

McLean Day attendees enjoy a riveting ride aboard a swinging pirate ship.

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NEWS

These McLean girls know that McLean Day is never complete without an order of smoothies. Left to right: Hannah Carter, 11, Elizabeth Galbreath, 12, and Jackie Mazur, 12.



PHOTO BY RACHEL STONE/THE CONNECTION



PHOTO BY RACHEL STONE/THE CONNECTION

Michalene's Goat Milk Soap's owner Michalene Katzer, of Gaithersburg, Md., displays her homemade products at her booth. "I learned to make soap from a lady I met on the Metro," she recalled, "Now, it's become my hobby as a full-time legal secretary."

McLean Day a Sunny Success

McLean Day is the town rite of passage for residents, and this year, they couldn't be happier.

BY RACHEL STONE
THE CONNECTION

Friends, families, organizations, and businesses gathered festively for the 99th anniversary of the annual McLean Day, held in Lewinsville Park on Saturday, May 17. On the sunny afternoon, mazes of booths brimmed again with visitors, who collected free giveaways, entered in raffles, and learned about the opportunities and products available to them from their Northern Virginia neighbors. From the stage, each half hour was punctuated with a new performance: dog trainers, McLean High School jazz musicians, award ceremonies, and dance ensembles dazzled the crowds below.

"This is where we come to meet with our friends and other families! We organized a group, and we've had a great time here," remarked Jeff and Jennifer Butler, a couple new to McLean, who were impressed with the turnout.

McLean resident Nicole Heath, sitting with daughters Zoe, 7, and Alexandra, 3, recalled that she'd "been to McLean Day every year since Zoe was 1 years old. You see a lot of people here that you know, all taking a day to spend with their families." She

pointed to a family just three yards away, commenting that her girls attended preschool with theirs. "McLean has really become a part of us," she said, "My father-in-law was the first psychiatrist in the town, back in the '60s."

McLean Day originated in 1915 as a collective opportunity for the town to vote. Today, it has grown into so much more, but the original democratic function has not disappeared. The entrance to McLean Day was again flanked by campaign volunteers for U.S. Congressional candidates and those running for the McLean Community Center's Governing Board.

"These local elected officials keep the momentum of the community going," remarked George Sachs, executive director of the McLean Community Center. Holding the elections at McLean Day provides the best guarantee of voter turnout, and according to volunteer Catherine Nesbitt, "There was a steady stream of voting all day."

Whether residents came for the rides, entertainment, booth offerings, or everything on the grounds, another McLean Day has gone by nurturing a fondness for the town and its community. And while the festivities of McLean Day might have changed over 99 years, the notable unity between neighbors and friends cultivated by a day at the park certainly has not.



Goldfish winner Trisha Choe, 16, of McLean, and her friend Haley Simkins, 16, on the right.



Smiling brothers Marshall (left) and Tanner Iverson (right) were happy to take home a balloon from the booths at McLean Day.

PHOTOS BY RACHEL STONE/THE CONNECTION



PHOTO BY RACHEL STONE/THE CONNECTION

Ashlee Chung plays her flute solo onstage with the McLean High School Jazz Band. "She just came back from her morning music competition, right before this!" said her mother, Soo Chung.



PHOTO BY ASHLEY DOLL

Ariana Binibini, 3, of McLean plays whimsically in the sunshine at McLean Day.



Blackfinn Ameripub entertains a wheel of fortune with lucky McLean residents (left to right) Abby McCann, 8, Jocelyn Brooks, 8, and Abby Brooks, 8.



PHOTOS BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION

Michael Caplin looks over the part of Tysons Corner he wants to expand - the community aspect.

Creating a Community in Tysons

Plethora of events this year in Tysons Corner.

BY REENA SINGH
THE CONNECTION

Michael Caplin is helping to turn Tysons Corner into a community. Caplin, the executive director of Tysons Partnership, has a long list of ideas to create a new image for Tysons - many of which include events that will pull people back into the area on weekends.

"Tysons is an anomaly because people have lived here for 100, 200 years, but the modern Tysons is more of a work destination than a home destination," he said. "We have 100,000 people who work here during the day. Only 19,000 people stay here at night."

By creating the farmer's market - which started Sunday - and a long list of inaugural events the same year the McLean stop on the Silver Line is expected to open, he hopes people from Washington D.C. and all over Northern Virginia sees Tysons as a different place than it has been perceived. The Tysons that is a business park and nothing more. The Tysons that is difficult to get to on the beltway.

"You can ride your bike anywhere on Sundays," said Caplin, talking about how Tysons Corner turns into a ghost town on the weekends. "It looks like a Hollywood stage set, because no one is here."

THE POPULATION is expected to reach 100,000 in the next 35 years, and new construction will double the square footage that exists vertically to accommodate for them.

To get a head start, a new logo for Tysons Partnership was created and banners will be added to light poles throughout the urban center. Additionally, the water tower will be emblazoned with the name in the near future.

"We're spending a lot of time creating a sense of place," he said.

All of the festivals are going to be annual. More are expected to be added next year.

These events include:

❖ May 31 to June 1 — Great Tastes of Tysons from 1 to 6 p.m. The two day festival features tastes from restaurants throughout town, music and art. Lerner Town Square.

❖ June 1 — Tysons Farmer's Market grand opening from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Fairfax County Police Bicycle Unit Bicycle Rodeo from 10 to 11 a.m. The Farmer's Market officially opens on May 18, but the celebratory kick-off is on the 1st. Nearly 20 vendors selling produce, bakery items and chocolate will set up their tents at Greensboro Drive and Westpark Drive. The Farmer's Market runs until Nov. 18.



Michael Caplin's vision of Tysons Corner that he said landed him the job at Tysons Partnership.

❖ June 29 — Second Annual Tour de Tysons bicycle race. Nearly 300 cyclists will race downtown from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Food trucks selling crepes lend to the French ambiance. 1800 Tysons Blvd.

❖ Sept. 13 — Tysons world Music Festival. Local and national musicians will perform from noon to 10 p.m. All proceeds will go to Spirit of Hope Children's Foundation. Lerner Town Square.

❖ Sept. 20 — Tysons BBQ, Bourbon and Beer Festival. The cost of admission gets visitors a commemorative sample glass for all-you-can-drink craft beer and small-batch bourbon. There will be live music while the festival is running from noon to 6 p.m. Lerner Town Square.

❖ Oct. 16 to Nov. 1 — Great Pumpkin Gathering. Artists will create a wall of intricately carved pumpkins for the display, which changes daily. Viewing times are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

❖ Oct. 18—19 Tysons Harvest Festival. There will be craft vendors and beer and wine tastings for the adults and rides and special activities for children from noon to 6 p.m. Artists will have demonstrations while preparing for the daily Great Pumpkin Gathering display change. Lerner Town Square.

Additionally, The Meridian Group is creating a pop-up park at Greensboro Drive and Solutions Drive that is expected to open in mid-June.

"We are working hard to change to rhythm of life in Tysons, adding reasons to linger and visit with colleagues and neighbors," said Caplin. "It'll be an opportunity for people to see an event in their neighborhood and bump into each other."

THE OPENING OF THE SILVER LINE is expected to draw crowds from all over the D.C. metro area in time for the BBQ, Bourbon and Beer Festival. As more people come to the urban center for these events, he hopes they will apply for the plethora of jobs in the area or even find an apartment to live in downtown.

SEE TYSONS, PAGE 5



PHOTO BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION

Local politicians meet with Bike to Work Day advocates at Greenberry's. Not many cyclists showed up at Bike to Work Day pit stop during the deluge Friday morning.

Few Roll Through Town

Bike to Work Day sees low participation due to heavy rain.

BY REENA SINGH
THE CONNECTION

Bike to Work Day was a washout at many event locations this year.

With a flash flood warning in effect, new event pit stop at Greenberry's Coffee Co. saw less than 10 cyclists on Friday.

"I was very impressed with the hearty souls that came in with their rain suits on," said coffee shop owner Dan LeBerge.

His shop was prepared for dozens of bike enthusiasts to stop in that morning with mountains of bagels and bananas. It was not a difficult decision for him to add his business to the list of pit stops in the D.C. metro area — 79 local businesses signed up to be pit stops for the event this year, according to www.biketoworkmetrodc.org.

"It's just an extension of being active in the community," he said. "We're a member of the community, so we look for opportunities like this."

Although two regular cyclists showed up during the last hour of the event, neither wanted to be interviewed.

Local officials state Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31), Dranesville Supervisor John Foust and Del. Marcus Simon (D-53) stopped by Greenberry's to show their support for the event.

"We've been involved with getting more bike-friendly options for a while now," said Simon. "We just want to give

the people of McLean more options. I'm glad to be here to support this."

Simon said he helped improve bike lanes throughout McLean.

Bike advocate Dennis Frew was handing out some of the cloth bike maps for Tysons and McLean that he helped to create. His mission through Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling is to make the county more bike-friendly.

He said the county has become a lot better at sharing the road in the past year.

"We have somewhere between 25 to 50 miles of bike lanes," he said.

Representatives from Cypress Fitness gave a free membership to the first cyclist who showed up at Greenberry's that morning.

"We've had a few cyclists roll in, no pun intended," said Vice President of Marketing and Concierge Services Katherine Quinn. "I think if it was a sunny day, we would have seen more people."

Quinn said she supports anything that gets people more active. She said safety is a big reason many people do not cycle as their main form of transportation.

"This gives people whose main form of transportation isn't cycling [an opportunity] to try it out and see how easy it is," she said. "If someone is afraid to even get started, they're not going to know how easy it is."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY TINA DUFFUS

Celebrating Prom

Langley High School celebrated prom on Saturday, May 17. Pre-Prom photo was taken at the Chirite's home in Great Falls.

Changing Tysons

FROM PAGE 4

Lerner Enterprises is allowing Tysons Partnership to use their 10 acre lot for events all year long

National Automotive Dealership Association is donating their lot for 27 Sundays for the Farmer's Market.

"These businesses are doing more than they have to for the common good," said Caplin. "They're doing it anyway because it will make Tysons a better place."

NADA Executive Vice President Joseph Cowden said he jumped at the chance to have the company be involved when Caplin asked.

