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OPINION, PAGE 4 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 12 ♦ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 14

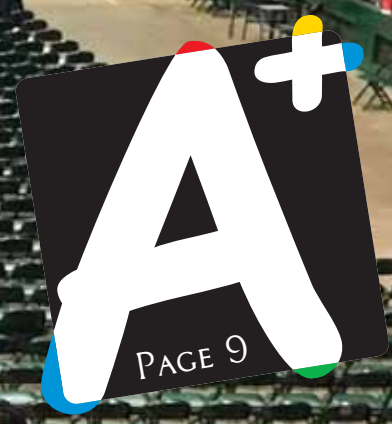
PHOTO BY ALEX PENNA/THE CONNECTION



Springfield CONNECTION

Franconia ♦ Kingstowne ♦ Newington

Students process into the arena floor to take their seats for the West Springfield High School graduation ceremony.



Remaining 'Spartan Strong'

NEWS, PAGE 6

Lee, Edison Graduations Held

NEWS, PAGE 8

County Anniversary Celebrated

NEWS, PAGE 3



The West Springfield Senior Class of 2017, their families, teachers, administrators and the All Night Graduation Party committee members gratefully acknowledge the following businesses, organizations and individuals for their support of the PTSA sponsored alcohol and drug free All Night Graduation Party held on June 20th at the Lee District Recreation Center in Alexandria. We are grateful for your generous contributions and commitment to the young people of our community!

THANK YOU!

Corporate Level, \$500 and over

Dorm It Up
Glory Days Grill, Burke
Greenspring Retirement Community
Morrissette Family Foundation
Tom & Cindy and Associates

Spartan Level, \$250-\$499

Dave Albo for Delegate
Cardinal Plaza Shell
Northern Virginia Dental Associates
Popeye's, West Springfield
Virginia Eyecare Center
Washington Walks Tour Company

Blue Level, \$100-\$249

Asian Grill
Austin Grill
Burke Lake Golf Course
Burke Lions Club
Burke Racquet and Swim Club
Chick-fil-A, Springfield
Chipotle, West Springfield
Fairfax County Park Authority
Firehouse Subs, Springfield
Five Guys
Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce
Greenbrier Resort
Dr. David Hughes Orthodontics
Immanuel Bible Church
Drs. Murphy, Staats & Dagle
Papa John's, West Springfield

Dr. Lawrence Rosenman
Sidestreet Hair Design
Springfield Lorton Dental Group
Starbucks, West Springfield
Wegmans, Alexandria
Whole Foods, Springfield
Women's Club of Springfield
Dr. Carol Wooddell
Dr. J. Douglas Wooddell

Orange Level, \$50-\$99

Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn
Flight Trampoline Park
Jammin Java
KK7SS Inc DBA 7-Eleven (at 6221 Rolling Rd)
Krispy Kreme, Alexandria
Ledo Pizza, Cardinal Forest Plaza
Medford Leas Homeowners Association
Nalls Produce
Potomac Riverboat Company
Subway, West Springfield
University Mall Theatres

Friends of WSHS Class of 2017, \$1-\$49

Cava
Fairfax Ice Arena
Great American Restaurants, Inc.
Hunt Valley Swim Club
Keene Mill Elementary PTA
Merrifield Garden Center
Potomac Nationals
Spartans Restaurant



NEWS



Braddock District Supervisor John Cook (center) with his Lord and Lady Fairfax nominees, Kevin Morse and Mary Cortina, and the 14th Lord Fairfax of Cameron, Nicholas Fairfax and his wife Annabel.



PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Performers from The Complete History of Fairfax (The Musical) Preview.

Fairfax County Celebrates 275th Anniversary

Fairfax County celebrated its 275th Anniversary on Saturday, June 17, 2017, in the area surrounding the Historic Fairfax Courthouse and the Judicial Center grounds in the City of Fairfax. More than 80 historical organizations, attractions, re-enactment units, and booths were present to showcase the county's neighborhoods, sites, and history. The day included historically themed activities, live music, antique vehicles from the Police and Fire Departments, and re-enactors and living history demonstrations. It also included the Lord and Lady Fairfax Awards Program, talks on topics in the Courthouse, Virginia's WWI/WWII Anniversary Mobile, Historic Courthouse Tours, a Revolutionary War memorial plaque dedication ceremony, petting zoo, and more.

The special guests who came all the way from England were Nicholas Fairfax, the 14th Lord Fairfax of Cameron, and his wife Annabel. Nicholas is the direct descendant of Thomas Fairfax, the sixth Lord Fairfax of Cameron, from whom the county gets its name.

— STEVE HIBBARD



Darline DeMott models a 19th century costume of an upper class lady at the Fairfax Fashion Through the Years: The 18th, 19th & Early 20th Centuries fashion show at Fairfax County's 275th Anniversary celebration on Saturday, June 17, 2017, in the City of Fairfax.



Re-enactors and Hessian Guard members Brent Mikulak and Alan Wetherald during Fairfax County's 275th Anniversary celebration on Saturday, June 17, 2017.



Dottie O'Rourke, a docent for 20 years with Sully Historic Site at its booth.



Phil Camero, a fiddler with the Regiment Von Huyn during Fairfax County's 275th Anniversary celebration on Saturday, June 17, 2017, in the City of Fairfax.



Liam Dorrity, 6, of Fairfax City plays in an Air Force F22 model airplane.



A group of models show off 18th century attire during the Fairfax Fashion Through the Years fashion show at the county's 275th Anniversary celebration.

Losing One of Our Own

Worst fear of any parent of a teenager, losing a child to violence.

Later this week, when area Muslims celebrate the end of Ramadan, a month of observance and daily fasting at Eid al-Fitr, the surrounding community grieves with them the loss of 17-year-old Nabra Hassanen of Reston.

Nabra was among a group of teenagers who were gathered at the All Dulles Area Muslim Society for an all-night event overnight Saturday during Ramadan, and who were returning to the center after going to eat at a fast food restaurant.

