

McLean CONNECTION

From left: Hyla Matthews, Lucas Beck, and Andy Brownstein in "My Name is Asher Lev" at 1st Stage.



Engrossing 'My Name Is Asher Lev'

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'Nature As a Prototype' Presented in McLean

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'A Disaster for Northern Virginia'

Connolly holds roundtable on congressional tax plan.

BY ANDREA WORKER

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) says that he and his Democratic colleagues are more than willing to work in a bipartisan effort on meaningful tax form. "As a leader of the New Democrat Coalition, a group of pro-business Democrats, I have written on several occasions to Speaker Paul Ryan and Ways and Means Chairman Kevin Brady asking them to partner with us ... to simplify the tax code, create revenue ... and provide middle class tax relief."

Speaking at a roundtable gathering that the congressman hosted at the offices of the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors (NVAR) on Monday, Nov. 13, to discuss the consequences of the GOP tax plans, Connolly says those overtures have been rejected.

"Congress had a real opportunity to pursue neutral tax reform that would lower corporate tax rates and benefit the middle class." Connolly expressed "deep disappointment" at the House and Senate bills being proposed, categorizing both as "shameful, corporate giveaways" that will have unprecedented and far-reaching negative effects on Northern Virginia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the nation.

Connolly reported that by using "dynamic scoring" — a method of analysis that includes the potential feedback effect certain tax cuts can have, and that he said Republicans often advocate "because it provides more generous deficit projections for tax cuts" — the proposals actually increase the country's deficit to \$1.5 trillion over 10 years, "and somebody has to pay that bill."

An assessment of the tax plans by Congress' nonpartisan Joint Taxation Committee released on Monday, Nov. 20, seems to support the congressman's concerns. The committee's analysis projects that some 13.8 million moderate-income American households would actually see a tax increase as a result of the Senate plan by 2019. Households earning less than \$200,000 per year would face increases of \$100 to \$500. The tax liability rises even more for earners between \$75,000 and \$200,000. According to the analysis, tax increases would be felt by 21.4 million households by the year 2025.

Connolly likened the plans to previously failed "trickle-down" attempts at tax reform and economic stimulus.

"1981, 2001, 2003. The Reagan and Bush tax cuts. So disastrous that they had to enact tax increases in 1982, 1983, 1984, 1987 and 1990" to raise the needed funds. "Then in the early 2000s, President George W.



U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) meets with local leaders to discuss the consequences of the proposed Senate and House GOP Tax Reform Bills. Connolly admitted from the start that he wasn't there to "sing their praises."



Bob Adamson, chairman of the board of the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors, views the proposed legislation as "unfair to homeowners," and that they will have a negative "ripple effect" on the local economy and residents of the community.

Bush took the record surpluses of the Clinton era and created record deficits." Connolly added that the trickle-down theory is based on "the hope and the prayer that such tax cuts will someday pay for themselves," but that history has already proven "that assumption to be false."

TO DISCUSS THE IMPACT of the proposed legislation on the Northern Virginia region, Connolly convened a group of local business leaders, economists and financial experts, as well as participants representing social service providers, persons with long-term medical and care needs, economists, parents of students with significant student debt, and seniors.

Connolly set the stage for the discussion with a few more facts and figures, although he cautioned that "we still haven't seen the whole of either proposed legislation."

* The plans either repeal or limit several tax breaks that are crucial to Northern Virginians, including medical and dental expense deductions, premiums for long-term care insurance, in-home and nursing home care, and mortgage interest deductions.

* The state and local income tax (SALT) deductions would be limited or even repealed. In Connolly's 11th District, 50 percent of tax filers claim the SALT deduction,

with 75 percent of the claimants being in middle income tax brackets. The number of SALT claimants throughout Fairfax County is as high as 280,000 households.

* The plans call for the repeal of Estate Tax, which only applies to about the wealthiest 5,000 decedents each year, while cutting adoption tax credits and credits for small businesses that invest in accessibility improvements for persons with disabilities.

* According to the Tax Policy Center, after-tax income for the top 1 percent of earners would rise by about 2.6 percent by 2027, while those at the bottom 80 percent would see after-tax increase of between 0.0 percent and 0.6 percent.

