



OPINION, PAGE 6 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 7 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10

PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

FEBRUARY 8-14, 2017

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# NEWS

## MATHCOUNTS Winners Announced

Top area teams, students advance to Virginia state competition.

The Northern Virginia Regional MATHCOUNTS Competition was held on Saturday, Feb. 4, at George Mason University. The regional competition combines the Fairfax, George Washington, and Northern VA Chapters of the Virginia Society of Professional Engineers.

More than 420 sixth through eighth grade students from 49 elementary and middle schools competed at the events. These students have been practicing since the fall and were selected to represent their schools at the competition. Students compete as school teams and as individuals.

The top teams, team members, and coaches for each Chapter are as follows:

Fairfax Chapter Area

1. Rachel Carson Middle School (Coach: Kristen Shebek); Students: Andrew Kim, Ankit Roy, Derek Dong, Anirudh Bansal

2. Nysmith School (Coach: JoMarie Broccoli); Students: Whitman Ochiai, Kaien Yang, Anuraag Kaashyap, Anand Advani

3. Joyce Kilmer Middle School (Coach: Lilia Nedialkova); Students: Daniel Zeng, David Han, James Xu, Luke McMahon

George Washington Chapter Area

1. Mark Twain Middle School (Coach: Jack Schiavone); Students: Jeb Cui, Griffin Chozick, Alexander Davis, Eugene Choi

2. South County Middle School (Coach: Gina Griffin-Evans); Students: Eugene Choi, Matthew Hwang, Shreyas Mayya, Shaunak Patel

3. Carl Sandburg Middle School (Coach: Nicole Yoder); Students: Molly Barron, Thomas Cuddy, Quinn Powell, Jillian Ylagan

Northern VA Chapter Area

1. BASIS Independent McLean (Coach: Rikki McCullough); Students: Austin Feng, Pravalika Putalapattu, Ethan Zhou, Joshua Fu

2. Longfellow Middle School (Coach: Jong Hyoun Jung); Students: Lawrence Shi, Austin Shi, Edwin Lu, Daniel Park

SEE MATHCOUNTS, PAGE 5

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# Citizens Remain Opposed to Sunrise Proposal

**The MCA Board of Directors urges the Board of Supervisors to deny the application.**

BY FALON FORBUSH  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he McLean Citizens Association voted to remain opposed to Sunrise Senior Living's proposed assisted living facility on land at the northwest corner of Kirby Road and Westmoreland Street.

The MCA Board of Directors approved a resolution that urges the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to deny the application at its meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 1, seven months after it approved its first resolution opposing the project.

As reported by the Connection last week, the MCA revisited its position after the developer made changes to its proposal in response to significant community concerns and opposition.

The project would build a 73-unit assisted living facility in the residential neighborhood that could accommodate up to 90 residents and would also provide a memory care unit for residents with Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

**THE REVISED PROPOSAL** would move the entrance of the facility from Kirby Road to Westmoreland Street; place 33 of its 55 parking spaces in an underground parking garage; and move a portion of the three-story building underground.

These changes reduced the building's height and size, but did not necessarily appease citizens' worries.

"They made it visibly smaller, but it is still a massive building in the middle of a residential neighborhood," MCA President Jeff Barnett said in the meeting before the vote.

"The net reduction of mass is not sufficient to overcome MCA's fundamental concern that the mass of this proposed development is incompatible with the neighborhood in which it would be located," MCA's new resolution says.

However, the group's firm opposition to the project was not a unanimous decision this time around. Two members voted against the resolution and four members abstained from voting.

## VOLUNTEER EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Fairfax County's free **Family Caregiver Telephone Support Group** meets by phone on **Tuesday, March 14, 7-8 p.m.** Share your experiences, gain support and get important information without having to travel. Register beforehand at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults) and click on Telephone Caregiver Support Group. Call **703-324-5484**, TTY 711.

The **Fairfax Commission on Aging** meets on **Wednesday, March 15** from Noon-3 p.m. at the Lincoln Senior Center - Craft Room, 4710 North Chamberliss St. Alexandria. (Please note new meeting location.) The public is welcome to attend and join in the comment period that begins each session. Find out more at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults) and click on Commission on Aging. Call **703-324-5632**, TTY 703-449-1186 for

meeting access needs – advance notice requested.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

The **Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program** needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at **703-324-5861**, TTY 711 or email [Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Meals on Wheels Drivers** are urgently needed in **Fairfax, Centreville** and the **Reston-Herndon** area. **Co-coordinators** are needed for routes throughout the county. Call **703-324-5406**, TTY 711 or Register Now.