Fairfax County Police report: "At about 3:40 a.m. on Sunday, a group of as many as 15 teenagers was walking and riding bikes on Dranesville Road. The group of teens had been attending an overnight event at a mosque, the All Dulles Area Muslim Society or ADAMS Center, and had left to go to a fast food restaurant. As they were returning to the mosque, some were on the sidewalk and others were on the road itself. Detectives believe [Darwin Martinez Torres, 22, of Sterling] came upon the teens while he was driving. The investigation reveals a teenaged boy on a bike began arguing with Torres. Torres then drove his car onto the curb as the group scattered. Witnesses say Torres

caught up with them a short time later in a nearby parking lot and got out of his car armed with a baseball bat and began chasing the group. Torres was able to catch Nabra. His anger over the encounter led to violence when he hit Nabra with a baseball bat. Torres then took Nabra with him in his car to a second location nearby in Loudoun County."

Nabra's body was found in a Loudoun pond. Torres is charged with her murder, which police describe as a road rage incident rather than a hate crime, although more charges could come later.

All parents who have successfully raised children into a teenagers know fear for their safety as they become more independent. We expect our teens to be safe participating in events based at a house of worship. We expect our teens to be safe from violence. Nabra's death means that all of us now have a diminished sense of safety; we all grieve with Nabra's parents, who lost their beautiful and beloved daughter during Ramadan, on Father's Day. We share their horror at what their daughter suffered.

Coming together in support of the Muslim community in vigil, prayers and other support has meant a great deal.



PHOTO COURTESY KHADIJAH ABDULLAH-LARDAS
Nabra Hassanen, 17, of Reston was a sophomore at South Lakes High School.

"Basically, the outpouring of support from the Christian community, the Jewish community, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Bahá'í; everyone is comforting to us," Rizwan Jaka of the ADAMS Center told a Connection reporter. "People care so much and it means so much to us."

But we will all feel the loss of Nabra Hassanen, and a loss of sense of safety here, in weeks and years to come.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

November General Elections

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)



With the conclusion of the political party primaries last week the general election is now teed up for Nov. 7. There were some surprises coming out of the Democratic and Republican primaries. Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam easily won the Democratic primary to be the nominee for governor even though there was discussion beforehand that polls indicated a tight race. Polling for primaries is notorious for being inaccurate because with a typically light turnout the universe of potential voters is almost impossible to determine.

Former one-term U.S. Rep. Tom Perriello has a great deal to offer and will hopefully stay on the scene for future opportunities. Although the term "establishment" was grossly over-used in describing Ralph Northam, his service in the state senate plus his active role as lieutenant governor made him well known and greatly admired throughout the state.

Justin Fairfax gained everyone's admiration after a primary loss to Attorney General Mark Herring four years ago led to his active campaigning during the interim time making him well known for this primary. He was also well known for his work as an attorney. If you review the areas where Ralph Northam did well

and compare them with where Justin Fairfax was strongest, you create a strong statewide team that will be nearly impossible to defeat. Attorney General Mark Herring was not challenged in a primary and will be on the ballot to succeed himself in November. There is no one-term limitation with the attorney general and the lieutenant governor as there is with the governor.

The greatest surprise of the primaries may have been on the Republican side to pick a candidate for governor. Ed Gillespie who has been mentioned for years as the next Republican governor of Virginia barely got through the primary with a shockingly strong showing by Corey Stewart who is known for his anti-immigrant work in Prince William County and for campaigning with a Confederate flag. He has the distinction of being so over the top that he was fired by the Trump campaign. Turnout was especially low in the Republican primary, and Stewart was just over a percentage point in taking out Gillespie. It will be interesting to see if the folks who voted for Stewart will vote in the general election or decide to stay home.

The Republican primary for lieutenant governor was a slug-fest between two state senators with Jill Vogel winning after a mud-slinging campaign that left neither candidate looking good.

All 100 seats for the House of Delegates are

up for election this fall with a record number of contested elections.

Historically it has been difficult to recruit candidates to run for the House of Delegates, but events of the past year have brought forth more candidates than ever before. There was a record number 27 seats where the candidates were determined by the primary because there was so much interest in running. Democrats will certainly pick up seats in the House of Delegates getting closer to shifting or sharing power in that legislative body.

While I am uncontested in my race for the House of Delegates you can still expect to see me campaigning. It is a good way to stay in touch with constituents and to increase turn-out for the statewide elections. Expect a busy fall of campaigning leading up to the fall elections in Virginia that will send a signal to the nation as to the public's reaction to national events.

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:

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Email editors@connectionnewspapers.com

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McAuliffe Signs Filler-Corn's Consent Education Bill into Law

On Friday, June 9, Gov. Terry McAuliffe signed Del. Eileen Filler-Corn's (D-41) bill, HB 2257 at the State Capitol in Richmond.

HB 2257 builds upon Filler-Corn's legislation from 2016 (now a law), which requires any high school family life education curriculum offered by a local school division to incorporate age-appropriate elements of effective and evidence-based programs on the prevention of dating violence, domestic abuse, sexual harassment, and

sexual violence.

This legislation codifies that the law and meaning of consent may be taught in high school family life education.

"HB 2257 has been a multi-year process for me building on my healthy relationship education bill passed and signed last year," said Filler-Corn. "My goal for this bill, as it relates to the law and meaning of consent to be taught in FLE, has been education and prevention," she added.

The bill will take effect July 1, 2017.

Gov. Terry McAuliffe signing Del. Eileen Filler-Corn's (D-41) bill, HB 2257



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

SCHOOL NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

Lindsey Victoria Krisak, of Alexandria, has been named to Eastern Mennonite University (Harrisonburg, Va.) dean's list for the spring 2017 semester.

Alexander Fekkes, of Alexandria, a junior at Randolph-Macon Academy (R-MA), was inducted into the National Honor Society in April 2017. Alex is the son of Bill and Cristina Lussier.

James David Stephenson, of Springfield, graduated from the University of North Georgia (Dahlonega, Ga.) during the spring 2017 semester and has earned the Bachelor of Science in biology.

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GRADUATION 2017



Students process into the arena floor to take their seats.



Friends and family of graduates cheer as the ceremony begins.

PHOTOS BY ALEX PENA/THE CONNECTION

West Springfield Graduates Remain ‘Spartan Strong’

The class of 2017 is the school’s 50th graduating class.

By ALEX PENA
THE CONNECTION

Friends and family filled the stadium at George Mason University as they watched the West Springfield High School (WSHS) graduating class proceed in to the tune of “Pomp and Circumstance,” played by the WSHS Band.