After Connolly's remarks, Bob Adamson, chairman of the board of the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors, was the first of the gathering to offer comments.

Representing some 12,000 Realtors in the region, Adamson stated that the NVAR "wants to be part of the solution," but finds the proposed legislation to be "unfair to homeowners," disproportionately placing the burden of "filling in the financial gaps" directly on them.

NVAR Chair-elect Lorraine Arora agreed, adding that "real estate bolsters the economy" with so many related jobs and services, and that any plan that suppresses

home buying will cause a "ripple effect of harm."

The Realtors at the table also worried that the proposed tax reform will actually lower existing house values. NVAR CEO Ryan Conrad said that in the NoVa region, that decrease could be as much as \$30,000 lost in home equity.

ADDITIONALLY, THE REALTORS foresee a decrease in housing stock that is already an issue, and even see Fairfax County's successes toward ending and preventing homelessness, slip into reverse, as developers are less able than ever to profitably build affordable housing.

Continuing the "ripple effect" theme, JoAnne Carter, managing director of PFM Financial Advisors, LLC, said that the proposals threaten the means by which municipalities, nonprofits and other businesses fund their services and investments in improvements and expansion.

"Eliminating Private Activity Bonds and causing cuts to 'advance refinancing,'" said Carter is severely hampering the ability to finance the basics, like "schools, roads, hospitals, transportation, airports, sea ports, all of it."

That in turn "increases the burden on the counties," said Adamson, while potentially depleting their main source of revenue. For municipalities like Fairfax County, that are, in essence, only able to raise funds through property taxation, the choices are dauntingly few. Either raise those taxes significantly, or reduce expenditure on infrastructure and public and social services.

"And if we damage our AAA Bond rating," added Carter, "it costs more for these municipalities and service providers to borrow." According to Carter, Fairfax County could save between \$3-12 million when re-financing with a Triple A Bond rating. "Losing that could mean that public structures just don't get built."

Nancy Mercer, a licensed clinical social worker and the former executive director of the ARC of Northern Virginia, and Ridge Multop, an economist, former AARP Congressional Affairs and former House Budget Committee staffer, both discussed the impact the proposed tax bills could have on seniors, those with long-term care and/or medical issues, and those most in need and most vulnerable in the community.

Multop "put a face" on the discussion, speaking about an economist friend. "He's 85 years old, on a fixed income, in assisted living. He looked at how these bills would impact him based on his 2016 tax filing and said it would raise his taxes by more than \$3,000. How do people like him cope with that?"

Eliminating tax deductions for medical expenses and long-term care would be harmful to seniors, Multop said, possibly forcing more into custodial care and placing an additional burden on municipalities

SEE ROUNDTABLE, PAGE 15



The McLean High School Marching Highlanders finish the parade route in WinterFest Parade 2016.



Santa Claus rode on top of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department's fire truck in WinterFest Parade 2016.

FILE PHOTOS BY KENT ARNOLD

McLean WinterFest Holiday Parade Sunday, Dec. 3

McLean WinterFest parade will be held Sunday, Dec. 3. To register to be in the parade, go to the WinterFest site at www.mcleanwinterfest.org. View the parade with the slideshow and video from last year's entries while planning for WinterFest 2017, McLean's only community parade.

Again this year, WinterFest will present a check to Share of McLean, the local organization that does so much to help families in need. "We'll be asking parade observers and participants to share their good fortune with those who have fallen on hard times by bringing grocery, pharmacy or clothing

store gift cards to the parade for Share," explained Trish Butler, chair of the parade steering committee. "We're also looking for local businesses to become sponsors of the parade to help underwrite the costs. We welcome locals to go to the parade web site to find out more about donor information."

The parade route will be the same as previous years: Old Chain Bridge Road from Fleetwood Road to Elm Street. The parade route will be closed from 2 to 5 p.m. on Dec. 3. Plan ahead for this; the only exceptions to the road closure by the police will be in the event of emergency. There will be

no entering or exiting Langley Shopping Center or exiting from other side streets along the parade route during these hours. In addition to the actual parade route, Beverly Road and Fleetwood Road to Old Chain Bridge Road will be closed to non parade traffic starting at 2 p.m.

