

McLean CONNECTION

From left, Susana Radice and Jo Hicks, longtime volunteers at Franklin Sherman Elementary School, are honored for their efforts Thursday, May 10.

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PHOTO BY ALEX MCVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

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NEWS



Fairfax County Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) and Del. Vivian Watts (D-39) attended FACETS annual benefit breakfast at the Waterford in Fair Oaks Thursday, May 10. Other elected officials attending the breakfast included U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly, (D-11), Del. David Bulova (D-37), and newly-elected City of Fairfax Mayor Scott Silverthorne.



From left, **FACETS** speaker Raven Bowden; **Fairfax County Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock)**, Amanda Andere, **FACETS** executive director; **FACETS Board Chair John Martin of Great Falls** and **FACETS** speaker **Frank Somers** at the non-profit's annual benefit breakfast, held at the Waterford in Fair Oaks Thursday, May 10.

Opening Doors for People in Need

FACETS celebrates volunteers, donors at annual benefit breakfast.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Surrounded by nearly 350 business executives, politicians and community leaders in the chandeliered ballroom of the Waterford, Frank Somers - dressed in jeans, sneakers and a denim work shirt - looked a little out of place.

But it was Somers' voice that held the attention of the high-wattage crowd, as he took the podium and told the audience his story of homelessness during FACETS annual "Opening Doors Benefit Breakfast," on Thursday morning, May 10.

"I was down and out. You can't get more down and out than I was," the stocky 47-year-old told the audience. "I want you all to know how FACETS can change a life, how they changed my life."

Founded in 1988, FACETS helps Fairfax County's most vulnerable

residents break the cycle of poverty and homelessness through various programs, services and partnerships with 100 faith communities, local businesses, other nonprofits and government agencies.

"I used to consider myself lucky. I had it all," Somers told the crowd. "I had a good job doing landscaping, friends, an apartment..."

BUT IN 2008, Somers had a heart attack. He had no health insurance, and used what savings he had on medical bills. After spending nearly a month in intensive care at Fairfax Inova hospital, he learned that he had diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and had to take 13 different pills each day to survive.

He also found that he had no place to live and no job because of his health crisis.

"I was renting out the basement of my niece's house," Somers said. "When I got out of the hospital, everything was gone. She cleaned me out. I had \$87 in my pocket and nowhere to go."

Somers took the cash he had, and spent two nights at the Breezeway Motel in Fairfax, before becoming one of Fairfax County's homeless statistics. Still recovering from his surgery, Somers said

FACETS Community Impact

In 2011, FACETS members and volunteers

- ◆ donated more than 30,000 hours
- ◆ prepared and delivered more than 37,000 hot meals to people who live in motels, cars, the woods and on Fairfax County streets
- ◆ provided more than 150 youth with backpacks filled with school supplies
- ◆ assisted 2,000 families with programs to prevent and end homelessness
- ◆ moved 130 families and nine individuals into housing
- ◆ For more information on FACETS, and ways to volunteer or donate, go to www.FACETScares.org or call 703-352-5090.

SEE FACETS, PAGE 5



The large carnival ride is one of the most popular attractions at McLean Day.

McLean Day to Celebrate Hometown

McLean Day 2012: 'Celebrating Our Hometown' is on Saturday, May 19.

The McLean Community Center's (MCC) annual community festival McLean Day 2012: "Celebrating Our Hometown" is on Saturday, May 19. MCC district residents are invited to come out and bring every member of the family for a fun day of outdoor activities. The festival will be held from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road. Admission is free.

The McLean School and Civic League originally sponsored the festival in 1915 as a way to raise funds for a host of school and community projects. The first McLean Day was held in a field adjacent to Franklin Sherman School. Over the years following, various community organizations kept McLean Day going (with varying degrees of success) until MCC began producing it in the mid-1970s. As it grew and became more popu-

lar, it soon outgrew the capacity of the Center's Ingleside Avenue address and in 1988, MCC relocated it to its current location, Lewinsville Park.

Residents of Dranesville Small Tax District 1A, who support the Center through a special real estate tax, can cast their votes to elect members to the 2012-2013 MCC Governing Board at the festival. The election will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at a booth just inside the entrance to the park. Onsite parking is not available; however, residents can use the free shuttle bus

service to and from the park. Voting instructions and candidate information are available online at the Center's Website: www.mcleancenter.org.

THE YOUNG AND THE

SEE HOMETOWN, PAGE 15

Wounded Warrior Visits Langley School

Navy Lieutenant Brad Snyder shares a message about service and perseverance with middle-schoolers.

BY LORI BAKER
THE CONNECTION

Navy Lieutenant Bradley Snyder wasn't able to run the Marine Corps marathon with his friends last fall. He was recovering from wounds sustained while serving in Afghanistan. So while they ran it without him, wearing "Brad Snyder" t-shirts, he made a plan. He said, "well alright, next year I'm going to run with you guys."

Running a marathon is no easy task, but for Lt. Snyder, it will be extra challenging. Snyder is blind. He lost both eyes when he stepped on an explosive device in Afghanistan while coming to the aid of a comrade last September. But while lying in the hospital during his recovery, he quickly made a decision to just move forward.

"I woke up in the hospital last September, and the doctor said well you're not going to be able to see anymore," he told middle school students at McLean's Langley School last week. "But I was able to really quickly just decide that, that wasn't going to be an impediment to me."

Lt. SNYDER was invited to speak to middle school students at the Langley School as part of the school's service learning project. "Our big goal was for the students to recognize that service comes in all forms and fashions," said Ryan Jefferson, director of Student Life at the school. "And when you're dealt a pretty tough hand, what you do to persevere and overcome. It ultimately builds their character as citizens of Langley, and of our community."

The Langley School auditorium was uncharacteristically quiet for a room filled with nearly 140 sixth, seventh and eighth graders. They listened intently to Snyder's story.

Snyder told the students that the last thing he remembers seeing was his arms and legs. And before he lost his eyesight, he felt grateful that they were there. "If you decide to always put things into perspective, always maintain a positive attitude, there's no stopping you at all," he said.

Snyder, who currently lives and works in Baltimore, learned the meaning of service at a young age. His father would ask him to pick up trash off the ground that others had left behind. The lesson stuck. Years later he attended the U.S. Naval Academy. He graduated in 2006 and earned a billet to join special operations as an explosives ordinance officer. "We were constantly training," Snyder said. His team's job was to diffuse explosives. He deployed to Iraq. Then soon after returning, he de-



Students were impressed with Lt. Snyder's smart phone, which has many applications for the blind.

ployed to Afghanistan where he was wounded while on patrol.