After a rendition of the National Anthem by the WSHS Madrigals, Senior Class President Joe Gumpf took the stage to greet those in attendance and reflected on the history of the school as the class of 2017 will be the 50th graduating class.

“The phrase ‘Spartan Strong’ is not just a clever phrase we put on t-shirts, but two words that every Spartan stands and lives by,” Gumpf said. “It is a way of life that we become accustomed to during our four years at this school that symbolizes wherever you go, West Springfield will always be a place you can call home.”

After Gumpf, Senior Class Officer Sophie Shidlovsky introduced Principal Mike Mukai. She described him as having high



Principal Mike Mukai address the graduating class.

energy and someone who brought maximum effort to ensure the success of students.

Mukai called for a moment of silence for the students who had passed before they could make it to graduation. A reflective quiet fell amongst those in the stadium, and then Mukai went on to recognize and express gratitude for alumni, teachers, and parents.

Mukai spoke about how even though his three years as principal of West Springfield have seemed short, the 18 years parents

have gone through with their children up until this point went by in the blink of an eye.

“I can tell you right now that they still think of you as those little kids. The ones they were worried about the first time they crossed the street, the first time they walked to school on their own, the first time they drove a car, or went out on a date,” Mukai said. “And I can tell a lot of them [are a little nervous] right now watching their baby graduate high school.”

Mukai then asked students to indulge

them and their parents one more time, as the principals of all the feeder schools read them a story, “Yay, You!” by Sandra Boynton.

Both the Spartan Award and the Faculty Awards were presented by the principal, the former going to Sophie Shidlovsky and the latter going to Costanza Hasselmann. The Bonnie E. Lilly Award was also given out to Colleen Dewing

Their keynote speaker was West Springfield’s own Duke Baird, a math teacher for 16 years who was also involved in the track and field team and girl’s tennis. Initially, Baird seem to be giving a cynically realistic speech. He discussed how some have not been as successful as others, and how going forward many more challenges will present themselves. But he quickly turned that callous build-up around.

“I like many of your family members and friends here today have experienced many of the aforementioned issues firsthand. And I am here to tell you that it is going to be okay,” Baird said. “Let me say that one more time. It is going to be okay.”

Shortly after Baird’s speech ended, the class of 2017 made their way across the stage one by one as families all over the arena could be heard cheering when their child’s name was called. Once all the diplomas were handed out, these Spartans stood together one last time to turn their tassels and fill the arena with flying blue caps.



Students walk across the stage to receive their diplomas.



The now graduated Spartans throw their caps into the air.

FAITH

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. www.jssa.org/growth-learning.

JCCNV Mothers Circle program, for women who are not Jewish but are raising Jewish children. Free education in Jewish rituals, practices and values, while respecting the participant's choice to retain her own religious identity. Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike in Fairfax. Contact Laurie Albert, 703-537-3064 or HYPERLINK "mailto:Laurie.Albert@jccnv.org" Laurie.Albert@jccnv.org.

Metropolitan Community Church of Northern Virginia, 10383 Democracy Lane in Fairfax, presents worship services on Sundays at 11 a.m. and choir practice, open to all, on Sundays from 9-10:30 a.m. www.mccnova.com or 703-691-0930.

Church of the Nativity offers a free general bereavement support group open to all adults on the first and third Thursday of each month 7:30-9 p.m. The church is located at 6400 Nativity Lane, Burke. Call 703-455-2400, ext. 17.

Arabic New Life Baptist Church is located at 6428 Ox Road in Fairfax Station. Worship services are on Sundays at 10:45 a.m. and prayer services are on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. Bible Study is on Fridays at 7 p.m. Pastor: Wissam Jamil. Call 703-273-5599.

Sydenstricker United Methodist Church has Worship services Saturday in the chapel at 5:30 p.m. and Sunday in the Sanctuary at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. traditional worship. Sunday School for

youth and children is in the Sanctuary at 9:30 a.m., and Sunday School for adults is in the sanctuary at 9:45 a.m. Fellowship is in Hottle Hall on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. 8508 Hooes Road in Springfield. www.sumcdisciples.org or 703-451-8223.

St. Anthony of Padua American National Catholic Church, 10383 Democracy Lane, Fairfax, holds mass for Contemporary Catholics every Sunday at 12:30 p.m. St. Anthony's is an independent Catholic parish, inclusive and accepting of all people. Experience true acceptance and true Catholicism. www.MySaintAnthonys.org.

Calvary Hill Baptist Church, 9301 Little River Turnpike in Fairfax, conducts Worship team practice for the Praise Band in the Sanctuary every Thursday at 7 p.m. All are welcome. 703-323-1347.

Jubilee Christian Center will have a Patriotic Service on Sunday, May 28, 8:45 and 11 a.m., featuring special music and message. Jubilee is located at 4650 Shirley Gate Rd., Fairfax. There will be no 6 p.m. service on May 28. For information, call 703-383-1170, or see www.jccag.org

The Fairfax Church of Christ, 3901 Rugby Road in Fairfax, has facilitators available to help those who are experiencing a separation or divorce. 703-631-2100 or www.fxcc.org.

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road in Oakton, offers services during the summer on Sundays at 10 a.m. The regular schedule, Sundays at 9:15 and 11:15 a.m., resumes Sept. 11. www.uucf.org.

Congregation Adat Reyim, an independent Jewish congregation, offers services Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 9:30 a.m. and Maariv minyan at 7:30 p.m.

Hebrew School is Sundays from 9-11:15 for K-6th graders and Mondays from 5:30-7:30 p.m. for 3rd-6th graders. Adat Reyim is located at 6500 Westbury Oaks Court in Springfield. 703-569-7577 or www.adatreyim.org.



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GRADUATION 2017

Lee Graduates Reminded of Purpose in Life

Robert E. Lee high school seniors graduate at Eagle Bank Arena.

BY BASMA HUMADI
THE CONNECTION

“Go all in, don’t hold back,” Robert E. Lee High School Principal Deirdre M. Lavery told the graduating class of 2017.

“The purpose of life is not to be happy, it is to be useful...to be compassionate,” she said.

On June 20, at Eagle Bank Arena at George Mason University, 395 seniors stepped onto the Eagle Bank stage, shook hands with Lee administration and faculty, and received their diplomas.

High school at Lee, Lavery said, is one of “the sum of your experience[s]... that have defined and shaped you.”

