Strolling in the Rain at Vienna’s Church Street

Making Plans for Vienna’s 125th Anniversary

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Gov. Terry McAuliffe carves the turkey served to families at Shelter House on Thursday, Nov. 27, in Fairfax.

Homelessness, A Year-Round Issue

Gov. McAuliffe serves Thanksgiving lunch at Shelter House.

By Abigail Constantino
The Connection

“D
o you like the stuffing? I made it,” said Gov. Terry McAuliffe on Thanksgiv-
ing, as he mingled with guests of Shelter House. Earlier, the gover-

nor donned a hairnet and served lunch to invited clients and residents at the Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter in Fairfax.

“Fairfax County does an excellent job in providing for those who need shelter, who need food,” said McAuliffe. “I was so hon-

ored to come out here with my family to show our support and give back a little bit.” Though he said we all have something to be thankful for, there are those who are re-

ally in need.

Mo, his wife, and their two children ar-

rived at the shelter the night before. He was working two full time jobs when he got hurt at work. He lost one job and started falling behind on his bills. “It was just me providing for my family and I couldn’t do it anymore,” he said. He has been in the U.S. for 15 years, emigrating from West Africa.

“I’ve never been in the shelter. Most of the time people talk about the shelter, and it’s, like, you know, you are somebody who doesn’t want to work. And, I’m not like that.”

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT
Jolie Smith said Mo’s situation is very com-

mon. “Really, all they need is a hand up not a handout.” With the help they re-

ceive, she has witnessed people bounce back. “A couple of months’ rent, a secu-
rity deposit and they’re off and running,” she said.

But there are those whose needs require more than financial help. “Thanksgiving, you’re supposed to be with your friends but right now, I cannot be with my family and friends,” said “Lee” (name changed for se-

curity). Lee fled from domestic violence and her husband does not know where she is staying. “He kind of knows I’m in a shelter. He knows I have no friends, no relatives. He pushed me out. Where am I supposed to go?”

Lee never called the police because her husband was the only one working in the family. “Since I got married, I kind of lost myself. I used to be very confident...go to work. But I have been a housewife for eight years. I don’t know what I can do.” Lee left her children with her husband, while she regains her independence and learns to be self-sufficient. “I want to get custody of them. I want to fight for them,” she said.

McAuliffe visited the tables of the fami-

lies he served and took photographs with them. Jennifer Erazo posed with him and nervously forgot to ask her question about housing for people with disabilities. “There’s a lot of housing for low funds, domestic vio-

lence. There should be more for people with mental disabilities,” she said. She is deal-

ing with mental health issues and domestic violence.

LAST SEPTEMBER, McAuliffe announced his measure to expand healthcare services to over 200,000 Virginians. Through a se-

ries of executive actions, the plan includes care and coverage for people with mental illness. The plan was a reduction from a more ambitious one that was thwarted by the General Assembly when it shut down the expansion of Medicaid in the common-

wealth. He said that about $26 billion of Virginia taxpayer money has gone to Washington, D.C. and the commonwealth has a right to bring that money back. “It’s unconscionable that we’re not doing that,” he said.

About 26.2 percent of sheltered home-

less persons have a severe mental illness, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. But although mental illness may contrib-
ute to homelessness, the lack of low-in-

come housing is the predominant cause of homelessness, according to a 1994 study by Shinn and Gillespie published in American Behavioral Scientist.

November is homelessness awareness month. Shelter House executive director Joe Meyer said that homelessness is not just a holiday or a seasonal issue. “It’s a year-round issue that we need to address.”
Strolling in the Rain at Vienna’s Church Street

Residents, neighbors enjoy traditional season kick-off.

It started 18 years ago when the Historic Vienna organization and Vienna merchants decided to close Church Street for one night and bring holiday cheer.

Stores remained open, performers strolled the streets, a stage was set up and singers from local schools entertained the crowds. Santa came and helped Vienna’s mayor light up the Christmas tree across from historic Freeman store. Citizens brought canned foods to share with those in need and bonfires were lit to roast marshmallows and warm visitors hands and hearts.

Dec. 1, 2014, was no different than previous years except this year the skies brought rain. But this did not dampen the spirits of those who came together to watch their children perform on stage, nor delay Santa from arriving to light Vienna’s tree.

