

Wakefield's Halil Parks, left, made the game-winning shot against Robinson in the Warriors' holiday tournament final on Dec. 30.

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PHOTO BY JEFF MCQUILKIN

College Applications Submitted — The Long Wait Begins

Navigating the process to admission.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

The waiting begins for four Arlington high school seniors who have submitted their college applications due in early January. They discuss the college application process, the details, frustrations and strategies.

Matt Tornquist, a senior at Yorktown High School says he started college visits during the summer of 2014 but there were no students there at that time. He revisited in the fall so he could get a better picture — what were the students wearing, were they active outside, “and I always ate a meal there. And then this year during break I took a big road trip to eight schools.”

Clifton Kubiak, senior at Yorktown, agreed. When he visited Belmont University all the kids were on break and he didn’t get the vibe, but at Virginia Tech “all 35,000 students were there so it was more exciting.”

Agnes Cheng, a senior at H-B Woodlawn said you should always check the library and the dining hall. “If there is silence and students are studying while they eat, it’s not for me.” Cheng added that it’s important if you can find an alum to give you a more honest tour of the school. Otherwise all of the standard tours begin to sound alike. “When I went to Yale I stayed overnight with a friend which is a good idea.” She said some schools track whether you have been there as a sign of interest.

Elana Filipos, a senior at Yorktown, said it is important to visit the schools where you apply. When she visited Boston College she found “there was just something about it, too bland.” Cheng agreed that Boston College was similar to a lot of other colleges she had applied to, but when she visited, “it didn’t fit my personality. And I’d heard that Johns Hopkins had a really competitive atmosphere and didn’t think I would like it. But I did so I applied there.”

Tornquist said he thought Drexel sounded kind of interesting but when he got there



Clifton Kubiak



Agnes Cheng



Matt Tornquist



Elana Filipos

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

he found it was “very urban, no grass anywhere and students lived in 20-story dorms. Not for me.”

Cheng said it is also important to set up interviews or music performances early for your college visits. She said her friend had to go around hauling her harp for music auditions.

Tornquist said that he had six interviews, two with alumni locally, “which is easier because you don’t have to travel to the school.”

So how does a prospective college student decide where to apply? Kubiak said he knew he wanted to be in an urban area. “The smallest school I applied to was Belmont University in Nashville. I’m going to George Mason University but my parents are moving to Nashville.” Kubiak has already been accepted through the early action process at George Mason where he plans to major in acting and directing stage and film.

Cheng says you have to do a lot of research on when to apply, and “it’s kind of a game.” At MIT, for instance, the early decision pool is small and so there is more competition than a regular submission in early January. In other schools it is to your advantage to apply early, and you have a better chance of acceptance. And if you apply for early acceptance at least you may know in November that you got in somewhere.

Cheng said, “I was all over the map in my applications. I am interested in science and engineering.” But she applied at small, middle and bigger schools with the Northeast weather and culture the unifying theme in her choices.

Tornquist’s parents both went to small liberal arts colleges. Since he is interested in

engineering he visited UVA in September but didn’t like the big school vibes. “But it’s hard to find a good small school with engineering.”

Filipos knew she liked a large school since her parents had both gone to the University of Maryland and she had been attending their football games since she was young. But she is also interested in Tulane University in New Orleans as well because they have an entire school devoted to her public health interest.

Cheng advised to start everything early because it is going to take longer than you can imagine to submit all of the pieces of paper. She had started her universal college essay in class in June.

Kubiak said, “I think it is as stressful as you make it,” although he admitted that he put off the personal essay, the most daunting, until October and then hired a personal counselor to help get him through the process in time.

Filipos said, there are so many components — the transcripts, test scores, recommendations, the essay for the Common Application and then the individual questions that each school requires.

“There is a lot going on at once,” Cheng said. “You have all of the tabs on your computer open at the same time.” And Cheng added, “sometimes colleges lose stuff.”

Filipos said they had lost her transcript and Kubiak said they’d lost his, too. Tornquist said each school has its own set of questions, usually asking why you want to come to their college but sometimes they ask something “like who is your favorite superpower.”

They agreed that it was challenging to try to distinguish themselves in their essay from

every other applicant. Cheng said one of the colleges told her that no matter how much time you spend trying to create an impression that they had read every essay that could possibly be written. What they wanted was for you to personalize it and they want to see how you write. In addition, all four students agreed it is important to ask your teacher and counselor for recommendations early because the counselors get behind.

Tornquist said at Yorktown a counselor can have 50 students assigned to him, and Filipos said some counselors have a standard recommendation form and just plug in the student’s name. “A college can tell and, that doesn’t do any good.”

But Cheng said at H-B Woodlawn her homeroom teacher is her counselor so that makes the process much easier for her.

In an attempt to distinguish themselves, students often pick up a bunch of clubs their junior year. But they say colleges can tell the pattern. Cheng has had the same art teacher since 7th grade and she feels that recommendation will show a long-standing interest which Cheng feels is important. Same with Kubiak who has had the same theatre teacher for four years and threw himself into what he was interested in. Tornquist said his approach is to be well rounded with sports, community service and art.

Cheng wrote her essay on her mother’s cancer as her viewpoint changed from a child into adulthood. Filipos had a brother with special needs who is now 23. Her essay dealt with her attempts to cope and understand, especially as a child. Kubiak focused on the definition of intelligence which he views as warped and with no meaning. “Your GPA affects everything but if the definition instead was how well a person understood the world around them, it would enable change.” Tornquist wrote about his summer counselor-in-training experiences and the impact that took him from childhood to adulthood and helped him get over his public speaking issues.”

Now the countdown begins until the emails arrive in a few months followed by the large — or the small — envelopes from the schools.

BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to arlington@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS IN JANUARY

Pop-Up Library Hours. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. on Tuesdays, 2-6 p.m. on Thursdays at Arlington Mill Community Center, 909 S. Dinwiddie St. Find a selection of books and DVDs, get a library card, and get one-on-one tech help. Free. Visit www.library.arlingtonva.us for more.

SATURDAY/JAN. 9

Blood Drive. 7 a.m.-5 p.m. at Kettler Capitals Iceplex, 627 N. Glebe Road. The Washington Capitals and Inova Blood Donor Services will host a blood drive. Blood drive donors will receive a bobblehead of forward Justin Williams as well as a Capitals T-shirt. Call 1-866-BLOODSAVES to make an appointment.

Free Paper Shredding & Inert Material

Drop-Off. 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at Earth Products Yard, 4300 29th St. S. Acceptable materials include paper (including staples, paper clips), checks and checkbooks. Unacceptable materials include magazine, catalogs, credit cards, binders, or phone book-sized materials. Inert materials include asphalt, ceramic tile, concrete, earth, Masonry block, rock, and sand. Free for residents only, no businesses allowed. Visit www.recycling.arlingtonva.us for more.

SAT/ACT Prep Workshop. 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Arlington Mill Community Center, 909 S. Dinwiddie St. The course includes four hours of instruction covering all elements of the SAT and ACT tests, one-on-one work with instructors and follow-up student and parent consultation. The session costs \$140. Call 703-228-7780 for more.

SUNDAY/JAN. 10

TreeStewards Application Deadline. The TreeStewards of Arlington and Alexandria are volunteers dedicated to improving the health of urban trees through educational programs, tree planting and care, demonstrations and tree maintenance throughout the community. New

volunteer training will be held Tuesday evenings, starting Feb. 2-April 12, 2016, with some Saturday mornings. Free. Visit www.TreeStewards.org.

MONDAY/JAN. 11

“Moving Words” Poetry Contest Deadline.