Lavery then presented the Lancer Award, an award voted on by Lee seniors, to two graduating seniors — Joan Chen and Mai Linh Tran Ho — for demonstrating outstanding service throughout high school.

Lee, which is an International Baccalaureate (IB) school, had 28 IB candidates graduating this school year. The rigorous program requires students to take majority IB courses, a Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course, write a 4,000-word “ex-



The stands at Eagle Bank filled up fast as family and friends joined to support the Lee High School’s graduating class.

tended essay” and do 150 hours of service of some kind. The diploma is based on a point system and students do not find out if they receive the IB diploma until after they graduate.

Andy Mensah the Graduate Address

speaker remarked on the rigor of the IB program when taking the IB History of Americas course, which taught him perseverance and the importance of pushing through. He also reminisced on entering his last year of high school as he and his peers stepped into

a “year of lasts” — last pep rallies, football games and homecoming dances.

“You always have a family at Robert E. Lee,” Mensah said.

Mensah then introduced the class of 2017’s commencement speaker, Karen N. Walker, a lawyer and partner at Kirkland & Ellis LLP in Washington D.C. Walker grew up in Prince George’s County and received her J.D. from Harvard Law School.

“You haven’t always had it easy,” she said to the graduating class. “Sometimes it was hard.” Walker noted that though today’s generation can often be labeled as lazy and “having it easy,” many of them balanced work and school, studied hard for standardized tests, participated in sports at school, stayed up late and suffered from lack of sleep to get assignments done on time.

“Maybe, just maybe, that’s why today is so special,” Walker said.

Students then headed to the stage as their names were called and they individually received their diplomas and took one last look at their friends, faculty and family that encircled them throughout their four years at Lee. “We wish you success in all you do and we wish our warmest congratulations to the class of 2017,” Lavery said.

‘Soar as an Eagle,’ Edison Graduates Told

Thomas A. Edison’s student body represents 50 different countries and 40 different languages.

BY BASMA HUMADI
THE CONNECTION

At the beginning of her speech, Lauren Myers, president of the class of 2017 at Thomas A. Edison high school, directed everyone in the audience to stand. “Take a step to the right, then take a step to the left. Now sit,” she said.

“If you’re wondering why I did that, it’s because they say a great speaker can move their audience,” Myers said.

The audience followed with laughter. Parents, friends and loved ones alike gathered together at Eagle Bank Arena at George Mason University on June 16 to celebrate and support Thomas A. Edison high school seniors as they held their graduation ceremony.

Principal Pamela Ellison Brumfield began her speech by acknowledging the hard work the “Edison Eagles” — the school’s mascot and symbol — put in throughout high school and remarked on the new stage Edison seniors are approaching.

“You will soar as an eagle,” she said.

The graduating class of 427 students were nostalgic but ready to embark onto a new chapter in their life. The Edison high school choir joined together to sing Phil Collins’s “You’ll be in my Heart.”

“Somewhere up there, even though we didn’t realize it, we grew up,” said Halle Kaufax in her speech as Edison’s honorary graduate.

Kaufax remarked on the joys and the journey Edison seniors took as freshmen to today, as well as discussing the diverse and considering nature which makes Edison such a great high school. She noted the diverse student body which represents 50 different countries and 40 different languages.

Kaufax then introduced the Commencement Speaker, Donald Dight, a beloved Edison teacher known for handing out gummy bears and greeting all Edison students in the high school hallways. Dight has taught at Edison for three years and admitted he learned from his students as much as they learned from him.

“When you were sophomores, I was the freshman,” Dight said.

During his speech, Dight, comically brought out a megaphone to emphasize the



Friends and family join together at Eagle Bank Arena to celebrate the achievements of Thomas A. Edison High School seniors.

great achievement Edison seniors have already embarked on: graduating. He offered encouraging words to the graduating class and noted that though many of them will be successful in their future, there is still success to revel in their achievements as high schoolers at Edison.

“Some of you have already achieved

greatness,” Dight said.

Dight remarked on the resilient spirit Edison Eagles will carry on with them after high school and challenged the senior class to examine what they wanted to be remembered for in the future.

“What will be your legacy?” he asked.



The Women in Search of Excellence (WISE) Mentoring Program run by Northern Virginia Community College is designed to address challenges faced by young women in higher education.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Finding the Right Mentor

A mentor can brighten a young person's future.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Tamyka Mason says that she was struggling with academics, finances and time management. She knew that she needed to make a change, but didn't have a source for guidance. Mason discovered the Women in Search of Excellence (WISE) Mentoring Program run by Northern Virginia Community College and her life began to change.

"When I joined WISE, [I] was assigned [a] mentor and learned how to speak about the challenges I was facing and the goals I had," said Mason. "[My mentor] helped me dramatically ... plan for future events."

The upcoming summer months offer teens an opportunity to connect with adults other than parents who can offer guidance through mentorship programs. Finding the right mentoring match can be a life-altering experience, say experts.

"Through supportive relationships with adult mentors, teens can learn how to develop practical goals, identify resources to accomplish goals ... regulate emotions, communicate effectively with others and cope better with stress," said Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at George Mason University.

The Virginia Mentoring Partnership (VMP) is a source for those who are looking for a mentor or those who want to mentor others. The organization's program managers train mentoring program coordinators and mentors. Their goal is to increase the number and quality of mentoring programs in Virginia. VMP maintains a database where prospective mentors or mentees can plug in a ZIP code and find the closest mentoring program.

"We provide support across the State of Virginia to help align program practices that research shows make high quality mentorship programs," said Betsy Bilharz, Virginia Mentoring Partnership. "We recruit, screen and match mentors with young people using that set of standards."

Recognizing that a mentoring relationship is not usually a relationship of equals is an important aspect

of mentorships, says Amy L. Best, Ph.D., professor and chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology at George Mason University. "There are really two types of mentors: those who provide guidance and willingly share knowledge they have accrued from their experience in the field," she said. "The second type are those who facilitate opportunity, vouching for someone or helping the person with points of contact in their area of interest. Both are important."

THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP develops best when mentors listen to a young person's concerns and expectations [and] empathize and tailor support and skill building around the teen's needs and with their input, says Short. "The relationship should benefit both the mentor and the teen through expressions of gratitude, a sense of accomplishment, and expectations for future support and success."