The center of each year’s holiday festivities is Freeman store, located at 131 Church Street N.E. The store was formed as a historic preservation in 1976 by Vienna’s Town Council and offers handmade gifts and holiday items. This year Vienna’s Historic society collaborated with artist Rachel Peden, from Farnham, Va. to create and hand-paint 15 historic building replica ornaments. The collectible ornaments are available for sale.

Scottish settlers first settled in 1760 and named the area Ayr-Hill. In 1849 Dr. William Hendrick agreed to settle in Ayr-Hill only if the town’s name was changed to Vienna, his hometown in upstate New York. At the time the town of Vienna had 300 residents. Today Vienna’s population is 14,000.

The second floor of Freeman’s Store is a grand collection of historic paintings, posters, dresses, pharmaceutical items, an organ, and adding machine. Mike Berger, chairman of the Museum Committee, has spent countless hours in assembling the display items and enhancing visitors understanding.

Helping in the celebration is Jon Vrana.

In period costume he entertained the guests by playing the reconditioned organ from 1920 and the ukulele.

—Terrance Moran
**Making Plans for 125th Anniversary**

**Town of Vienna was founded in 1890.**

By Bonnie Hobbs  
*The Connection*

The Town of Vienna’s 125th anniversary is next year, and plans to commemorate it are already beginning. In fact, the Town Council has already allocated $10,000 for it.

Parks and Recreation Director Cathy Salgado made a list of possible ways the Town could celebrate this historic day. Then she presented it to the Town Council so the members could tell her which ones they liked.

The actual date Vienna was founded was Feb. 28, 1890; and in 2015, it’ll fall on a Saturday. But the overall idea is to pay homage to the founding of Vienna by holding special events and doing particular things, all year long. One way in which it could be honored is via a re-enactment on Church Street; and if the weather’s good, it could even be held outside.

Another possibility is to have the local businesses strolling, music and a children’s activity. While closing a portion of the street for pedestrians, it could even be held outside.

Noting that 25 percent of Vienna’s residents are originally from another country, Salgado said they could be highlighted in the Town’s newsletter and on the Town website. She said the many longtime residents could be featured, as well.

Another suggestion is that Vienna create a new, Town event in August. It would be a “Dinner in White,” to which people would wear white clothing and eat together outside. They’d also sit and eat with people they don’t know so everyone could get to know each other better and make new friends.

Yet another idea is to recreate a historic, Vienna horse race on the Fourth of July. Salgado also noted that the Town’s official holiday card from 1948 could be revived and recreated.

“The banners would be the biggest cost, but I think they’d look very nice,” said Councilwoman Linda Colbert.

“And we could leave them up the entire year,” added Councilman Howard Springsteen.

Salgado said there would be a total of eight banners in the center of Town. The Council members especially liked this idea, and Salgado said she’d look into their design and cost and report back to the Council at a later date.
Opinion

Be Part of Children’s Connection 2014

Annual edition showcases youth art and writing.

During the last week of each year, The Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

We welcome student’s original ideas. Here are some suggestions:

- Drawings or paintings or photographs of your family, friends, pets or some favorite activity. These should be photographed or scanned and submitted in jpeg format. Photos of sculpture or larger art projects are also welcome.
- Short answers (50 to 100 words) to some of the following questions: If you could give your parents any gift that didn’t cost money what would that gift be? What are you most looking forward to in the upcoming year? What is one thing that you would change about school? What do you want to be when you grow up? What is your favorite animal? What is your favorite toy? What makes a good parent? What makes the best or worst thing that happened to you? What is the best gift you’ve ever given? Ever received?
- Your opinion (50 to 100 words) about newspapers, traffic, sports, restaurants, video games, toys, trends, politics, etc.
- Poetry or other creative writing.
- News stories from school newspapers.
- Photos and text about activities or events. Each school can make a separate contribution from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location.

Email submissions for the Children’s Connection to editors@connectionnewspapers.com.

To send CDs or flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail to Children’s Connection, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please send all submissions by Dec. 10. The Children’s Connection will publish the week of Dec. 27, 2014.

Mary Kimm, MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPEAKS.com

Help! I’ve Lost Everything!

By Ann Emmons Petri

You may think McLean is a nice, quiet place to live, but you are wrong. In our living room at this very minute lurks an almost invisible menace. It is small and innocent looking but in reality it is the scourge of our lives. Very simply put, it is our laptop computer. It is not what it seems to be. With a mind of its own, it waits patiently for the ideal time to strike.