Six poets will have their work printed and displayed inside area buses April-September. Winners will also each receive a \$250 honorarium, and will be invited to give a public reading of their work in April 2016 during National Poetry Month. This contest will be juried by poet Francisco Aragón. Free to enter. Visit www.arlingtonarts.org for more.

TUESDAY/JAN. 12

News on Brain Function. 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Walter Reed Community Center, 2909 S. 16th St. Norton Beckerman, author of “A User’s Guide to a Healthy Brain,” will discuss a key discovery about the brain, how it has changed the perception of the brain in the neuroscience community, and how it supports the conclusion that aging itself doesn’t cause cognitive decline. Free. Call 703-228-0949 to register.

Coffee in the Beer Garden

Every Wednesday in January, Arlington Neighborhood Village (ANV) welcomes residents to “Coffee and Conversation” at the Westover Market Beer Garden & Haus, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Free. Bring a friend to meet ANV members and volunteers, listen to a speaker, and learn more about aging in place with Arlington Neighborhood Village. See www.arlnv.org.

Upcoming events:

- ❖ Jan. 13 - AARP’s Fraud Watch
- ❖ Jan. 20 - Arlington Transit Options for Seniors
- ❖ Jan. 27 - “Villages” - A National Movement

New Year's Resolutions for County Board

New leadership faces new challenges and old problems.

BY VERNON MILES
THE CONNECTION

While many of the goals set by the Arlington County Board for 2016 were familiar, like expanding school capacity, signs of the new perspectives and new leadership began to take hold at its Jan. 1 meeting.

"Clearly, some things are going to be different this year, but a lot will stay the same," said Libby Garvey. "I'm confident that, together, our residents, our businesses, our staff, and this new board will make sure that Arlington delivers outstanding customer service to all our residents and businesses, that every Arlingtonian who wants can have a voice in our government, and that we will work strategically to make this wonderful county even better."

For Garvey, the top priority in 2016 is refining the county's "customer service." Garvey referred to the current permitting and zoning system as "Byzantine" and complicated to the point where many county officials struggle to understand it, much less businesses and citizens. For Garvey, the county must do more than simplify the process, it needs to have the system presented online in an easily explainable format.

Garvey also targeted sign ordinance as another area of stifling regulation in Arlington.

"We have people coming up with really cool and exciting ideas for signs, and then we tell them their ideas don't fit within the confines of our regulations," said Garvey. "Part of the charm of Arlington, particularly



Libby Garvey, chair of the 2016 Arlington County Board

along the Pike and in our older districts, is how not-standard everything is. It helps create an authentic personality, which draws and keeps people here. Our newer areas like Rosslyn and Crystal City need to be able to try different things as well."

Another subset of Garvey's "customer service" focused on transit, a topic which in the past put Garvey at odds with fellow board members. Garvey and the County Board's independent John Vihstadt opposed the Columbia Pike streetcar project, which was ultimately cancelled in 2014. Garvey expressed frustration that staff had failed to bring forward any substitute transportation policy in 2015, but that later in the month, County Manager Mark Schwartz would report to the board about potential transit plans.

The streetcar was one of several major Arlington projects that saw Garvey clash with Democratic members of the County Board. Garvey's support of Vihstadt against fellow Democrat Alan Howze prompted her to resign from the Arlington Democratic Party, which says that no committee members or officers could publically support candidates opposing a Democrat.

But if there was lingering resentment from the 2014 election controversy, it wasn't apparent at the board's first 2016 meeting.

Jay Fiset, vice-chair and most senior member of the board, expressed support for Garvey's stated priorities.

"I support the chair's focus on improving customer service, particularly with building permit," said Fiset. "We can always do more to streamline processes, improve predictability, and enhance customer service."

But for his own priorities, Fiset focused on problems the County Board has struggled with for years. The biggest challenge, Fiset said, is adding the facilities needed to support Arlington's growing population in the increasingly limited available space. Fiset specifically noted school overcrowding as part of that crisis. In their last meeting on Dec. 15, the County Board voted

to approve a new elementary school's construction on a parking lot adjacent to Patrick Henry Middle School. The decision was opposed by neighbors, who criticized the project's lack of consideration for how a new school would impact local traffic, and lamented the loss of park space.

New board members Katie Cristol and Christian Dorsey emphasized the need for more affordable housing, another demand on Arlington's limited space.

"Land use remains our greatest challenge, both with respect to public facilities like schools and parks, and with respect to attracting and maintaining commercial tenants to restore our tax base," said Cristol. "Here, we need to follow through on a series of thoughtful, community-generated recommendations from the Community Facilities Study. The study group has urged us to action to address our threatened commercial tax base, and we need to focus this

year on efforts to streamline permitting, as our new chair has emphasized, and enabling more temporary commercial space uses to address our threatened commercial tax base."

Stephanie Pryor, president of the Arlington County Civic Federation, said that the land conflict is one that's haunted the county for at least the last 100 years since the Civic Federation was founded.

"One hundred years ago, the big questions were still the issues with too many people coming in," said Pryor.

Pryor also noted that while residents are still coming into Arlington, the county has still struggled to recover from the 2005 Base Realignment that pushed military offices and contractors out of Arlington. Today, Pryor said Arlington faces the added challenge of having to

compete with Loudoun County and other outlying suburbs of Washington D.C. for the kind of industry that has normally attracted. While it wasn't raised by members of the County Board as a 2016 priority, Pryor also noted that sewage and pipe infrastructure is one of Arlington's unspoken calamities.

"There's slow leaks going on across the county," said Pryor. "Look at the age of the pipes. A woman complained for years to Washington Gas about one but received no response. It took the Fire Department coming out to identify the leak ... There's slow leaks in the water pipes. People don't realize how much water is going into their yard."

For Pryor, there are still questions about Arlington's infrastructure the County Board needs to answer.

"How much capacity can we have?" asked Pryor. "Can the system handle it?"

"Land use remains our greatest challenge ..."

— **Katie Cristol, member, County Board**

OAR Provides Gifts for Children of Prisoners

Volunteers fill church for annual event.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

Volunteers gathered around tables piled with wrapping paper and looked at their individualized lists of children. Some of the volunteers have been participating for 15 years in the annual Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) gift-wrapping event for the children of incarcerated individuals. Each child's list has specific information on the age, gender and interests of the child along with individualized tags that have been signed by the parent. "The child recognizes their parent's handwriting and it means so much to see a special note from the incarcerated parent

on their gift," said the Rev. Kathy Dwyer, OAR board member.

Gail Arnall, former executive director of OAR, says the OAR staff started wrapping gifts for the children of prisoners almost 25 years ago in the OAR office for about 25 children. On Dec. 16 about 150 volunteers planned to wrap 1,200 presents, three each for about 395 children. Tables lined the walls of St. Andrews Episcopal Church stacked high with Candyland, Tough Truck, Barbies and LEGO duplo sets, puzzles and basketballs marked by age groups.

Volunteers roamed through the tables checking their child's list, inspecting the Star Wars figure and the book about whales and deciding on a good mix of presents for their assigned child.

A teen heads back to the food table to grab another square of pepperoni pizza and a carrot, then back to the table. "Can I bor-

row the scissors?" "Hmmm, does this piece of wrapping paper look big enough?" Scotch tape is applied liberally and then the gift is checked off on a master list in the corner of the room marked "delivery." OAR volunteers will personally take the packages to the homes of the children who live in Virginia, Maryland or D.C. If the children live out of the area, the packages are mailed. An OAR staff member said, "All of the packages will be taken to the post office tomorrow morning. They are opening early for us; we told them we will have hundreds of packages."

