrists and ophthalmologists," said

Ulrich. "If there are other specialists that come forward, we would add other services as well. The program is ongoing and we're hoping to generate interest even if it is not on these specific dates."

Health care professionals must hold a Virginia license and volunteer in an area that is consistent with their licensure.

VOLUNTEERS ARE CRITICAL to the mission of the clinics.

"We work with a fantastic group of volunteer physicians, mostly specialists. We are so grateful for their generosity as they give their time and talent to increase the quality and access to care," said Dr. Jean Glossa, medical director, Community Health Care Network of Fairfax County and Molina Healthcare. "Without them, I don't know how some of our most vulnerable patients would be able to get the specialty care they need when they need it the most."

Services and availability vary from clinic to clinic. To be eligible for service at the safety-net clinics, patients must be adults who have a household income of 200 percent or less than the federal poverty level and no health insurance. Ulrich suggested that those interested in the services visit <http://novaspecialtyaccess.org> to find a clinic that is right for them.



Alexandria resident, Marie Markey, volunteers her time to low-income uninsured patients at the Arlington Free Clinic. Local safety-net clinics are looking for volunteers particularly specialty care doctors and nurses.

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NEWS

Giving Back to Mason

Steve Mullins of Great Falls returns to his alma mater to serve on the Board of Visitors.

BY JEAN T. JIANOS
THE CONNECTION

As high school seniors across the country are currently deciding the college to attend in the fall, local entrepreneur and chief financial officer Steve Mullins reflects upon the choice he made as a senior at Annandale High School to attend George Mason University and on his recent appointment to Mason's Board of Visitors. "It is an honor to be asked to serve on the board of the university from which you graduated," says Mullins. At this point in his family life and his career, Mullins had asked, "What can I do to help the University? How can I give back a little?" The answer came when Governor Bob McDonnell tapped Mullins to join the Mason Board of Visitors at a critical time last fall when the Board was tasked with selecting a new president for the university. Mullins knew that selection "could be the most important decision for the University for the next 20 years," given the fact that the sitting president, Dr. Alan G. Merten, has led the university for the past 16 years. So, while the first month of Mullins' service was dedicated to the selection of Dr. Angel Cabrera as Mason's new president, effective July 1 of this year, the remainder of the last six months has been spent overseeing the implementation of policies designed to further the university's strategic goals.

In describing itself, Mason states in its "Strategic Goals for 2014," that: "If there is one term that captures the history of George Mason University, that term is 'entrepreneurial.' . . . We have demonstrated an ability to be both creative and efficient in responding to the many opportunities the National Capital Region has to offer."

THAT DESCRIPTION can be equally applied to Mullins himself. Although he did not have a declared interest in the information sciences as an incoming freshman, while a student at Mason, Mullins decided to take an early computer programming course and realized its potential for extrapolating valuable information from data. He had an idea about the kind of information that he could sell and was inspired to form an information services company, contracting with a fellow student for the necessary programming skills.

John Backus, former chairman of the Northern Virginia Technology Council, has this to say about Mullins:

"Steve has done so much for our community and our entire State. As a CFO he has helped dozens of companies grow and prosper. At NVTC he brought insight into technology policy that helped make our State the top in the country for technology businesses. And his side business, building donor lists for political parties, has helped hundreds of candidates win elections over a 20 year period. Steve is tireless, and available 24/7. You are as likely to see him at The Tavern in Great Falls as you are at a Wizards game, a political fundraiser, or an NVTC event. He is always working to help out the companies he works for."

One of those companies, the cybersecurity firm Invincea, also got its start on the campus of George



PHOTO BY JEAN JIANOS/THE CONNECTION

Steve Mullins at the Center for Innovative Technology building in Herndon where George Mason University has offices and classrooms.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MULLINS FAMILY

Steve Mullins, daughter Sabrina (St. Francis Creche preschool in Great Falls), spouse Cristina Mullins and daughter Amanda (Colvin Run ES in Vienna).

Mason University, having been founded by Dr. Anup Ghosh, a Research Professor and Chief Scientist in Mason's Center for Secure Information Systems (CSIS). Not only does such an entrepreneurial incubation benefit student education and faculty scholarship, but in addition, since the patent-pending technology was developed in collaboration with CSIS, it creates financial revenues that are distributed to the university. George Mason Intellectual Properties, Inc. (GMIP) is the not-for-profit entity within the university that holds inventions, patents and license agreements; and that also explores ways in which to market Mason's intellectual property.