He told the students about the day-to-day challenges of being blind, such as shopping, cooking, even combing his hair. And he recounted funny stories about the many adjustments he has had to make. But, he said, he is learning to overcome many of the challenges. "I went through a pretty significant life change," he told the students. "But it's easy to put that into perspective because I have friends who lost a leg, or got killed, period. Who never even made it back. So it's all about putting it into perspective. And it was easy to do."

Snyder is currently serving in an unpaid internship for a small technology firm in Baltimore, while waiting for his medical retirement to process. Red Owl Analytics is a data analysis firm in Baltimore that has hired several wounded warriors. "There are a lot of characteristics of a special operations person that make him valuable to a corporation," Snyder said.

PART OF HIS NEW JOB is to demonstrate the value of wounded warriors in the corporate world.

Snyder recently qualified for the Paralympic national swim team. And when he's not working, he is training for a spot on the Paralympic Swim Team for London 2012. After the swim season is over, Snyder is planning to start training for the Marine Corps marathon.

The Langley School students were inspired by his story, and by his determination. "He showed us that we should always be brave, and not give up on our dreams," said sixth grader, Caroline Garcia.

The middle school students have been raising money all year through their weekly snack bar to donate to the wounded warrior fund. And they were proud to present Lt. Snyder with a check for \$500 dollars for the fund.



Jo Hicks, 89, watches a group of preschool students while volunteering at Franklin Sherman Elementary School. Hicks has volunteered for years for the school's preschool program.

PHOTOS BY ALEX MCVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Franklin Sherman Honors Volunteers

Jo Hicks, Susana Radice honored for decades of service.

BY ALEX MCVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

As mothers, Jo Hicks and Susana Radice raised their children in McLean. Once their children were grown, both women decided to take their skills to the local school, Franklin Sherman Elementary School. More than 20 years and 10 teachers later, the two are still going strong volunteering with special needs preschool students.

On Thursday, May 10, faculty of Franklin Sherman honored the two longtime volunteers for their decades of service.

"I don't know what I'd do without them," said Tara Geozeff, preschool teacher. "They never take a sick day, never take vacation and when they're here everything works so well."

Hicks, 89, has been volunteering for more than 20 years. Her daughter, now 62, attended Franklin Sherman. Hicks got her first taste of volunteering in schools while she and her family were living in Australia.

"Old ladies like me just can't sit at home and fingerpaint alone, they'd put me away," Hicks said. "But I've had to learn to do a lot of things that I wouldn't otherwise do, so it's been a learning experience for me as well."

Hicks volunteers with the preschool once a week, and stays busy golfing and swimming throughout the week.

"I asked Jo years ago, why doesn't she get her hip repaired, and she told me it would mess up her golf stroke," said



Susana Radice assists students at Franklin Sherman Elementary School.

Deborah Abbot, an instructional assistant at Franklin Sherman.

In addition to helping keep the children organized, the two often clean up between preschool sessions.

"I don't do too much cleaning at home, but I certainly do here," Radice said with a laugh. "I've learned that if I don't get out, I'll get lazy."

Radice started volunteering in 1985 and comes in twice a week. The grandmother of 23 (with her first great-grandchild due this year), she said she started volunteering to give back to the community around here.

"My favorite part is the camaraderie, with the students, parents and teachers," she said. "And I've learned that you definitely need a sense of humor."

The two say they plan to continue volunteering as long as they can.

NEWS

FACETS Honors Volunteers

FROM PAGE 3

he was too ashamed and depressed to reach out to friends and family. He bought a sleeping bag, and decided to sleep under a bridge in Annandale.

After two months of living under the bridge and looking for work during the day, he learned about FACETS through a social worker at the hospital.

"I called them on a Thursday. By Friday, they made sure I had a real place to sleep. They made sure I got transportation to and from my doctor's appointments... They always said yes," Somers said. A Chantilly High School graduate who once played high school football, Somers said he's still shocked he became homeless. "I want to work for what's mine. I never thought I'd be in that situation."

"The lesson learned," said U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11), a longtime advocate for the homeless who gave the welcome address, "is that 'There but for the grace of God go I.'"

"Too many of our veterans are homeless, one in four of our children receive free and reduced lunches, 1,600 children in Fairfax County are homeless," Connolly said, "Your presence and continued participation is so vital to FACETS."

Connolly noted that Fairfax County is one of the few communities in the nation to reduce its homeless population during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. In 2008, under Connolly's direction as chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, the board initiated the 10-year-plan to prevent and end homelessness, and funded the county's first agency to carry out that mission. Since

then, Fairfax County has reduced its homeless population by 16 percent.

"We are making progress," Connolly said. "That success is the result of the tremendous work of FACETS dedicated volunteers and community partners, but, as you know, much work is left to be done."

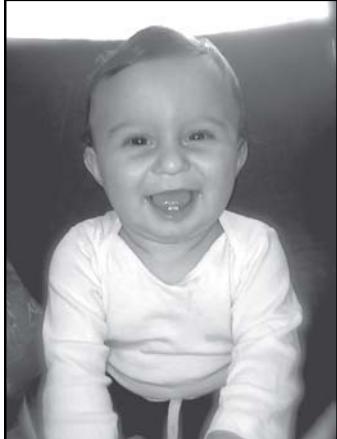
"At FACETS, we envision a day when everyone in Fairfax County has access to adequate and affordable housing and nobody is homeless," said Amanda Andere, FACETS executive director.

"Each of us plays a crucial role in...opening doors for those suffering the effects of poverty. We ask you to continue supporting the thousands of individuals right here in our community who are faced with inconceivable challenges," Andere said.

THANKS TO FACETS, Somers is now living in an apartment in Reston, and looking for full-time landscaping work while working part-time jobs. He also volunteers with FACETS, speaking at fundraising events and helping where he can, such as cleaning up campsites occupied by the homeless population.

"Without FACETS, I don't know where I'd be. My health is better. I graduated from FACETS financial classes, to get myself back on track. I took classes to learn how to control my diabetes," Somers said.