❖ There is still no fee to be an entry in the parade, but any business or group wanting to participate must register by Nov. 24, ❖ WinterFest 2017 will have food trucks again this year in the Langley Shopping Center: Mama's Donut Bites, Crepe Love and Rockland's BBQ

❖ Peggy Fox from WUSA/Channel 9 will call the parade from the Fairfax County Showmobile situated in Langley Shopping Center. Pre-parade entertainment will be provided by local schools – Chesterbrook, Westgate and Kent Gardens — and will be introduced by Bill DuBose. Bach to Rock students will perform prior to and after the parade.

❖ The pre-parade entertainment begins at 2:30 p.m.
❖ The parade will step off at 3:30 p.m. sharp.

For more information on WinterFest and this year's rules, go to the website at www.mcleanwinterfest.org.



Successful 'Arts Night Out'

The New Dominion Women's Club hosted "Arts Night Out," an event that offers the combination of a social gathering featuring art and appetizers along with a silent auction at McLean Project for the Arts (MPA). The event raised money for non profits including Friends of Pleasant Grove, McLean Project for the Arts, Safe Community Coalition, and SHARE, Inc. Pictured, from left, event committee members: Jaimie Galbreath, Erika Keough, Paige Himes, Desi Woltman, Mary Ann Miller and MPA Executive Director Lori Carbonneau.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

More than 20 seniors at The Potomac School have earned special recognition from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

Twenty-five Potomac School Students Earn National Merit National Scholarship Notice

Twenty-five seniors at The Potomac School have earned special recognition from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

These students were among the top performers from the more than 1.6 million students who took the 2016 Preliminary SAT (PSAT)/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test last October. Potomac students received the following distinctions:

❖ National Merit Semifinalist (among the top 16,000 scorers nationwide): Madeline Cunnion, Tracey Mills, and Jasmine Terrones

❖ Commended Student (among the top

50,000 performers nationwide): Caroline Case, William Debayo-Doherty, Laila Germanis, Jason Gould, Seyoung Hong, Helen Horan, Caroline Jackson, David Kiernan, Nicole Manning, Maria Petrosinelli, Matthew Plaza, Thomas Rollins, Catherine Rooney, Tyler Sanok, Chloe Searchinger, William Socas, William Thompson, Brian Wilson, Jolie Zhang, and Tina Zvinys

❖ National Hispanic Recognition Program Recipient (among the top 5,000 scores out of the 250,000 Hispanic students who took the PSAT): Farris Sepúlveda, TJ Sharkey, and Jasmine Terrones



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OPINION

Shop Locally, Give Locally

Every day is for shopping small and shopping locally.

An effort to support locally owned businesses has resulted in the recognition of Small Business Saturday, the Saturday after Thanksgiving. This year that is Nov. 25. Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, is promoted as a day of national zeal for shopping. Presumably the next day shoppers can focus on local shopping.

There is a joy to shopping in local stores at the holidays, to walking along a sidewalk with the streets decked out for the holidays, to being greeted by someone likely to be the owner of the store, to finding gifts that are not mass-produced.

We all benefit when local stores thrive, when local business districts beckon.

Locally owned retail shops, services, restaurants depend on vibrant local communities to thrive. Most small, locally owned businesses invest in community, helping to transform our towns and communities with a sense of place.

Supporting small businesses, locally owned businesses, has to be more than a one-day affair. And in this area, there doesn't have to be anything small about shopping locally.

But still, local families will shop and exchange gifts during the next month, spending tens of millions of dollars in a variety of

places.

One way to be sure holiday shopping comes with some holiday spirit is to do a portion of your shopping in some of the area's locally owned stores. There is special holiday ambience available by shopping in the heart of a town that is decked out for the season. Small retail shops are part of defining any community. Their livelihood depends on the livability and quality of the neighborhoods around them. A small business owner pays attention to every detail in his or her business in a way that no chain can.

The small business owner is often the leader for fundraising for local charities, for fire and rescue service, for local schools and in organizing holiday events.

Local shoppers should be sure to save some shopping time and dollars for local stores. Spend some time shopping in your own community, and also plan an excursion to a nearby town to check out the holiday spirit there.

See Connection's Holiday Calendar for great celebrations near you.