AS A VISITOR, Mullins serves on the Finance and Land Use Committee of the Board, and he says that the business opportunities created by entities such as GMIP help that committee in achieving its dual goals of keeping tuition and fee increases to a bare minimum while moving Mason forward as a world class university. Mullins will continue to apply the same philosophy to his responsibilities on Mason's Board of Visitors as he has to the investments he has made in his own education and business ventures:

"It is always a struggle to balance short term and long term goals, but if you employ long term methods — do what is right for the company and figure out how you can create long term value, quietly going about building a good company — you may have to wait, but you will eventually be rewarded for doing that."

ENTERTAINMENT

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

WEDNESDAY/MAY 2

Vienna Photographic Society. 7:30 p.m. Thoreau Middle School, 2505 Cedar Lane, Vienna. Photography lecture with Victoria Restrepo. www.vps-va.org or 703-451-7298.

THURSDAY/MAY 3

"How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying." 7:30 p.m. James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. \$10-\$12. www.madisondrama.com.

Lupe Fiasco. 8 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Tickets \$35-\$45, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 1-800-745-3000. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities by calling 703-993-3035.

Company of Thieves and Chris Merritt And The Dirty Girls. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

FRIDAY/MAY 4

Artists' Reception. 4-9 p.m. Frame Factory, 212 Dominion Road N.E., Vienna. Lisa Neher, Barbara Wagner, Sarah Swart, Jackie Elwell, Elaine Florimonte, and Debbie Glakas in "Six Artists, Once Again." teresa@tlcillustration.com.

Super bob and Almost Kings. 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

ValeArts Spring Show. 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Vale Schoolhouse, 3124 Fox Mill Road, Oakton. "Full Spectrum," featuring nine local artists. Reception, 7-9 p.m. Free admission. www.valearts.com.

"Deathtrap." 8 p.m. McLean Community Center Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Comedy-thriller about a play within a play. \$14-\$16, group rates available. 866-811-4111 or www.mcleanplayers.org.

"The Fantasticks." 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Musical comedy. \$14, \$12 students and seniors. 703-255-6360 or www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

"How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying." 7:30 p.m. James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. \$10-\$12. www.madisondrama.com.

An Art Affair. 7 p.m. Madeira School, Georgetown Roan, McLean. Art auction and exhibit. Proceeds benefit Freedom in Creation, providing art therapy to children in Uganda. www.freedomincreation.org.

Artist's Reception. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Great Falls Artists' Atelier, 1144 Walker Road, Great Falls. Paintings and works on paper by Roberta Pruet Beasley. Free admission. 703-994-3165.

SATURDAY/MAY 5

ValeArts Spring Show. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Vale Schoolhouse, 3124 Fox Mill Road, Oakton. "Full Spectrum," featuring nine local artists. Free admission. www.valearts.com.

"The Fantasticks." 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Musical comedy. \$14, \$12 students and seniors. 703-255-

6360 or www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

"Deathtrap." 8 p.m. McLean Community Center Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Comedy-thriller about a play within a play. \$14-\$16, group rates available. 866-811-4111 or www.mcleanplayers.org.

GFVFD Celebrates 70 Years of Service. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department, 9916 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Family food and fun plus tours of the new eco-friendly fire station. vsingh8651@aol.com.

New Dominion Chorale. 4 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Mendelssohn's Elijah, featuring soprano Esther Heideman, alto Laura Zuiderveen, baritone Timothy LeFebvre, tenor Issachah Savage and the New Dominion Chorale. Tickets \$5-\$30, available at cfa.gmu.edu/tickets, 703-993-2787, www.tickets.com or 888-945-2468.

Fairfax Civil War Day. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Historic Blenheim Estate, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Commemorating the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War. \$5 adult, \$3 age 12 and younger. Proceeds benefit the restoration of the Historic Blenheim Estate. www.fairfaxva.gov or 703-591-0560.

❖ Demonstrations on blacksmithing with an 1862 traveling forge, railroads, naval artifacts, medicine, jewelry, toys, slave life and soldier research.

❖ Re-enactors will portray General Robert E. Lee, General Ulysses S. Grant, General George B. McClellan, Colonel John S. Mosby, photographer Matthew Brady and a "Yankee Schoolmarm."

❖ Talks on generals Lee, Grant and

McClellan; Germans; and soldiers' ID tags.

❖ Demonstrations of a Howitzer cannon artillery gun, "boot camps" for children, author/vendor tents and more.