“Help! I’ve lost everything!” is Bill’s usual panicked response when things go terribly wrong.

Bill’s usual panicked response is a call to our grandson Brian and Parisot, Republican nominee running in our area. He asked what the issues I cared about were, then relayed that he had the same concerns about including our business community in state and local politics, engaging younger people in policy decision making, and The conversation flowed on.

I was particularly impressed with his strong position on reducing regulations and taxes to increase take home pay - now that is true showing of someone who really understands the struggles of those like me who are new to the workforce and trying to scrape by and save up living in a place like pricey Northern Virginia. Even from this first meeting with Mr. Parisot, I could tell that he would be a great representative for this area.

Bill at the computer: With a mind of its own, it waits patiently for the ideal time to strike.

Letters to the Editor

Meeting a Candidate

To the Editor:

I am not a political person, but I recently attended a young professional’s event and met Craig Parisot, Republican nominee running for Virginia House of Delegates, 34th District, and I knew we had a new kind of candidate on our hands. You think of a politician and you think of the same old tired stump speech, shake hands, swap names, then move on to quickly greeting the next face in the room. When Craig came up to me and initiated our conversation I could tell that this was someone who was eager to learn, listen and lay out a real vision for his candidacy.

He asked what the issues I cared about were, then relayed that he had the same concerns about including our business community in state and local politics, engaging younger people in policy decision making, and The conversation flowed on.

I was particularly impressed with his strong position on reducing regulations and taxes to increase take home pay - now that is true showing of someone who really understands the struggles of those like me who are new to the workforce and trying to scrape by and save up living in a place like pricey Northern Virginia. Even from this first meeting with Mr. Parisot, I could tell that he would be a great representative for this area.

He is a breath of fresh air, and with him being a young, first time candidate with a business and technology background, he would be a perfect fit for this important House of Delegates seat. I urge anyone who isn’t already familiar with Craig Parisot to learn more about him at craigparisot.com, and strongly consider voting for him in the special election for the vacated seat in the 34th District.

Sam Veganeh
Vienna

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

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

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
vienna@connectionnewspapers.com
Kemal Kurpucbic
Editor 703-778-9414
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com
Amna Rehmatulla
Editors@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9410 ext. 427
arehmatulla@connectionnewspapers.com
Bonnie Hobbs
Community Ed 703-778-9438
bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com
Donna Manz
Community Ed 703-778-9438
dmanz@connectionnewspapers.com
Jon Roettman
Sports Editor 703-752-4013
jroettman@connectionnewspapers.com
@jroettman

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Debbie Funk
National Sales 703-778-9444
debbie@connectionnewspapers.com
David Griffin
Marketing Manager 703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Executive Vice President
Jerry Verone
jverone@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor in Chief
Steven Mauren
Managing Editor
Kemal Kurpucbic
Photography:
Deb Gibb, Craig Sterbutzel
Art/Design:
Laurence Poong, John Heidly
Production Manager:
Giovanni Flores

Special Assistant to the Publisher
Jeanne Theismann
jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com
@TheismannsMusli

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The Vienna Town Council on Nov. 17 approved a request to move the Planning Commission’s meetings to the Community Center.

The Council met at 7 p.m. in the Community Center’s third-floor meeting room, where it approved the move of the Planning Commission meetings there, effective Nov. 17. The meeting was adjourned to 7:15 p.m. because several members were absent and the agenda was already filled.

Lisa Sienicki, the town’s Planning Director, said the Planning Commission meetings would be moved to the Community Center because it is a state-of-the-art facility and it is a meeting place within the building, making it easier for the residents. Sienicki said the new location would also allow more people to attend the meetings, which are usually on the second floor of the building.

Several members of the Planning Commission were present, including Matt Flis, who seconded the motion to move the meetings to the Community Center.

The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be on Nov. 17, 2015, at 7 p.m. in the Community Center.

The Vienna Town Council is planning to move its meetings to the Community Center as well, but the move is not expected to take place until 2016.

The move of the Planning Commission meetings is expected to take place in early 2016, and the Town Council meetings are expected to move to the Community Center in late 2016.

The Community Center is a state-of-the-art facility that provides a great venue for public meetings and events. It is located at 101 Center St. and is open to the public during business hours.