❖ **Fairfax County:**

www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/16/holiday-calendar-2017/

❖ **Arlington:**

www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/15/arlington-holiday-calendar-2017/

❖ **Potomac:**

www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/15/potomac-almanac-holiday-calendar-2017/

❖ **Alexandria:**

www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/20/alexandria-holiday-calendar-2017/

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Short Deadline for Children's Edition

During the last week of each year, this newspaper devotes its pages to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families. Even readers without children of that age spend time admiring and chuckling over the issue. The annual Children's Connection (including Children's Gazette, Children's Almanac and Children's Centre View) is a tradition of well over a decade.

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

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

format.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. To be published, we must have first and last name of the student. Please include the student's age and/or grade, school attended and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Provide submissions by Friday, Dec. 1.

Email submissions for the Children's Edition to the following editors:

❖ For Burke, Clifton, Fairfax, Fairfax Station, Great Falls, Herndon, Lorton, McLean, Reston, or Springfield, email to Kemal Kurspahic at kemal@connectionnewspapers.com.

❖ For Alexandria, Arlington, Centreville, Chantilly, Mount Vernon, or Potomac, Md., email to Steven Mauren at smauren@connectionnewspapers.com.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Focus on Community Policing, Positive Outreach

To the Editor:

In response to: www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/08/commentary-independent-progressive-doublespeak-imm/

Fairfax County police officers do not conduct immigration enforcement sweeps or stop individuals solely to inquire about immigration status. Fairfax County police officers follow General Order 601 and cannot arrest someone unless there is reasonable suspicion that a crime was committed or is being committed.

Operation and policy decisions regarding the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center fall under the authority of the Sheriff, an elected constitutional officer, independent

of the Board of Supervisors. Per Code of Virginia 19.2-83.2, when individuals are arrested and booked into the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center, their computerized fingerprints are automatically transmitted to the Virginia State Police's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS), regardless of their immigration status. The Virginia State Police forwards the information to other state and federal databases per their guidelines. From there, it is up to ICE to determine who is a priority for deportation. Before 2016, ICE operated under the Priority Enforcement Program and focused its efforts on deporting undocumented immigrants with serious criminal records. Under

the Trump Administration, the Priority Enforcement Program no longer exists, and any immigrant who is in the country illegally may be selected by ICE for deportation.

If ICE places an arrest warrant and an order to detain on an inmate in the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center, the Sheriff's Office will hold that inmate for up to 48 hours (not counting weekends and holidays) past his or her scheduled release date. If ICE does not take custody of the inmate within that time frame, the inmate will be released.

The Board of Supervisors, the Police Department, the Sheriff's Office and all Fairfax County government agencies comply with state and federal laws, and immi-

gration is a federal matter. Any changes regarding deportations or the focus and direction of ICE must come from the federal level. On the local level, we continue to focus on community policing through positive outreach and building trust with the residents we serve. All residents of Fairfax County should know that Fairfax County police officers are here to protect and serve any and all community members, regardless of citizenship. No person should be afraid to call the police out of fear of deportation — our police officers are not in that business.

Sharon Bulova

Chairman,
Board of Supervisors

McLean
CONNECTION

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Langley High School Wind Symphony in concert.

Langley High Wind Symphony Kicks-Off New Concert Season

The Langley High School Wind Symphony kicked off their concert season on Nov. 17, performing by invitation at the Virginia Music Educators Association annual conference for the first time in school history.

The Wind Symphony, which consistently receives Superior ratings at District Assessments, demonstrated their range, performing a wide variety of pieces, including ancient sacred music, a Spanish march, an all-percussion dance piece, mid-century classic Bugler's Holiday by Leroy Anderson, and more.

They ended their performance with an adaptation of a joyous piece originally written for violin quartet titled Peat Dance, arranged for the group by Langley Band Director Doug Martin and FCPS colleague Alan Johnson. The VMEA performance was previewed in a concert at Langley Auditorium on Nov. 8.

Future Langley concerts include a Jazz Band concert on Dec. 7, and a concert featuring all four Langley bands on Dec. 14. The concerts will be at Langley High School in the new auditorium.