A divorced father of five, Somers said the joy of his life is seeing his children and grandchildren. "My son takes classes at Northern Virginia Community College. We speak almost every day, and he helps me with my landscaping jobs when he's not in school. I'm very proud of him."



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OPINION

Most Endangered?

Potomac River has made great strides, has miles to go to save the Bay.

Unless your home is served by well water, you are almost certainly among the five million people in the Washington Metropolitan area who get their drinking water from the Potomac River.

This week, the organization American Rivers named the Potomac River as the most endangered river in the nation. The Potomac River is far cleaner than it was 40 years ago when the Clean Water Act was enacted.

"Before the Clean Water Act was enacted in 1972, the Potomac was a cesspool of sewage and industrial pollution," says American Rivers. "Thanks to the Clean Water Act, the Potomac and rivers across the country are cleaner and safer for drinking, boating, and fishing. But ... a University of Maryland report card has given the river a 'D' grade for water quality for the past two years."

Now it's safe for high school crew teams to take to the river by the dozens. Kayakers and paddle-boarders join them in intimate contact with the water. Motorboats, marinas and fish-

EDITORIALS

ermen all show the confidence we now have in the integrity of the Potomac River.

Still, after a rain, stormwater washes agricultural waste, suburban and urban runoff carrying loads of pollution into our area's small streams, into the Potomac River and on into the Chesapeake Bay. Bacteria in the river after big rainstorms, from dog waste in suburban areas, agricultural runoff in more rural areas, has led to the recommendation by some that people avoid contact with the river for two-to-three days.

Slowing stormwater runoff, limiting the amount of "nutrients" that are swept down the river into the Chesapeake Bay, and improvements in methods of treating sewage are all critical to the ongoing health of our water supply.

Fish in the Potomac River also continue to show symptoms of exposure to endocrine disruptors, with male bass carrying eggs and other signs. Scientists suspect variety of pharmaceuticals and chemicals are causing these abnormalities, and it is not known whether current water purification systems are removing those pollutants fully from the drinking water.

American Rivers called on Congress to kill any legislation that weakens the Clean Water Act or prevents the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from restoring protections for small streams

and wetlands under the Act. American Rivers also called on the Obama Administration to finalize guidance clarifying the scope of the Clean Water Act and issue a rule-making to ensure that all waters get the protections Americans expect and deserve.

The Potomac River continues to serve as the scenic backdrop to much of what we do here. Let's continue to push for improvements.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Father's Day Photos

Every year at this time, the Connection puts out the call for photographs of fathers and their children, grandfathers and their children and grand children.

Father's Day is Sunday, June 17, 2012 and once again the Connection will publish a gallery of Father's Day photos.

Send in photos as soon as possible, including names of everyone in the picture, the date the picture was taken, the ages of the children and sentence or two about what is happening and where the photograph was taken. Be sure to include your town name and neighborhood. Photos are due by June 8.

You can submit your photos to mclean@connectionnewspapers.com.

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Game On

George Mason University students develop video games aimed at curtailing gang recruitment in Virginia.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Law enforcement officials now have two unlikely weapons in the fight against gang activity in Virginia: video games and college students.

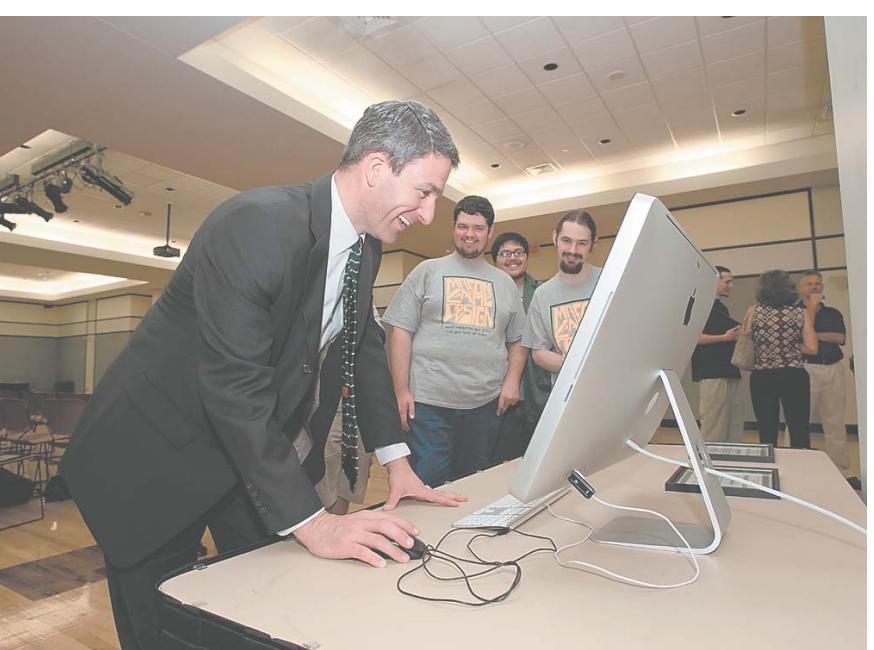
Students in the Computer Game Design program at George Mason University partnered with Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli's office to create video games designed to show children the consequences of joining a gang. The result of the collaboration is a series of interactive and educational computer games and mobile phone applications designed to reduce gang recruitment. The games were unveiled earlier this month on the George Mason campus in Fairfax.

"Gangs are constantly working to recruit new kids to replace those going to jail and getting killed. Their recruitment techniques are evolving, even to the point of using online gaming and other technologies. We have to work even harder to stop them," said Cuccinelli.

"The goal of this partnership with GMU is a novel approach in the war against gangs to beat them at their own game."

Students enrolled in the university's GAME 232 Online Gaming and Filesharing course presented game proposals to Cuccinelli's office. The attorney general's staff selected three:

♦ "A Second Family," created by Michael Katz, Romel Ramos and Brandon Miller. The game tells the story of Justin, who is trying to fit in at a new school and becomes involved with some questionable people. He is forced to rely on his friends and mentors to overcome these negative influences.



Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli plays a game created by George Mason Game Design students in Dewberry Hall at Fairfax Campus. The students created interactive and educational games aimed at teaching kids about the risks of joining gangs.

Steven Fernandez, Devin Gibson, John Murphy and Daniel Paquette. In this game, the player has just moved to a new town and has to assimilate into a new school. He or she must make the right decisions and find a trustworthy group of friends.