OAR was established in 1974 "by a local group of women from Arlington who volunteered in jails and saw a need for ongoing support of prisoners and ex-offenders who remained largely ignored and forgotten by society." Today OAR offers assistance both pre-release and post-release custom-



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Volunteers choose gifts for the children of incarcerated individuals at the Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) annual event on Dec. 16 at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church on Lorcom Lane.

ized to the needs and risk level of the individual. They offer life skills and education courses as well as evidence-based interventions pre-release. In addition, OAR provides emergency needs assistance for individuals immediately following their release.

New Year's Goals

A few wishes for the General Assembly, more coming ...

❖ **Expand Medicaid:** Expanding Medicaid to cover as many as 400,000 uninsured people in Virginia under the Affordable Care Act would come at virtually no cost to Virginia and would be a massive boost to Virginia's economy. The local and state economy is suffering from the loss of federal spending in other areas, and it's just plain crazy and mean-spirited to deny medical care for people who can't afford it otherwise, and at the same time, turn away an economic stimulus equal to 20,000 or more jobs and a direct infusion of nearly \$2 billion a year.

❖ **Fund Education:** Localities need more help from the Commonwealth to pay for schools.

❖ **Fostering Futures:** Help teens in foster care by extending services and support, including foster care maintenance payments, to qualifying individuals age 18 to 21 years. The money spent will be matched by Federal dollars, and every dollar spent helping former foster children

become independent, self-supporting adults saves a bundle in other costs down the line.

❖ **Stop Predatory Lending:** The local impacts of predatory lending, including some car title loans, can be devastating to struggling families and individuals who get into the cycle of high interest debt. This is not an issue of just allowing more choice as some have claimed. And when someone loses the vehicle he or she needs to get to work, the costs can extend.

Early Voting for Presidential Primary Starts Next Week

Every year is an election year in Virginia. Just two months ago, Virginia voters faced ballots for almost every state and local elected officials. While candidates spent millions of dollars and not very much changed, some critical races in Virginia have been decided by a fraction of one percent of votes cast.

Elections have had significant consequences here, and the coming election is likely to be in that category.

Early voting (absentee voting in person) for

U.S. Presidential Primaries starts Jan. 15, really, starting in just a little more than a week. The official primary date is March 1, but there is no reason to wait until then to vote.

Voters in Virginia don't register by party, but can only vote in either the Democratic or Republican primary. To vote in the Republican primary, each voter will need to sign a form asserting that he or she is in fact a Republican.

Democrats will choose between Hillary Clinton, Martin O'Malley and Bernie Sanders (in that order).

Republicans will choose among 13 candidates who will be listed in the following order: Marco Rubio, Lindsey Graham, Ben Carson, Rand Paul, Mike Huckabee, Ted Cruz, Donald Trump, Jim Gilmore, Chris Christie, Jeb Bush, Rick Santorum, John Kasich and Carly Fiorina.

For details on absentee voting in Fairfax County, see www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/absentee.htm.

For details on absentee voting in the City of Alexandria, see www.alexandriava.gov/Elections.

For details on absentee voting in Arlington, see vote.arlingtonva.us/absentee/.

— MARY KIMM
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EDITORIAL

VIEWPOINTS

Arlingtonians Make New Year's Resolutions

New Year's resolutions are a tradition most common in the Western Hemisphere in which a person makes a promise to himself for some kind of self improvement or act of kindness to others in the upcoming year. At the end of the Great Depression about a quarter of American adults made New Year's resolutions. At the start of the 21st century, this had increased to 40 percent. Studies of New Year's resolutions have shown that most participants fail to keep their resolutions due to setting unrealistic goals, forgetting about them or making too many resolutions. Popular among this year's group of interviewees was healthy habits — eating better and exercising.

— SHIRLEY RUHE

Garret Scavotto, 28-year-old Arlington County gardener with Parks and Recreation, says, "I used to run. I'm going to start running again and do a marathon, hopefully this year."



Orlando Roca, 33-year-old Arlington County gardener with Parks and Recreation, says, "my goal is to reach my degree in business administration from NOVA. I have two years already."



Rosanne Russo, 63-year-old who says she can't think of anything to do differently. She wants "to keep doing what I do. I work out every day and eat healthy."



Robert Quinn, 71-year-old retired and raising oysters on Northern Neck. "My son moved into the house he was raised in here in Arlington and we come back and visit sometimes. My resolution is to get my body and mind back together, to read more and get back to the Y after traveling a lot this year."



Arlene Burstrom, 76-year-old retired mother of three and grandmother of six. Burstrom says she has three resolutions. "At the top of my list is to exercise 3-4 days a week and stretch every day. I go to three classes geared for seniors and in the big gymnasium we walk to Frank Sinatra's 'New York, New York.' I could walk forever. My second resolution is to put my toe in the water on 50 years of photos in shoe boxes. Finally I plan to journal myself which I've wanted to do for many years. I do like to write and my mother wrote songs. Maybe it passed on to me."



Ronald Black Jr., 34-year-old personal trainer, says he wants to be a little more impulsive, not in a destructive sense but not to rethink too many things until the time has already passed by to do them, "to do things I have always wanted to do like traveling to another country than Iceland where I went this year, to pursuing a new skill, to educational pursuits beyond my master's degree."



Maryam Lewis, 54 tomorrow. "I just want to be healthy, eating properly, more exercise and walking."

Juana Banks, 21-year-old Arlington County recreation worker says, "Hmhmhm I would like to save money-wise and to procrastinate less. I need to work on it."



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New Year's Resolutions



Antonio Alvarez, 26-year-old Starbucks barista. Alvarez says his goal is to “open up my schedule to work even more in my little 7-year-old boy’s

school.” Alvarez says he has volunteered for field trips but has been asked to come in to the classroom to help students who don’t speak as good English.

Steve Fustier, 62-year-old counterterrorism guy. He says, my resolution is “always my weight. See my I-phone — it’s neat how far I’ve walked every day. But it’s pathetic. I want to go from 3,000 steps a day to 10,000 steps a day.”



Molly Mercedes, 5-years-old. According to her owner Tova Solo, she is going to learn to be much nicer to other dogs this year.” Solo says they called their dog Mercedes because Solo bought her husband a Mercedes with her bonus when she retired. But her husband said he felt too guilty so he bought Molly for Solo instead. They gave her the last name of Mercedes so they would have one Mercedes in the family.



Harry Larbarestier, 9-year-old says his New Year’s resolution is not to eat any more candy because “I’m getting way too fat.”



Barbara Earles, 67, “the oldest here at Giant.” Earles says she has worked at the same Giant store since 1990. “I’m going to try to get more exercise because I’m expecting my second great grandchild this year and I’ll need the energy.”

cise because I’m expecting my second great grandchild this year and I’ll need the energy.”

Collin McKinney, 49-year-old dog walker. “I guess my goal is to keep my 12-year old dog, Buddy, alive and to take good care of him.”



McKinney says, “But I made my last year’s resolution to quit smoking. I had smoked for 30 years and I smoked until midnight last year. But that was the last time.”

Tom Hnatowski, a retired attorney walking his dog at Gulf Branch Park, says, “I never make New Year’s resolutions. But if I say something I’m going to do, it’s get in better shape. The doc says lose weight — stay away from bread.” Hnatowski says he exercises now but might have to have a knee replacement. “I want to eat a lot healthier.”

Sharon Simkin, 75-year-old math tutor, grandmother of four, folk dancer, Bulgarian cook and food volunteer says, “I don’t usually make resolutions but you made me think about it. I want to be healthy and active in mind and body and keep doing all of the things I enjoy.”