Effective mentors are as interested as they are interesting and are forthcoming with accounts of their own struggles and the strategies they used to overcome them, says Best. "The best mentors listen first and then lead. It's not a one size fits all relationship," she said. "The best mentors are concrete in their guidance and work with attainable and flexible goals. [They] don't play favorites, but work to create an ethos of fairness and mutual respect."

Tykesha R. Myrick works as a financial aid manager at Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) and is the founder of the WISE program on campus. The program, which targets minority women, pairs students with adult professionals who offer guidance to the students, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college. "The relationships go beyond academic accomplishments and are life changing and life lasting," said Myrick. "The goal is to provide a holistic environment for these young women."

Mentorship programs such as WISE work best when those being mentored are receptive. "The [best] mentees [respect] the mentor's gift of time [and] recognize the importance of learning by listening and ask thoughtful questions, and they are open and responsive to guidance," said Best. "It is equally important to invest not simply in the best and brightest, but those with the smallest glimmer of promise. Good mentors move mountains."

Details

For more on Virginia Mentoring Partnership, visit vamentoring.org or connect.mentoring.org.

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The Pet Connection will publish on July 26, 2017, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by July 19. We welcome short stories about how you got your pet, a noteworthy talent or anecdote about your pet, tales of the bonds between your family and your pet, plus drawings, paintings or other artwork of your pet by children or adults.

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GRADUATION 2017



More than 700 Lake Braddock seniors graduate together in the Eaglebank arena.



From left: Aracelli Villalba, Laura Doreymi Sanchez and Jouszell Lopez gather together before the graduation begins.

Onto the Next Chapter Lake Braddock's Class of 2017 turns their tassels.

BY GRETCHEN KERNBACH
THE CONNECTION

Dressed in all purple, Lake Braddock's class of 2017 said their final goodbyes June 19. More than 700 graduates crossed the stage at Eaglebank Arena to receive their diplomas and start the next chapter of their lives.

Followed by the presentation of colors and the national anthem, principal David F. Thomas gave opening and special recognitions.

"This school has always had an extraordinary staff," said Thomas, who individually recognized retiring staff members.

Thomas proceeded to ask the entire teaching staff to stand up for an applause from the students and audience alike. In reference to the graduating seniors, he also recited Kennedy's quote, "ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."

In addition, 25 students from Lake Braddock's graduating class were recognized for choosing to serve the country after high school, eight of them receiving ROTC scholarships to their respected colleges.

Succeeding the opening remarks, "America the Beautiful" was performed by Lake Braddock's combined bands and senior class executive board members Hannah Kim and Shoshana Warshavsky gave a message of welcome.

Two separate acknowledgments were made by director of student services Alka Howard. First, she recognized two students in the class of 2017 from Italy and Norway. Second, she praised scholars who scored a 3 or higher on three or more AP exams, completed five or more AP courses and received over a final cumulative 4.0 GPA.



Shalom Mengesha plans to study biology at Virginia Tech for the next four years.



Ben Clark is heading to William and Mary in the fall to study business.



From left: Hanna Un and Emely Velapatino flash excited smiles.

Afterwards, honor graduate Emily Warwick addressed her fellow senior class. She discussed life after high school as if it was an AP test. There would be decisions to make from here on and many answer choices to choose from.

"What do I want to accomplish in life?" Warwick posed the question to her peers.

She touched on Lake Braddock experiences, specifically mentioning the time #closefcp trended on Twitter worldwide.

Following Warwick, Academic Interventions Assistant Principal Brett Garner, addressed the graduating class as the ceremony's guest speaker.

Garner, a former Lake Braddock student and James Madison University alum, has been with the class of 2017 ever since they were in seventh grade. The class of 2017's first steps in Lake Braddock were Garner's first steps as well.

"Always show appreciation and gratitude," said Garner. He emphasized on the power of the people and how important it is to strive to help others. Garner ended his address with a poem he wrote, titled "Water's Edge."

Following the guest speaker, SGA Senior class president Delaney Crowe presented the class gift. The class of 2017 is leaving behind four boulders for each class to be able to paint.

The faculty award was given to Asa Ward, who was described as someone who stood his ground in the wake of bad decisions.

The last of the presentations ended with a special recognition of the senior class sponsors, Jennifer Celko and Kayla Shane. With that the awarding of diplomas began and each student crossed the stage when their name was called.

Thomas gave the declaration of graduation and Lake Braddock's class of 2017 was officially done with high school.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE HUB THEATRE

Tia Shearer, featured in one-actor performance of "The Happiest Place on Earth" at the Hub Theatre. Matt Bassett, director, "The Happiest Place on Earth" at the Hub Theatre

Escaping Into a Magical Place

Hub's Theatre presents "The Happiest Place on Earth."

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Where & When

Fairfax's Hub Theatre continues to introduce national playwrights rarely produced in the region. For its summer production, the Hub is treating audiences to "The Happiest Place on Earth" by the Philip Dawkins. Dawkins is the playwright who penned "Failure: A Love Story," a Hub production that received acclaim several summers ago.

"The Happiest Place on Earth" is a one-actor play that fits Hub artistic director Helen Pafumi's desire to give audiences plays that are singular, artistically fanciful, acted with heart, intelligence and imagination. "I adore plays that leave you with a pang of joy and pain, that are bittersweet to the core."

With Matt Bassett's direction, "The Happiest Place on Earth" is set in a fictional Anaheim, Calif., where a magical kingdom has been built. A few years after the magical kingdom has opened, the father of one particular family suddenly dies on live television as he delivers the Albuquerque sports scores. The loss of their patriarch leaves the family reeling. So the family takes a quest to reach the magical kingdom to seek solace and recovery.

For director Bassett, Dawkins's "writing is so full of heart and wit, with laughs easily followed by tears, quickly followed again by laughs. He never wallows in pathos, nor does he milk comedy. His characters and voice are honest, yet perfectly theatrical."

Tia Shearer is the actor who

The Hub Theatre presents "The Happiest Place on Earth" at The New School of Northern Virginia, John Swayze Theatre, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. Performances July 7 to July 23, 2017: Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. \$30 adults, \$20 for seniors (65+) and students. Call 703-674-3177 or visit www.thehubtheatre.org. Note: There is construction occurring next to The New School parking lot. Be alert to lane changes.

guides the audience through the play's journey; the journey of an American family taking a visit to a magical place built on total happiness as they try to leave their troubles and woe behind them

Director Bassett and actor Shearer have discussed the challenges: such as finding the simplest, clearest way to communicate each character Shearer plays. In a one-actor play keeping the story active, not a monologue, without scene partners to provide reactions can be a challenge. "I am working with a thoughtful and creative actor, so these challenges are quickly changed into opportunities for insight into character and action," said Bassett.