THE GAMES ARE TARGETED at middle and high school students. "This is an attempt to reach kids using devices that they already have in their hands," said Arlington resident and George Mason adjunct professor Matt Randon. "The kids are already addicted to these devices so we have a better chance of reaching them with our message."



Seth Hudson, assistant director of the Computer Game Design Program at George Mason University, plays a game created by Mason Game Design students in Dewberry Hall at Fairfax Campus in Virginia. The students created interactive and educational games aimed at teaching kids about the risks of joining gangs.

"I wanted the game to be fun for the player while teaching them about gang violence and how it can be harmful."

— Daniel Paquette

PHOTOS BY
ALEXIS GLENN/
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

During the course, Randon, who also works as an English teacher in Manassas, taught students about the history, practice and design of online games and smartphone applications. Throughout the semester, the students developed written scripts and storyboards, art and sound design, programming, coding and musical compositions.

"I wanted the game to be fun for the player while teaching them about gang violence and how it can be harmful. Finding that balance wasn't easy, but ... we were able to create a game that's educational, but also fun to play," said Daniel Paquette, who helped design one of the games.

THE GAMES will be available for mobile download free of charge by summer 2012. The games will also be available on the attorney general's website, as well as the websites for George Mason University, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, and Virginia Rules.

"Games have a pretty bad reputation in the media. What I hope this project shows people is that the greatest asset of games is that they make learning fun ... which is a talent school systems around the world should look into," said Stephen Berrigan, lead writer and narrative designer for "New Kid on the Block."

A Gripping Play

Langley High's production of 'The Crucible.'

BY KATE CAMPBELL
JAMES MADISON HIGH SCHOOL

Amaddening witch hunt, a town turned on its head, and a court fallen to corruption — and it all started with a dance; this crazed phenomenon, the hunt for witches, that swept Salem, Mass., in 1692, was depicted beautifully in Langley High School's production of "The Crucible."

"The Crucible" was written by Arthur Miller in 1952, at the height of America's era of the Red Scare and McCarthyism. The play was written as an allegory, comparing the Salem witch trials of the late 1600s to the hunt for communists in the 1950s. The story centers around John Proctor (Brian Patterson), whose wife, Elizabeth (Taylor Goodson), as well as many other women of the town of Salem, has been accused of witchcraft.

He endures humiliations and frustrations, and eventually is forced to confront his own sins to reveal truth to the town and the courts.

Langley's performance of "The Crucible" displayed a spectacular level of character development and comprehension of the script. Each person onstage was well-defined and well-depicted; every actor was fully in character and remained engaged in the action of the plot during the entirety of the show. Langley was able to produce a rather refreshing rendition of "The Crucible" in that the cast maintained a steady pace that pushed the plot forward, and was able to successfully avoid any dull moments throughout the show.

The cast in its entirety was incredibly talented, and the leading roles reflected this talent. Brian Patterson, who played John Proctor, handled the difficult role spectacularly. He had a very commanding voice and presence; his demeanors, mannerisms and facial expressions were highly convincing. He portrayed a huge range of emotions brilliantly. His interactions with Taylor Goodson, who played his wife Elizabeth Proctor, were beautiful to watch; they portrayed a dynamic married couple incredibly, ranging their interactions from tense to compassionate to tender. Goodson performed with gracefulness

"Games have a pretty bad reputation in the media. What I hope this project shows people is that the greatest asset of games is that they make learning fun ... which is a talent school systems around the world should look into," said Stephen Berrigan, lead writer and narrative designer for "New Kid on the Block."

PHOTO BY ALEX MCVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

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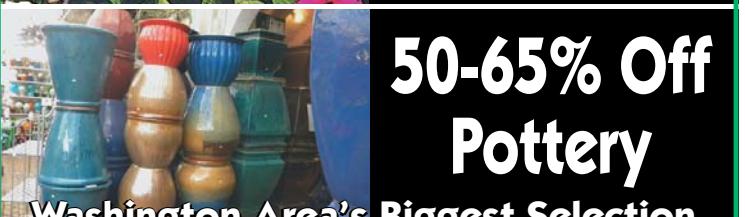
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ENTERTAINMENT

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

THURSDAY/MAY 17

An Evening with Charlie Hunter. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Chapter 227, Vietnam Veterans of America Inc. 7:30 p.m. Neighbor's Restaurant, 262D Cedar Lane, Cedar Lane Shopping Center, Vienna. Including the presentation of awards to the winners of the 12th Annual Vince Kaspar Awards for Excellence in the Arts, a community program recognizes art and poetry talents of local high school students. The general public and all veterans are invited. Free admission is free. 703-255-0353 or www.vva227.org.

Book Discussion Group. 7:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Call for title. Adults. 703-757-8560.

FRIDAY/MAY 18

"Flora the Red Menace." 8 p.m. 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tyson's Corner. A musical by John Kander and Fred Ebb, set in the Great Depression. \$15-\$30. www.1ststageTysons.org.

Friends of the Great Falls Library Book Sale. 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Spring used book sale. 703-757-8560.

Friday Flicks. 10:30 a.m. Tysons Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Call for movie title. All ages. 703-790-8088.

SATURDAY/MAY 19

Scott Ramminger

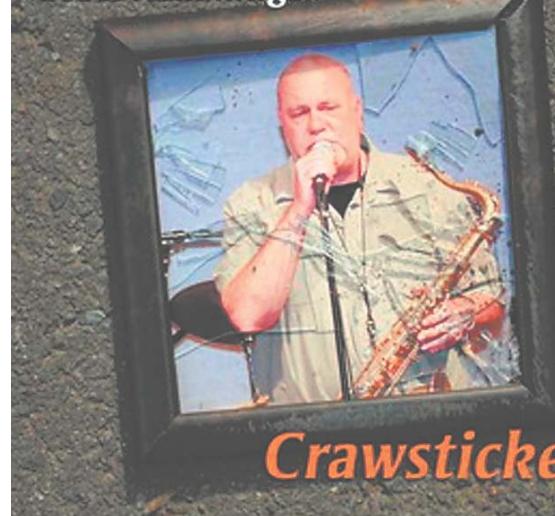


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Musician Scott Ramminger and his band, the Crawstickers, will perform at McLean Day 2012: Celebrating Our Hometown. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday, May 19, Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Family fun day of outdoor activities, including amusement rides and stage entertainment plus four new food vendors. Free admission.