The **Chronic Disease Self-Management Program** needs volunteer leaders to facilitate 2-hour workshops during this 6-week program that meets in Fairfax County. For more informa-

tion, contact [Colleen.Turner@FairfaxCounty.gov](mailto:Colleen.Turner@FairfaxCounty.gov), call **703-324-5489**, TTY 711, or go to [www.FairfaxCounty.gov/DFS/OlderAdultServices/chronic-disease.htm](http://www.FairfaxCounty.gov/DFS/OlderAdultServices/chronic-disease.htm).

**NEARLY 19 PERCENT** of McLean's total population is aged 65 or older, according to the 2015 American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau.

As reported last week by the Connection, Sunrise has advocated that there is a need for its facility in the area. In May 2016, the Fairfax County Health Care Advisory Board sent a memo to the Board of Supervisors stating that Sunrise had demonstrated a need for the development of an assisted living and memory care facility in the McLean community.

"Find a way to say we oppose, but we're highly aware of the situation and would work with [the developer] for solutions," Gazzola said.

One paragraph was included in the resolution that made this point.

"While the MCA recognizes that McLean has a large number of senior citizens and an increasing need for assisted living facilities for the elderly or disabled who wish to remain within the McLean community, it does not believe that this need outweighs the need for compliance with the requirements of the zoning ordinance," the resolution says.

Members of the group took issue with the fact that the developer has not tried to find an alternate location in McLean for its new facility.

Despite the opposition, Sunrise plans to move forward.

"We're pleased to see that the MCA acknowledges a need for high-quality senior care in McLean, in addition to the ample precedent by the Board of Supervisors in approving this use on properties less than five acres," Sunrise Senior Living spokesperson Jennifer Clark said in a statement emailed to the Connection. "Sunrise wholeheartedly believes that local residents want and deserve to age in place within the community they've loved. We thank the MCA and neighbors for working with us to improve the application and look forward to proceeding with our efforts."

The Fairfax County Planning Commission is scheduled to consider the application on March 8. The county's Planning and Zoning Department will publish a staff report with recommendations some time this month before the meeting.



PHOTOS BY FALON FORBUSH/THE CONNECTION

**Sunrise Attorney Stu Mendelsohn spoke before the McLean Citizens Association's Planning and Zoning Committee on Tuesday, Jan. 24, at a public meeting where nearly 200 people attended.**



**Nearly 200 people attended a public meeting organized by the McLean Citizens Association to talk about the proposal. Most in attendance were opposed to the project.**

granted in the past.

"A special exception may only be granted if a use meets all of the requirements of a special exception with an emphasis on compatibility of the neighborhood and harmony of the neighborhood," Ron Bleeker, co-chair of the group's Planning and Zoning Committee, said at the meeting.

As reported by the Connection last week, nearly 200 property owners and community members participated in a public meeting that was organized by the MCA to discuss the proposal.

"I think the majority of [community members] don't want [the facility] there because of traffic and other reasons," Madge Gazzola, vice-chair of MCA's Budget and Taxation Committee, said.

## NEWS

(From left): Desi Woltman, president of NDWC; Jane Edmondson, Mary Ann Miller, VP of Programs; Cindy Hutchings, Treasurer; John Foust, Dranesville District Supervisor; Paige Farrington-Himes; and Amy Swaak, event chairwoman.

PHOTOS BY  
STEVE HIBBARD  
THE CONNECTION



## Arts Night Out Held in McLean

Event co-hosted the New Dominion Women's Club and MPA was a fundraiser for club's four charities.

More than 50 people attended the Arts Night Out on Thursday, Jan. 26, hosted by the New Dominion Women's Club (NDWC) and the McLean Project for the Arts (MPA) at the McLean Community Center on Ingleside Avenue. The event was a fundraiser for NDWC and included a gallery talk by Nancy Sausser, MPA's Exhibitions Director, who spoke about the artwork and artists on exhibit at MPA. The mission of the MPA is to exhibit the work of emerging and established artists from the mid-Atlantic region.

There was also a Silent Auction at the event as well as wine and beer provided by TTR Sotheby's International Real Estate, and hors d'oeuvres provided by Giant Food Store. The money raised with the \$20 tickets benefit four of NDWC's charities, which include McLean Project for the Arts, Safe Community Coalition, SHARE, Inc., and Pleasant Grove Church.

"I'm proud to be chairing this event for NDWC," said Amy Swaak, event chairperson. "Having served in many different capacities for this organization, this



Amy Swaak, event chairperson, with Nancy Sausser, who gave an art gallery talk.

is very fulfilling to be raising funds for these fabulous organizations."

For more information on NDWC, visit its website at [www.ndwc.org](http://www.ndwc.org).

— STEVE HIBBARD



Jim Saunders, Mary Ann Miller, Carol Brunner and Alina LeMay have a chat during Arts Night Out.



Jennifer Whitsitt and Carol Brunner at Arts Night Out.

## Wireless Facility Approved, For Now

BY KEN MOORE  
THE CONNECTION

If a proposed 52-foot telephone pole was three-feet shorter and 18 inches narrower in diameter, McLean advocates wouldn't have had the opportunity to testify against a communications antenna topping it.