"NADA has been in the Tysons ecosystem for a long time," Cowden said. "We made a big investment back in the day when people probably laughed at us for it."

He and the company have seen the changes Tysons has gone through first hand.

"We just think Tysons has become a model community," he said. "As all these apartment units are being built and more and more people move in, we don't want people to think it's a cold office park where people go home at five."

For more information, visit <http://tysonspartnership.org/>

WEEK IN McLEAN

AAUW to Hold Book Collection Saturdays

In preparation for its 45th Annual Used Book Sale to be held Sept. 19-21, the McLean Area AAUW will have four used book collection Saturdays between the hours of 9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. May 31; June 21; July 19; and, Aug. 9.

Desirable contributions include musical CDs as well as DVDs of television series and movies; recent editions of histories, including military histories, biographies, political analyses, gardening, health, general literature and business and economics books. AAUW also needs travel books published since 2009 and, as always, treasured collectibles and special art books, mystery stories, children's and general interest adult books.

The collection hours are shorter than in previous years and books cannot be left at the Bank outside of the collection hours. Sale proceeds support the professional development and scholarships for women.

A Documentary on Inequality at McLean Church

The public is invited to a free breakfast featuring a documentary narrated by economist Robert Reich on growing income inequality in the U.S. and the risks that presents for our economic recovery and even our political system and democracy. The event will take place Saturday, May 31, 8:30 to 11 a.m., at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The film will be followed by an open discussion on how faith values might influence our response to these worrisome trends that both President Obama and Pope Francis have highlighted. With simple language and even humor, Reich examines how our policies and laws since the 1980s have resulted in a disproportionate share of income going to the top, exacerbating poverty and leaving the middle class anxious and feeling worse off. For more information, contact the church, 703-356-7200, or Ray Martin, 703-556-0123, or martins@aol.com.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Eloise Larose, second from left, receives congratulations from Peggy Stotz, incoming co-President of the AAUW McLean Area Branch, far left, Judy Page, McLean Area Branch STEM coordinator, second from right, and her mother Linda Pelletier, far right, at the branch's annual dinner on May 6.

McLean High Junior Wins STEM Excellence Award

Eloise Larose, a junior at McLean High School, has been selected as the first student to receive the American Association of University Women (AAUW) McLean Area Branch STEM Excellence Award. The STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Excellence Award is given to a female student from a McLean Area high school with an outstanding science fair project in the field of Engineering. The award was presented to Eloise at the Branch's annual dinner held on

May 6 at the Riverbend Country Club.

With the encouragement of her father, Eloise decided to undertake a science fair project on "Electro-Conductive Concrete." The purpose of her experiment was to create a concrete that would allow for electrically heated concrete floors. Eloise worked with a mentor, as well as her physics teacher, to better understand the scientific procedures to use and how to verbalize and demonstrate the results of her experiment.



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PHOTOS BY ASHLEY DOLL

The recipients display their awards, as presented by John Foust, Dranesville District Supervisor; Janie Strauss, Dranesville District School Board Member; and Sally Horn, McLean Citizens Association President.



The Teen Character Award Recipients, from left: John Worm, Alex Pfadenhauer, Meredith Harris, Megan Ganley, Madison Jones, Kate Callahan.

Six Teens Receive McLean Character Awards

BY RACHEL STONE
THE CONNECTION

Teens honored for serving community.

The McLean Citizens Association recognized six teens with Teen Character Awards in a ceremony on McLean Day. These exemplary teens—Kate Callahan, Megan Ganley, Meredith Harris, Madison Jones, Alex Pfadenhauer, and John Worm—were hon-

ored for rendering service to the community without pay, previous recognition, or enterprise from school or church.

Kate Callahan, a McLean High School junior, spent her year voluntarily coaching elementary and middle school volleyball teams with McLean Youth Volleyball (MYV).

As a coach, she has seen enrollment increase by thirty-three percent, and the institution of a male league. MYV Director Chuck Pruitt said, “Kate’s enthusiasm and commitment kept the teams engaged and eager to play.”

Meredith Harris and Madison Jones, also juniors at McLean High School, became a

winning duo for their management of a swim-a-thon that raised funds for Friends of Homeless Animals. As co-chairs, they were responsible for everything from permission slips and collecting donations to swimming in the event itself. For Meredith, hard work was met with reward when she saw the shelter “taking such good care of

SEE TEENS, PAGE 7

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PHOTOS BY RACHEL STONE/THE CONNECTION

Proud family members attended the awards ceremony held during McLean Day. Left to Right: Collete Worm, mother; Judith Brice, great-aunt; John Worm, awardee; John Brice, great-uncle.

Teens Honored

FROM PAGE 6

the animals,” and remembered finding her own dog, Lacy, there. Meredith also tutors neighborhood children, while Madison coaches at MYV as well.

The Teen Character Award was a benchmark of three years of service for Megan Ganley, a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School. After finding numerous winter jackets unclaimed in her school’s Lost and Found, Megan created “Lost and Refound” to deliver, wash, and repackage the coats for FCPS Title 1 schools. She’s become a natural leader, and her initiative a positive (and warm) influence.

Alex Pfadenhauer and John Worm, a senior and junior at Langley High School, brought their technical skills and friendliness together in their service. Since 2011, Alex refurbished 128 computers and revolutionized the organizational framework of SHARE, which supports needy families in the area. Meanwhile, John connected with residents and staff in Vinson Hall, the Navy assisted living center in McLean. “My dad was in the army,” John commented, “Those people could have been my parents. Knowing that makes every



Alex Pfadenhauer with his mother, Lynn Pfadenhauer.



Meredith Harris with her mother, Vicky Harris.

experience more meaningful.” The awardees learned, as Madison reflected, “There’s a community out there.”

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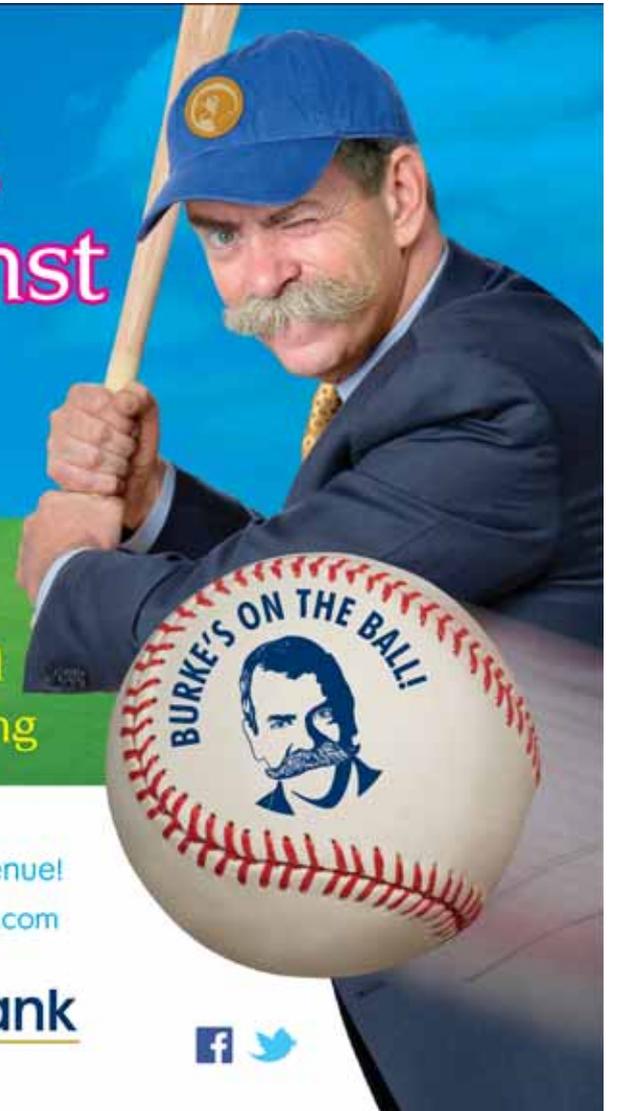
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OPINION

Remembering on Memorial Day

Fewer deaths as military operations wind down, but 22 veterans a day die of suicide.

In Arlington over the coming Memorial Day weekend, the organization TAPS, or Tragedy Assistance for Survivors, will hold its 20th annual Military Survivor seminar and Good Grief camp for young survivors, children of all ages. TAPS offers support to anyone who is grieving the death of someone who died in the military, whether from combat, suicide, terrorism, homicide, negligence, accidents or illness. <http://www.taps.org/>

EDITORIAL

One veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan recently related that he had lost more of his military family to suicide post-deployment than he did from combat. Reports by the Veterans Administration set the number of suicides among veterans nationwide at about 22 per day.

On Memorial Day, we remember all of those who have died in military service, more than 400,000 in World War II, more than 30,000 in Korea, more than 50,000 in Vietnam.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, more than 6,400 U.S. military service men and women have died in support of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Nearly 50,000 U.S. military service members have been wounded, although that number is likely to be revised upward. Last year, the military confirmed traumatic brain injury in more than 220,000 of the more than 2.3 million troops who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan. The long-term consequences of many of these injuries are unknown, but they will require a national commitment to excellence in health care and services for both active duty military personnel and veterans. Virginia's U.S. Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine continue to advocate for better service from the Veterans Administration.

Since Memorial Day 2013, with military operations winding down in Afghanistan, the Department of Defense announced the deaths of two military service members from Virginia. Army Sgt. Lyle D. Turnbull, 31, of Norfolk, died Oct. 18, 2013 in Kuwait, from a medical emergency. Capt. Brandon L. Cyr, 28, of Woodbridge, was one of four airmen who died April 27, 2013, near Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, in the crash of an MC-12 aircraft.

1st Lt. Robert J. Hess, 26, of the Kings Park West neighborhood of Fairfax, was killed by enemy fire on April 23, 2013, Afghanistan. Hess was known as "RJ" and graduated from Robinson Secondary School in 2005, where he played football, lacrosse and was the captain of the swim team. He was a U.S. Army Blackhawk helicopter pilot who deployed to Afghanistan on April 11, 2013. His family remembers his sense of humor and his natural leadership ability.