❖ Wagon rides through soldier camps, period music by Southern Horizon and period dancing.

❖ Guided tours of the first floor of the Blenheim house, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

"How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying." 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. \$10-\$12. www.madisondrama.com.

Social Justice Yard Sale. 7 a.m.-1 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Proceeds benefit four charities. Cash only, no checks. www.uucf.org or lkozloff@verizon.net.

Ayr Hill Garden Club Plant Sale. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Vienna Town Green next to the Freeman Store, 131 Church St. N.E., Vienna. Featuring plants proven to grow well in Vienna because they come from local gardens. Species for sun and/or shade, deer resistant plants and drought tolerant plants. Proceeds help the AHGC to maintain five gardens in Vienna. 703-759-3899.

Northern Virginia Country Western Dance Association. Luther Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Road, Falls Church. Line dance lesson 7:30 p.m., couples lesson 8 p.m. Open dancing 8:30-11 p.m. \$5-\$12. www.nvcwda.org or 703-860-4941.

Ancient Technology Expo. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Claude Moore Park, 21544 Old Vestal's Gap Road, Sterling. Discover ancient Native American technology as seen by Captain John Smith in

1608 with hands-on and Make & Take activities. Make an ancient style pot, grind corn, try spear-throwing (atlatl), create shell/bone jewelry and more. Enjoy archaeological artifact exhibits and photo galleries. \$3, under age 5 free. 571-258-3700.

Riverbend Bird Stroll: Warblers. 9-11 a.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Bring binoculars. \$7. Register at 703-759-9018.

Squirreling Around on a Spring Day. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Children age 6 and up. Find squirrels throughout the historic house. \$5. 703-437-1794.

Living Wreath. 10 a.m. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Create a wreath using annuals on a moss frame. \$30. Reservations required at 703-255-3631.

SUNDAY/MAY 6

Spring Fling. 4 p.m. Oakton High School, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna. The Main Street Community Band celebrates the arrival of spring as part of Fairfax's "Spotlight on the Arts Festival." Adults \$10, seniors \$5, students free. www.fairfaxband.org.

ValeArts Spring Show. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Vale Schoolhouse, 3124 Fox Mill Road, Oakton. "Full Spectrum," featuring nine local artists. Free admission. www.valearts.com.

"The Fantasticks." 2 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Musical comedy. \$14, \$12 students and seniors. 703-255-6360 or www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

City of Fairfax Band: Spring Fling.

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McLean Softball on Course for Strong Finish

Highlanders are 8-2 in the strong Liberty District.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

Over the course of the high school girls' softball season, the McLean Highlanders have shown upward progress and gotten better and better. There have been a few lopsided losses to some exceptional opponents, but the Liberty District team has consistently responded with strong bounce-back games and improved play.

All things considered, this spring's Highlanders have displayed both fortitude and talent, with an 11-4 overall record.

"We are having an up and down season so far," said McLean head coach Maurice Tawil. "But, we have progressed since the beginning of the season."

One of the team's worst losses came two weekends ago at home on the afternoon of April 21 when McLean lost by a 12-0 score to perennial metropolitan private school power Bishop O'Connell of Arlington. The Highlanders had struggled in a similarly lopsided loss earlier in the season, a 15-3 Liberty District home setback to Stone Bridge on March 26.

Following the defeat to Stone Bridge, McLean responded with an impressive six-game win streak. Thus far, in similar fashion, Coach Tawil's squad has won its two games since losing to the Knights of O'Connell - a 5-3 victory at Stone Bridge, the same team which beat the Highlanders



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

McLean High softball is beginning to gear up for the upcoming postseason. A year ago, the Highlanders captured the Liberty District tournament title and reached the region finals before losing to Westfield (pictured).

by 12 runs in late March, and a 12-2 district home win over Marshall last Friday night, April 27. The win over the Statesmen improved McLean's district record to an outstanding 8-2.

At the plate against Marshall, McLean received multi-hit games from junior pitcher/first baseman Lauryn Hahne, senior outfielder Mary Spulak, and junior catcher Maddie Moore, along with a home run from senior first baseman/outfielder Allison Wilhelm. And in the prior game win over Stone Bridge, Hahne's strong pitching helped lead the way for the Highlanders.

McLean's district losses have come to Stone Bridge (in the first meeting with the

Bulldogs) and Madison. The setback to the Warhawks, by a 5-3 score, came at home on April 13 and snapped the Highlanders' six-game win streak. Madison, last Friday night, saw its own win streak of eight games snapped with a loss to Stone Bridge.