"It would have been approvable as a 'feature shown' without a public hearing," said Dranesville Planning Commissioner John Ulfelder.

At a decision-only hearing on Feb. 1, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the Verizon Wireless proposal for two panel antennas in a "stealth canister" flush-mounted to a 52-foot Dominion Power monopole at 1451 Chain Bridge Road.

"Even though the existing pole will be replaced with a taller pole, the County has a long-standing policy of treating replacement poles as a modification to an existing facility, rather than an intensification, expansion or redevelopment," said Ulfelder.

But the recommended approval is only on an interim basis, he cautioned. "If the pole is removed for any reason, including as part of an effort to underground utilities in the McLean CBC, Verizon's facilities would necessarily have to be removed as well."

**AT THE PUBLIC HEARING** before the Planning Commission a week before, Maya Huber communicated the vision and efforts of the McLean Citizens Association, McLean Planning Committee and the McLean Revitalization Corporation to underground utilities in the McLean Business District.

"They all say the same thing. They say, 'Look, our design standards do not call for streetscape with antennas mounted on power poles,'" said Huber.

"We just finished a 13-year effort to underground the utilities on Old Dominion Drive and on Chain Bridge Road. We don't want another pole, it's not part of our Comprehensive Plan. We're trying to underground them as fast as we can," said Huber, a McLean resident and former at-large Planning Commissioner.

The Comprehensive Plan calls for future development and redevelopment in the McLean CBC to place utilities underground.

"In that respect, the citizens groups are absolutely correct," said Ulfelder.

"I do not take lightly their concerns that, if approved, this application will undermine their collective efforts to move utilities in the McLean Community Business Center underground."

"As Ms. Huber articulated, these organizations have worked hard on this effort for many years and – and have experienced some success in getting nearby utilities in the McLean CBC moved underground," he said. "They do not support an application that they believe will detract from their ongoing effort to get the remaining above ground utilities finally put underground."

Verizon Wireless verified at the public hearing in January that it would have to seek a new alternative if the pole comes down in the future.

**THE LICENSE AGREEMENT** on record, said Ulfelder, "plainly requires Verizon to remove its facilities should Dominion, in its sole discretion, ever remove its pole for any reason. It also makes clear that Verizon has no property interest in the pole. As such, Verizon has no legal right in the pole's continued existence at this location, it cannot hinder any future effort to remove the pole or underground the utilities currently supported by the pole."

## WEEK IN MCLEAN Help Senior Citizens Get to Their Appointments

The Shepherd's Center of McLean-Arlington-Falls Church needs volunteers who can help area senior citizens get the transportation they need to get to their medical and therapy appointments. The number of new clients continues to grow at a rapid pace and there is a need for more volunteers to help meet that need.

To find out more about the Shepherd's Center and how you can volunteer to provide transportation and other services, call the Center at 703-506-2199 or e-mail the Center at [info@scmafc.org](mailto:info@scmafc.org). The Center's website is [www.scmafc.org](http://www.scmafc.org)

# NEWS

**The Children's Hour runs in McLean High School's Burke Theatre Feb. 16 through 19.**



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## TheatreMcLean Presents The Children's Hour

In 1934, playwright Lillian Hellman did the unthinkable — she revealed the bitter truth. Through her beautifully written play The Children's Hour, Hellman challenged not only the mid twentieth century stigma against homosexuality, but also publicized a powerful message about the danger of gossip and lies. McLean High School's theatre department — TheatreMcLean — dives into the transcendent world of The Children's Hour as its second production of the 2016-2017 season.

The Children's Hour runs in McLean High School's Burke Theatre Feb. 16 through 19. Appropriate for mature audiences, tickets are \$12-\$15, and may be purchased online at [www.TheatreMcLean.org](http://www.TheatreMcLean.org).

The cast includes Jordan Prather (Martha Dobie), Anna Kate Womack (Karen Wright), Joey Barth (Joseph Cardin), Julia Luigs (Lily Mortar), Emily Lachow (Amelia Tilford), Alexandra Lagos (Agatha), Amanda Flores (Rosalie Wells), Rachel Kulp (Mary Tilford), Careenna Slotkoff (Peggy Rogers), Ariana Colder (Evelyn Munn), Delaney Bottorff (Catherine), Bryn Kirk (Helen Burton), Ruby Larimer (Janet), Syd Kirk (Lois Fisher), Rachel Jaffe (Leslie), and Alex Weinstein (Grocery Boy).