Lance Cpl. Niall W. Coti-Sears, 23, of Arlington, died June 23, 2012, while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. Coti-Sears loved music, played the guitar, composed songs and entertained family and friends at holiday gatherings. Niall was very close to his grandfather, William Coti, who

was a Marine. "He was always my protege," William Coti told the Arlington Connection. "He always wanted to be a Marine and he followed my example. It weighs heavily on me that this had to happen."

Chief Warrant Officer Five John C. Pratt, 51, of Springfield, died May 28, 2012 in Kabul, Afghanistan, when his helicopter crashed. Staff Sgt. Jessica M. Wing, 42, of Alexandria, Va., died Aug. 27, 2012 in Kuwait City, Kuwait.

In February, 2012, Brig. Gen. Terence J. Hildner, 49, of Fairfax, was the highest ranking military officer to die in the war. Hildner died Feb. 3, 2012 in Kabul province, Afghanistan.

OTHER VIRGINIA DEATHS in Afghanistan in the year before Memorial Day 2013: Sgt. Aaron X. Wittman, 28, of Chester, Va., died Jan. 10, 2013 from small arms fire. Sgt. David J. Chambers, 25, of Hampton, Va., died Jan. 16, 2013 from a roadside bomb. Sgt. Robert J. Billings, 30, of Clarksville, Va., died Oct. 13, 2012 when enemy forces attacked with an improvised explosive device. Staff Sgt. Jonathan P. Schmidt, 28, of Petersburg, Va., died Sept. 1, 2012 from enemy small arms fire. 1st Lt. Stephen C. Prasnicky, 24, of Lexington, Va., died June 27, 2012, from a roadside bomb.

Here we remember the local men and women who have died since Sept. 11, 2001 in the wars that resulted from that day:

Aaron Carson Vaughn, 30, was one of 30 American service members and 22 Navy SEALs killed Aug. 6, 2011 when their Chinook helicopter was shot down in Afghanistan. Vaughn's family has ties to McLean and Burke. He is survived by his wife, Kimberly, and their two children.

Spc. Douglas Jay Green, 23 of Sterling, died Aug. 28, 2011, when insurgents attacked his unit using a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. Green enlisted in 2007, after attending Potomac Falls High School.

Pfc. Benjamin J. Park, 25, of Fairfax Station, died June 18, 2010 at Zhari district, Kandahar, Afghanistan, of injuries sustained when insurgents attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device.

May 12, 2010, Donald J. Lamar II, 23 of Fredericksburg, was killed in Afghanistan. Christopher D. Worrell, 35 of Virginia Beach, was killed in Iraq on April 22, 2010. Steven J. Bishop, 29 of Christianburg, was killed March 13, 2010 in Iraq. Kielin T. Dunn, 19 of Chesapeake, was killed Feb. 18, 2010 in Afghanistan. Brandon T. Islip, 23 of Richmond, was killed Nov. 29, 2009, in Afghanistan.

Stephan L. Mace, 21 of Lovettsville, died Oct. 3, 2009 in Afghanistan.

Bill Cahir, 40 of Alexandria, died Aug. 13, 2009 of a gunshot wound while conducting combat operations in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan. After 9/11, Cahir decided to leave his career as a journalist and join the Marine Corps. His application to become a Marine was denied because of his age, but he lobbied members of Congress to get a special exemption.

Lance Cpl. Daniel Ryan Bennett, 23 of Clifton died Jan. 11, 2009, in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

2nd Lt. Sean P. O'Connor of Burke died Oct. 19, 2008 while stationed at Hunter Army Air Field, Savannah, Ga. O'Connor was an athlete in soccer, baseball and football who attended Fairfax County Public Schools and was a 1999 graduate of Bishop Denis J. O'Connell High School in Arlington.

Pfc. David Sharrett II, 27 of Oakton, died Jan. 16, 2008 in Iraq. On Oct. 24, 2008, his father, David H. Sharrett, was on hand as the Oakton Post Office on White Granite Drive was renamed to honor his son. But the senior Sharrett has battled to learn the truth about his son's death, that he was killed by his lieutenant in the confusion of a firefight. In, April, 2012, Sharrett Sr. obtained documents confirming some of the details of his son's death and a subsequent cover-up.

Army 1st Lt. Thomas J. Brown, a George Mason University graduate and Burke resident, died on Sept. 23, 2008, while serving in Iraq. His unit came under small arms fire, and Brown, 26, died from his wounds.

Sgt. Scott Kirkpatrick, 26, died on Aug. 11, 2007, in Arab Jabour, Iraq. Kirkpatrick, who graduated from Park View High School in Sterling, and also considered Herndon and Reston as his hometowns, was a champion slam poet. His father, Ed Kirkpatrick, calls him the "warrior poet," and he and his wife help injured vets at Walter Reed through the Yellow Ribbon fund (www.yellowribbonfund.org).

Ami Neiberger-Miller of Sterling lost her brother, U.S. Army Spc. Christopher Neiberger, in August 2007 when he was killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq. He was 22.

Staff Sgt. Jesse G. Clowers Jr., 27, of Herndon, died when an improvised bomb exploded near his vehicle in Afghanistan on Aug. 12, 2007. Jonathan D. Winterbottom, 21, of Falls Church, died in Iraq on May 23, 2007, when an IED exploded near his vehicle.

Nicholas Rapavi, 22, of Springfield, died Nov. 24, 2006, during combat in Anbar province in Iraq. Army Cpl. Andy D. Anderson, 24, was killed by enemy fire in Ar Ramadi, Iraq on Tuesday, June 6, 2006.

Spc. Robert Drawl Jr., 21, a 2003 graduate of T.C. Williams High School, was killed by a bomb in Kunar, Afghanistan, on Aug. 19, 2006.

U.S. Army Specialist Felipe J. Garcia Villareal, 26 of Burke, was injured in Iraq and flown to Washington Hospital Center, where he died Feb. 12, 2006. He was a graduate of Herndon High School.

Capt. Shane R. M. Mahaffee, 36, a 1987 graduate of Mount Vernon High School, died May 15, 2006. He was a lawyer, married, with two children. His parents live in Alexandria.

U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Nicholas Kirven, 21, was killed in Afghanistan in 2005 during a firefight in a cave with insurgents. He enlisted while still in high school after 9/11.

Fairfax Station resident Pfc. Dillon Jutras, 20, was killed in combat operations in Al Anbar Province of Iraq on Oct. 29, 2005.

Maj. William F. Hecker III, a 1987 graduate of McLean High School, was killed in action in Iraq, Jan. 5, 2005. Staff Sgt. Ayman Taha, 31, of Vienna, was killed Dec. 30, 2005, when an enemy munitions cache he was prepping for demolition exploded. Army Capt. Chris Petty of Vienna was killed Jan. 5, 2006.

Staff Sgt. George T. Alexander Jr., the 2,000th soldier to be killed in Iraq, was literally born into the Army here in Northern Virginia, at DeWitt Army Hospital at Fort Belvoir. Alexander died at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, Oct. 22, 2005, of injuries sustained in Iraq five days earlier.

Fairfax Station resident Pfc. Dillon Jutras, 20, was killed in combat operations in Al Anbar Province of Iraq on Oct. 29, 2005.

Lt. Col. Thomas A. Wren, 44, of Lorton, died in Tallil, Iraq on Nov. 5, 2005. Marine Capt. Michael Martino, 32 of the City of Fairfax, died Nov. 2, 2005, when his helicopter was brought down in Iraq.

1st Lt. Laura M. Walker of Oakton was killed on Aug. 18, 2005, in Kandahar, Afghanistan. CW4 Matthew S. Lourey of Lorton died from injuries sustained on May 26, 2005 in Buhriz, Iraq. Operations Officer Helge Boes of Fairfax was killed on Feb. 5, 2003, while participating in counterterrorism efforts in eastern Afghanistan.

Among other local lives lost: Lance Cpl. Tavon Lee Hubbard, 24, of Reston; 1st Lt. Alexander Wetherbee, 27, of McLean; 1st Lt. Jeff Kaylor, 25, of Clifton; Coast Guard Petty Officer Nathan B. Bruckenthal, 24, of Herndon; Army Chief Warrant Officer Sharon T. Swartworth, 43, of Mount Vernon; Command Sgt. Maj. James D. Blankenbecler, 40, of Mount Vernon; Capt. James F. Adamowski, 29, of Springfield; Sgt. DeForest L. Talbert, 22, of Alexandria; Marine Cpl. Binh N. Le, 20, of Alexandria; Staff Sgt. Russell Verdugo, 34, of Alexandria. Army Capt. Mark N. Stubenhofer, 30, from Springfield; Marine Gunnery Sgt. Javier Obleas-Prado Pena, 36, from Falls Church; Marine Sgt. Krisna Nachampassak, 27, from Burke; Army Staff Sgt.

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SEE REMEMBERING. PAGE 17

Vienna Man Going to Federal Prison

Given nearly seven years for McLean teen's death.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Kyle Alifom, 20, of Vienna was sentenced last Friday to nearly seven years in federal prison in connection with the death of a 16-year-old McLean girl. The victim was Emylee Lonczak, a McLean High student whose body he hid after she overdosed on heroin.

Charged with tampering with evidence, Alifom was convicted of that offense Feb. 10 in U.S. District Court in Alexandria. A statement of facts filed with his plea made it clear that – not only did he try to prevent anyone from finding Lonczak – he also did nothing to obtain medical help for her while she was still alive.

In that document, he admitted that, on Aug. 21, 2013, he and three other people – two friends plus Lonczak – drove from Virginia into Washington, D.C., to buy heroin. Each of them then used it via injections from separate hypodermic needles, each containing about 30cc of the narcotic.

“Lonczak, who wasn’t a heroin user, was unable to administer the heroin to herself intravenously because she couldn’t find a vein,” the document stated. So the person who’d made the drug buy “injected her.”

They then headed back to Virginia and, during the drive, Alifom and the others noticed Lonczak was

unconscious. They dropped off the drug buyer at his home and the other friend dropped off Alifom and Lonczak, who remained unconscious, at Alifom’s home in Vienna.

According to the statement, Alifom and the friend placed Lonczak in a bed in a basement bedroom and the friend left. The following morning, Alifom discovered that Lonczak had died.