The technical designs are "exploring the themes of nostalgia versus reality, coping with trauma, and rediscovering wonder in adulthood. To that end, we are finding the balance between set, projections, props, lighting, and sound that can create a 3-D representation" for the play, added Bassett.

Is there a place where a family's dreams can come true? Hub Theatre's "The Happiest Place on Earth" will give audiences much to ponder.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Send entertainment notes to the Connection at connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ or call 703-778-9416. The deadline is the Friday prior to the next paper's publication at noon. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

ONGOING

Senior Line Dancing 1-2 p.m. Little River Glen Senior Center 4001 Barker Court, Fairfax. Line Dancing is a gentle, social form of aerobic activity. Studies have shown it aids in warding off Alzheimer's disease. No previous experience needed. Cost: \$5 per 8 week session. barbriba@hotmail.com 703-524-3739

Fairfax Pets on Wheels New Volunteer Orientation First Wednesday of each month. 7:30-9 p.m. 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax. An orientation for new volunteers interested in visiting residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities with their approved pets through the Fairfax Pets On Wheels program is held the first Wednesday of every month starting at 7:30 p.m. Visit www.fpow.org for each month's location. Prior to attending, please complete the online application found at www.fpow.org/volunteer. Please do NOT bring pets to this orientation. Also, see weather policy for possible cancellations. www.fpow.org, 703-324-5424 or dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Carolina Shag. Wednesdays. 6:30-10 p.m. Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m. No partners needed. Dinner menu. \$8. Under 21 free. nvshag.org.

FUN-Exercise Thursdays, noon-12:50 p.m. Grace Presbyterian Church Family Room, 7434 Bath St., Springfield. Inova certified exercise instructor leads a moderate level exercise class with music and current events conversation. Muscle, Balance, Strength Training using stretch bands and weights both standing and seated exercises. Instructor donation is \$5. moorefitt@yahoo.com or 703-499-6133.

Exercise Program Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 a.m. year-round at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. The exercises are for strength, balance and maintaining limberness. Contact SCFB office at 703-426-2824 for more information.

Cafe Ivrit (Hebrew Cafe). Wednesdays. 8:15-9:15 a.m. Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Shalom (hello) Did you always want to converse in Hebrew? Join Na'ama each week for conversational Hebrew. You will learn and practice Hebrew in a fun and interactive way while learning more about Israel. Free, however we ask that you try to attend regularly. RSVP.Naama.Gold@jccnv.org.

Smoke Free Bingo. 7 p.m. Every Friday. Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Free coffee, entertaining callers, \$1,000 jackpot (with breaks for smoking friends). www.fairfaxvd.com. 703-273-3638.

English Conversation Groups weekly at George Mason, Burke Centre, and Lorton Libraries Practice and improve your English. Day and start times vary. Visit: va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/eventcalendar.asp

Stories From Strawberry Park 10-11 a.m. Tuesdays in Mosaic, Strawberry Park, 2910 District Ave., Fairfax. Enjoy a live interactive performance each week. For ages 10 and under. Held outside in Strawberry Park. Visit www.fxva.com/listing/mosaic-district/2326/.



'Desire'

Cheryl Wilson "Desire," is part of an art exhibition on display July 1-30 at Fairfax Art League, Gallery Wing, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. Cheryl Wilson's abstract acrylic and mixed media collection of art entitled "Remembering Alice" is in honor of the artist's mother. Visit www.cherylwilsonart.com/ for more.

Funday Monday 10:30 a.m., every Monday at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. There will be music, movement, storytelling, performances, crafts, and more. It is open to children of all ages, however especially for those who haven't yet started school. Programs are free and open to the public, donations are gratefully appreciated. There is ample free parking in the downtown area, and stroller access at the rear of Old Town Hall on Main St. 703-385-7858 www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts

Kingstowne Farmers Market opens. 4-7 p.m. every Friday through Oct. 27, at Kingstowne Giant Parking Lot, 5870 Kingstowne Center, Alexandria. Freshly picked, producer-only vegetables and fruit, from-scratch bread (including gluten free), baked goods, kettle corn, salsa, hummus, cake pops, fruit popsicles, and ice cream. Email Chelsea.roseberry@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-642-0128 for more.

CAMPS & CLASSES

Art Camp. Various times July 3-7, July 24-28, and July 31-Aug. 4 at the Woods Community Center, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke or the second location is Burke Presbyterian Church, 5690 Oak Leather Drive, Burke. Lessons by Carol Zeitlin. Call 703-250-6930 or visit www.czartlessons.com for more.

JUNE 21-JULY 18

Snoopy and Belle in Fashion. Various times in Fair Oaks Mall, 11750 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. A celebration of Washington D.C.'s political style, dolls will feature presidential outfits. Visit www.shopfairoaksmall.com.

FRIDAY/JUNE 23

Rock the Block Concert. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. The Rockets in concert, alongside beer garden, and city restaurant vendor booths. No Pets allowed except service animals. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/rocktheblock for more.

SATURDAY/JUNE 24

Mosby Spring Bus Tour. 8 a.m. at the Truro Rectory, 10520 Main Street, Fairfax. Local Civil War historic tour. Call 703-971-4984 or email: dhakenson@verizon.net.

Häagen-Dazs Shop Grand Opening. 10 a.m.-9:30 p.m. at Fair Oaks Mall, 11750 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. Ice Cream store located on the upper level near the main entrance. Visit

www.shopfairoaksmall.com.
Art and Lunch. noon-3 p.m. at the Village Gallery, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. The Fairfax Art League will be hosting an Art and Lunch event, lunch not provided. Free. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net or call 703-587-9481.

Chronology of the Civil War in Fairfax County, Part I. 2-4 p.m. at the Civil War Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Preservationist, historian, and author Edward T. Wenzel will discuss notable incidents from the first two years of war in Fairfax County. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov for more.