The move of the Planning Commission meetings is expected to take place on Nov. 17, 2015, while the Town Council meetings are expected to move to the Community Center in late 2016.

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**Calendar**

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

**THROUGH SUNDAY/DEC. 4**

Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights. 5-9 p.m. Meadowlark Botanical Garden, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. A winter wonderland, including a flowing stream of softly glowing lights, a two-story animated fountain and a Gingerbread Village. Admission: $13 adults, $8 children ages 3-12, children under 3 are free.

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**FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 5-14**

Christmas Market & Winterfest. Friday, 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Tysons Corner Center Outdoor Plaza, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, Tysons Corner. Festival will include 30 vendors selling German holiday goods. Plus, mulled wine, German beer, German fare, hot chocolate and coffee. Enjoy the spectacular Christmas tree, entertainment, beer garden and other festive activities. Ongoing event.

**SATURDAY/DEC. 6**

Holiday Sing-A-Long. 4 p.m. Wolf Trap's Filene Center, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. No tickets are required, but patrons are encouraged to bring an unwrapped toy donation for Toys for Tots. For more information, visit wolftrap.org.

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 6-7**

Christmas Market & Winterfest. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Chain Bridge Road, Great Falls. Live music from the Dance-tet playing favorite dance tunes from the 1930s to today. Attire is ballroom casual, everyone is welcome. 703-759-2685 or www.friendsofclemy.com.

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 6-7**

Gingerbread House Decorating Festival. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Chain Bridge Road, Tysons Corner. Festival will include 30 vendors selling German holiday goods. Plus, mulled wine, German beer, German fare, hot chocolate and coffee. Enjoy the spectacular Christmas tree, entertainment, beer garden and other festive activities. Ongoing event.

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 6-7**

Holidays with Santa Paws. 12-2 p.m. Clemyjontri Park, 1017 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The Friends of Clemyjontri Park will join with the Fairfax County Park Authority to ring in the holidays with Santa Paws. There will be holiday-inspired crafts and goodies along with plenty of photo opportunities on the magical grounds of the newly renovated Clemyjontri Park. Bring your Pennies for Clemy and receive a Holiday treat from the Friends. www.friendsofclemy.com.

**HOLIDAY BALLROOM DANCE**

8-9 p.m. Viennese Waltz lesson, 9-11:30 p.m. dance. $20 for the evening. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Live music from the Dance-tet playing favorite dance tunes from the 1930s to today. Attire is ballroom casual, everyone is welcome. 703-759-2685 or www.colvinrun.org.

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Health Fair on Dec. 13
Antioch Christian Church and Everest College Nursing Students will host a fun filled carol sing-a-long and informative Health Fair on Dec. 13. This health fair will be a four-hour Open House event held on Saturday at Antioch Christian Church located at 1860 Beulah Road in Vienna. The fair will have 26 different stations that provide a wide array of health information for women, men, teens, children and the elderly. Topics range from Heart Health, Diabetes Disease, Ebola Awareness, Keeping jolly during the holidays to Stranger Danger. Participants will be able to gather health information, talk with the nursing students about their researched health projects and participate in demonstrations, blood pressure and blood sugar screenings. Participants will be able to obtain a freshly baked treat at the bake sale and participate in four service projects: Food Collection for CHO, winter coat collection, Medical supplies collection for Brother’s Brother, and an opportunity to select a toy or outfit to purchase for our Adopted Family Project for a family with 3 school-aged children. Consider participating in one of these service areas when you visit the fair.

One-of-a-kind Gifts on Display in Vienna
Every Thanksgiving weekend, the Vienna Community Center hosts the three-day juried holiday craft show presented by the Northern Virginia Handcrafters Guild. Shoppers and browsers come from throughout the region to choose one-of-a-kind handcrafted gifts for friends and family.

— Donna Manz

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Hand-painted decorative art pieces herald the holiday season.

Calendar

From Page 10
Corner’s Pastry Team. The class includes all the ingredients to construct a beautiful gingerbread house as well as a special souvenir. $75 per child, ages 3 to 12, inclusive of tax and gratuity. Event also takes place on Dec. 14, 20 and 21.