An Evening with John Fullbright at 7:30 p.m.; FunkMnkzy, Feed God Cabbage, Poor Man's Copyright and Castro at 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

"Sleuth." 7:30 p.m. James Lee Community Center, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. Providence Players in a whodunit classic. \$15-\$18. 703-425-6782 or www.providenceplayers.org.

SATURDAY/MAY 19
McLean Day 2012: Celebrating

Our Hometown. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Family fun day of outdoor activities, including amusement rides and stage entertainment plus four new food vendors. Free admission.

Colonial Spring Market Fair. 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Claude Moore Colonial Farm, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Period music, quoits and other games, children's puppet theater, farm animals. Fencing lessons, blacksmith, herbs and

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11

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St Andrew Episcopal Church...703-522-1600

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 10

flowers, colonial market stands and more. See Farm family and community members in character and costume. Refreshments available. Adults \$6, age 3-12 and seniors \$3. 703-903-9330.

Children's Shows: Milkshake Trio. 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Flea Market & Yard Sale. 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Great Falls United Methodist Church, 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Spaces available to rent, \$20. 703-582-1640 or c.wright@longandfoster.com.

Kintz-Mejia Academy of Ballet. 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. George Mason High School, 7124 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Two original one-act ballets: Snow White and Alice in Wonderland. \$30. 703-893-0404 or www.kintzmejiaballet.com.

"Flora the Red Menace." 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tyson's Corner. A musical by John Kander and Fred Ebb, set in the Great Depression. \$15-\$30. www.1ststagetysons.org.

Art Reception and Benefit Raffle. 4 p.m. The Vienna Arts Society, 115 Pleasant St. N.W., Vienna. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the American Legion's emergency fund for military families in distress. 703-319-3971 or www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

Korean Bell Garden Opening. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Marking the 25th anniversary of Meadowlark's 1987 opening. 703-255-3631.

Volksmarch. 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. www.ava.org, event #92677.

Friends of the Great Falls Library Book Sale. 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Spring used book sale. 703-757-8560.

Plant Clinic hosted by the Master Gardeners. 10 a.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Answers to gardening questions. Adults. 703-790-8088.

The Joy of Dance with Ballet & Jazz. 3 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. The Adagio Dance Company and Adagio Ballet's Advanced Jazz students. All Ages. 703-790-8088.

Bach 2 Rock Music Teachers. 5 p.m. The Palladium Civic Place Green, 1445 Laughlin Avenue, McLean. Free. 703-288-9505.

Country Western Dance. Luther Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gulliver 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.nvcwa.org or 703-860-4941.

Carsie Blanton and Dawn Landes at 7:30 p.m.; **In The Lobby Bar with Fight The Lion** at 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Seikilos to U2: A Tour Through Music History. 7:30 p.m. UUCF 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. The Vienna Choral Society presents a concert to support arts education. Pre-concert talk by Creative Director Jennifer Rodgers Beach, 7 p.m. \$15-\$20, families \$35. www.viennachorsociety.org.

City of Fairfax Antique Car Show. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax. See a Model-T Ford reassembled in 15 minutes. Antique cars and live bluegrass music. Food available for purchase. Presented by the Northern Virginia Regional Group of the Early Ford V-8 Club, the City of Fairfax and others. A portion of the proceeds benefit the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington D.C. www.nvrg.org or info@nvrg.org.

'Oh My Son' in McLean

Professional opera to be performed at McLean's Lutheran Church of the Redeemer.

BY LORI BAKER
THE CONNECTION

McLean theatre and opera fans are in for a treat. A highly-acclaimed production of "Oh My Son," a dramatic opera about the life of Jesus, will be performed at McLean's Lutheran Church of the Redeemer on May 20.

The opera was composed by Marcos Galvany, and it will make a one-night stop in McLean. The production had its world premier at Carnegie Hall in 2010 and it is scheduled to perform next year before an audience of 8,000 at the Vatican.

Galvany started composing at a young age. In fact, the first aria for the opera was taken from a melody he composed as a seven year old.

Matt Osifchin, one of the performers and the chorus master for the opera is the Director of Music at McLean's Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. He has been working to bring the professional production to McLean. "I thought it would be a great opportunity to bring it into the northern Virginia area," Osifchin said.

The event will have a professional 19-piece orchestra drawn from the Washington Opera Orchestra. It will also feature the original cast.

"People really loved it," said Galvany. "It is very powerful."



PHOTO BY NANETTE MELVILLE

Karla Rivera as Mother Mary and Javier Gonzalez as John in Galvany's production of "Oh My Son."

The aria is performed by Mary who is watching her son's crucifixion. "Even though she knew he was the son of God, she was crushed. He was asking his mother, 'is there anything you can do, I just don't want to die. I'm scared.' It's very emotional with the characters," Galvany said.

Osifchin said that they were able to raise enough money for the McLean production so that tickets will be available at a "free will offering. We want to make the tickets available to as many people as possible," he said. "People can give as little or as much as they want to donate to the event."

However, tickets to the May 20 event are limited. Those interested in reserving a ticket for the opera should visit the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer website at www.RedemeerMcLean.org.

Wine down with the Ques Wine Tasting Fundraiser. 1 p.m. The Tasting Room of Maison du Vin, 7 756 Walker Road, Suite D, Great Falls. Wine tasting, hors d'oeuvres and live jazz music. \$45, age 21 and up. Proceeds benefit the scholarship program. info@OKK-QUES.org or okk-ques.org/winetasting.

Benefit Yard Sale for Hartwood Foundation and Relay for Life. 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. 608 Plum St., Vienna. Hosted by the Vienna Woman's Club. pegpuhl@cardinalsfec.com.

Community Cookout. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Loebig Chiropractic and Rehab, 754 Walker Road, Great Falls. Free adjustments for existing patients, seated massages and more. Hot dogs, face painting and moon bounce. 703-757-5817 or www.loebigchiropractic.com.

"Sleuth." 7:30 p.m. James Lee Community Center, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. Providence Players in a whodunit classic. \$15-

\$18. 703-425-6782 or www.providenceplayers.org.

SUNDAY/MAY 20

Mosaic Harmony Choir. 4 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Silent auction beginning at 3:30 p.m. \$25-\$30, under age 12 free. www.mosaiccharmony.org or 703-764-8061.