McLean Woman's Club To Hold Annual 'MarketPlace' Fundraiser

The Woman's Club of McLean will hold its free, annual MarketPlace fundraiser on Thursday, Dec. 7, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., in conjunction with its annual Holiday Homes Tour the same day. The fundraiser, at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd. (Route 123), McLean, will feature more than a dozen vendors, as well as a silent auction of goods and services offered by 10 local businesses. In addition, lunch and tickets for the day's Homes Tour will be for sale. Ample car parking will be available at the church.

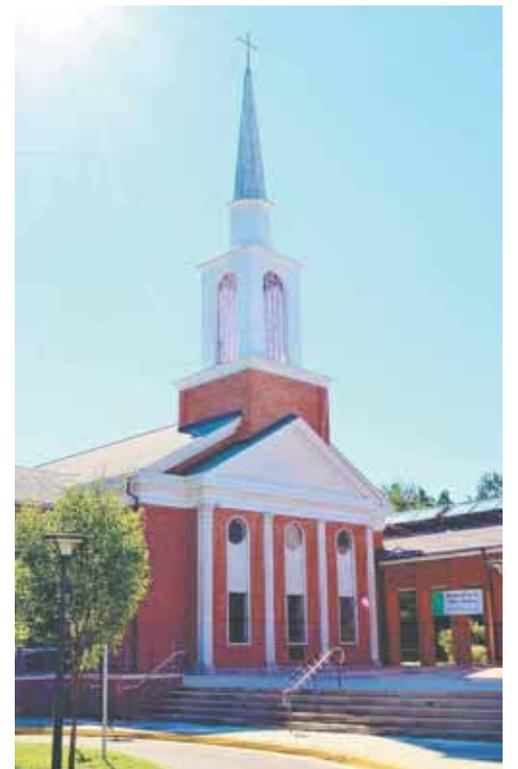


PHOTO BY LAURA SHERIDAN

The following vendors will be present:

Trinity United Methodist Church.

Two Laughing Ladies (fun apparel), Entertaining Designs by Melanie Barry, Claude Moore Colonial Farm, With You in Mind, Chez Madame Forestier, Ginny's Gems (jewelry and accessories), Beauty Counter Cosmetics, Annalee Design Studios, Merry Stitches, USborne Books and More, Christmas Bakery and Christmas Gifts & Décor.

Silent-auction donors will include: Staybridge Suites, 1st Stage Theater, Mangan Jewelers, Fleming's Steak House, Clyde's Willow Creek, Your Dog's Best Friend, Lamps Unlimited and Great Falls Organizers. Bidding will close at 3 p.m., with drawings at 3:30 p.m. (You need not be present to win; however, you must be available by phone.)

Lunch at Café Noel will be available between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

The menu will be chicken salad, chicken on a bun, wraps, chili (vegetarian and meat), chips and rolls. Coffee, tea, soft drinks, water and desserts will be available all day.

All proceeds of the MarketPlace and the Holiday Homes Tour will be donated to local charities and nonprofits, such as Share Inc., Capital Caring, the Wounded Warrior program, Second Story (Alternative House), the McLean Project for the Arts, Claude Moore Colonial Park, the McLean Volunteer Fire Department and Fisher House, as well as used for scholarships and education.

For more information, call 703-556-0197 or visit www.mcleanwomensclub.org.

— LAURA SHERIDAN

Join Us for Falls Church Tree Fest

Pass the love, please.
It's holiday time at The Kensington!

We've saved a place for you, at our table and in our hearts.
Come share in the magic of The Kensington holidays as we gather for festivities, food and fun with family and friends.
Help us make lasting traditions as we open our doors and spread a little cheer.

To kick off the season, please join us for our first holiday event, co-hosted with Falls Church Arts. Support your favorite cause with a donation or a bid for a chance to win a beautifully decorated holiday tree.

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An annual holiday celebration and silent auction to raise money and awareness for Falls Church area nonprofits

Thursday, November 30, 2017 from 4:30pm-7:30pm
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PHOTO BY TERESA CASTRACANE/COURTESY 1ST STAGE:

Lucas Beck, Hyla Matthews, and Andy Brownstein in “My Name is Asher Lev” at 1st Stage.