FRIDAY/DEC. 12
Annual Holiday Reception. 4-6 p.m. Vienna Town Hall, 127 Cedar Street S., Vienna. Mayor Laurie DiRocco and the Town Council invite the public to celebrate the holidays at the annual Holiday Reception. Enjoy the sounds of the holiday season with the James Madison High School Madrigals from 4:30 to 5 p.m. and the Vienna Choral Society from 5:30 to 6 p.m. Light refreshments will be provided by the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary. No cost and no RSVP required. For more information, contact the Mayor’s office at 703-255-6311 or mayor@viennava.gov.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 13 -14
Visit from Santa. 1:30-3:30 p.m. Santa Claus will be visiting the Freeman Store. Seated in his special chair next to Historic Vienna’s beautifully decorated Christmas tree – courtesy of the Optimist Club and the Ayr Hill Garden Club – he will meet his young visitors and hear their Christmas wishes. Parents (and grandparents) are encouraged to bring their cameras to capture the looks of joy and wonder as the little ones talk to the Man In Red. For information call 703-938-5187 or visit www.historicviennainc.org.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 31
New Year’s Eve in Entyse Wine Bar & Lounge. 9 p.m. to Midnight. The Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Boulevard, McLean. Celebrate the New Year with live musical entertainment provided by The Christopher Linman Jazz Ensemble and culinary delights. As the clock strikes midnight, welcome 2015 with a complimentary champagne toast. $100 minimum food & beverage purchase per person.

THURSDAY/JAN. 8, 2015
Dobet Gnahore. 8 p.m. The Barns Wolftrap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Discover delicate ballads and sensuous African grooves from this Grammy-winning vocalist, percussionist, and dancer praised as one of contemporary African music’s most charismatic talents. $25-30. 703-255-1900.

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**SPORTS**

**Oakton Girls’ XC Places 4th at Nike SE Regional**

Madison harriers compete at Foot Locker South.

The Oakton girls’ cross country team, which captured its second straight VHSL 6A state championship on Nov. 15, finished fourth at the Nike Southeast regional meet on Nov. 29 in Cary, N.C.

The Cougars posted a score of 176. Blacksburg (Va.) won the event with a score of 86, followed by Western Cary (N.C., 106) and Lake Braddock (143), which placed runner-up in 6A at the VHSL state meet.

The top two teams and the top five unattached individuals qualified for the national meet on Dec. 6 in Portland, Ore.

Sophomore Casey Kendall led the way for Oakton, finishing 15th with a time of 18:07.7. Sophomore Leya Salis finished 24th for the Cougars with a time of 18:16.7.

Senior Allie Klimkiewicz finished 35th (18:30.4), freshman Kira Buttrey was 80th (19:01.7) and junior Jill Bracaglia finished 97th (19:19.3).

Patriot High School sophomore and VHSL state champion Rachel McArthur won the individual competition with a time of 17:16. Klimkiewicz (third), Kendall (fourth), Salis (11th) and Buttrey (15th) earned all-state honors at the VHSL state meet.

Members of the Madison girls’ cross country team competed at the Foot Locker South regional meet on Nov. 29 in Charlotte, N.C.

Madison sophomore Devon Williams finished 24th with a time of 17:57. Senior Amanda Swaak came in 28th (17:59), junior Morgan Wittrock finished 36th (18:08), senior Laura Sullivan took 93rd (18:08) and junior Catherine Stone finished 136th (19:31).

Ryen Frazier, a senior at Ravenscroft School in Raleigh, N.C., won the event with a time of 16:27.

The Madison Warhawks placed third at the state meet. Williams (eighth), Swaak (10th) and Wittrock (13th) earned all-state honors.

**Langley Boys’ Basketball Enters 2014-15 with Increased Depth**

Saxons have just one senior on the roster.

By Jon Roetman
The Connection

Second-year Langley boys’ basketball coach Scott Newman hopes to build on the success the team experienced near the end of last season, when it finished third in Conference 6 despite a slow start.

Increased size and depth should help the Saxons’ cause.

While Langley’s roster includes just one senior, Newman said this year’s team has the talent to allow him to play 10 or 11 players on a given night rather than the rotation of seven or eight he played last season. Mix in five players listed at 6 feet 3 or taller and Newman is excited for his second year at the helm.

“Our greatest strength is our depth,” said Newman, who was a Langley assistant before taking over head-coaching duties last season. “…It’s unlike any team I’ve coached at Langley.”