Kintz-Mejia Academy of Ballet. 2 p.m. George Mason High School, 7124 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Two original one-act ballets: Snow White and Alice in Wonderland. \$30. 703-893-0404 or www.kintzmejiaballet.com.

City of Fairfax Band: Rite of Spring. 3 p.m. Oakton High School, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna. Northern Virginia Youth Winds, the official youth ensemble of the City of Fairfax Band Association, comprised of high school woodwind, brass and percussion students. \$5, students free. christinarbanchi@gmail.com.



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THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

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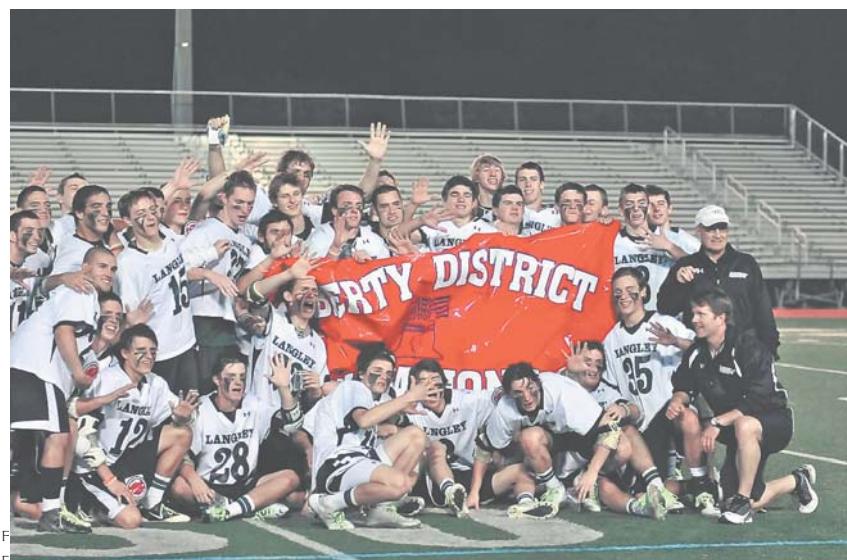
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SPORTS

MCLEAN CONNECTION SPORTS EDITOR RICH SANDERS
703-224-3031 OR richsand8@aol.com

The Saxons celebrate their Liberty District boys' lacrosse finals win over Madison last Friday night. The contest took place at Marshall High School.

PHOTO/COURTESY OF
LANGLEY BOYS LACROSSE



Langley Boys Lacrosse Edges Madison in Liberty Finals

Ahearn's 5 goals, 4 assists lead Saxons to fifth consecutive district crown.

The Langley High Saxons captured their fifth Liberty District tournament title in as many years last Friday, May 11 in a riveting boys lacrosse contest at Marshall High School. The Saxons defeated a tenacious Madison Warhawk side that pushed the Saxons to the brink before they were able to secure a 13-12, smash-and-grab finals win for the district title.

A pair of Langley man-advantage goals - a game-tying score by senior Sean Ahearn, and the winner from senior Mike Adams - deep into the fourth quarter ultimately made the difference between the long-time Liberty team rivals who battled to the end with the prospect of overtime looming as the final horn approached.

By building an 8-5 halftime lead and scoring the opening goal of the second half to make it 9-5, the Saxons looked to be settling into a steady stride to the evening's finish line. But the Warhawks had other ideas, and exploded for six goals in six minutes that tipped the scales in their favor by two goals early in the final period.

What seemed to be an imminent shift in Liberty supremacy was put on hold, however, when strikes from Saxon senior Josh Sibio and then Ahearn erased the deficit in a two-minute span, leaving final resolution in some doubt with an 11-11 score with eight minutes remaining in regulation time. Senior Connor Strock nudged Madison ahead once again, only to see Ahearn supply his fifth goal of the game - the Langley attacker also had four assists - to tie the score at 12 apiece at 3 minutes, 47 seconds showing on the clock. The game-tying score came early in an extra-man opportunity that came out of a slashing infraction during a dangerous build-up by the Saxons on the counter-attack.

Warhawk junior Kyle Rowe, who excelled in the center spot re-starts throughout the night, thought he had given his side the lead again right out of the ensuing face-off. But the apparent goal was nullified when the middie was judged to have entered the crease area before the ball had gone into the net.

However, Madison had a one-minute man advan-

tage at the 1:31 mark due to an illegal body check call on Langley. But the Saxon defenders kept their composure and limited their opponent to a single shot attempt during their man-down situation.

An off-sides infraction yielded a 30-second power play for Langley, although only 19 seconds were needed for Adams to snap in a score from eight yards, allowing the Saxons to go ahead 13-12 in what would prove to be the game-winner.

The Warhawks generated one last good look in their bid to level matters but the goal-bound shot by junior middie Matthew Arndt was kept out by Langley senior goalie Andrew Spivey. The Saxons then literally ran out the clock with controlled possession during the remaining time.

IN ADDITION TO AHEARN'S five goals and the Sibio score, Langley got four goals from Adams and solo strikes from senior middies Slater Howell and Clay Rivers, and from sophomore attack/middle J.T. Meyer.

Strock joined attackers Kyle Mancini, a junior, and Brett Simeck, a sophomore, in supplying single goals for Madison, which also had junior goalie Matt Hayden providing one of his own late in the opening quarter. Junior attacker Nick Gabriel and junior middie Ian Cooke did much of the heavy lifting on the Warhawks' offense with each delivering a hat-trick to go with a pair from senior attacker Kellen Schmitz.

Rowe claimed 24 of 29 face-offs in a productive performance at the center that was the engine of the Madison outburst early in second half play and an imposing threat had the battle extended past regulation time.

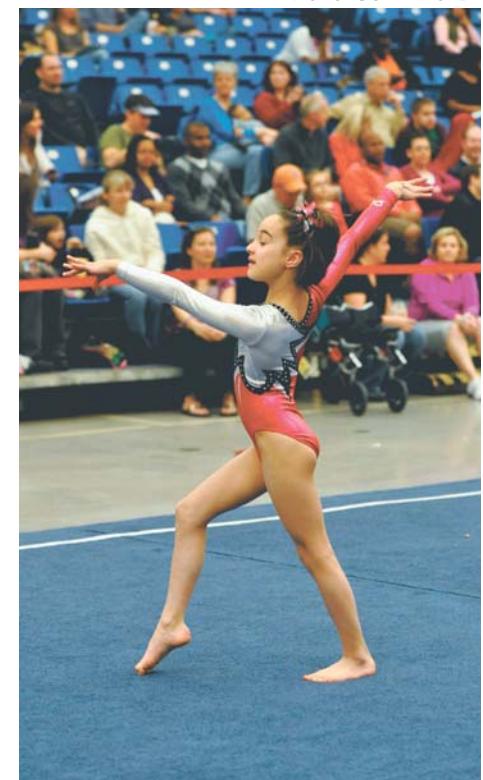
Spivey was credited with 11 saves while Hayden turned back eight Saxon goal-bound attempts. The netminders were sharp at important moments but the two were just as busy picking the ball out of their respective cages as both offenses had their shooting sticks in prime form for the district title encounter.