1st Stage’s Engrossing ‘My Name Is Asher Lev’

Non-conformist artist as disruptor of family and community.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Under the discerning direction of Helen Hayes Award recipient Nick Olcott, “My Name is Asher Lev” at 1st Stage is a burnished gem packed with acting prowess and terrific technical artistry.

Winner of awards for theatrical achievement, “My Name is Asher Lev” is written by D.C. area playwright Aaron Posner. He adapted the play from a novel by Chaim Potok. Posner’s script is a penetrating look into thorny relationships of a gifted young Jewish artist named Asher Lev seeking a respectful exodus from his cloistered upbringing in a post-Holocaust Brooklyn Hassidic community.

The production is told in a series of flashbacks. The Lev character is portrayed by Lucas Beck with an understated command of the moody, willful Lev. Beck is a founding artist of 1st Stage. As Lev, Beck is both a narrator speaking directly to the audience and the protagonist himself.

Beck never leaves the stage or falters as he weaves his way through the heartbreak of loving his parents, yet becomes convinced he must live by the commandment, “As an artist you are responsible to no one and to nothing, except to yourself and to the truth as you see it.”

Other characters are played by Andy Brownstein as “The Men” and Hyla

Where & When

1st Stage presents “My Name is Asher Lev” at 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. Performances through Dec. 17, 2017. Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$33 (general admission), \$30 (seniors), \$15 (students and military). Call 703.854.1856 or visit: www.1ststage tysons.org.

Matthews as “The Women.”

Brownstein is successful at providing distinct life for three characters. Brownstein is Asher Lev’s domineering, distant father as well as the stormy provocateur Jacob Khan, an older artist who becomes Lev’s mentor. Brownstein also portrays the Rebbe who is generally sympathetic to Lev.

Matthews’ main stage character is as Asher Lev’s affectionate mother who is also seeking her place in the world. Matthews is often a haunted presence, sunk in a fragile depression, while attempting to make sense of her headstrong son.

The “Asher Lev” design team adds immeasurable underpinnings to the show’s success. Jessica Cancino has designed a homey set with three well-defined performance areas. The stage has large windows that become central to the play’s path forward, especially as impressively lit by lighting designer Kristin A. Thompson. Marsha M. LeBoeuf’s costumes are spot-on modest befitting the characters. Reid May’s sound design is an awesome passage through a Klezmer repertoire with a fitting crossing into Dave Brubeck’s composition “Take Five.”

“My Name is Asher Lev” is a savvy tale of a struggle to find one’s place when family, community and one’s own need for individuality are at constant loggerheads.

Notice of Public Hearing

NOTICE OF BUDGET AND WATER RATE PUBLIC HEARING

December 14, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 14, 2017, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water’s offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2018, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from \$4,100 to \$4,150¹
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$11,685 to \$13,420
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,240 to \$1,260¹
4. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$2.81 to \$2.94 per 1,000 gallons of water
5. An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$44 to \$45
6. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge
7. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$35 to \$36

¹ Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8” residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax County Water Authority (Fairfax Water) is proposing a \$178.7 million budget² for calendar year 2018. Revenues are expected to be \$178.7 million in 2018. Water sales are expected to provide \$155.8 million. Approximately \$22.9 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2017	2018
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 54,270	\$ 55,983
Power and Utilities	10,468	10,670
Chemicals	6,846	7,732
Purchased Water	7,677	6,340
Supplies and Materials	4,850	5,102
Insurance	1,186	1,200
Fuel	595	655
Postage	611	614
Contractual Services	11,252	11,610
Professional Services	990	1,025
Other	2,280	2,503
Sub-Total	101,025	103,634
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,991)	(10,248)
Total	\$ 91,034	\$ 93,386

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:	
Debt Payment	\$42,981,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$31,087,000

² Fairfax Water’s Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes to the rates can be viewed on our website at www.fairfaxwater.org/rates. A copy of the proposed budget can be found at www.fairfaxwater.org. Those wishing to speak or receive a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Eva Catlin at 703-289-6017.

Interested parties may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 13, 2017 to be included in the record of the public hearing.

NEWS

From left: artists Yoko K from Nagano, Japan; Grethe Wittrock of Denmark; and Adam Nelson of Raleigh, N.C.; speak to the crowd about their art with curator Elsabe Johnson Dixon.