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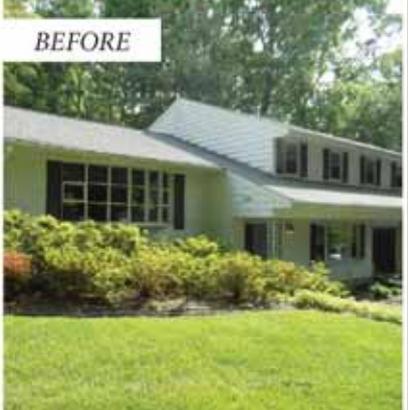
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ENTERTAINMENT

Signature Stages 'West Side Story'

Iconic show is a 1950s musical adaptation of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet."

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Signature Theatre in Arlington is staging "West Side Story," considered to be one of the greatest musicals of all time, through Jan. 24.

The highly stylized show is about two star-crossed lovers who find themselves wrenched between two rival gangs, the Jets and the Sharks, in New York City's Upper West Side in 1957 in this musical adaptation of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." The play features original choreography by Jerome Robbins and a score by Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim that includes "America," "Maria," "Somewhere," "I Feel Pretty," and "Tonight." It also marks the 25th production of a Stephen Sondheim musical in Signature Theatre's history. The 1961 film of the same name won 10 Academy Awards, including Best Picture.

MaryJoanna Grisso plays the role of Maria, a young girl who has just moved from Puerto Rico to New York City and is eager for the possibilities of being a young lady in America. "She falls in love for the first time and doesn't see the 'sides' the way the rest of the gangs do," she said. "She and Tony strive to have their love survive in a world of bigotry, hatred, and violence and are hopeful that there is a place for them, somewhere, in this world."

She said the role of Maria was a huge responsibility for her vocally, emotionally and

physically. "I have been fortunate to grow in this piece for almost 500 performances of Maria as I performed the role on the National Tour," she said. "But doing a new production, with a new cast always brings new and exciting challenges."

"And having different people to interact with changes your show completely," she said. "Also, getting used to the new thrust stage configuration is something that has been a challenge for me, as I am used to doing this piece on a proscenium stage. The performance feels much more intimate and in some ways a bit more honest rather than presentational as it would need to be in a huge theatre."

She hopes the audience will take away the incredible message and challenge that this show offers — "that the only way to stop violence and hatred is with extreme love and forgiveness," she said. "If we perpetuate violence with violence, we will never end the vicious cycle."

She added: "I hope people take away that 'there is a place for us,' a place of peace, but it has to begin with each of us, on a personal level. This show has changed my life. I know it will do the same for those who open their hearts to this incredible story."

Associate Artistic Director Matthew Gardiner said "West Side Story" is a show that they've wanted to produce at Signature Theatre for several years now, but it is also a mammoth show from a financial and



Michael Graceffa (Indio), Ilda Mason (Francisca), Natascia Diaz (Anita), Katie Mariko Murray (Rosalia), and Olivia Ashley Reed (Consuelo) in "West Side Story" at Signature Theatre through Jan. 24.

artistic perspective. "We finally feel like it was the right time to produce it," he said.

Gardiner said this musical is the perfect piece of theatre, "relevant and important in a country that seems to have grown more openly xenophobic by the day. Terrified by the other, terrified of the people that don't look and talk like us. This piece has been a reminder that we can do better."

He added: "I hope our production plays a small part in reminding people to be a little more understanding, a little more compassionate."

He said it was a challenge fitting 30 ac-

tors and 17 musicians into a 300-seat theatre, and finding a way to tell this epic story in an intimate space. "But it is what makes Signature so unique," he added.

"West Side Story" runs Tuesdays-Sundays, with matinees on Saturdays and Sundays. A student matinee has been added for Wednesday, Jan. 20 at noon. Tickets start at \$40. The Pride Performance is Jan. 8; a Discussion Performance is Jan. 13. Single tickets are available in person at the Signature Box Office at 4200 Campbell Ave., by calling 703-820-9771, and online at www.sigtheatre.org.

CALENDAR

Email announcements to arlington@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

ONGOING

Wordless Shakespeare: "As You Like It." Through Jan. 17, various times at Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell St. Synetic Theater presents a completely physical interpretation of "As You Like It." Tickets start at \$35 for adults, student tickets are \$15. Visit www.synetictheater.org for more.

"West Side Story." Through Jan. 24, various times at Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave. For Signature Theatre's adaptation of classic musical "West Side Story," no audience member will be further than 20 feet from the stage. Tickets start at \$40. Visit www.sigtheatre.org for more.

Christmas With Nova Y. Payton and Friends. Through Jan. 24, various times at Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave. Star of "Dreamgirls" and "Hairspray" sings some of her favorite holiday tunes. Tickets are \$35. Visit www.sigtheatre.org for more.

"The Civil War Grand Review." Through Feb. 1, Monday-Thursday

10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Tuesday-Wednesday 1-9 p.m.; Friday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Cherrydale Branch Library, 2190 Military Road. View "The Civil War Grand Review: Photos of the Sesquicentennial Reenactment Parade." Free. Call 703-228-6330.

Sci-Fi Book Club. Third Wednesday of each month, 7-8:30 p.m. at Java Shack, 2507 N. Franklin Road. Free. Visit www.library.arlingtonva.us.

Arlington's Historical Museum Open on First Wednesdays. The Arlington Historical Museum is open to the public on the first Wednesday of every month from 12:30-3:30 p.m. The museum consists of exhibits chronicling Arlington County's history from Native American settlements up to the present day. The museum will continue to be open on Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m. Admission is free. The museum is located in the former 1891 Hume School building at 1805 S. Arlington Ridge Road. Contact Garrett Peck at 571-243-1113 or at garrett.peck@arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org.

LGBT & Straight Friends Social. Tuesdays. Happy Hour, 3 p.m.-7 p.m.; Mikey's "Bar A" Video Wall, 7 p.m.; start time at 8 p.m. IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. For 21 years and older. Free. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com for more information.

Open Mic Comedy. Wednesdays 8-10 p.m. at Ri Ra Irish Pub, 2915 Wilson

Blvd. Doors open at 7 p.m. Age 21 and up only. Free show, \$25 cash prize for best joke. Call 703-248-9888 or visit www.RiRa.com/ Arlington for more.

Food Truck Thursdays. 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the corner of North Irving Street, and Washington Boulevard. Find a round-up of regional food trucks. Free to attend. Visit www.dmvfta.org.

Invasive Plants Removal. Work parties are held every month to keep the parks free of destructive invasive plants. Teens, adults and families welcome. Every second Sunday of the month 2-4:30 p.m. at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Road; call 703-228-3403. Every third Sunday of the month 2-5 p.m. at Long Branch Nature Center, 625 S. Carlin Springs Road; call 703-228-6535 or visit registration.arlingtonva.us. Free, no registration required.

Poetry Series. 6-8 p.m. second Sunday of the month at IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Hosted by poet Miles David Moore. Featured artists share their poetry followed by open readings. Free. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com or call 703-522-8340.

Open Mic Nite. 8 p.m.-12:30 a.m. every Wednesday at IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Sign-up times are 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. Bring instruments, fans and friends.

Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com or call 703-522-8340.

Karaoke. 8 p.m. on the first Sunday every month at Galaxy Hut, 2711 Wilson Blvd. Visit www.galaxyhut.com or call 703-525-8646.

Pub Quiz. 8 p.m. every Sunday at Whitlow's on Wilson, 2854 Wilson Blvd. Prizes for first place. Free. Visit www.whitlows.com or call 703-276-9693.