On Tuesday, May 15 of this week, Madison head coach Rich Hodge was set to lead his Warhawks (12-5 overall, 7-3 district) against 11-5 Westfield (Concorde District) in a first round game of the 16-team Northern Region tournament. Langley head coach Earl Brewer, meanwhile, was to see his top-seeded Saxons (15-2, 10-0) from the Liberty entertain Concord No. 4-seed Robinson (7-6, 4-3), also on Tuesday.

McLean Gymnast Wins State Championship

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Margo Gurian, 9, a third grader at Spring Hill Elementary School in McLean, won the All Around title at the Level 5 Virginia State Gymnastics Championships held at Radford University on April 28. The All Around competition combines the scores from all four gymnastics events: floor exercise, vault, uneven bars, and balance beam. She had a combined score of 38.0. Margo also won first place on the floor exercise with a score of 9.7, second on both the vault (9.275) and the uneven bars (9.7), and eighth on the balance beam (9.325) in the individual apparatus competition. Margo trains at Capital Gymnastics in Burke.



In addition to winning the All Around title, Margo Gurian also won first place on the floor exercise with a score of 9.7.



PHOTO/COURTESY OF LANGLEY SOFTBALL

Saxons Celebrate Senior Night

On Tuesday, May 8, Langley High's four softball seniors - Lauren Mensing, Hope Albers, Julia Weeks and Jenna Dunn (all four towards the right) - were honored during Senior Night celebration ceremonies. On top of it being Senior Night, with the four 12th grade ball players being honored on their outstanding careers with the program, the evening was extra special as the Saxons celebrated Great Falls Little League Night as well. The Little League players were out in full force and treated the Saxon seniors as true stars. In the Liberty District game itself, the Saxons were victorious over opponent Jefferson.

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NEWS

"Psycho-not-so-matic" Anymore

By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Whatever I thought was only happening in my head – or not, or was really happening physically – or not, is the muddled description of the thoughts and emotions that this cancer survivor/cancer patient-still-receiving-treatment feels every time I make a 24/7 self assessment (which is often). An assessment that seems to have a mind of its own, and one which is mostly beyond my control to prevent/manage its ugly head from rearing whenever it pleases. As much as I pretend, as much as I deny, as much as I compartmentalize, any and every thing that happens to me happens in the context of having cancer. Any misstep, physically or emotionally, real or imagined always brings me back to the elephant in every room in every house; in fact, that metaphorical elephant is in every closet, every drawer, on every television channel and radio station; home or on the road; everywhere; especially and of course predominantly, in my head, and originally in my lungs and mediastinum, where it still remains, "stable," for the moment.

Whatever strategy I have employed in an attempt to manipulate my circumstances, to prevent cancer from getting the best of me emotionally, always suffers a setback after a visit to my oncologist. As much as I've tried to make light of these appointments over the last three years, having heart-to-heart, life-and-death conversations with YOUR cancer doctor, one who has already told you that he "can't cure you, that he can only treat you," is unsettling at best and downright depressing and mind-numbing at worst. Facing one's own mortality at age 57 conjures two quotes from Curly Howard of The Three Stooges, a famous one and a funny one: "I'm a victim of soycumstance," and "I'm too young to die, too handsome; well, too young, anyway."

Laughing in the face of adversity has been an ongoing and overriding pursuit of mine since being diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer in February, 2009. Not that my circumstances are anything to laugh about but, oddly enough, crying about them or "woeing" is me about them is a bit of a tired pursuit – for me. Sure I've cried and been curious why a lifelong non-smoker with no immediate family history of cancer could be diagnosed with a terminal disease at age 54, a mere eight weeks after burying my widowed mother. Nevertheless, life goes on, and it has, as I've now outlived my original prognosis by years, causing my oncologist to say to me at the end of my most recent appointment (and the one I may be overreacting to in this column): "It's been a privilege treating you." Words, as I say, "to live by."

Where I'm going in this column is a place I've never been: a new phase in my treatment, with new medications, new side effects, new consequences and new worries; all of which are unknown and unfamiliar to me. Presumably all of the above are simply more of the same – only different, if you know what I mean – (things I can handle, just calling them different things) meaning my concerns are more in my head than they are in my body. But I really won't know until I've lived it. For the moment, I can only anticipate it. Knowing what I knew is much preferred to not knowing what's new. And what lies ahead is definitely new. I can't say anymore: "been there and done that" – I can only say that I'm glad – and privileged, to still be doing anything.

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



A History of Community Service

A fond farewell to McLean Day Volunteer Tommy Lukas.

Longtime McLean Day Volunteer and Master of Ceremonies Tommy Lukas has put his microphone down and is off to other adventures.

Lukas, who with his signature top hat and tails, greeted and entertained McLean Day participants on the McLean Day stage for 19 years will not be participating in this year's festival. He has retired from the stage and he and his wife Carol will be missed.

Lukas began his duties in 1993, when his wife Carol was working for the Special Events department at McLean Community Center. A professional engineer in the automotive industry by day, he decided to volunteer his services because his wife was working the event and he wanted to be with her. One day, Special Events Director Sam Roberts asked him to consider being the master of ceremonies for the McLean Day stage. An amateur magician since his days as a Captain in the Navy, Lukas decided to take the job. And the decision to wear top hat and tails? Well, he always wore them when performing. Having worked at orphanages, retirement homes and children's birthday parties, Lukas had to



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCC

Tommy Lukas with his signature top hat and tails, greeted and entertained McLean Day participants on the McLean Day stage for 19 years.

adjust to the more diverse McLean Day crowds. "Over the years, it was always a lot of fun; most years things went off like clockwork and we had some of the best bands in the area come to that stage."