One big reason for Newman’s optimism is 6-foot-4 forward Nate Shafer. The junior is a shot-blocking force at the defensive end and can score in the paint.

“Nate Shafer is just a tremendous shot-blocker and interior defender,” Newman said. “…When we’re forced to help [on defense], Nate can [make a difference]. … Whenever we have a breakdown, having Nate at the back of the defense … really [helps. He] cleans up a lot of mistakes that we make. … I would be really surprised if he was not one of the two or three guys in discussion for Defensive Player of the Year in our league.”

Along with Shafer, senior guard Alex Callaghan, junior guard Daniel Salamone, junior forward Chris Miner and sophomore guard Aaron Kim return with varsity experience.

“Callaghan will start at point guard for the Saxons. Salamone and junior guard Tavon Tarpley are two of the Saxons’ top perimeter players.”

“(Salamone has) really matured and advanced his game,” Newman said. “He’ll be one of our key perimeter threats. … [Tarpley is] long, he’s athletic, he’s quick and he’s our best perimeter defender. He’s also crafty on offense and gets to the rack.”

Six-foot-4 sophomore Sami El-Rafey could see significant time at forward.

Six-foot-6 junior John Bau provides Langley with additional size in the paint.

Langley opens the season with a home game against Osbourn at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 3. After hosting Herndon on Dec. 5, the Saxons will travel to face rival McLean on Dec. 12.

“The No. 1 thing that I’ve taken away from my first year going into my second year is I’m trying to be much more level as a coach and more consistent and even-keeled,” Newman said. “I’m taking an approach to build their confidence and believe in their abilities.”
George Mason was recognized for its commitment to health and wellness.

George Mason University’s wellness efforts recently earned national recognition for the school.

“It gives me great pride to see our community coming together in the areas of wellness and well-being.”
— Kerry Ross, George Mason University

By Marilyn Campbell
The Connection

George Mason University’s well-being and wellness programs recently received national recognition when the Fairfax-based university was chosen as the first higher education institution in Virginia to join the Healthy Campus Initiative, an effort to encourage colleges and universities to make their campuses healthier by adopting guidelines around food and nutrition, physical activity and programming.

Last month, the Partnership for a Healthier America unveiled the pilot program at the American Public Health Association’s annual conference in New Orleans. (Leaders from The Healthier Campus Initiative praised Mason for its commitment to a health and for agreeing to adopt more guidelines on food and nutrition, physical activity and programming in the next three years.

“We are proud and challenged to continue this energy toward a Healthier Campus Initiative,” said Bill Ehling, executive director of Mason recreation.

“I am continually appreciative of the past efforts and results to provide a genuine sense of a healthier community at George Mason University.”

Mason officials point to statistics from The American Public Health Association, which show that during the first year in college, students’ overweight and obesity rates increase by more than 15 percent. Additionally, most college students do not meet dietary and physical activity guidelines. PHA officials say, at the same time, the college years are a time when lifelong habits begin to form because most students are making their own choices about healthy eating and fitness.

“As a Mason alumna,” said Kerry Ross, director of benefits and faculty/staff well-being, “it gives me great pride to see our community coming together in the areas of wellness and well-being.”

— Kerry Ross, George Mason University

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Providing Free Estimates Since 1984
By KENNETH E. LOURIE

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Nevertheless, it is cause for concern. The kidney is a major organ. As it goes, so might yours truly go, and consequently its affect has been an ongoing theme/point of awareness during my six years of treatment. Fortunately, miraculously maybe (for all I know), a week later the second/rescheduled lab work showed that my creatinine levels had returned to its previous high normal and thus chemotherapy went on/in as semi usual. And thus begins, according to my oncologist, my new normal. I will continue to be scheduled for infusions every three weeks with my pre-chemistry lab work completed the Wednesday before the Friday. If my creatinine levels are high, we’ll delay and reschedule the infusion for a week later as happened during this past interval. Now, I wish to disclose what schedule we’ll follow if abnormal creatinine levels persist. As has been established during previous conversations between Team Lough and my oncologist, scenario questions are not helpful and we rarely venture into any what-ifs/what-abouts until absolutely necessary.