The document further states that Alifom “dragged Lonczak’s body through the grass behind his residence to an area of shrubbery behind a neighbor’s house. [He] covered [her] body with an abandoned screen window in an attempt to conceal [it].”

Meanwhile, the teen had been reported missing, Aug. 21, when she failed to return home. Using a bloodhound, Fairfax County police discovered Lonczak’s body, Aug. 23, 2013, after the dog tracked her scent to a wooded area. An autopsy and toxicology report confirmed she had a fatal level of heroin in her system and that heroin use had caused her death.

The statement concluded that Alifom’s actions in connection with this tragedy were, “in all respects, knowing and deliberate.” Following his conviction, he returned to court last Friday, May 16, to learn his punishment from Judge Claude M. Hilton. Alifom apologized for what he’d done and Hilton then sentenced him to six years, eight months in prison.

This case was investigated by the Fairfax County police and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael P. Ben’Ary, formerly a commonwealth’s attorney in Fairfax County, was the prosecutor.



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Nicholas Harrelson, formerly of Centreville and McLean, suffered a traumatic brain injury from an IED in Iraq.



Veteran John Flanagan, with MAGNOLIA, who will be his psychiatric assistance dog.



Sabrina Rigney of Lorton, ex-Air Force with NOEL, who will help her with her PTSD.



Trish, at podium, tells her emotional story for the first time; sharing the past is part of the healing process in the paws4prisons program.



Paws4potential Disconnected Youth: young people between 16 and 24 who are neither in school nor employed

"Disconnected Youth" is a population identified by the June 2012 Youth Leadership Institute's report to the White House. The group is comprised of young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not in school or employed. More likely to end up living on the streets, becoming parents before they are ready and/or in our jails and prisons, these young people cost society \$4.7 trillion, according to the Economic Value of Disconnected Youth researchers. We simply cannot afford to continue to ignore this growing portion of our population. Paws4people.org, an organization with a successful track record for creating successful rehabilitation and redemption programs for federal and state criminals, believes they can change the statistics. And I believe them. The new program, paws4potential will combine housing, employment and a supportive environment that includes the healing power of dogs. Paws4people.org is currently seeking funding for this exciting program. To learn more about paws4people and the new program, paws4potential, visit paws4people.org and click on the program: paws4potential, or contact me directly at joan@joanbradyphotography.com or 202-256-1311.

— Joan Brady



Trained in Prison, Healing in N. Virginia

Healing power of dogs creates ties between prisoners, veterans, children with disabilities.

By JOAN BRADY

Rebecca, a pretty blonde in her mid-40s, is holding Ziva, the puppy she is currently training. We might have been two strangers at a local dog park, caught up in a conversation that could have gone on for hours. But we weren't at a dog park. We were sitting inside Lakin, an all-women correctional facility in West Virginia. And Rebecca, an assistance dog trainer for paws4people.org's in-prison training program, paws4prisons, is serving a sentence of life without parole for a murder committed 21 years ago.

And that comfortable scene on April 4, 2014 was a far cry from how I felt on my first prison shoot, over four years ago.

When I first started going inside prisons for paws4people.org, my job was three-fold: to capture, through photography, the connection between the dogs and their inmate trainers, to provide images that reflected the accomplishments of months of training and to document the moment that veterans, children and young adults were matched with their assistance dogs.

On my first visit, I was scared. No open-toed shoes. No open-heeled shoes. No jewelry. No underwear bra. No khaki clothing. Cell phone and drivers license were left

behind and I shuddered a little as the first set of metal doors clanked behind me. Shivering with cold, I walked through the next set of gates into the West Virginia winter, casting furtive glances at the barbed wire fences that surround the prison.

Almost five years later, khaki uniforms,

barred windows, loudspeaker announcements and door buzzers all melt away as Rebecca and I chat comfortably about her past, her present and her future behind bars.

For Rebecca, it's personal. The paws4prisons program staff and volunteers "give you the tools from a caring position

to show you how to work through ... the mistakes you make in life. In order to be a better person." Rebecca adds that, for her, it's been "life-changing."

One of the tools is mutual sharing. Stories of isolation, drugs and alcohol, abuse, fear and loneliness are the rivers that have carried each speaker to this day.

Hyper-vigilant veterans wrestling symptoms of PTSD anxiously wait to share their stories with inmate trainers, prison officials and paws4people staff and volunteers. Only after that do they get a turn to meet the dogs one at a time in a ritual called a "bump" where paws4people staff determine if there is a match. Before and after each person shares, soft, cuddly puppies are passed around to help calm nerves.

For the trainers, it's more complicated. In addition to sharing their stories publicly, their skills as trainers will be on display. They are as anxious as parents that their dogs do well during demonstrations and the matching process. They will be proud if their dog is matched, but they know that a match today will bring them one step closer to losing their canine companion.

The room set-up is reminiscent of an old-fashioned wedding, with an inmate-trainer side and a free-civilians side. Thirty dogs, mostly golden retrievers, rest quietly on both sides of the aisle.

SNIFFLING CAN BE HEARD quietly echoing off the cement walls as Melissa, an inmate trainer, stands at the podium to share her story. She tells of a happy childhood ending when an uncle took her to a secluded woods and raped her so violently that she had to have a full hysterectomy, at

age eight. No charges were filed.

Years later, grief stricken by the loss of her grandfather, Melissa started taking drugs to numb the pain of her loneliness and she began breaking into houses to pay for the drugs. She had several stints in rehab, but none took. Looking back, "[I] just wasn't ready. [paws4prisons] has been the best rehab... Sometimes I wonder if [the paws4prisons staff] know how big an effect this has on us."

That's a refrain I've often heard from veterans, trainers, parents of children and volunteers. For many of the inmate trainers, the caring from the paws4people team is remarkable.

"To have people that don't even really know you ... care, even though you are in prison and you have made all of those mistakes. [It's] an amazing feeling," explains Tiffany.

Dogs can make a difference that people can't. Air Force veteran Sabrina Rigney of Lorton, looks forward to having a companion who will be persistent about getting her

out of bed in the morning. "I can't get mad at her for pulling the covers off me, because I've really got to get up and feed her and take her out."

When paws4prisons inmate trainers are released from prison, they have marketable skills. They are highly effective dog trainers. In fact, four former inmate trainers are now paid employees with the organization and two more volunteer.

On this day, David Burry, managing director of the paws4people for-profit training arm, Paws Training Centers, is on hand to encourage and inspire trainers. "As a result of my greed and pride, I lost everything," he tells the group. "I pled guilty to bank fraud, wire fraud and money laundering and I was sentenced to 151 months in prison. I now owe the government \$41 million dollars in restitution and the IRS \$12 million. I know that all sounds pretty grim, but in fact I've never been happier."

Since serving his sentence, Burry, formerly an inmate trainer, has teamed up with his daughter, Ashley O'Hara, to train privately

owned dogs as assistance dogs for qualified owners as well as to provide basic obedience and behavior modification for pet dogs in West Chester, PA. "It's amazing to know that I'm making difference and helping others."

Last year, Paws Training Centers were opened at locations across the country. These for-profit training centers provide employment for ex-inmate trainers and others and help to fund the work of the non-profit. One paws trainer is in Leesburg.

Trish, from the inmate side of the aisle, steps up to the podium and reveals a lifetime punctuated by abuse, rape and trauma perpetrated by family and foster care. It's impossible not to want to reach out and give Trish a hug as she tells her story. But there is no touching at Lakin. A fellow trainer stands with her, but cannot comfort her. She appears relieved to return to her seat where she is surrounded by her four-legged support system.

Carol Hancock is the Veteran Client Advocate for paws4people's "paws4vets" pro-



Tiffany, an inmate at Lakin Correctional serving a 15-year-to-life sentence, is training TANNEN.



Rebecca, an inmate at Lakin Correctional serving a sentence of life without parole, is training ZIVA.



FINLEY, third dog from left, is the mother of eight puppies who arrived at Lakin Correctional at the age of four months to begin training.

'You Are Not Your Mistakes'

BY JOAN BRADY

"S he was one of the most disagreeable people I had ever met," says paws4people Chairman and COO, Terry Henry, remembering his reaction to meeting Rebecca at Lakin Correctional Center, more than three years ago.

Seeing her now with her earnest smile and a well-behaved puppy happily nestled in her lap, it's hard to imagine the Rebecca he describes.

The old Rebecca had a nickname she chooses not to explain, because it reflects a part of the past that she doesn't want to talk about. And it was the old Rebecca who committed murder during a roadside altercation. That same bad attitude she had in her early 20s got her kicked out of the "paws4prisons" assistant dog training program in her 40s, three years ago.

Rebecca's childhood is devoid of memories of birthday parties, school concerts and family trips. The second of four children, what Rebecca recalls is abuse, as far back as she can remember, the only one of her siblings, she says, to suffer at the hand of her mother.

It's hard not to feel the pain with her as she recalls how she felt when she was fired from the paws4prisons program. "[I was] embarrassed, ashamed and hurt." And then she adds, "It was life changing though and now



PHOTOS BY JOAN BRADY

Harper, a labradoodle trained at Lakin Correctional, with Julia, 14. "Wherever Julia needs extra supervision, companionship, responsibility or a bridge to human connection, Harper is there," says Julia's mother.

I'm thankful for it."

After 19 years in prison, she had a goal. She was determined to get back into the assistance dog training program. Rebecca is serving a life sentence, without the possibility of parole. She wanted her time to mean something. After a year of continu-

ous re-application, Rebecca was conditionally reinstated.

She describes how it felt to come back, now two years ago. "I was still embarrassed. ... I felt like I was still being judged." But then she realized, not only was she not being judged, but "they were trying to help

HEALING POWER



paws4people

me to understand myself. ... They wanted to show me how to change."

This support was new for Rebecca, "It was the first time I felt like someone cared about me. It's not easy to feel deserving, when no one had ever cared before."

Learning to accept caring support was just one of her challenges. Cece Miller, Director of the paws4prisons program, really pushed her to grow; trainers have to pass a rigorous academic curriculum that includes tests and essays. They must become proficient public speakers. And they must be able to take direction and correction and work with others.