Storytime. Mondays and Fridays, 10:30-11 a.m. at Kinder Haus Toys, 1220 N. Fillmore St. Storytime with Ms. Laura. Call 703-527-5929.

Lego Club. Monthly on the first Wednesday. 4-5 p.m. Glencarlyn Branch Library, 300 S. Kensington St. The library provides tubs of legos and a special challenge and after the program the creations are displayed for everyone to see. No registration required. Call 703-228-6548 for more.

Ball-Sellers House Tours. Saturdays, April-Oct., 1-4 p.m. at The Ball-Sellers House, 5620 3rd St. S. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Arlington Historical Society receiving the house from Marian Sellers in 1975 for \$1. Free. Visit www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org.

Crystal City Sparket. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. on Wednesdays at 1900 Crystal Drive. Sparket — A Creative Market is an extension of DC's Eastern Market with arts, crafts, and

handmade goods. Free to attend. Visit www.crystalcity.org.

Open Mic Night. Wednesdays, at 8 p.m., sign ups are at 7:30 and 10 p.m., at Iota Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Free. Visit <http://www.iotaclubandcafe.com/>.

Art for Life. Third Thursday of each month. The Hyatt Regency Crystal City's "Art for Life" Partnership with National Kidney Foundation brings a new artist each month to The Hyatt for a reception. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org.

Brunch at Freddie's. Third Saturday of every month, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Freddie's Beach Bar, 555 23rd St. The Arlington Gay and Lesbian Alliance gathers for an all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet (\$9.99). All are welcome. No reservation is required. Visit www.facebook.com/events/700174390103305.

THURSDAY/JAN. 7

Celebrate Conservation. 12-1:15 p.m. at Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport, 1999 Jefferson Davis Highway. The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, the nonprofit land trust that serves the region, will hold a lunch event, Celebrate Conservation. Keynote speaker is Juliet Eilperin, Washington Post White House Bureau Chief and environmental writer, who will talk about President

ENTERTAINMENT

Obama's conservation legacy. Tickets are \$75. Visit www.nvct.org for more.

Shut Up and Write! Panel Discussion.

7 p.m. at Central Library, 1015 N. Quincy St. Founded by young adult authors John Skovron and Jessica Spotswood, this month's One More Page Book's Shut Up and Write! panel features Pintip Dunn ("Forget Tomorrow"), Laura Elliott ("Across a War-Tossed Sky," "Da Vinci's Tiger"), and Caroline Tung Richmond ("The Only Thing to Fear") in a discussion about the importance and construction of the opening chapter. Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com for more.

Fireships. 8:30 p.m. at IOTA Club & Cafe, 2832 Wilson Blvd. Fireships, a collaboration between Honey Brothers and Andrew Vladeck, will launch their tour. Tickets are \$10. Visit www.iotaclubandcafe.com.

FRIDAY/JAN. 8

Parents Night Out. 6-10 p.m. at Walter Reed Recreation Center, Walter Reed Community Center, 2909 S. 16th St. Teens Making a Difference Club will host an evening of fun for children age 4-11. Call 703-228-0935 for more.

Book Signing and Musical Performance. 6:30 p.m. at One More Page Books, 2200 N.

Westmoreland St. Musician turned author Korby Lenker will be signing his new book of short stories, "Medium Hero and Other Stories." He will also perform. Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com.

Stand-Up Comedy: Pete Davidson.

7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. at Arlington Cinema & Draffthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. Pete Davidson is a Saturday Night Live cast member. Tickets are \$30. Visit www.arlingtondraffthouse.com.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/JAN. 8-10

"Snow White." 7:30 p.m. on Friday, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturday, and 3 p.m. on Sunday at Thomas

Jefferson Community Theatre, 125 S. Old Glebe Road. Encore Stage & Studio presents the classic tale of a princess who is banished by her evil, jealous stepmother. Tickets are \$10 or children, student, military and seniors, and \$15 for everyone else. Visit www.encorestageva.org.

Dixon detailing Dixon's relationship with friend and mentor George Rose, a Broadway character actor. Tickets are \$25-45. Visit www.sigtheatre.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 9

Book Signing. 1 p.m. at One More Page Books, 2200 N. Westmoreland St. Carole O. Schryber discusses and signs "In HIStory in 30 Days: Genesis to Revelation: With Daily Devotionals," a collection of 30 daily readings with devotionals and prayers. Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com.

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SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 8

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Transform 66 Inside the Beltway Project Arlington County, City of Falls Church and Fairfax County Design Public Hearings

Monday, January 25, 2016 (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

Presentation at 6:30 p.m.

*Snow Date: Thursday, January 28, 2016 (7:30-9:30 p.m.)

Presentation at 8:00 p.m.

Washington-Lee High School Cafeteria

1301 N. Stafford Street

Arlington, VA 22201

Tuesday, January 26, 2016 (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

*Snow Date: Friday, February 5, 2016 (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

Presentation at 6:30 p.m.

Stone Bridge High School Cafeteria

43100 Hay Road

Ashburn, VA 20147

Wednesday, January 27, 2016 (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

*Snow Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2016 (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

Presentation at 6:30 p.m.

Visit Transform66.org to view a live stream of this meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m.

VDOT Northern Virginia District Office

4975 Alliance Drive

Fairfax, VA 22030

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VDOT Northern Virginia District Office

4975 Alliance Drive

Fairfax, VA 22030

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), in partnership with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), will host Design Public Hearings for the Transform 66 Inside the Beltway Project. Improvements involve converting I-66 to dynamically-priced toll lanes in the peak direction during morning (eastbound) and afternoon (westbound) rush hours between I-495 (the Capital Beltway) and U.S. Route 29 in Rosslyn, along with implementing a series of multimodal improvements that will benefit toll users of I-66. Information related to proposed locations and design of toll gantries and signage will be available at the hearings, as well as a presentation on how the toll system will operate.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR 771, draft Categorical Exclusion (CE) documentation has been prepared in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration and is available for review and comment. VDOT staff will be available to discuss the environmental studies underway and the coordination with appropriate regulatory agencies to obtain information about the resources in the project's vicinity. A public notice for review and comment on the final CE documentation will be posted at a later date. In compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 and 36 CFR Part 800, information concerning the potential effects of the proposed project on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places is also provided in the environmental documentation.

Stop by to learn more about the project, discuss your questions with VDOT staff, and attend the formal presentation.

Review project materials at the hearings, including the draft CE, traffic technical report, plans, project schedule, and right-of-way, environmental and civil rights information. Materials will also be available for review on or before January 8, 2016 at www.Transform66.org or VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office at 4975 Alliance Drive in Fairfax. Please call 800-FOR-ROAD (800-367-7623) or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure availability of appropriate personnel to answer your questions.

Give your written or oral comments at the hearings or submit them to Amanda Baxter, Special Projects Development Manager, at the VDOT Northern Virginia District Office (address noted above). You may also e-mail comments at any time to Transform66@VDOT.Virginia.gov. Please reference "Transform 66 Inside the Beltway" in the subject line. Comments must be postmarked, emailed or delivered to VDOT by February 22, 2016 to be included in the public hearing record.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT's Civil Rights Division at 800-367-7623 or TTY/TDD 711.

State Project: 0066-96A-358, P101 UPC: 107371



PHOTOS BY JEFF MCQUILKIN

Members of the Wakefield boys' basketball team celebrate winning the George Long holiday tournament on Dec. 30.