Performances are at McLean High School, 1633 Davidson Rd., McLean, Feb. 16, 17, 18 at 7 p.m. Feb. 18 and 19 at 2 p.m. [www.TheatreMcLean.org](http://www.TheatreMcLean.org)

## MATHCOUNTS

FROM PAGE 2

3. Haycock Elementary School (Coach: Jin Kang); Students: Sam Wang, Taein Kim, Brian Lai, Alan Vladimiroff

The top-scoring students in each Chapter are as follows:

### Fairfax Chapter Area

1. Andrew Kim, Rachel Carson Middle School
2. Ankit Roy, Rachel Carson Middle School
3. Derek Dong, Rachel Carson Middle School
4. Rubaiya Emran, Edlin School
5. Subhksha Balaji, Rocky Run Middle School

### George Washington Chapter Area

1. Eugene Choi, South County Middle School
2. Jeb Cui, Mark Twain Middle School
3. Griffin Chozick, Mark Twain Middle School
4. Mingang Kim, South County Middle School
5. Hieu Vu, Glasgow Middle School

### Northern VA Chapter Area

1. Lawrence Shi, Longfellow Middle School
2. Austin Shi, Longfellow Middle School
3. Austin Feng, BASIS Independent McLean
4. Sam Wang, Haycock Elementary School

5. Kevin Zhang, Longfellow Middle School

The top two teams and top four students that are not on the top two teams from the Fairfax Chapter along with the winning team and top two students that are not on the winning team from each of the George Washington and Northern VA Chapters, will advance to compete at the Virginia State MATHCOUNTS Competition to be held on March 18 at the Dominion Virginia Power facility in Glen Allen, Va.

MATHCOUNTS is a national middle school math enrichment program offering competition and club activities designed to foster appreciation of math among U.S. students so as to prepare students for future career opportunities and success. In an increasingly technological society, those students who do not begin developing strong problem solving, logical thinking, and analytical abilities in middle school will face an uphill battle later in life if they wish to pursue a medical, scientific, mathematical, engineering or technical career. More than 6 million students across the U.S. have participated in MATHCOUNTS programs.

Additional information on the national MATHCOUNTS program is available at [www.mathcounts.org](http://www.mathcounts.org).

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# OPINION

## First Amendment Is Alive and Well

BY RONALD GOLDFARB

*"Congress shall make no law ... abridging ... the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."*

**H**aving worked in D.C. and lived in Alexandria since 1961 when I came to work for Robert Kennedy in the Justice Department, I've experienced the First Amendment in real time action, by assembling and petitioning my government for redress of grievances.

In 1963 my wife and I stood near the Lincoln Memorial where Martin Luther King, Jr. pleaded to the world for civil rights for all people, and delivered his immortal "I Have a Dream" speech. About 250,000 people — black and white — peacefully gathered in the nation's capital to plead for President Kennedy to provide 19 million Afro-American descendants the right to vote, travel, and work.

Fears abounded. The D.C. police and FBI were present on the streets. There were altogether over 8,000 guardians of the peace. The federal government and many businesses were closed. Hospitals canceled elective surgery so all beds would be available for riot-related emergencies. Jails were emptied to provide room for predicted arrests. Judges were on around-the-clock standby.

These precautions were not necessary. The assembly was non-violent. People arrived from all over the world and marched with dignity. Many swarmed around the Reflecting Pool in

### COMMENTARY

a field of humanity that ran all the way to the Washington Monument.

On that day we listened to the greatest orator of his time pleading for racial justice, claiming that the time had come "to lift our nation from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood," calling for "the fierce urgency of now," then urged on by Mahalia Jackson, departed from his prepared text and segued into his immortal plea, "I have a dream," that reverberates still in the hearts and minds of all decent people.

The New York Times called the event "the most impressive assembly for a redress of grievances in America's history." The Washington Post reported that the assembly was a happy combination of prayer meeting, picnic, and political rally, a crowd "united in a sense of brotherhood and common humanity." The next year, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed.

Unfortunately, many of the social injustices deplored on that summer day in Washington, D.C., have not yet been overcome. But Aug. 28, 1963, was a seminal moment in American history. It demonstrated the power and dignity of democracy in action.

♦ ♦ ♦

In 1971, the scene was more fractious when my wife and I joined Vietnam War protests on the streets of Washington D.C., a gathering which was rougher and more proactive than the 1963 event. We were gassed, with many others, near Dupont Circle by police overreacting to the noisy protests. Eventually the public demonstrations worked. The war was ended, too late, but it might not have ended when it did without these public pro-

tests. Critics of the war hastened the end of it, and resulted in a president leaving politics.

♦ ♦ ♦

In 1986, my wife, daughter and two human rights activist friends, the late Pat Derian and Rose Styron and their daughters marched on a sunny day near Congress in a sea of women who came from across the country to support the ERA. But this time their pleas were not successful in terms of reaching the goal that gave rise to that march. But peace prevailed and eventually the goals they asserted then have been advanced in major ways.