McLean is scheduled to play the Warhawks in a second meeting on May 8 at Madison. That game could go a long way in determining which of the two rivals will finish first in the regular season district standings and hold top seeding for the upcoming district playoffs.

This week, McLean was scheduled to play three district games - at South Lakes on Monday, April 30, home against Fairfax on

Wednesday, May 2, and at Jefferson High this Friday night, May 4 at 6:30.

THE REGULAR SEASON is rapidly coming towards an end with just five games remaining, including the three this week. The Liberty District tournament is scheduled to begin with first round games on Wednesday, May 16.

"We still believe that we will be playing our best ball by season's end," said Tawil, who led McLean to its first-ever Virginia State AAA title just two years ago. "So we still expect to contend for the district and [Northern] Regional titles."

The team's top players have been Wilhelm, a team captain, and catcher Moore.

"Both players possess power, hit for average and hit third or fourth in our line-up," said Tawil.

The Highlanders have received a solid season from sophomore right fielder and leadoff hitter Christi Geisler, whom the coach said has exceeded expectations with her fine all-around play.

"She has a combination of speed and power and adds a dimension by being a [slap hitter]," said Tawil.

In the field, McLean has made teams earn their runs. Having exceptionally good seasons with the gloves are senior second baseman Tina Anwyll and outfielder Spulak, whom, like Wilhelm, serves as a team captain.

Handling the pitching duties have been Hahne, sophomore Rachel Wiener, and freshman Maddy Witchey.

Other members of the Highlanders roster are junior shortstop Grace Henry, freshmen Sami Youaw and Erin Calpin, and sophomores Nikki Slade (outfield) and Catherine Overberg (infield).

SPORTS ROUNDUPS

The McLean High boys' tennis team, following a Liberty District win over Jefferson last Thursday, April 26, held a perfect 11-0 record.

McLean had a pair of tough district matches during the week - the Thursday competition versus Jefferson and, three days earlier, an outing versus cross-town rival Langley. All three Liberty District teams - McLean, Langley, and Jefferson - are among the top teams in the Northern Region.

"The McLean Highlanders boys' tennis team is blessed with excellent depth," said the team's head coach, Aavo Tomkov.

That was certainly proven in the match versus the visiting Jefferson Colonials, in which three of McLean's top three players were unable to compete due to illness. But the Highlanders still performed well in a 7-2 team victory over Jefferson (7-3 record), the defending Northern Region champions.

In singles action, McLean won



PHOTO/COURTESY LANGLEY BASEBALL

Langley High baseball pitcher Jonathan O'Connor, a senior, earned the decision for the Saxons in their 5-3 home victory over the South Lakes Seahawks last Friday. The Saxons improved to 9-7 on the season.

five of the six matches. At No. 1 singles, Nik Padmanabhan defeated Stephen Hu, 10-6; and at No. 2, Mike Padmanabhan was a 10-7 winner over Ben Rosenblum. McLean's other singles winners were: Kristian KC over Govind Mattay, 10-4, at No. 4; Mark

Martinkov over Brad Rosenblum, 10-6, at No. 5; and Joon Yee, a 10-8 victor over Jason Huang at No. 6.

In doubles, McLean's No. 1 team of Padmanabhan and Ahmed Skaljic bested Stephen Hu and Kevin Wan by a 10-8 score. Mike Padmanabhan and Mark

Martinkov won their No. 2 match, 10-4, over Govind Mattay and Matt Swanhorst.

IN THE APRIL 24 match earlier in the week, McLean won a hard-fought meeting at Langley, 6-3. It marked the second time this spring in which the Highlanders have defeated the talented Saxons.

In singles, McLean's Nik Padmanabhan won his No. 1 match over Jeff Small, 10-4. At No. 2, the Saxons' Jimmy Fang was a 10-6 winner over Kyle Chisu Edwards. In the No. 3 singles match, McLean's Mike Padmanabhan earned his way past JT Von Seggern, 10-5.

The Highlanders took the No. 4 through six singles matches: Ahmed Skaljic getting past Joe LaFuria, 10-8, at No. 4; Bing Waid defeating Brian Niu, 10-4, at No. 5; and Kristian KC winning over Anudeep Bodd, 10-5.

McLean's Padmanabhan and Kyle Chisu Edwards won their No.