Wakefield Wins Tournament

Warriors improve to 11-0 with victory over Robinson.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The more important championships are won in February and March, but for the Wakefield boys' basketball team, its performance during the final of the George Long holiday tournament on Dec. 30 resulted in a confidence-boosting close to 2015.

The Warriors overcame a 12-point halftime deficit, junior guard Halil Parks scored in the closing seconds and Wakefield defeated Robinson 65-63 to win the George Long tournament title.

The Rams led 43-31 at halftime, but the Warriors battled back in the second half and improved to 11-0 after guard Alan Treakle penetrated in the closing seconds and dished to Parks for the game-winner.

Seven of the Warriors' 10 wins prior to the tournament championship came by double digits.

"Robinson was really handing it to us," Wakefield head coach Tony Bentley said. "... We had to fight back. It was good to see the guys fight back and have some adversity hit and see how we handle things."

Treakle and senior Deng Nhial are only the Wakefield returners who played significant minutes last season. Many of the Warriors' key



Wakefield senior Jonathan Adams, right, is averaging 13.8 points per game.

contributors this year are transfers in their first season at Wakefield, including Parks, Jonathan Adams and Eric Martin.

"For my guys, all these guys are new," Bentley said. "... This was a little test to say, 'Hey, if we put our heads together, we can actually win something.'"

Parks earned tournament MVP honors and is averaging 14.2 points per game. Treakle leads the team in scoring at 15.7 points per contest. Adams averages 13.8 and Nhial averages 13.4.

Sophomore forward Amari Cooper leads the Warriors in rebounding at 5.8 per game.

Bentley also praised the play of senior point guard Martin.

"Eric doesn't get the credit that he deserves," Bentley said. "His on-ball pressure on defense is great."

Wakefield will travel to face Edison at 7:15 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 8.

"For my guys, all these guys are new. ... This was a little test to say, 'Hey, if we put our heads together, we can actually win something.'"

— Tony Bentley, Wakefield boys' basketball coach

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 7

Environment. 1-2:30 p.m. at Lee Community and Senior Center, 5722 Lee Highway. Teens 13 and up are invited to hike through forests, meadows, and wetlands to do hands-on data collection using scientific instruments and worksheets. Participants will investigate the atmosphere, hydrosphere, geosphere and biosphere. Admission is \$7.50. Call 70-228-0555.

Stand-Up Comedy: Pete Davidson. 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. at Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. Pete Davidson is a Saturday Night Live cast member. Tickets are \$30. Visit www.arlingtondrafthouse.com for more.

SUNDAY/JAN. 10

"Who Lives in the Chesapeake Bay?" 2-3 p.m. or 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Gulf Branch Nature Center, 3608 N. Military Road. Meet and touch live animals native to the Chesapeake. Tickets are \$10. Use code #622856-J to register for the 2 p.m. session or #622856-K for 3:30 p.m. session by visiting www.arlingtonva.us for more.

Book Signing and Reading. 3 p.m. at One More Page Books, 2200 N. Westmoreland St. Coauthors Deborah Schoeberlein David and David Panakkal read from and sign "Living Mindfully: At Home, at Work, and in the World," a guide for positive change. Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com.

Arlington Philharmonic: "Ritmos Festivos." 3 p.m. at Wakefield High School, 1325 S. Dinwiddie St. The Arlington Philharmonic continues its 10th Anniversary Season with "Ritmos Festivos" featuring Spanish influences on classical music from the Old World to the New. The repertoire includes Borne's "Carmen Fantasy," a flute solo, by Aaron Goldman, based on Bizet's themes, directly from Spanish folk influence. North America will be represented by Gershwin's "Cuban Overture" and Moncayo's Mexican dance (Huapango). Admission is free, \$20 suggested donation. Visit www.arlingtonphilharmonic.org for more.

MONDAY/JAN. 11

Meditation Made Easy. 7-9 p.m. at Teal Center, 4001 N. 9th St., Suite 230. Learn techniques for an effective meditation practice. The fee is \$40. Visit www.lightyourfiremeditation.com for more.

TUESDAY/JAN. 12

Sip & Sample. 6-8 p.m. at Bistro 360, 1800 Wilson Blvd. This reception will benefit Bowen McCauley Dance company. Tickets are \$50. Visit www.bmdc.org for more.

Hockey 'n' Heels. 6-9:30 p.m. at Kettler Capitals Iceplex, 627 N. Glebe Road. Hockey 'n' Heels is held each season exclusively for Scarlet Caps members and features instructional sessions and on-ice demonstrations targeted towards the Capitals' female audience. Tickets are \$75, \$65 for season ticket holders. Visit www.scarletcaps.com for more.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 13

Young Adult Author Panel. 7 p.m. at One More Page Books, 2200 N. Westmoreland St. One More Page hosts a Young Adult Author Panel featuring Marieke Nijkamp, debut author of "This is Where It Ends," along with Robin Talley ("What We Left Behind"), Kat Spears ("Breakaway") and Miranda Kenneally ("Jesse's Girl"). Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com.

THURSDAY/JAN. 14

Cooking Demonstration and Book Talk. 6:30 p.m. at One More Page Books, 2200 N. Westmoreland St. Writer and chef Jonathan Bardzik conducts a cooking demo and discussion about "Seasons to Taste: Farm Fresh Joy for Kitchen and Table." Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com.

"How the C&O Canal and W&OD Railroad Shaped Arlington." 7 p.m. at

Marymount University-Reinsch Library auditorium, 2807 N. Glebe Road. Leader of C&O Canal Trust and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, Michael Nardolilli will discuss the connections between the towpath, trail, and the history of Arlington County. Free. Call 703-942-9247 for more.

"Helping Nature Help Itself."

7:30-9:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Charles Smith, an Arlington resident and natural area restoration professional, will explore the broader issues affecting our natural resources and natural areas and focus on what we can do regionally and locally to make a positive impact. Free. Visit www.vnps.org/potowmack/events for more.

FRIDAY/JAN. 15

Book Discussion and Signing. 7 p.m. at One More Page Books, 2200 N. Westmoreland St. Law professor, humor writer, and former law clerk Jay Wexler discusses and signs "Tuttle in the Balance," his debut novel about a U.S. Supreme Court justice having a midlife crisis. Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com.

Tom Green Live. 7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. at Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike.

Tom Green of MTV's "The Tom Green Show" (1996-2000) will give a live stand-up comedy performance. Tickets are \$25. Visit www.arlingtondrafthouse.com.

MLK Memorial Service

Featuring Shirley Ginwright. 8 p.m. at Temple Rodef Shalom 2100 Westmoreland St., Falls Church. Fairfax County NAACP President Shirley Ginwright will speak about building communities of trust between law enforcement and residents. Free. Visit www.templerodefshalom.org for more.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/JAN. 15-17

The Aerials Gymnastics

Invitational. 3-9 p.m. on Friday, 8 a.m.-8 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday at the Barcroft Sports & Fitness Center, 4200 Four Mile Run. This competition includes more than 550 athletes from Virginia, Maryland and

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11

WELLBEING

George Mason University Fitness Director Ethan Carter says choose foods and physical activities that you enjoy is a key to successful weight loss.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Resolving To Lose Weight

What works and what doesn't when it comes to health and fitness.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

More than half of Americans are resolving to lose weight and get in shape this year, according to a new Nielsen survey, but only 8 percent will achieve that goal.

"People tend to make New Year's resolutions to give themselves a fresh start," said Lyn Chang, a Bethesda, Md.-based marriage and family counselor. "They're also a way of addressing things about ourselves that are dissatisfying and trying to make a change. The problem is that most people create resolutions that are too unrealistic."