♦ ♦ ♦

On Saturday, Jan. 21, 2017, an estimated half million Americans filled the streets of Washington, as did huge crowds in other cities in America and around the world to claim rights they felt were disparaged by the Trump campaign and election. The Saturday crowds far surpassed Friday's relatively insignificant inaugural crowds. President Trump now argues about the relative size of his crowds — those applauding his election, and those crying out against it.

My children who attended here in D.C. and other locations reported a cheering good spirit, upbeat communal behavior, welcoming friendly law enforcement officials, filled bleachers, and an upbeat camaraderie.

Now what remains after people returned to their homes away from Washington, D.C. is the question: how does this experience change the future? Will the energy become harnessed into a movement that changes politics? We all ponder that question, bravo to the people who are trying.

## Crossing Guard Appreciation Day Feb. 8

BY JOHN C. COOK

SUPERVISOR (R-BRADDOCK DISTRICT)

If you have lived in Fairfax County for any amount of time, you are surely familiar with the traffic situation here. Congested roads and long travel times lead to frustrated and fatigued motorists, who may not always yield to pedestrians at a crosswalk. In the morning and afternoon, the situation is compounded by school children going to and from school. To help keep us all safe, and keep traffic moving in an orderly fashion, the County hires crossing guards to assist students and pedestrians in crossing the street at appropriate intersections. The service these workers provide plays an instrumental role in promoting student safety, and we should be thankful for their service to our children and the community. Crossing Guard Appreciation Day is Feb. 8, and I hope everyone will go out of their way to thank a crossing guard. (In fact, you can thank them every day!) Our students and pedestrians depend on them, and the County would not be as safe without them.

Safety at intersections, and roadway safety as a whole, is one of my priorities both as your supervisor and as Chair of the Board's Public Safety Committee. In that regard, I have

launched and participated in several safety initiatives. First, to improve safety for both motorists and pedestrians, I developed the "Slow Down" safe driving campaign. This campaign aimed to reduce neighborhood speeding through extensive community outreach efforts, and part of that outreach involved assistance from residents. If you are interested in spreading the word, my office still has available for free the yellow "slow down" signs, which you can place on your lawn to get the message out.

Second, to combat the issue of distracted driving, I joined Kirk Cousins (Washington Redskins Quarterback) in support of the "Phones Down Touchdown" campaign sponsored by Transurban. This campaign raises awareness of distracted driving, primarily by discouraging texting on the road. A significant number of accidents are attributable to texting while driving, and other forms of distracted driving. By keeping people focused on the road, and not their phone, we can improve everyone's roadway safety.

Recently, the Board joined my call to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to increase from three to six times per year its mowing of roadway median strips. This high grass is not only unsightly, but creates visibility

problems for motorists.

These initiatives are great ways to promote community engagement and safe driving awareness, but, are not enough on their own. You can join with us by focusing on your own driving, speed, and attentiveness behind the wheel. Encourage your neighbors to do the same. And thank your local crossing guards. They are out there every day- rain, snow, or shine- working to keep our neighborhoods safe. Thank you!

### 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.  
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Call: 703-917-6444.

By e-mail: north@connectionnewspapers.com

## McLean CONNECTION

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# CALENDAR

Send announcements to [connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). Deadline is Friday at noon for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## WEDNESDAY/FEB. 8

### Great Falls Elementary School Annual Scripps Spelling Bee

Contest 9:15 a.m. in the Gym 701 Walker Rd, Great Falls. Our snow date is the following Wednesday - February 15th. 703-626-1149 or [6schulmans@gmail.com](mailto:6schulmans@gmail.com)

**Penny University Event** 7 - 8 p.m. Caffe Amouri 107 Church St. NE, Vienna. "Why Are We Here?" "Heart-Opening Meditation" with Mental Health Counselor and Professor Cathy Trenary. Space is limited. To RSVP email [nicki@caffeamouri.com](mailto:nicki@caffeamouri.com). Cost: Free. [www.caffeamouri.com](http://www.caffeamouri.com)

## THURSDAY/FEB. 9

**"Adjust the Heat"** 10:30 a.m. Vienna Arts Society, 115 Pleasant Street, NW, Vienna. Nationally acclaimed watercolorist Catherine Hillis will explain the importance of observation in art and, particularly, the need to develop the warm and cool colors in a painting. Hillis will demonstrate how artists can bring their paintings to a new level by creating color temperature in their work. Cost: Free and open to the public. 703-319-3971 [www.ViennaArtsSociety.org](http://www.ViennaArtsSociety.org)

## FRIDAY/FEB. 10

### Valentine's Day Arts & Crafts

Hour 11 - noon Once Upon A Dream, 527 Maple Ave E #200, Vienna. There will be arts & crafts to celebrate Valentine's Day. Additional \$5 per child.