Two years after that reinstatement, Rebecca has earned her role as a leader in the program says Cece Miller, Director, paws4prisons. "I am very proud of her and I have loved watching her grow."

Rebecca relishes the opportunity to help others. "They have a story. They have prob-

SEE REBECCA, PAGE 13

Sharing Burden of PTSD

BY JOAN BRADY

Paws4people assistance dogs sprinkle the country, matched with children and veterans whose lives have been forever changed. More than ten of those dogs have benefited from Tiffany's loving training at Lakin Correctional Center in West Virginia.

While paws4people breeds dogs with specific qualities to help ensure more successful assistance dogs, the organization also rescues dogs domestically and even some from Afghanistan.

Tiffany says her biggest challenges have come working with dogs who have been traumatized. It's difficult, when they can't talk to you about what happened, "to reprogram a scared dog to letting him know that the world is ok and people are ok."

The work that Tiffany does is as healing for her as it is for the dogs she trains and the clients who are matched with her dogs.

She describes a challenging childhood in which her parents split up when she was five. When her mother remarried and started a second family, Tiffany moved in with her beloved grandmother and was raised jointly by her grandmother and her father.

Her voice cracks a little when she talks about feelings of isolation and not fitting in at school. By 13, she was acting out and turning to drugs and alcohol that she felt allowed her to fit in somewhere.

At 14, her grandmother and father agreed that a change of scenery might help. What followed was a wrenching move to South

Carolina to live with her dad. But Tiffany didn't find it any easier to fit in in South Carolina, especially, she remembers with a wry smile, with her blue hair. From that point, she was passed back and forth between grandmother's home and father's home whenever she got into trouble.

"I felt like nobody really cared what happened to me... I just acted crazy and acted out and rebelled... I made bad choices and mistakes and ended up here."

Tiffany's life stopped when her fiancé died of a drug overdose. Suffering from PTSD herself, it's important to Tiffany that she is able to help the paws4people veteran clients with their PTSD by training dogs that will allow them to resume normal activities like going into a grocery store and getting gas.

Sabrina Rigney, ex-Air Force, was thankful to meet Tiffany and to learn more about NOEL, who will become her assistance dog.

"It was really great to meet someone who has had a chance to get to know and love NOEL. And she didn't mind me pestering her with questions about what NOEL likes, what she doesn't like." The nuggets shared by Tiffany will help Sabrina get through the long months of training both she and NOEL will go through before NOEL can join her permanently at home.

Tiffany gives her all to the dogs she trains, the clients who get matched with them, and her two half-brothers. She especially worries about the brothers, aged 17 and 19, with whom she speaks daily.

"I try to stay so close to them to keep them from turning out like [me] ... I ask them



Veteran Sabrina Rigney, right, was matched with NOEL, trained by Tiffany, serving 15 years to life at Lakin Correctional in West Virginia.

about their day. Every day. I try to relate to them ... because I just wish that I would have had somebody doing that for me."

She thinks that if there had been a program with dogs for her when she was younger, one where she could get the caring support and job training she is now get-

ting, "things would have been completely different."

And completely different would mean that Tiffany's fiancé was still alive and she, not serving a sentence of 15 years to life in prison, for providing the drugs that killed him.

Dogs' Unconditional Love

FROM PAGE 11

Lakin hoping to be matched with a psychiatric assistance dog. As a medic, she did one tour in Kuwait and then another in Baghdad. She described tending to a 19-year-old soldier as he begged her not to let him die. "You pretty much know that when they say that, they're gone. I'll never forget that," she tells her audience.

After her third tour, back in Northern Virginia, Sabrina was scheduled to be a living kidney donor for a close friend, when her orders to redeploy for the fourth time came in. She declined redeployment in order to move forward with the kidney donation and was later denied the opportunity to re-enlist, after eight years of service.

Her pain is palpable as she describes what it felt like to lose her military family.

Sabrina suffers from PTSD. While she is employed as a paramedic, she often finds it difficult to be around people. Some days she can't bring herself to leave her home. There are 22 suicides of veterans every day, she tells her audience. And three times, she was almost one of them.

When she began working with a therapist who included a therapy dog in their sessions, tiny pieces began to heal. Today she hopes that she will be matched with an assistance dog who will help her to get her life back.

Those listening to Sabrina on both sides of the aisle nod in sympathy and wipe away tears.

Two other veterans with PTSD tell their stories. All have military friends who have committed suicide. One says he lost more of his fellow soldiers to suicide after deployment than during combat.

By the end of the day, each veteran has been joyfully matched with a dog and train-

HEALING POWER



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If you would like to learn more about paws4people and its programs visit paws4people.org or contact Joan Brady at joan@joanbradyphotography.com or call 202-256-1311.

ers stand by proudly while pictures are taken. Later, there is time to socialize.

"It was really great to meet someone that has had a chance to get to know and love NOEL," says Sabrina of Tiffany, one of the trainers of the golden retriever Sabrina has been matched with today.

Many of the trainers have had little encouragement in their lives. And it's isolating to be in jail where inmates share stories of being abandoned by friends and family. But today, they bask in the applause for the difference they are making.

This is a three-legged stool of inmate trainers, dogs and clients – with the paws4people organization creating the right environment for each group to thrive as they travel their personal journeys of redemption and healing accompanied by the caring support of others and the unconditional love of dogs.

As trainers file out and the civilians behind them, there is a connection between those who sat on either side of the aisle that will remain forever unbroken.

ably still be closed up. And now... she is so outgoing, happy and confident. [she has] self respect and self esteem... [it] touches your heart."

And Rebecca herself has touched the heart of Terry Henry.

"I have never witnessed a more dramatic change in a person than the change I have witnessed in Rebecca. ... The world is now a much better place and Rebecca has only begun to have an effect."

With the caring motivation of paws4people, Rebecca has learned a critical lesson: "You are not your mistakes."



PHOTOS BY JOAN BRADY

Rebecca

FROM PAGE 12

lems. [I can] help to teach them to be better people."

For her, it's not as much about the dogs she trains, although that's very important. What touches her the most is "watching the other girls' faces... watching them grow and heal [because of the dogs they have trained.]"

Julia, 14, is on hand to show the trainers how well she is doing with Harper, a Labradoodle who was trained at Lakin. Julia has a genetic disorder which causes abnormal blood vessel malformations to grow in her brain. She has been through four surgeries to date, to stop brain hemorrhages.

"Harper fills the holes in Julia's life," Julia's mother says. "Wherever Julia needs extra supervision, companionship, responsibility or a bridge to human connection, Harper is there."

Julia would not speak to the audience, but happily took center stage to show off her assistance dog, Harper.

Rebecca, who met Julia before she was matched with Harper, describes how she felt when Julia began demonstrating. "At that moment, you are thinking, well just think if she didn't have that dog, she would prob-

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McLean Community Center Board Chair, Chad Quinn and his wife, Tricia.



Former Fairfax County Supervisor for the Dranesville District, Lilla Richards, and MPA founding member, Nancy Bradley were both instrumental in securing what is now MPA's permanent home at the McLean Community Center.

Celebrating Art at Hickory Hill

McLean Project for the Arts celebrates a year of visual arts at its annual spring benefit.

BY LORI BAKER
THE CONNECTION

Rainstorms drenched Northern Virginia last Thursday night, but the stormy weather did not dampen the spirits of hundreds of local art patrons. In fact, the skies cleared just long enough for McLean Project for the Arts to celebrate with nearly three hundred supporters during its annual spring benefit at the historic Hickory Hill estate in McLean.

The McLean Project for the Arts is a non-profit art gallery and arts education center that has been a fixture in McLean for more than fifty years. It brings the works of mid-Atlantic artists to northern Virginia throughout the year, and offers art education classes to school children, adults, low and middle-income populations, and developmentally disabled adults.

Each year MPA invites hundreds of local artists, supporters, community members and local dignitaries to celebrate the arts in McLean. The event is a fundraiser for the organization, and one of their biggest events of the year. But in addition to raising funds for their many programs, the annual affair provides an opportunity for art lovers to gather and celebrate community.

"McLean Project for the Arts is one of the jewels of McLean, and one of the organizations that creates the sense of community that we have in McLean," said Fairfax County Supervisor, John Foust.

Eighty-eight year old Nancy Bradley is the only surviving founder of the MPA. The organization was started by a group of six women artists more than fifty years ago as the Emerson Gallery, and saw ten different homes before Bradley and others finally found them a permanent home at the McLean Community Center. "It means a lot to me to see all of this," she said.

Guests dined and socialized, enjoying the view at the recently renovated Hickory Hill.



McLean residents, Cindy Hutchings and Kevin Morin at the MPA Spring Benefit.

PHOTOS BY LORI BAKER/THE CONNECTION



Award-winning sports columnist and TV and radio sports commentator, Christine Brennan was guest speaker for the MPA Spring Benefit.

Award-winning USA Today sports columnist, Christine Brennan, addressed the group, and shared her admiration for the MPA. Brennan made history as the first female sportswriter for the Miami Herald in 1981, and she was the first woman to cover the Washington Redskins as a staff writer for the Washington Post. She shared with the audience her feelings about the Washington Redskins, which she now refers to as "Washington's NFL team."

"I avow not to use that name anymore," said Brennan, who referred to her time covering the Redskins as one of the highlights of her career. "It's not a cause, it's not for everyone.



McLean resident, Leslie Aga and MPA sponsor, Sushma Shenoy. "I love this event," Shenoy said. "It brings together an amazing community, and gives them another aspect of life to enjoy. It's a great organization."



Executive Director of the McLean Community Center, George Sachs, Safe Community Coalition Executive Director, Nyka Feldman, and MCC board member, Sean Dunn.

It's my own personal belief that it's not the right thing to do...and so my guess is that in the next five or ten years, we'll probably see that name changed."

McLean Community Center Board Chair, Chad Quinn, was in attendance, and spoke of the group's relationship with the MPA. "I think it is a wonderful example of a public/private partnership. We cherish our partnership with the MPA. And ultimately we think it's the type of environment that makes McLean special. That neighbors and friends can come together and celebrate the arts."