Small and practical targets, such as taking a 10-minute walk during lunch or joining an exercise class that meets twice weekly, are more attainable than vowing to spend two-hours a day at the gym, says Domenica M. Rubino, M.D., director, Washington Center for Weight Management and Research in Arlington.

"You have to distinguish fantasy from reality and think about making sustainable changes," she said. "When you start setting and achieving small goals it builds your confidence to keep going. One change tends to beget another change, and I think that's particularly true with weight loss."

"You have to distinguish fantasy from reality and think about making sustainable changes."

— Domenica M. Rubino, M.D., Director, Washington Center for Weight Management and Research

Successful weight loss requires a multi-pronged approach, says Chang. "Break the larger goal in to smaller steps like creating an exercise routine or practicing healthy grocery shopping and meal planning," she said. "Carefully examining and planning the mi-

cro-steps to achieving the larger goal of weigh loss is what will increase the chance of success."

Whether choosing food or exercise, the key is making it pleasurable. "If I don't like a certain vegetable, but say that I want to eat it everyday because its healthy, I'll only be able to maintain that for a short time," said Ethan Carter, fitness director at George Mason University. "The same is true for exercise. Fitness is more than dumb bells and bar bells. If you like hiking or yard work, you should choose that as a way of getting exercise."

Rubino encourages clients to view exercise as a gift rather than a means for burning calories. "See it as mood management or a way to feel better," she said. "People who are chronically trying to lose weight tend to resent exercise and activity because it's always connected to their weight, so they see it as pointless. It helps to see it as something that can improve your mood and your overall health and wellbeing. When we're feeling better we can make better choices."

Creating balance is an often-overlooked component of weight loss, but one that can sabotage health and fitness efforts, says Cheryl Mirabella, a nutritionist and wellness coach with Living Whole Health in Alexandria.

"If you're working hard and don't have a lot of balance in your life then you turn to food for pleasure, but when you're focusing on things that make you happy you naturally turn to healthier food choices and food loses its power as a source of pleasure and reward," she said.

Mirabella asks her clients to create what she calls a joy list. "They jot down a list of things that make them happy like spending time with friends, music or another hobby," she said. "The list

is broken down into immediate activities like sitting with a cup of tea and a book, mid-term activities like having lunch with a friend and long-term activities like a weekend trip. The idea is to have a source of inspiration and something to look forward to."

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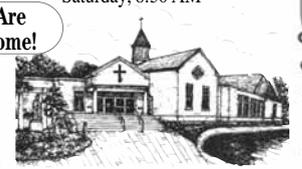
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SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

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1/20/2016.....A+ Camps & Schools

1/27/2016..... Community Guide

1/27/2016.....Winter Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment; Valentine's Preview

FEBRUARY

2/3/2016.....Valentine's Dining & Gifts I

2/3/2016.....Wellbeing – National Children's Dental Health Month

2/10/2016.....HomeLifeStyle

2/10/2016.....Valentine's Dining & Gifts II

2/17/2016.....A+ Camps & Schools

2/24/2016.....Pet Connection

MARCH

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3/9/2016.....HomeLifeStyle Real Estate Pullout

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-William Van Horne

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The Vienna/Oakton Connection
The McLean Connection
The Great Falls Connection

Upon Further Reflection



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I'm not a look-in-the-mirror kind of person. Other than in the morning when I wash up, brush my teeth, shave and get ready for the day, I spend very little time reflecting on my appearance. In fact, during the early days of my cancer treatment when I was infused with a chemotherapy cocktail for six non-stop hours every three weeks – I lost all my hair, as forewarned; I have no recollection of what I looked like without any hair on my head. Presumably, every morning when I prepped for the day, I would have seen what I was doing and watched how it was done; yet there is no image, still or otherwise, in my mind of how I appeared to others.

Seven years of continuous treatment later, when I look in the mirror now (I have a full head of hair and a growing stubble, like most men), I can't evaluate what I see. Do I look sick? Or do I look as I should for a middle-aged man aging gracefully? Not that I need to look good to feel good ("and you know who you are"), any more than I need to "look mahvelous," but the cumulative effects of chemotherapy and the inevitable signs of aging have blurred (no pun intended; I can see perfectly well) my objectivity. So much so that on any given day, what I see is what I get and I'm happy to have gotten it, subjectively speaking. Ergo, looking in the mirror more often than not serves no appreciable benefit – to me, since I know what I see, or rather, don't know how to evaluate what it is I do see.

Then along comes the holidays, when many social gatherings are planned where in addition to food and drink, face-to-face interactions occur with many people you see regularly and some you know but rarely see. It is the observations and comments from these rarely-seen persons, persons with whom you are familiar – and who are familiar with you and your "underlying diagnosis," as I call my cancer, that are the genesis of this column.

I am happy and amazed, and incredibly flattered even to say that the feedback I received was uniformly positive and extremely encouraging; and if I had to bet a nickel, I'd say their comments were all sincere and honest. And since I don't want to look for trouble (since trouble has already found me), I am going to take their words at face value (again, no pun intended). And in thanking them graciously, reconsider yet again how fortunate I am to be receiving such compliments, nearly seven years in and nearly five years past, the end date (pun intended) of my original "13 month to two year" prognosis, words which I first heard from my oncologist at the initial Team Lourie meeting held on February 27, 2009 (Oh, yeah, you remember that date, forever).

Unfortunately, there is a bit of a cynic in me, so I still question the validity of words people sometimes say not necessarily to the wise. Moreover, I still am not convinced that looking good is more important than feeling good (with apologies to a Billy Crystal sketch mimicking Fernando Lamas back in the day on Saturday Night Live). Nor am I at all sure that looking good is an accurate description of what effect my stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer is having on me and my mediastinum.

As much as I'd like to believe that form follows function and that looking good is a clear indicator of one who is not only feeling good, but doing well (cancer-wise), I'm still wondering what it is that sets me apart from many other similarly diagnosed patients who have succumbed to this terrible – and mostly terminal – disease. I never thought it was, or would be, my looks. And given that there hasn't been that much with which to work, maybe not focusing on my appearance all the time has helped? Apparently, it hasn't hurt.

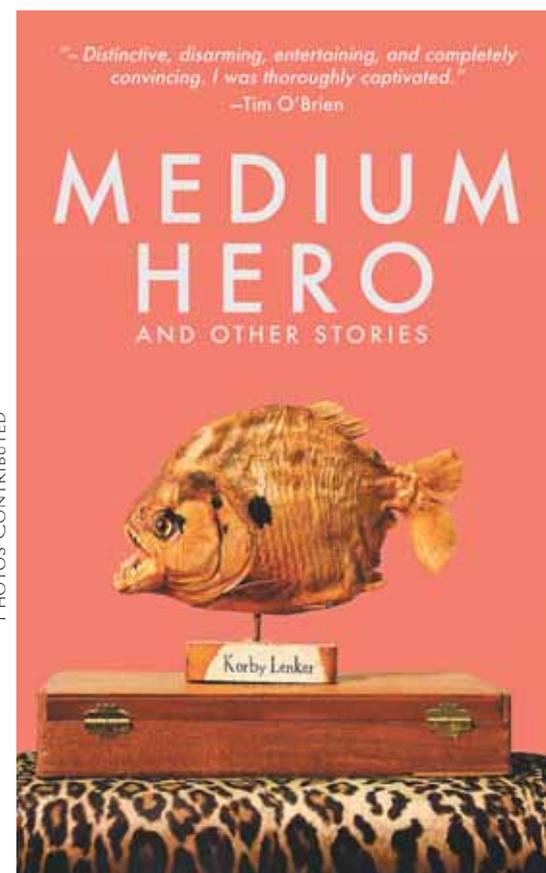
Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Musician Turned Author Reads, Performs

Korby Lenker will make a stop on his national tour to promote "Medium Hero and Other Stories" at One More Page Books, 2200 N. Westmoreland St. on Jan. 8 at 6:30 p.m. "Medium Hero" is a collection of 27 short stories inspired by his life as a traveling musician with a cat. Attend a book signing and musical performance. Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com for more.