In addition to volunteering at McLean Day, he worked at many other Center events over the years, including the annual McLean Holiday Crafts Show, the Taste of McLean

and the annual cultural festivals. In recognition of his dedication, the Center awarded him the 2004 H. Gordon Randall Volunteer Service Award.

The parents of five grown children, Scott, Jeff, David, Susan and Linda, Tommy and Carol Lukas now have nine grandchildren and are expecting their first great-grandchild later this month.

Hometown Celebrated in McLean

FROM PAGE 3

YOUNG-AT-HEART will find lots of fun options this year. Games 2U of Huntingtown, Md., returns for a second year of field games, such as laser tag, archery tag and a cannon. Reithoffer Shows is bringing the Orbiter and a number of large carnival rides. Full Tilt, The Ring of Fire, Pharaoh's Fury, Starship 3000 and bumper car rides are also returning. Ticket sales for the large rides will begin at 10:30 a.m. and will end at 4 p.m. Tickets must be purchased with cash only. Most large rides cost \$4 (or two tickets). An unlimited ride bracelet can be purchased for \$20.

Four new food vendors are coming to McLean Day this year and they will expand the food offerings significantly on Eatery Row: Pepper Creek Shellfish Farm, Suya-to-Go and Dee's Concessions, along with the popular Tysons area food truck,

The McLean Day Stage has something for everyone in the family. The children will love the antics of the talented dogs in the Mutts Gone Nuts Dog Show (<http://muttsgonenuts.com/>)

index.html), the energy of the demonstrations by Mount Kim Tae Kwon Do students and the funky tunes of Bach to Rock bands. Proud parents and grandparents love the Joy of Dance

performances by students enrolled in classes at MCC. The headlining act this year will be New Orleans style band Scott



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER

Community organizations, such as McLean Baptist Church, provide friendly greetings and a bounty of free information and goods to festival goers.

Ramminger and the Crawstickers (<http://www.crawstickers.com/home.cfm>).

PARKING is not available at Lewinsville Park on the day of the festival, so MCC strongly encourages participants to use its free shuttle service. Starting at 9:30 a.m. and continuing throughout the day, shuttle buses will run from the park to McLean Baptist Church, 1367 Chain Bridge Rd., Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 1545 Chain Bridge

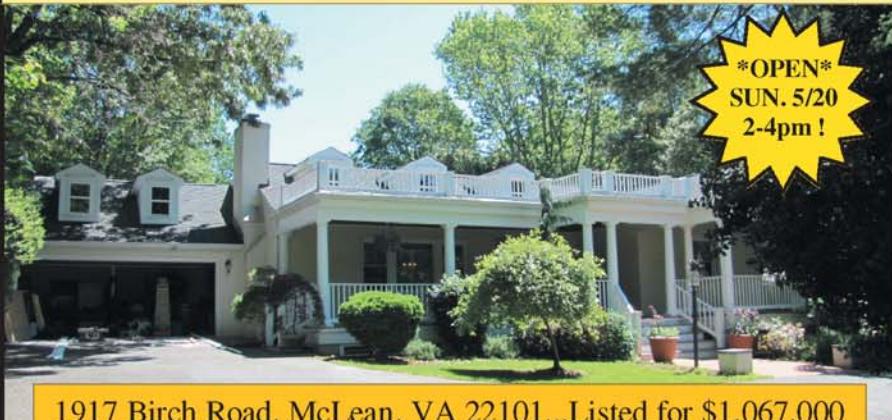
Road, and MCC, 1234 Ingleside Avenue. Parking also is available at the Lewinsville Senior Center, 1609 Great Falls Street, and the Center will run airport-style shuttle carts from Evers Drive, located at the rear of the building, to the park all day.

For festival updates, driving directions, shuttle bus stop locations and a festival area map, visit: www.mcleancenter.org/specialevents/mcleanday.asp or call the Center at 703-790-0123/TTY: 711.

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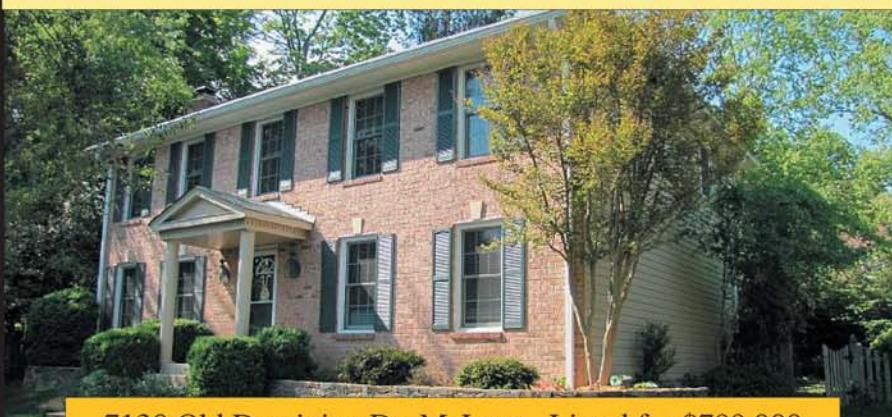
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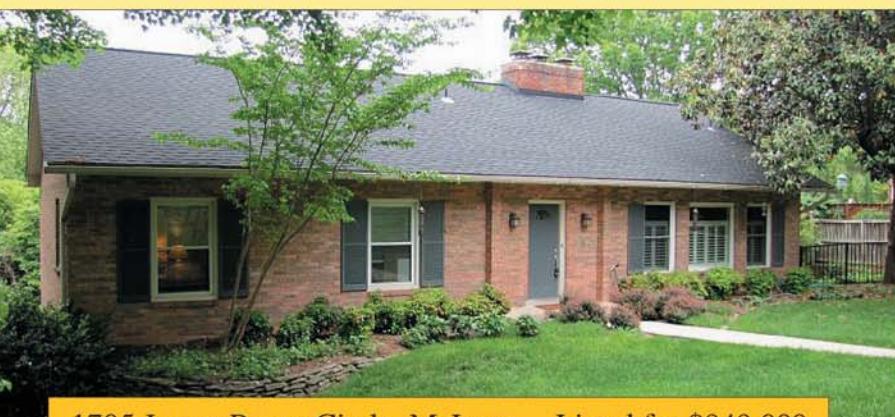
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