McLean Choral Society to Present The Secret Garden

The McLean High School Choral Society (MCS) stages the enchanting musical *The Secret Garden* in what may be the group's final performance. Led by Performing Arts Department head, Linda Martin, the group brings this captivating classic of forgiveness and renewal to the community. *The Secret Garden* runs May 29-June 1, Thursday through Saturday, 7 p.m. finishing with a Sunday matinee, 2 p.m. Performances are in McLean's Burks Auditorium with advance tickets available at www.mhschoralsociety.com.

This charming classic of children's literature is re-imagined in brilliant musical style by composer Lucy Simon and Marsha Norman, the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright.

The choral program of McLean High School is among the first in Fairfax County to feel the effect of recent budget constraints. The program's most advanced choir, Madrigals, is currently scheduled to not be offered as separate class in the 2014-2015 school year. Madrigals, an auditioned mixed voice chamber ensemble, has a 50 year tradition of excellence. At a recent competition in New York City, Madrigals received a Gold rating, earning them the right to perform in the Elite Performance Series Festival at Carnegie Hall. For complete information, visit www.mhschoralsociety.com.

Featured in this production, Grace Myers and Jennifer Rose appear as Annie Lennox. The cast also features many performers from McLean Theatre Company's recent performance of *Catch Me If You Can* including Alex Stone (Archibald Craven), Nancy Pruett and Lily Lord (Lily Craven), Matt Lucero (Neville Craven), Jack Posey (Dickon), Rachel Lawhead (Martha) and Jamie Wertz (Colin Craven). Meg Hashem also appears as Martha.

The Secret Garden runs May 29-June 1, Thursday through Saturday, 7 p.m. with one Sunday matinee, 2 p.m. Performances are in McLean's Burks Auditorium, 1633 Davidson Road, McLean, with advance tickets available at www.mhschoralsociety.com. *The Secret Garden* is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

CALENDAR

Send announcements to mclean@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

THURSDAY MAY 22-SATURDAY/MAY 31

Book Sales. Ongoing book sales at all libraries except George Mason, Tysons-Pimmit and Woodrow Wilson.

THURSDAY/MAY 22

Great Falls Writer's Group Meeting. 12-1:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Kemal Kurspahic, editor of the Great Falls Connection, will address the group on "Life on Deadline—From the Frontline Sarajevo Daily to the Great Falls Connection," in which he will talk about his years as a foreign correspondent and international journalist, and his role at The Connection. Potluck lunch will be served. Writers of all levels are welcome, no registration necessary. Call 703-926-7457 for more information.

DMVLIFE.com Spotlight Concert. 8 p.m. Jammin Java, 227 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. Lobby bar opens at 6 p.m. with a full dinner and drink menu. Concert featuring various DMV artists. Admission: \$10-\$20. <https://jamminjava.com/events/dmvlife>. 703-255-1566.

FRIDAY/MAY 23

Patriotic Campfire. 7 - 8:30 p.m. WNC Campfire Ring - On Soapstone Drive, between Glade Drive and Lawyers Road. All ages. Celebrate Memorial Day by singing patriotic songs around a campfire. Roast a hot dog on a stick and make a yummy marshmallow treat. Play old-fashioned games and get a fun start to your holiday weekend.

"A Prairie Home Companion" with Garrison Keillor. 8 p.m. Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Radio host Garrison Keillor leads a cast through his weekly variety show featuring musical guests and a monologue, "The News from Lake Wobegon." Admission: \$25-\$65. 703-255-1900.

Drop-In Chess. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. All ages and skills levels welcome!

Pokemon League. 3 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave East, Vienna. Learn and play! Ages 5-8.

FRIDAY/MAY 23 - SUNDAY/JUNE 22

"Bat Boy: The Musical." Check website for times. 1st Stage Theatre in Tysons, 1524 Spring Hill Road, McLean. A musical comedy/horror spoof and satire on American prejudice featuring a half-boy, half-bat creature a the main character. Admission: \$15-\$32. <http://www.1stStageTysons.org/>. 703-854-1856.

SATURDAY/MAY 24 - SUNDAY/MAY 25

Model Trains at Open House. 1-5 p.m. 231 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. See and hear model trolleys and steam and diesel trains plus Thomas and some of his friends in the Historic Vienna Train Station along the W&OD trail just past the Caboose. 703-938-5157. www.nvmr.org.

SATURDAY/MAY 24- MONDAY/MAY 26

Viva! Vienna! 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Rides, food, entertainment, kids' activities and Memorial Day tribute celebrate community spirit. www.vivavienna.org.

SATURDAY/MAY 24

"A Prairie Home Companion" with Garrison Keillor. 5:45 p.m. Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Radio host Garrison Keillor leads a cast through his weekly variety show featuring musical guests and a monologue, "The News from Lake Wobegon." Admission: \$25-\$65. 703-255-1900.

An Evening with The Kruger Brothers. 7 p.m. Jammin Java, 227 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. The Kruger Brothers perform a mix of jazz, classical and bluegrass music and are



PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

Teens scream on the major rides at Viva! Vienna! last year. Join in on the fun at this year's Viva! Vienna! taking place this Memorial Day weekend, May 24-26.

originally from Europe, now living in North Carolina. Admission: \$25. <https://jamminjava.com/events/kruger-brothers>. 703-255-1566.

Electric Love Bash w/ELM + Hubble Bash. 10:30 p.m. Jammin Java, 227 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. ELM (formerly Segway) is a quartet that combines electronica, dance, rock, soul and funk into high-energy music. Admission: \$10. <https://jamminjava.com/events/elm-hubblebash>. 703-255-1566.

Maria Spearman (Tai-Chi and Stretch). 8-9 a.m. The Palladium Civic Place Green, 1445 Laughlin Avenue, McLean. Free. 703-288-9505.

Four Star Combo (Rock/Honky Tonk). 5-7 p.m. The Palladium Civic Place Green, 1445 Laughlin Avenue, McLean. Free. 703-288-9505.

SUNDAY/MAY 25

Music Friends Concerts: Young Soloists Recital. 3 p.m. The Alden 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Four internationally-recognized students perform solos on violin and piano. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/events/aldenconcerts>.

Wolf Trap Summer Blast Off! 8 p.m. The Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. The U.S. Marine Band will perform followed by fireworks. http://www.wolftrap.org/Home/Find_Performances_and_Events/Event/blastoff.aspx. 703-255-1868.

TUESDAY/MAY 27

James Madison High School Jazz Band. 7 p.m. Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. The nationally-recognized jazz band performs a wide range of repertoire. Admission: \$5-\$10. <https://jamminjava.com/events/james-madison-high-school-jazz-band>. 703-255-1566.



PHOTO BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

A Year-end Performance

Monica Brown of Chantilly High School, Bennett Green of Fairfax High School, Allison Maebius of Langley High School, Allie Smith of Lake Braddock Secondary School and Brittany Summers of Chantilly High School perform in Act 1: New York State of Mind to the music Johann Sebastian Bach in the 1st section of Preludium in the Fairfax Academy of the Arts year-end performance at Fairfax High School last weekend.

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lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known

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<p>SUNDAY LITURGY SCHEDULE: Saturday Vigil: 5:30 PM Sunday: 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 AM 1:30 PM Spanish Liturgy 5312 North 10th Street Arlington Virginia 22205 Parish Office: (703) 528-6276</p>	<p>DAILY EUCHARIST: Weekdays Monday-Friday, 6:30 AM & 8:30 AM Saturday, 8:30 AM</p>
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SPORTS

Sullivan, Paine Lead McLean Baseball Past South Lakes

Highlanders secure regional berth win over No. 2 Seahawks.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Joey Sullivan's previous start lasted just 1 1/3 innings, with the future Virginia Tech pitcher allowing seven runs — four earned — on May 9 against Madison.

Eight days later, the McLean right-hander toed the rubber with the Highlanders' season on the line. Facing South Lakes in the Conference 6 tournament quarterfinals, Sullivan delivered a stellar performance.

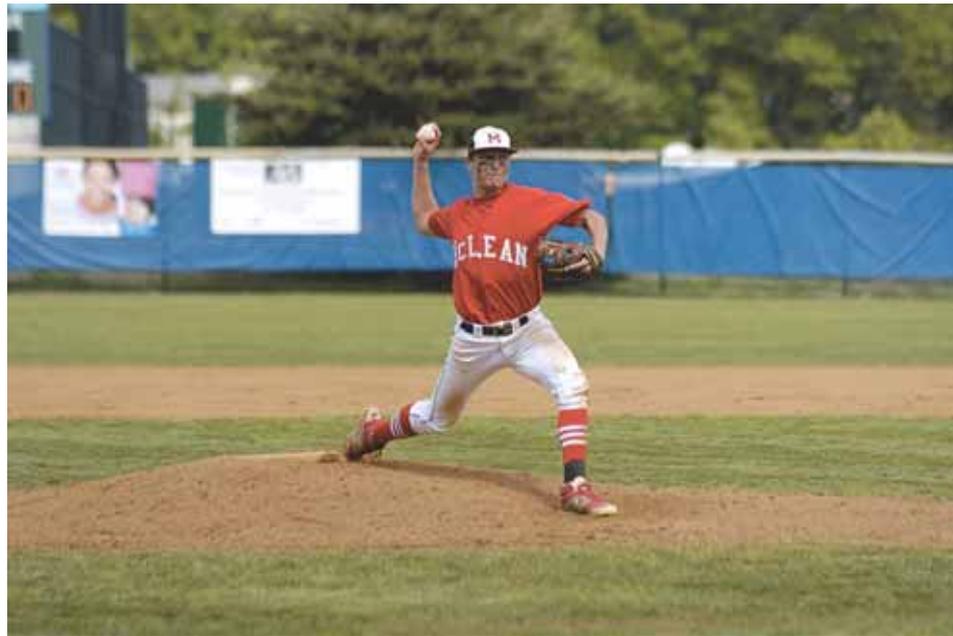
Sullivan tossed a three-hit shutout and left fielder Grady Paine went 4-for-4 with five RBIs as No. 7 McLean defeated No. 2 South Lakes 5-0 on May 17 at South Lakes High School. The Highlanders secured a berth in the regional tournament and traveled to face No. 3 Langley in the conference semifinals on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline.