FROM PAGE 8

Pennsylvania. Free. Contact Carly Meyer at cmeyer@arlingtonva.us.

"Snow White." 7:30 p.m. on Friday, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturday, and 3 p.m. on Sunday at Thomas Jefferson Community Theatre, 125 S. Old Glebe Road. Encore Stage & Studio presents the classic tale of a princess who is banished by her evil, jealous stepmother. Tickets are \$10 or children, student, military and seniors, and \$15 for everyone else. Visit www.encorestageva.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 16

"Mouse in the House." 3 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Jane Franklin Dance gives a performance of an adaptation of the book by Elizabeth Spire, "Mouse in House," which reveals a friendship between a mouse and reclusive 19th-century poet Emily Dickinson. Tickets are \$10-15. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

Tom Green Live. 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. at Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse, 2903 Columbia Pike. Tom Green of MTV's "The Tom Green Show" (1996-2000) will give a live stand-up comedy performance. Tickets are \$25. Visit www.arlingtondrafrthouse.com for more.

"Niche." 7:30 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. "Niche" follows an unremarkable couple with a new house, big careers, and odd neighbors. 2-D cut-outs projected via 'old school' technology supply visuals. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

SUNDAY/JAN. 17

Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute Event. 5 p.m. at Wakefield High School, 1325 S. Dinwiddie St. Find inspirational musical and spoken word performances, and meet Arlingtonians who participated in the Civil Rights Movement. Free. Call 703-228-3329 for more.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 20

Pet Therapy. 10:15-11 a.m. at Walter Reed Senior Center, 2909 S. 16th St. The public is invited to meet Zoe, a therapy Yorkshire Terrier. Free. Call 703-608-8314 for more.

THURSDAY/JAN. 21

Forty+ Performance. 10:30 a.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Forty+ is a group of performers past the age of 40 that study with a local choreographer at Jane Franklin Dance studios. Tickets are \$5. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

Poetry Reading. 7 p.m. at One More Page Books, 2200 N. Westmoreland St. Sandra Beasley

("Count the Waves") and Sass Brown ("USA-1000") read from their collections of poetry. Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com for more.

FRIDAY/JAN. 22

The Accidentals & Kevin Heider. 7 p.m. at FORUM Arlington, 3304 Washington Blvd. Live music. Tickets are \$10-15. Visit www.arlingtonforum.org for more.

SATURDAY/JAN. 23

1K Beer/Wine Walk. 2-6 p.m. at 1750 Crystal Drive. Pass the start line and sip your way along the race course, stopping at "Wine" and "Beer" hydration stations along the course. Sample 20 wines or 20 beers. Tickets are \$20 online and \$25 at the door. Visit www.crystalcity.org for more.

"Mouse in the House." 3 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Jane Franklin Dance gives a performance of an adaptation of the book by Elizabeth Spire, "Mouse in House," which reveals a friendship between a mouse and reclusive 19th-century poet Emily Dickinson. Tickets are \$10-15. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

Rosebud Film Festival Nominee Showcase. 2-8 p.m. at Navy Heritage Center, 701 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington D.C. The Rosebud Film Festival, a project of Arlington Independent Media will showcase 20 short films made by nominees. Tickets are \$15. Visit www.rosebudfestival.org for more.

Forty+ Performance. 5 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Forty+ is a group of performers past the age of 40 that study with a local choreographer at Jane Franklin Dance studios. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door, \$10 for seniors 65+ and children 17 and under. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

"Niche." 7:30 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. "Niche" follows an unremarkable couple with a new house, big careers, and odd neighbors. 2-D cut-outs projected via 'old school' technology supply visuals. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

SUNDAY/JAN. 24

Forty+ Performance. 1:30 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. Forty+ is a group of performers past the age of 40 that study with a local choreographer at Jane Franklin Dance studios. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door, \$10 for seniors 65+ and children 17 and under. Visit

www.janefranklin.com.

"Niche." 4 p.m. at Theatre on the Run, 3700 S. Four Mile Run Drive. "Niche" follows an unremarkable couple with a new house, big careers, and odd neighbors. 2-D cut-outs projected via 'old school' technology supply visuals. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Visit www.janefranklin.com.

Rosebud Film Festival Awards Gala. 7-10 p.m. at Clarendon Ballroom, 3185 Wilson Blvd. A panel of judges, drawn from the area's rich media arts community, selected the 20 nominees from which five winners, including one Best of Show, will be chosen. Festival winners will each receive a cash prize and will be announced at the Rosebud Awards Gala. \$15 ticket to the showcase allows free admission to the gala. Visit www.rosebudfestival.org for more.

MONDAY/JAN. 25

Pet Therapy. 1:30 p.m. at Walter Reed Senior Center, 2909 S. 16th St. The public is invited to meet Zoe, a therapy Yorkshire Terrier. Free. Call 703-608-8314 for more.

THURSDAY/JAN. 28

Author Talk. 7 p.m. at One More Page Books, 2200 N. Westmoreland St. Writer, editor and French teacher Marianne Bohr shares from "Gap Girl Year: A Baby Boomer Adventure Across 21 Countries." Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com for more.

SATURDAY/JAN. 30

Yoga to Benefit Arlington Free Clinic. 9-10:30 a.m. at Top of the Town, 1400 14th St. N. Take a yoga class with Sun and Moon Yoga Studio's Nancy Carter followed by an inspirational talk by Spiritual Coach Andrea Haynes: "Stress Less, Live More!" Tickets are \$50. Visit www.arlingtonfreeclinic.org/yoga.

Music and Dancing Through the Decades. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Fairlington Community Center, 3308 S. Stafford St. Dancing to music from the 1950s to the present including ballroom, swing, hand dancing, and moonwalking. Free. Call 703-228-4711.

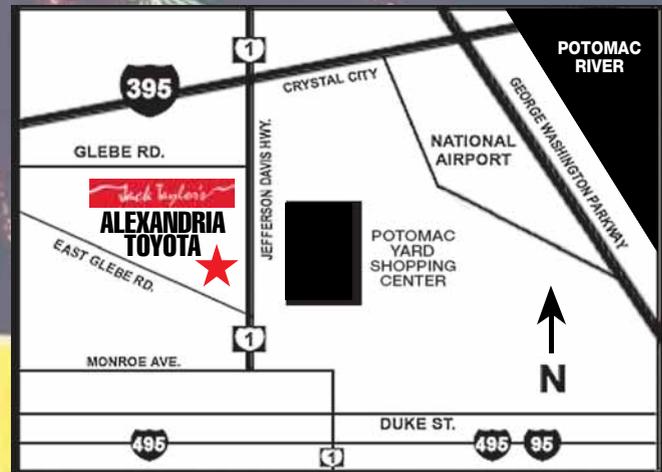
The Book Divas. 2 p.m. at One More Page Books, 2200 N. Westmoreland St. The Book Divas — authors Puja Guha, B. Swangin Webster, Dee Lawrence, and K.R. Raye — chat about their books in the romantic suspense, new adult, drama, and thriller genres, along with sharing their writing journeys. Free. Visit www.onemorepagebooks.com for more.

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