1 doubles match over Jeff Small and Jimmy Fang, 8-4. At No. 2, Langley teammates JT Von Seggern and Joe LaFuria were 8-6 winners over Ahmed Skaljic and Bing Waid. And at No. 3 doubles, the Saxon duo of Elliott Greene and Calvin Li bested Kristian KC and Joon Yee, 8-6.

Great Falls Soccer invites parents from the local area to learn more about the GFSC Travel program. What is travel soccer all about? What is the time commitment? What is the tryout process like? Is it a good fit for my child/family? Answers to these questions, along with many others, will be answered on Wednesday evening, May 2 from 6 to 7 p.m. at Forestville Elementary in Great Falls - a meeting especially designed for the parents of rising U9 players (mainly rising 3rd grade students, contact us for birth date requirements). For more information contact administrator@greatfallsoccer.com

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 13

4 p.m. Oakton High School, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna. Part of Fairfax's "Spotlight on the Arts Festival." \$10, seniors \$5, students free. christinarbianchi@gmail.com.

Percussion Ensemble Spring Concert. 3 p.m. Langley High School, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. American Youth Percussion Ensemble, Doug Wallace, Director. \$7 adult, \$5 senior s, \$5 student. www.aypo.org, events@aypo.org or 703-642-8051.

Grain Grinding and Blacksmith Demonstrations. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, McLean. \$7 adult, \$6 students, \$5 child or senior. Free admission. 703-759-2771.

TUESDAY/MAY 8

Dance Every Tuesday. 7:15 p.m. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Introductory dance lesson 7:15 p.m., dancing 8-10:30 p.m. Swing, Latin, waltz, country and more. \$10 per person, includes lesson and snacks. No partner necessary. colvinrun.org or Ed Cottrell@macp.org.

Battle of Ox Hill Lecture. 7 p.m. Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. David Welker on the Sept. 1, 1862 Civil War battle near present-day Fair Oaks. \$5. Register at 703-437-1794.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 9

Jammin' Juniors. 12:30 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Concert for age 2-5 with Vanessa Trien and the Jumping Monkeys. Free. sabrina.anwah@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times

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 15237 Surrey House Way..\$569,900.....Sun 1-4.....Donny Samson.....Samson Props..703-864-4894

Clifton
 12662 Braddock Farms Ct..\$949,900.....Sun 1-4.....Jamil Mourtaza.....Weichert..703-472-3819
 13602 Union Village Cir.....\$559,900.....Sun 1-4.....Damon Nicholas..Coldwell Banker..703-502-8787

Fairfax
 11124 Popes Head Rd.....\$820,000.....Sun 1-4.....Monica Adams.....RE/MAX..703-434-9400

Fairfax Station
 11808 Winterway Ln.....\$799,900.....Sun 1-4.....Cristina Dougherty.....Long & Foster..703-969-0471
 8303 Pinyon Pine Ct.....\$767,900.....Sun 1-4.....Christine Shevock.....RE/MAX..703-475-3986

Herndon
 642 Madison St.....\$689,000.....Sun 1-4.....Alison Sherman.....Keller Williams..703-636-7306

Leesburg
 40994 Waxwing Dr.....\$664,900.....Sun 1-4.....Donny Samson.....Samson Props..703-864-4894

Oak Hill
 12721 Ox Meadow Dr.....\$1,269,000.....Sat 2-4.....Jerry Thatcher.....Weichert..703-934-0400

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21 Announcements

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By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As our Publisher and fellow cancer survivor, Mary Kimm, e-mailed back to me last week: "Who knew 'stable' could be so exciting?"

Yes, 'stable,' as in the results of my most recent diagnostic scan after four heavy-duty chemotherapy infusions; even though I have been diagnosed with stage IV (meaning metastatic, meaning: moved already) lung cancer, nothing much is happening. For the moment, and that moment has now lasted three-plus years, I continue to be, fortunately for me, an anomaly: alive and reasonably well. Can I hear an "Amen?!"

Though I've tried, repeatedly, since June '09 when I first went public, column-wise, and confirmed my diagnosis/prognosis in print, it still remains nearly impossible to articulate exactly what bounces around in the head (figuratively speaking) of an otherwise healthy, then 54-year-old male (now 57), non-smoker, with no immediate-family history of cancer – or of even having ever smoked cigarettes, to be diagnosed with advanced-stage (IV; there is no V) "terminal" lung cancer. However, I continue to try, as you regular readers know. And thanks to the varied feedback I receive: cards, letters, e-mails, books, inclusions on prayer lists, and the expressions of encouragement and support typically contained, I am relatively healthy, in no small measure I believe, to the words and prayers – of hope and faith, directed to me.