Sullivan struggled with his fastball command during McLean's 11-3 loss to Madison, part of a second-half collapse for the Highlanders that led to the team finishing the regular season with a 10-9 record after an 8-2 start. Sullivan was dominant on Saturday, however, allowing just three singles while striking out seven in seven shutout innings. He threw a first-pitch strike to 19 of the 25 batters he faced and did not walk a batter. He threw 63 of 87 pitches for strikes.

"Joey bounced back very well," McLean head coach John Dowling said. "South Lakes, they are a feisty team this year — they earned that 2 seed. [Sullivan] went out and commanded his fastball and that's really the key for him. When he keeps that down and he can move it in and out, all the sudden now he's got a decent curveball and he becomes real tough."

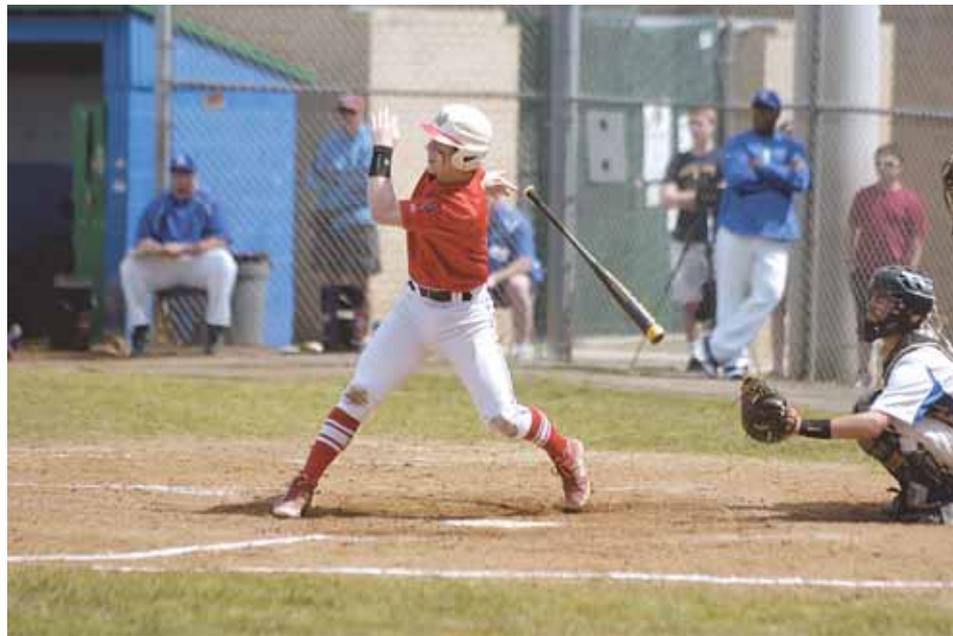
SULLIVAN said he straightened out a mechanical flaw that hindered his performance against Madison. The Highlanders also appeared to have straightened out whatever was hindering their performance during the second half of the season. After defeating Fairfax 11-1 during the regular-season finale on May 14, McLean won a pair of elimination games on back-to-back days, including a 4-1 victory against No. 8 Yorktown on Friday evening in the conference tournament play-in game.

"A couple practices ago, I got everybody around and I was like, for some of the seniors here, this is the last time they're going to be able to play baseball," said Sullivan, who signed with the Hokies. "We



McLean senior Joey Sullivan pitched a three-hit shutout against South Lakes during the Conference 6 quarterfinals on May 17.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION



McLean left fielder Grady Paine went 4-for-4 with a home run and five RBIs against South Lakes on May 17.

don't have to do it for our coaches, we have to do it for each other, and the most important thing is we have to start having fun again, because none of us were having fun."

While Sullivan was dominant on the mound, Paine took care of the offense. The senior cleanup hitter finished 4-for-4 and drove in all five McLean runs.

In the top first, Paine's two-out single drove in Sullivan, who led off the game with a single off the fence in right field. With the bases loaded and one out in the fifth, Paine doubled to deep center, driving in three and giving McLean a 4-0 advantage. With two outs in the seventh, Paine ripped a solo home run over the fence in right.

"I was feeling great," Paine said. "Joey was dealing and he was letting me feel loose at

the plate. It's great. You don't have to think about anything else. You can just go out there and do your job."

PAINE also singled to load the bases in the third, but McLean failed to score.

"He's a very hard worker and he's a very mature athlete," Dowling said. "He doesn't try to do too much. ... Teams are walking [No. 3 hitter] Caleb [Beatty and Paine] has started to make them pay for that and that's not the first time this year he's done that."

Sullivan went 2-for-4 at the plate. Sophomore shortstop Conor Grammes finished 1-for-3 with a double.

South Lakes pitcher Matt Wojciechowski suffered the loss, allowing five runs — four earned — and seven hits in seven innings.

SPORTS ROUNDUPS

Langley Crew Produces Six State Champions

The Langley crew team won gold with six of the seven boats which entered events during the state championships on May 10.

The Langley men's varsity 4, women's varsity 4, men's lightweight 4, men's junior varsity 8, women's junior varsity 4, and men's second four each took first place.

Langley Baseball Earns Regional Berth

The No. 3 Langley baseball team defeated No. 6 Hayfield 7-1 on May 17 during the Conference 6 tournament quarterfinals at Langley High School.

With the win, the Saxons advanced to the semifinals and secured a berth in the region tournament. Langley faced No. 7 McLean in the semifinals on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline.

He walked three, hit one batter and struck out seven. The junior right-hander produced the South Lakes highlight of the afternoon when he struck out the side in nine pitches, the minimum needed to do so, during the top of the fourth.

South Lakes sophomore shortstop Marty Gryski went 2-for-3 with a pair of singles. Senior left fielder JoJo Lear led off the bottom of the first with a single.

South Lakes lost seven of its first eight games this season, but started to turn things around with a pair of wins during a spring break trip to Myrtle Beach, S.C. The Seahawks closed the regular season by winning eight of 10 and posted a 5-2 mark against Conference 6 opponents, earning them the No. 2 seed in the tournament. Saturday's loss dropped South Lakes' final record to 9-10.

"It's been a huge turnaround, as you can tell," Wojciechowski said. "I'm a junior. The past three years I've been here, we've just been getting stepped on every game. Nobody takes us seriously. Then, [we] come back the second half from spring break and we started playing like we know we can."

While South Lakes' season is over, McLean is hoping to continue with a turnaround of its own.

"I think that we're starting to realize our talent didn't go away as soon as we lost a few games and that we've got a group of kids that, as a team, can be very successful," Dowling said. "I think for a while there we might have gotten a little away from that, but the hot start didn't happen on accident. Getting hot lately didn't happen on accident. We just kind of needed to figure things out."

You're Never Too Young for Poetry

Local educators say exposing children and even babies to rhyme and rhythm can help develop reading and language skills.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Though Keith Ward's son is still a baby, the young child is already being exposed to exposed to not just silly stories, but poetry, and a variety of poetic forms at that.

"My son is only 6 months old, but soon I will be challenging him to find, for example, just the right word for the shade of green he is trying to describe — or imagine," said Ward, who is head of the English department at the Madeira School in McLean. "Maybe it's a word and a color we have yet to discover. He's working on it, though."

Local researchers and educators say that young children enjoy poetry. In fact, hearing rhythms, sounds and language patterns play important roles in a child's literacy development.

"Rhythm and rhyme are some key factors in early literacy, and even something as simple as reading and memorizing nursery rhymes with your children can have a huge impact on their later development as readers," said Holly Karapetkova, an associate professor of literature at Marymount University in Arlington. "One research study found that the 3-year-olds who knew eight nursery rhymes were the best readers in third grade. Hearing rhyme and rhythm in language can help children develop phonological awareness and predict word patterns and sounds."

"Without realizing it, students hear poetry and think deeply about sounds and structures in sentences. As a result, they become better readers, thinkers, and writers," said Blake Howard, an English teacher at The Potomac School in McLean.

Howard's students recently studied structural elements, "Such as stanza formations, meter and rhyme, and sound devices like consonance and assonance in poems by Shelley, Keats, Dickinson and Frost," he said. "They practiced scansion of evident rhythms in metrical poems. They learned how and why those devices enhance tone and thematic purpose in the selected poems. Next, they wrote original poems. Some students crafted sonnets with meter and rhyme. They admitted — some reluctantly — that the exercise of reading and writing poetry has made them appreciate the value of precise word choice and balanced syntax." Ward also encourages the exploration of a variety of poetic forms. "Many students enjoy haiku, too, which are fun and approachable," he said. "They often reward the young poet with a profoundly beautiful result, which builds confidence and appreciation."

THE TYPE OF RHYME doesn't matter, however. Young students at Grace Episcopal School, in Alexandria, explore a different nursery rhyme each month as part of their Music and Performing Arts class.

"We repeat the verses out loud week after week to internalize the cadence, define any challenging words, pair motions with phrases, and culminate the whole affair by acting out each month's poem — complete with props and costumes," said Penelope Fleming, the school's librarian. This [emphasizes] the notion that language has rhythm and also expands students' vocabulary."

"A good poem really comes alive when it is read aloud," said Barbara Vaughan, a sixth grade teacher



PHOTO COURTESY OF NORWOOD SCHOOL

Students at Norwood School participate in Poetry Day, an annual event at the school. Poetry is a way to help children become develop essential skills while having fun.

at Norwood School, in Potomac, Md. "There is such variety in form, length, and subject. Poetry can help readers pause and look at the world in a different way."

READING POETRY TOGETHER, especially funny poems, and asking a child to guess the rhyming word is a way of reinforcing phonemic awareness and introducing letter patterns, said Mandov. "Playing rhyming games is another fun way for preschool and kindergarten children to reinforce these skills. While driving in the car, try a rhyme chain. Ask your child for a word that rhymes with cat. Perhaps your child will say 'bat.' Then you give a word that rhymes with bat and continue rhyming back and forth. See how many rhymes you can make."

"A good way to encourage children to create their own poetry is to devise alternate lyrics to the tunes of familiar songs, an easy activity that can be incorporated into bath time, car trips or even a way to pass the time while waiting in line," said Fleming.