SUNDAY/JUNE 25

Burke Historical Society. 3:30-5 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road. Susan Gray, curator of the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, will give a talk called, "Get on Board for a Quick Ride Through Fairfax History." Visit www.burkehistoricalsociety.org.

National Jazz Workshop. 7-8:30 p.m. at George Mason University, Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. The U.S. Army Blues, part of the United States Army Band "Pershing's Own," is the jazz ensemble of the United States Army. Free. Email dpurcel2@gmu.edu or call 703-993-2787 for more.

Posipalooza: Positive Music Festival. 7 p.m. at the Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Sloan Wainwright, Roger Tomhave, Sue Riley, and Glen Roethel will perform in a round-robin format, engaging in banter, sharing how songs were written, and creating impromptu arrangements. \$20. Call 703-281-1767 or visit www.UnityOffFairfax.org.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 28

Tai Chi. 6:30-7:30 a.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a mat. Class will take place in Old Town Square at the pergola, weather permitting. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

THURSDAY/JUNE 29

Pleasure Train Concert. 6:30-8:30 a.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Local band, family friendly event. Free. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

FRIDAY/JUNE 30

Music on the Plaza. 7 p.m. at the Old Town Plaza, 3955 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Music and dance

performances. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 1

Art Exhibition. 10 a.m.-9:30 p.m. at Fairfax Art League, Gallery Wing, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. Cheryl Wilson's abstract acrylic and mixed media collection of art entitled "Remembering Alice" is in honor of the artist's mother. Visit www.cherylwilsonart.com/ for more.

Kidz Korner. 10:30-11:30 a.m. in Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Summer in the City shows, every Saturday into September, weather permitting. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov for more.

Declaration of Independence Reading. 1 p.m. at Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Public reading of the Declaration of Independence at Historic Pohick Church by historical re-enactor, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Costa, portraying the Rev. Mr. Massey, rector of Pohick Church in 1776. Call 703-339-6572, or visit www.pohick.org for more.

Independence Day Celebration. 5-9:30 p.m. at Lorton Workhouse, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Community, family friendly, music. Call 703-584-2900 or visit workhousearts.org.

SUNDAY/JULY 2

Yoga on the Square. 10 a.m. in Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Bring a yoga mat and water bottle. Weather permitting. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7858 for more.

MONDAY/JULY 3

Funday Monday for Children. 10:30 a.m. in Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Mr. Skip: fun and songs. Weather permitting. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7855 for more.

JULY 3-7

Drawing Plus Color and Craft Fun Camp. 9:30-11:45 a.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin. Ages 5-8. Visit www.czartlessons.com or call 703-250-6930 for more.

Drawing Camp. 12:30-3:15 p.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin. Ages 8 and up. Visit www.czartlessons.com or call 703-250-6930 for more.

TUESDAY/JULY 4

Independence Day Parade. 10 a.m. On Main Street in downtown Fairfax. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7855 for more.

Holiday Crafts Day. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Crafts will highlight the holiday and the railroads. Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2; ages 16 and older, \$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, or call 703-425-9225 for more.

THURSDAY/JULY 6

Summer Under the Stars concert. 8 p.m. Veterans Amphitheater (adjacent to City Hall), 10455 Armstrong Street, Fairfax. Main Street Community Band. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7855 for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 8

Lesson Zero Concert. 8-midnight at The Epicure Café, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax. This band is from Springfield. Free. Visit www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero.

SUNDAY/JULY 9

Mason Family on Roosevelt Island. 2 p.m. at the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St., Fairfax. Bradley Krueger, a National Park Service Cultural Resources Specialist for the George Washington Memorial Parkway, will tell the little-known history of George Mason's family on the island. Free admission. Call 703-385-8414.

JULY 10-14

Vacation Bible School. 9 a.m.-noon at Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. For 3-year-olds through 5th-grade. Free. Call 703-339-6572 or visit www.pohick.org for more.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 12

Tai Chi. 6:30-7:30 a.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a mat, weather permitting. Free. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

Fashions and Tea. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Springfield Golf & Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Springfield Christian Women Connection sponsoring fashion consultant, Dana Elmini, exploring the notion of "Simply Comfortable." In addition Gail Alicia will speak about "Surviving the Grand Canyons of Life." \$20. Call 703-922-6438, 703-913-9844 or email SpringWmConn@yahoo.com.

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Announcements



A Lamb Center guest receiving a dental exam at the free, onsite clinic.

Free Dental Clinic Opens

The Lamb Center is providing free oral healthcare to area homeless.

The Lamb Center (TLC), a day-time drop-in shelter serving poor and homeless individuals in central Fairfax County, announces the opening of a free dental clinic located onsite at 3160 Campbell Drive in Fairfax City.

Before The Lamb Center began introducing dental services in late March, too often, the only free oral health service available was an emergency extraction. Today, TLC guests working with a case manager can receive exams, x-rays, simple restorations and root canals at no charge. Beginning in August, cleanings and preventive services will be offered thanks to a partnership with the Northern Virginia Community College Dental Hygienist Program.

The dental clinic is a natural outgrowth of The Lamb Center's commitment to caring for the whole person. Living in the woods or on the streets is not conducive to good oral hygiene. Mouth and gum infections can contribute to serious health issues, including heart disease. Compounding health challenges, poor dental health can impact self-esteem. "Your smile betrays your economic

wellbeing. Imagine trying to get a job with broken or missing teeth," said clinic coordinator, Sharon Jones, a retired psychiatric nurse and TLC board member.

Apprehension about seeing a dentist is not uncommon, but it's worse for a person living on the street. They might be ashamed of their poor hygiene or scared of receiving bad news about treatments they can't afford. "Having the clinic onsite, we are able to listen to our guests' fears and take the time to reassure them," said TLC Senior Case Manager Deb Haynes.

The dental clinic is supported by a growing network of volunteer dentists who share TLC's commitment to offering hope and dignity to poor and homeless individuals.

Oral healthcare professionals interested in supporting the dental clinic should contact The Lamb Center's Executive Director, John MacPherson at 703-691-3178.

In addition to dental services, TLC provides hot meals, showers, case management, pastoral care, and access to medical and psychiatric nurse practitioners. Visit www.thelambcenter.org.