But what we did discuss at this last appointment was my future, a little bit. Considering the “shrinkage” written about in last week’s column, my oncologist was very encouraged and characterized my treatment going forward as something we’re going to do for awhile. But he said it does matter of fact, that we sort of took it for granted. He didn’t really see about it and we didn’t expect either. He said it.He didn’t really emphasize it. But he meant it. It was all good, that’s for sure.

On the way home, my wife, Diana and I reviewed what my oncologist had said and we became even more giddy at what had transpired and said. It was certainly news with which we could live and that’s what we intend to do. I’m not about to look a gift oncologist in the mouth. Since nothing seems broken, I’m not looking to fix anything.

Since It Ain’t Broken...

By KENNETH E. LOURIE

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Kathrin Swoboda, of Vienna, received the Nature Visions’ “Best in Show in Fine Art” award at the recent 2014 Nature Visions Photo Expo. Her photograph is titled “Delicate Nectar Gatherer.” The photograph was taken from her Vienna home. Nature Visions is one of the premier photography expos in Northern Virginia. The expo was held Nov. 14-16 at the Hylton Performing Arts Center in Manassas. “This year there were 1,335 entries from 155 local photographers for our nature and fine art competitions,” said Corbett. The talent and creativity is a joy to behold,” said Bill Corbett, McLean Photo Club and President, Nature Visions Photo Expo. Camera clubs and their membership from throughout Northern Virginia and beyond were contributors to the Expo.

“I am a physician turned stay-at-home mom turned amateur nature photographer. I like exploring the beauty of nature with a camera to capture what can’t be seen with the naked eye,” said Swoboda. “This award inspires me to seek art in nature,” added Swoboda.

—David Siegel
Capitol Steps Performs at Shepherd’s Center

The sold-out audience was rolling in the aisles when nationally recognized comedy troupe, Capitol Steps, appeared at the 2014 benefit performance for the Shepherd’s Center of Oakton-Vienna (SCOV). SCOV serves older adults in Oakton, Vienna, Merrifield, Dunn Loring and portions of Fairfax and Reston.

Founded in 1997, the Shepherd’s Center of Oakton-Vienna is a volunteer-based non-profit organization dedicated to providing opportunities for adults (50+) to seek rewarding lives and to live independently in their homes for as long as possible. Last year SCOV’s services, personal enrichment and volunteer opportunities reached more than 3,000 older adults (50+) in the region.

In 2014 the agency was recognized by the National Volunteer Caregiving Network with their Program of the Year award. In 2012 SCOV was voted the Best Nonprofit of the Year by the Vienna Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Each year more than 200 volunteers at SCOV serve as medical drivers, companion drivers, friendly callers and visitors, health and wellness counselors, fundraisers, and grant writers. These volunteers run programs such as Lunch n’ Life, Adventures in Learning, trips and outings, special events, and caregivers’ support groups. Services and programs are available to anyone age 50+ who lives in Oakton, Vienna, Merrifield, Dunn Loring and portions of Fairfax and Reston.

The 2014’s SCOV Capitol Steps event received additional support from Ready Hands Home Care, Presenting Sponsor and Navy Federal Credit Union, Platinum Sponsor. Additional Sponsorship support was provided by the Estate Planning & Elder Law Firm, P.C.; VLP Financial Advisors; The Law Office of Michele H. Wright, P.L.C.; Booze/Allen/Hamilton; Arden Courts; Ashby Ponds; Heavenly Paws; Home Care Assistance; Homewatch Caregivers of Falls Church; Money & King; Sunrise Senior Living; A First-Class Move; Heavenly Paws; Tall Oaks Assisted Living; Greenspring; The Balch Family; Goodwin House; Fisher Group, LLC; Advent Funeral Home; Arbor Terrace of Herndon; Doc Talker; Garai Orthodontists; Great Falls Assisted Living; Hale, Ball, Carlson, Baumgartner, Murphy, PLC; Title One Settlement Group; The Woodlands; Westminster at Lake Ridge; Vienna Manor and Comfort Keepers.

To learn more about SCOV and how you can support their mission, visit their website at www.scov.org or call Michelle Scott, Executive Director at 703 281-5088, director@scov.org.

Pictured at pre-event reception are, from left, Jude and Richard Duesterhause, SCOV Board Chair; Mark Eaton, Capitol Steps; William Kirby, SCOV Board Vice Chair and Nina & Don Kissenger, Homewatch CareGivers of Falls Church, Silver Sponsor.