PHOTO BY IRISH EYES PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOBY/COURTESY OF MCLEAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS

## 'Company' at Alden

**From left — Robert (Matt Liptak) and his three girlfriends, Marta (Kristina Friedgen), Kathy (Vanessa Miller), and April (Melissa Pieja) in a 'Company' rehearsal photo. McLean Community Players present 'Company' at the Alden Theatre in the McLean Community Center on weekend through Feb. 19, 2017.**

## Old Firehouse Friday Night Trips Washington Wizards vs Indiana Pacers

4:30-11:30 p.m. Join the staff of the Old Firehouse as they watch the Washington Wizards face off against Paul George and the Indiana Pacers. With exclusive pregame access, free giveaways, a food voucher and quality seats, this trip will be a slam dunk. \$50/\$40 MCC district residents.

## THURSDAY/FEB. 16

**Fred Eaglesmith** will be performing in Vienna 7 p.m. JAMMIN JAVA 227 Maple Ave. East Vienna.

## SUNDAY/FEB. 19

### Concert: The Daraja Ensemble

4 - 6 p.m. at Saint Francis Episcopal Church 9220 Georgetown Pike Great Falls, VA 22066. This fellowship woodwind quintet from the University of Maryland takes its name from the Swahili word for "bridge." Coming together from around the country and abroad, their wide-ranging performances include ongoing outreach to Tanzania. Cost: Season pass \$150 or \$30 at the door. Visit: <http://amadeusconcerts.com/>

## ONGOING

## FRIDAYS-SUNDAYS/FEB. 3-19

### McLean Community Players

**"Company."** 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays. Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean, VA 22101. A 1970 musical comedy based on a book by George Furth with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. The original production was nominated for a record-setting fourteen Tony Awards and won seven.

\$25/\$23 MCC tax district residents. Visit <http://www.mcleanplayers.org/>.

### The U.S. Small Business Administration

is reminding businesses in Virginia that working capital loans are still available to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture and private nonprofit organizations affected by the severe storms and tornadoes on Feb. 24, 2016. Deadline to file is March 7, 2017. <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>. [www.sba.gov/disaster](http://www.sba.gov/disaster). [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov).

**Weekly Storytime.** Wednesday and Saturday. 11 a.m. Barnes & Noble, 7851 L Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Themes and Titles vary. Free admission.

### Tai Chi Beginners' Practice.

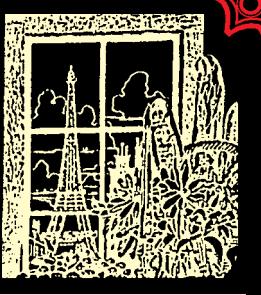
Saturdays, 8-9 a.m. St. Luke's Catholic School Gymnasium, 7005 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Weekly Tai Chi practice. Group has met for over 20 years. Free. [FreeTaiChi.org](http://FreeTaiChi.org). 703-759-9141.

**"Thrifty Thursdays" Basic Budgeting Classes** in Annandale, Chantilly and Alexandria 7-9 p.m. Heritage Building 7611 Little River Turnpike, East Wing 1st Floor Conference Room D Annandale. Thursday, January 19, 2017 & Thursday, April 20, 2017.

South County Government Center 7-9 p.m. 8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Thursday, February 16, 2017 (Room 220) & Thursday, May 18, 2017 (Room 220) Chantilly High School 7-9 p.m. 4201 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Thursday, March 16, 2017 (Room 253) & Thursday, June 15, 2017 (Room 253)

For All Sessions, RSVP to: Carole Rogers at [croggers@britepaths.org](mailto:croggers@britepaths.org) or 703-273-8829

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The McLean Community Players, Inc. is funded in part by the Arts Council of Fairfax County.  
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# Fireplace as Focal Point

**A hearth is in demand for cold weather.**

BY JOHN BYRD

**F**ireplaces have never fallen out of favor," said David Foster, president of Foster Remodeling Solutions. "We may be seeing a preference for gas over a traditional wood-burner, but the hearth itself is hugely popular — with homeowners continually seeking distinctions in style, building materials and, even, where it will be located."

Foster says he's currently working on several home remodeling projects that feature a fireplace as an interior focal point.

"A fireplace offers aesthetic and functional benefits at one price," he said, "so it's an attractive option."

Fireplace-desire can also be a spur to creative thinking that stimulates a more engaging and original remodeling project.

Case in point, the new formal dining room created for Burke homeowners Dennis Perzanowski and Jack Ellison. The goal: convert a three season-room into a year-around dining room complete with a gas-fueled hearth on one elevation.

"We were looking for a mix of old and new styles," said Perzanowski. "We wanted

to feature a traditional dining room set with sideboards, but there are modern touches such an industrial-style chandelier."

In this context, a gas fireplace with an brushed steel frame was a perfect offset. Mounted on the east wall elevation and with an oil painting just above, the stacked geometrical shapes lend balance and symmetry to an otherwise blank wall between two floor-to-ceiling windows.