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BULLETIN BOARD

Send notes to the Connection at connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ or call 703-778-9416. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke serves those 50 and older who no longer drive. **Volunteer drivers** are needed for trips (Monday-Friday) to medical appointments and companion shopping within the Fairfax/Burke area. **Office workers** are needed to answer phones in the SCFB office (Monday-Friday) to match drivers and those who need rides. Call 703-323-4788.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 21

Financial Considerations for Caregiving. 1 p.m. at Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax. The financial costs of long term care and long term caregiving are enormous. Explore options for this important aspect of caregiving. Contact Christi Clark, at christi.clark@insightmcc.org or 703-204-4664, or visit InsightMCC.org.

THURSDAY/JUNE 22

Fundraiser. Shop at a Whole Foods Market located in Fair Lakes, Reston, Springfield, Tysons or Vienna and 5 percent of net sales will be donated to the Fairfax County Park Foundation to help Fryling Pan Farm Park, Hidden Pond Nature Center, and other Fairfax County park programs.

JUNE 26-AUG. 25

Summer Lunches. The Fairfax County Public Schools Office of Food and Nutrition Services will be hosting the FEEDS (Food for Every Child to Eat During Summer) BBQ program, a USDA-funded program is free to all children 18 years and under and \$2 for adults. There is no registration involved, and open to everyone. Meal service will be provided at the following sites Monday-Friday, 11:30-1 p.m. No service on July 3 and 4. In the Springfield area, FEEDS is offered at the following schools:

- Springfield Gardens Apartments, 6116 Cumberland Ave.
- Springfield Square Apartments, 7000 Rhoden Court, starts at noon
- Chelsea Square Apartments, 5734 Backlick Road, starts at noon

THURSDAY/JULY 20

Lunch N' Life. noon-2 p.m. at Burke Presbyterian Church, 5690 Oak Leather Drive, Burke. The guest presenter will be Elizabeth Gray, Esq. to speaking on legal issues for older adults. \$10. Sponsored by Shepherd's Center. Call 703-273-5730 or see www.scfbva.org for more.

ONGOING

Positive Parenting Strategies Course. At PHILLIPS, 7010 Braddock Road, Annandale. A series of classes and in home consultations taught by PHILLIPS' counselors. Open to all local families. Call Stacy Stryjewski at 703-658-9054.

Thermal Camera Loan Program. Learn where the energy is leaking out of the home with a special attachment for the iPhone or Android. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/energy or call 703-324-5955 for more.

Master Gardener Training. The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit fairfaxgardening.org or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

Fairfax Rotary Club Meeting 12:15-1:30 p.m. Mondays. American Legion, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. Meetings with luncheon and program. fairfaxrotary.org.

NARFE Monthly Meeting Every Second Tuesday 11:30 a.m. American Legion Post 177 located at 3939 Oak Street, Fairfax. NARFE Fairfax 737 monthly luncheon meeting. Enjoy lunch accompanied by a special program. Lunch at noon. Cost: \$11 Speaker/Program-12:45PM. rrharmey2@cox.net 703-501-0020

Civil War Research scholarship to a public or private high school senior who resides in Fairfax, Fairfax City, Prince William County, Manassas City, or Manassas Park from the Bull Run Civil War Roundtable in Centreville, Va. Visit bullrunwrt.org for more.

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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them. -Werner Heisenberg			

Relatively Speaking



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

If you live long enough, it's quite likely that many of the family members/generations born before you will have predeceased you. Moreover, the family members born before them, two generations-plus behind, are most surely to be geshtorbin (Yiddish for dead) as well. The effect: memory loss. Specifically, the memories lost of a generation of great grandparents – and beyond, you probably never knew or for whom you have extremely limited knowledge; after all, you were an infant when your maternal grandmother died. And when your widowed mother died nearly nine years ago, you lost what may very well have been that final anecdotal connection to your family's history, especially if your Jewish and your grandparents immigrated from Russia, Romania, The Baltic States, etc. before World War II where recorded history of Jews was evidence not documentation.

It just so happens that in my family, in fact, our closest surviving cousins, Ronnie and Gil, who themselves are in their 80s, are alive and extremely well and living with their daughter, Jayne, in Massachusetts. This past weekend, Ronnie and Gil drove eight hours to visit my brother Richard and me. And though we are regularly in touch over the phone, it has been years since we were all together in Washington, D.C. And being in their company, naturally we reminisced – ALL WEEKEND. What spawned this column was a comment Ronnie (a singer/pianist in Boston for 25 years) made in response to a question we asked about whether there was any other musical talent in the family. She said quite matter of factly that my maternal great-grandfather – who I had never met or even heard of before, “was a cantor in Russia – with a beautiful voice” (who never left Russia). “What! I never knew that.” I don't recall knowing anything about my great grandparents, maternal or paternal.

You see, Ronnie was there almost at the beginning. She was the first born to my mother's oldest sibling and only sister, my Auntie Lee. My mother was the baby of the family – after two brothers were born. As such, the age difference between my mother and Ronnie was about 14 years, atypical for a niece and an aunt. As a result, Ronnie was witness to lots of family history that I thought might have been lost forever when my mother died in 2008. As a few examples, Ronnie knows who was present at my mother's “Auntie's” house for Passover Cedar in the early 1960s. She knew that “Auntie” was my mother's mother's brother's widow, not my mother's mother's sister. I certainly didn't. She knew that three families/our cousins lived together in this three-story home and all worked together in the family market: Levine's. Still more that I didn't I know.

Another family connection Ronnie and Gil reminded us of was a family line we have in South America. Again, before World War II, one of my maternal grandfather's (Hyman) brother's Simon (Shimon) immigrated to Argentina where to this day exists first (Eduardo) and second cousins (names I'm afraid don't know) I've never met, though Ronnie and Gil have met numerous times in Miami and in Argentina (Ronnie and Gil used to live in South Florida). The more we talked, the more we travelled back in time. But I won't self-indulge myself and bore you any longer. I will try to wrap it up in the next paragraph.

My mother, Celia died in December 2008, my father died in December 2006. With their passing, my brother and I lost – among a million other things, their first-hand, on-site accounts of our Lourie/Blacker history dating back 150 years or so to Russia/Eastern Europe, before any of my relatives immigrated to America. Ronnie, my mother's cherished niece, knows as much about our family history as there is still to know and her husband of nearly 63 years, Gil, knows almost as much. Their visit wasn't just a weekend. It was a lifetime. A weekend of a lifetime for which Richard and I are extraordinarily grateful.

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



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