Karapetkova played similar games with her children. "These games are a favorite way to pass our time waiting in line or sitting in the car," said the Arlington mother of two. "We start with a word — simple words with lots of rhymes for younger children and more complex words for older children — and see how many rhyming words we can come up with. We might also start with a word on a billboard or a word from a product while we're shopping at the supermarket." Poetry games that give children an opportunity to fill in the blank with a rhyming word are another way for parents to bring out their children's inner poets. "You start a poem and let them fill in the rhyming word," said Karapetkova. "For example, 'Star light, star bright, first star I see ____.' Both of my children also enjoy memorizing nursery rhymes and poems, and these nurture a deep appreciation of language and meaning."

Karapetkova says two of her family's favorite poets are Shel Silverstein and Langston Hughes. She encourages her children to try writing their own poems as well. "We often collaborate and write them together," she said. "I might give a suggestion about how to start a poem, or about a topic to write on, and I might also suggest possible rhymes if they get stuck. My daughter, who is 4, makes up nonsensical rhymes about random things that come into her mind and my son, at 9, likes to write poems that are playful and humorous. I let their interests guide what they write."

REMEMBERING

Honoring Those Who Have Died in Military Service

FROM PAGE 8

Nathaniel J. Nyren, 31, from Reston; Marine Lance Cpl. Tenzin Dengkhim, 19, from Falls Church, Navy Chief Joel Egan Baldwin, 37, from Arlington; Maj. Joseph McCloud, of Alexandria, and Major Gloria D. Davis, 47 of Lorton.

OTHER VIRGINIA service members lost:

Capt. Jesse A. Ozbat, 28 of Prince George, Va., died on May 20, 2012 in Afghanistan from a roadside bomb. Constructionman Trevor J. Stanley, 22, of Virginia Beach, Va., died April 7, 2012 while deployed to Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti. Pfc. Michael W. Pyron, 30, of Hopewell, Va., died Jan. 10, 2012 in Afghanistan. Maj. Samuel M. Griffith, 36, of Virginia Beach, Va., died Dec. 14, 2011 in Afghanistan. Staff Sgt. James Ronald Leep Jr., 44 of Richmond, died Oct. 17, 2011 at Forward Operating Base Kalsu in Iraq. Spc. Levi Efrain Nuncio, 24 of Harrisonburg, died June 22, 2011 in Afghanistan. Capt. Michael Wray Newton, 30 of Newport News, died June 11, 2011 in Afghanistan. Capt. Charles A. Ransom, 31, of Midlothian was one of eight airmen who died April 27, 2011, at the Kabul International Airport, Afghanistan, from gunfire. Sgt. Sean T. Callahan, 23, of Warrenton died April 23, 2011 in combat in Afghanistan.

Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Venetz Jr., 30, of Prince William died Jan. 28, 2011 in

Afghanistan, after being seriously wounded months before.

Spc. Sean R. Cutsforth, 22, of Radford, died Dec. 15, 2010 in Afghanistan. Spc. William K. Middleton, 26, of Norfolk died Nov. 22, 2010 in Afghanistan. Staff Sgt. Christopher F. Cabacoy, 30, of Virginia Beach died July 5, 2010, in Afghanistan.

If you know of someone who should be included in this list, or if you would like to share how you are honoring the memory of a family member or friend lost, or about the progress of someone injured, please let us know.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue.

The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Send to:

Letters to the Editor
The Connection
1606 King St.
Alexandria VA 22314
Call: 703-917-6444.
By e-mail:

mclean@connectionnewspapers.com



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Providence Baptist Preschool is a Christian, non-profit week-day ministry of Providence Baptist Church. We provide a caring and positive atmosphere which creates a warm and happy place for preschoolers to learn.

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4 RE for Sale

The Fairfax County Water Authority ("Fairfax Water") will be accepting bids from prospective purchasers for the Sale of Property (0.86 acres) "Hallowing Point Well 2 Site-Lot 19" located at 6037 Chapman Road (IFB 14-05). Interested parties may obtain a copy of IFB 14-05 by contacting the Procurement Department Fax: 703-289-6262, or E-mail: procpu@fairfaxwater.org.

Bids will be accepted in the office of Fairfax Water's Procurement Department until 2:00 p.m., July 9, 2014.

4 RE for Sale

21 Announcements

Public Notice
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND DRAFT GENERAL CONFORMITY DETERMINATION FOR THE PROPOSED COVE POINT LIQUEFACTION PROJECT

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) published a Notice of Availability of the environmental assessment (EA) and Draft General Conformity Determination (DGCD) for the Cove Point Liquefaction Project (Project) proposed by Dominion Cove Point LNG, LP (DCP). DCP requests authorization to construct and operate facilities to process and export domestically sourced liquefied natural gas (LNG) at the existing Cove Point LNG Terminal in Calvert County, Maryland. The Project would enable DCP to export approximately 5.75 million metric tons per annum of LNG via LNG marine carriers that would dock at the existing offshore pier.

The EA assesses the potential environmental effects of the construction and operation of the Project in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. The DGCD was prepared pursuant to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's General Conformity Regulations (40 CFR Part 93, Subpart B), and addresses air emission impacts associated with the Project.

The EA and DGCD are available for review and comment. The FERC staff mailed copies of the EA with the DGCD to federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; potentially affected landowners and other interested individuals and groups; libraries in the Project area; and parties to this proceeding. In addition, the EA with the DGCD has been placed in the public files of the FERC and is available for public viewing on the FERC's website at www.ferc.gov using the eLibrary link. A limited number of copies of the EA and DGCD are also available for distribution and public inspection at:

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Public Reference Room
888 First Street NE, Room 2A
Washington, DC 20426
(202) 502-8371

Any person wishing to comment on the EA or DGCD may do so. To ensure that your comments are properly recorded and considered prior to a Final General Conformity Determination and Commission decision on the proposal, it is important that the FERC receives your comments in Washington, DC on or before June 16, 2014.

For your convenience, there are four methods you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. In all instances please reference the Project docket number (CP13-113-000) with your submission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert staff available to assist you at (202) 502-8258 or efiling@ferc.gov.

1. To submit brief, text-only comments, you can file your comments electronically by using the eComment feature on the Commission's website at www.ferc.gov, under the link to Documents and Filings.

2. To submit comments in a variety of formats by attaching them as a file, you can file your comments electronically by using the eFiling feature on the Commission's website at www.ferc.gov under the link to Documents and Filings. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on "eRegister." You must select the type of filing you are making. A comment on a particular project is considered a "Comment on a Filing;" or

3. You may file a paper copy of your comments at the following address:
Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE, Room 1A
Washington, DC 20426

4. In lieu of sending written or electronic comments, the Commission invites you to attend a public comment meeting in the Project area. We encourage interested groups and individuals to attend and present oral comments on the EA and DGCD. The meeting is scheduled as follows:

Date and Time Location
Saturday, May 31, 2014
1:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Patuxent High School
12485 Southern Connector Boulevard
Lusby, MD 20657
Additional information about the Project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at (866) 208-FERC, or on the FERC website (www.ferc.gov) using the eLibrary link.

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-William Van Horne

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4 RE for Sale

The Fairfax County Water Authority ("Fairfax Water") will be accepting bids from prospective purchasers for the Sale of Property (0.92 acres) "Gunston Manor Well Site-Lot 53" located at 6055 Honeysuckle Trail (IFB 14-06). Interested parties may obtain a copy of IFB 14-06 by contacting the Procurement Department Fax: 703-289-6262, or E-mail: procpu@fairfaxwater.org.

Bids will be accepted in the office of Fairfax Water's Procurement Department until 2:00 p.m., July 9, 2014.

4 RE for Sale

Too Patient a Patient



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Since I'm in the honesty business (as you regular readers know; and based on many of the e-mails I receive, commended on being so), if I were to admit anything concerning my behavior during these last five-plus years as a lung cancer survivor, it would have to be my continual tendency to minimize new symptoms, and in turn, not contact my oncologist (which from the very beginning is the exact opposite of what we are told to do). Stupid, stubborn, scared, naive, in denial; you pick.

I mention this subject/behavior because over the last month or so, I've noticed some changes in my breathing. Not characteristic of or similar at all to the symptoms I experienced last July – which led to an eight-day, seven-night stay at a local hospital during which 4.5 liters of fluid were drained from my left lung – still, there have been some challenges/abnormalities of which I have been aware. Challenges which, when they involve your breathing AND YOU HAVE LUNG CANCER, are probably best NOT IGNORED. And certainly I didn't ignore them. I acknowledged them; I simply neglected to do anything about them (now I have, but that's not the point of this column).

Now before you ask the obvious rhetorical question: "How could you (meaning me) be so stupid?" let me try to explain, or for those who know me: rationalize my behavior. I am not assigning any blame here whatsoever. This is my doing, or rather not doing; hopefully which won't lead to my undoing. To invoke and quote Moe Howard from a Three Stooges episode where The Stooges were thought to have kidnapped a baby: "It was my idea and I don't think much of it." The decision (or non decision), the responsibility and/or the consequences fall on me.

As to the specific reasons how I could be so stupid, considering my circumstances, read on, McDuff. It's easy when you're scared. Part of my irrational thinking is (A) these new symptoms are much different from and somewhat less obvious (ergo, easier to dismiss) than those I experienced last August. So maybe it's not as serious? Maybe it's the pollen count? Maybe, maybe maybe. Now before you even think it, obviously I know that there are many cancer-related symptoms and not having a recurrence of one certainly doesn't (shouldn't) minimize or marginalize the others. But from the date of diagnosis, you're in a sort of self-preservation mode; this is yet another example. As George Costanza advised Jerry Seinfeld on how to beat a lie detector test: "It's not a lie, if you don't believe it." So I try not to believe the symptoms are relevant. And (B) if I don't tell the oncologist about these new symptoms, then he can't tell me that my cancer – which has already metastasized and is inoperable (stage IV), has reasserted itself and I really am terminal and really should get my things in order. Similar to what he initially advised Team Lourie back on February 27, 2009.

Thinking "(A)" and behaving like "(B)" has finally brought me to "(C)." I am now seeing doctors for an evaluation/assessment, completing lab work and taking diagnostic tests, and waiting for further instructions. And though I may have been late to this party, hopefully, it will have been fashionable, not fatal.

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

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