Chris Arnold, a Foster partner who managed the project, knew there would be challenges in adding a hearth in a somewhat restricted available space, but with a little research found a 42" x 38"gas insert that perfectly suits the spot allocated for an eye-catching focal point.

"This is something of a formal dining room," Arnold notes, "yet the fireplace design is so understated it's visually compatible the rest of the décor."

#### RAISE THE ROOF

Meanwhile, not far away, the interior design solution to a Vienna great room also depended on profiling an new hearth.

Ted and Wanda Rogers had asked Foster to renovate the circa-1960's ranch they had occupied for 30 years.

The remodeler added more than 1,000 square feet of additional living space. But the question that generated really serious discussion was how best to introduce a new



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**The McLean makeover features an 11-foot cathedral ceiling dominated by a window wall, and a post-modern hearth as the central interior focal point.**

hearth.

Wanda Rogers wanted to eliminate the original builder-grade brick-facing fireplace, which was situated in the middle of the house and too drafty and cold.

Ted Rogers agreed in principal, but was attracted to a gas-fueled fireplace alternative, which offers considerable heating efficiencies.

As all soon learned, the existing 8-ft ceiling to the Rogers home was too low to yield much design benefit. That's when Foster proposed re-working the entire mid-house interior by opening sightlines out and up.

To implement changes that now called for connecting the new kitchen to a front-facing family room, the remodeler replaced an obstructive bearing wall with concealed structural supports.

Giving sightlines free-reign, likewise, meant removing the living room ceiling and shelling-in previously concealed roofing rafters.

An ascending vertical accent was now introduced: a floor-to-ceiling hearth constructed of dry stacked Ledgestones.

SEE HOMELIFESTYLE, PAGE 9

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## Fireplace as Focal Point

FROM PAGE 8

The new hearth is designed for a gas-fueled insert equipped with blowers and remote control. Vents draw air in from the outside. The couple can adjust a thermostat for the desired temperature. This is a useful since, at full speed, the unit can generate 55,000 BTUs of heat — enough to keep the entire great room toasty and warm even during the dead of winter.

Foster's architect proposed a wood-trimmed ledge above the fireplace, a simple motif that draws the eye upwards to the accent-lighted vaulted ceiling.

As a housewarming gesture, Foster fashioned a rustic mantle from the rough-sawn oak previously deployed in the rafters of the original structure. It's a little keepsake of the old place.

Though higher interior ceilings, theoretically, make a room harder to heat, the remodeler re-insulated the ceiling and installed an eco-slate roofing, dramatically improving the thermal efficiency of the entire residence.

The new fireplace is flanked by arches: a recess for shelving and cabinetry on the left; a sympathetically curvilinear entry to the new master suite on the right.

"The effect in all directions is exciting," Wanda Rogers said. "Looking in from the kitchen, the room opens out and up; it feels really warm."

The new vaulted wall expanse also doubles as display space for her private art collection, which is now illuminated by tract lights.

### FAMILY-GATHERING PLACE

In nearby McLean, a Foster client was looking for a floorplan re-configuration that would include a front-facing family-gathering niche — with a window wall and a fireplace.

"We all saw the aesthetic opportunity," Foster said. "There would be larger windows on all sides. But also a new front-facing family room — with an 11' cathedral ceiling dominated by an extensive window wall, and an appropriately post-modern hearth as the central interior focal point."

The window wall would help to contextualize a more symmetrical front elevation — one defined by a processional entrance way with double French glass doors and sidelights.

Taken as a whole, however, the floor plan is functionally a "great room" formed by clever variances in room width and ceiling height differentiated as clearly identified "use" spaces.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**The Grems decide on a formal and traditional look for the fireplace in the family room. The half-brick floor-to-ceiling backwall was replaced by symmetrical built-ins, crown molding and an elevated hearth with a marble surround and an Edwardian-style mantle.**

"The slightly narrower width confers a degree of intimacy on the family room that suits its purpose," Foster observes. "The hearth, in particular, really defines this."

The stainless steel hearth features gas burner elements embedded in river rock and functions as both a heat source and an ornamental focal point.

Flanked by open "cubbies" with glass display shelves, cherry wood cabinetry, and a wine rack abutting a wine refrigerator, the "built-ins" define a functionally separate family entertainment zone that includes a wide-screen plasma TV mounted above the fireplace.

A more congenial spot for holiday entertaining is hard to imagine.

### FROM BRICK TO ELEVATED HEARTH

Ed and Kelly Grems of Vienna have worked with Foster on a number of projects over a decade, but held off on upgrading the family room because the family's design process was gestating slowly.

"We're particular; we let the look come to us piece by piece," Kelly Grems said.