Though I didn't start writing these "cancer columns," as I call them, for any greater good – it was simply what interested me, given my circumstances – they have evolved into a kind of cathartic exercise that perhaps has enabled me to still write them, if you know what I mean? If I didn't have this outlet (space) to indulge myself (thank you again, Mary Kimm), and subject you readers to the rigors – both physically and emotionally, of the ongoing struggles of a cancer patient living day by day, and writing about it week by week, I don't suppose I would be so proud of what I've accomplished/what I've endured.

That is not to imply that I have suffered any more than any other cancer patient and/or any other diagnosed-as-terminal patient; in fact, comparatively speaking, I think I've had it pretty easy (other than the reality of it all). Nevertheless, being diagnosed with cancer is all it's cracked up to be, despite one's relative good fortune in managing to outlive their prognosis ("13 months to two years"). I still can't get the characterization "incurable disease" as initially used by my oncologist, out of my head. As such, as good a result as what I recently received, it's still a temporary result, albeit it an amazing/great/miraculous one, but one subject to change, from what I understand. And as much as I want to receive and hear a permanent you're-cured-type of assessment from my doctor, apparently the chances are fairly unlikely. Still, I have to remain satisfied with the "stable" because the "stable" is all it's cracked up to be. And for a terminal patient, when you're no longer stable, generally speaking, you're no longer an anomaly.

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

Fashion, Fun and Philanthropy

D.C. Chapter of Childhelp Wings holds fashion-show fundraiser.

By MARY GRACE OAKES
THE CONNECTION

On Sunday, April 15, the Washington D.C. Chapter of Childhelp Wings held its seventh annual Fashion Show at the Tysons Corner Bloomingdale's. Co-chaired by Great Falls residents and Childhelp Wings members Debbie Copito and Anjanette Murphy, the event attracted families from all over the D.C. metro area, and benefited the children served by Childhelp, a non-profit organization "dedicated to helping victims of child abuse and neglect through prevention, intervention, and treatment." Childhelp, which was founded in 1959 by actresses Sarah O'Meara and Yvonne Fedderson, has serviced nearly 7 million children since its inception, through the operation of 24/7 National Child Abuse Hotline and the running of nationwide residential treatment "villages."

The "afternoon of fashion, fun, and philanthropy" began with a brunch reception and raffle, after which opening remarks were made by Bloomingdale's General Manager, Julia Palmer, and actress and philanthropist Jen Liley. Liley, who stars as Maxie Jones on General Hospital, spoke of her admiration for the organization and its efforts, saying "child abuse is such a big problem, and it demands a big answer...and I fully believe, with all my heart, that Childhelp is that answer."

Attendees then enjoyed a fashion show hosted by journalist, strategic communicator, and activist, Cynthia Steele Vance, which showcased Bloomingdale's "must-have selection" for the spring season. Working the runway was a mix of professional models and young volunteers from the D.C. branch of Childhelp Wings, "a program designed to inspire, empower, engage and equip youth to join Childhelp in the prevention and treatment of child abuse."

Following the show, Childhelp's co-founders, Yvonne Fedderson and Sarah O'Meara, took to the catwalk in order to "celebrate" Sandra Crippen of Great Falls for her more than two decades of service to the organization. Crippen, who in 1988 became a founding member of the Washington, D.C. chapter of Childhelp, was presented with the "Heart of an Angel" Award for her commitment to the organization's cause. "Every step of the way, through every hill and valley, Sandy and her dear husband Jack were right by our side... They never wavered from their belief in the miracles that are possible when generous hearts come together for the love of a child," Fedderson said.



Dylan Murphy, 14, of Great Falls, works the runway as the audience looks on. Dylan was one of several local children who participated in the fashion show.



Event Co-chairs Debbie Copito and Anjanette Murphy pose for a quick picture with Sandy Crippen (middle), all from Great Falls. Crippen is a recipient of Childhelp's "Heart of an Angel Award."

PHOTOS BY MARY GRACE OAKES/THE CONNECTION



Walking the runway in Bloomingdale's "must-have selection" for the spring season was a mix of professional models and young volunteers from the D.C. branch of Childhelp Wings.

Before the day's festivities concluded with a shopping event, guests also heard from Lisa Evans, the director of National Mem-

bership and the Wings Program, and Carol Hebets, "the founding mother of Childhelp Wings."

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