One notable piece, was deciding on a formal and traditional look for the fireplace in the family room. In the end, FRS designers created interior elevations that bear no resemblance to the excess of brick that came with the original circa-1990s house.

The earlier half-brick floor-to-ceiling backwall was replaced by symmetrical built-ins, crown molding and an elevated hearth with a marble surround and an Edwardian-style mantle.

"It's an entirely different mood from the sun room," Grems said, "and perfectly satisfies another dimension of our lifestyle."

Foster Remodeling Solutions periodically offers workshops on home remodeling topics. For information call: 703-550-1371, or [www.fosterremodeling.com](http://www.fosterremodeling.com)

*John Byrd (byrdmatx@gmail.com) has been writing about home improvement for 30 years.*



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### LEGAL NOTICE

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### ABC LICENSE

AU Enterprise, LLC trading as Carlton Mini Mart, 4600 S. Four Mile Run Dr. Ste C1, Arlington, VA 22204. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine & Beer Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages,

Allan Urcia, Owner

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at [www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or 800-552-3200.

Nothing is too small to know, and nothing too big to attempt.

-William Van Horne

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## LIVE AUCTION COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Thursday February 23, 2017 @ 12:30pm

365 Denbigh Blvd, Newport News, VA

### SUMMARY

Primary Property Type: Commercial

Parking Spaces: 9

Building Size: 2,640 SF

Lot Size: 0.36 Acres

Year Built: 1964

Total Sq. Ft.: 15,605

2016 Assessed Value: \$299,000

From Footage: 100 FT

New HVAC System

Depth Footage: 125 FT

No. Stories: 1

Zoning: C1

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## Completely Off Topic



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

That topic not being cancer. The topic being candy, or rather the disappearance of candy, from my hiding place at home. The reason I'm even discussing/divulgling this publicly is that I've been forced by circumstances beyond my control to already involve my wife, Dina, in the disappearance of said topic: my post-holiday purchase of 75-percent-off-the-regular-price of snack-size type candy, typically available the day after a holiday.

Before I proceed, let me provide a bit of context for some of you irregular readers: I love chocolate. I don't just have a sweet tooth, I have sweet teeth. However, given certain realities/habits in my life, I almost always (unless times/circumstances are desperate) only buy these delicacies when the items are on sale and even more so when the items are both on sale and I have coupons. Now add into that mix an extra \$5 off a \$15 purchase — or a percentage off \$20 or \$30 store-specific coupon, and I'm spending pennies (almost literally) on the dollar. On these occasions — and Rebecca, you should probably stop reading — I load up. ('Load up' for a typical person might mean months. For yours truly, honestly, it means weeks, sometimes even days.)

Now when I bring this much volume into the house, my wife, Dina, need not know anything about it. Generally, I will stash the non-cash in places where I'll doubt she'll look (and I'm not saying the oven; that's an old Henny Youngman joke), and when I do indulge, it won't be in her presence, nor will there be any sign that I've unwrapped anything.

One of my hiding places, which will now be changed, was downstairs in our cellar in a top drawer of an old bureau I use for collecting miscellaneous bank statements, credit card bills, insurance forms, etc., and for years, my candy and previously unmentioned consumables. On the particular day in question — a day now seared into my memory — as I am habitually wont to do, I went to my downstairs drawer to replenish my upstairs drawer (in yet another hiding place) and was shocked and awed to find my two remaining bags of Kisses and Rolos empty, both gutted like a fish, ripped along their sides with nary a wrapper to be seen, 40-50 bite-size pieces gone.

My first reaction was of course to accuse my wife. Doing so however, would have exposed my secret: I buy candy and hide it (although, she probably knows it, and since I'm not exactly losing any weight ... ). But what other cause/culprit could be behind such a dastardly deed? A break-in? No. A ghost who loves chocolate? (We do live in a 250-year-old house.) Mice? Squirrels? It's possible. There are some animal-friendly access points under our foundation. And even though the bureau is flush up against a retaining wall/crawl space for critters, I did notice that the bureau drawer was open an inch or two. Barely enough access. Otherwise, there is no entry. But if critters were responsible, where are all the wrappers and/or feces or any other evidence of their transgression? There weren't any. If the candy was indeed pilfered, it was "The Great Escape" of candy heists. Forced with this dilemma and daring-do, I was forced to confront my wife with these facts and ask if she in fact was responsible. She denied everything and blamed either a ghost or an animal. She was surprised, or so she claimed, at where I had hid the candy, not that I hid candy, so we weren't breaking any new ground, but apparently, my secret had been safe.

It's been a few weeks since this non-insurance loss, and there's been no sign or evidence to indicate what happened to my chocolate. My wife seems to have forgotten the incident. As for me, I bought a 3.4-pound container of Kirkland-brand chocolate-covered raisins from Costco so my inventory is back where I want it to be. I just wish my Kisses and Rolos were back as well.

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



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