The crowd enjoys the refreshments and art pieces at the McLean Project for the Arts.

PHOTOS BY ROBERT HEALY/
THE CONNECTION

‘Nature As a Prototype’ Presented in McLean

The exhibition “Nature as a Prototype,” presented at the McLean Project for the Arts, evoked a calming energy that mixed with the cold air outside. The three artists – Yoko K, Adam Nelson, and Grethe Wittrock – proceeded to share how their concept of how nature has deeply influenced their work.

Grethe Wittrock, from Denmark, grew up next to fjord and has used water as one of her primary mediums to work in. One of her pieces, “The Blue Whale,” was made of a long sail and cut into teeth as if you were looking from the inside of a whale’s mouth outward.

Adam Nelson from Raleigh used Google Earth and other 2-dimensional images to try to re-create images from places he’s never visited. He over-layed plaster on top of dark black glue using wiring from sidewalks as the backbone for the piece.

All of the artists recognize the disappearance of nature due to human impact, and reflected this topic in the exhibition.

The third artist of “Nature as a Prototype” was Yoko K from Nagano, Japan. She is an ambient musician, and created a tranquil setting at the MPA with her flowing music. She has done extensive research on alarm fatigue which is constant noise and alarms that can affect human health. Her songs are meant to offset alarm fatigue with simple sounds like cello, and the heartbeat. She has walked the halls of hospital’s experiencing these noises firsthand, and spoken



Yoko K from Nagano, Japan stands in front of her wind chime meant to reduce stress and tension.

to doctors and patients about this problem as well.

The McLean Project for the Arts has been around for 56 years bringing local and emerging artists from the mid-atlantic region into the limelight. The studio space on Chain Bridge Road has brought three shows recently and offers classes as well. Visit mpaart.org.

— ROBERT HEALY/



Adam Nelson of Raleigh, N.C. in front of his work “La Brea Expansion Plan.”



Grethe Wittrock of Denmark stands in front of her piece “Familiar Shores.”

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SPORTS



McLean U18 Boys Soccer Team Wins Virginia Championship

McLean 00 Hotspur Green Boys won the Virginia State Cup held in Fredericksburg on Sunday, Nov. 5. With the win, the team advances to the US Youth Soccer Regional Championships held in June 2018 for a shot to advance to the National Championships in Texas in July 2018. The team advanced to Nationals for the past three years including winning the National Championship in 2016. In the Sunday finals, McLean's 18U boys bested Braddock Road Elite Academy 2-0. McLean beat Virginia Rush in the semi-finals. The team is coached by Jamil Walker, former MLS professional player and NSCAA National Youth Coach of the Year in 2014.



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For more details see www.greatfallstudios.com

The Children's CONNECTION 2017

This keepsake, award-winning issue will be filled with the artwork and writings of local children starring their families, friends, pets, schools and more. Our family readers are your best customers, who take time to savor this edition during the holidays and beyond.

Be Part of the Children's Connection

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



The edition has won many awards. We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens, or other creative efforts. To submit material, identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school if applicable, name of teacher and town of school location. E-mail to editors@connectionnewspapers.com. To send CDs or flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail the CD to Children's Connection, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please send all submissions by December 27.



Publishes December 27 | Ads Due December 15

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Frank de la Fe,
Hunter Mill District



Phillip Niedzielski-Eichner,
Providence District



Peter Murphy, chair,
Springfield District



Janyce Hedetniemi,
at-large



James Hart, at-large



Peys-Gamarra

Planning Changes to Planning Commission

Twelve-member commission endures multiple changes through grief, triumphs, retirement and more during 2017.

BY KEN MOORE

Two seats on the 12-member Fairfax County Planning Commission remain open.

And earlier this month, Hunter Mill District Supervisor Catherine M. Hudgins announced Frank de la Fe's decision to retire at the end of the calendar year.

"After 16 years of dedicated service, the Hunter Mill District Planning Commissioner Frank de la Fe has announced his intention to retire," Hudgins told the Board of Supervisors at its meeting on Nov. 2. De la Fe has served on the planning commission since 2001, and currently is vice chair.

Hudgins will appoint a new commissioner to begin on Jan. 28, 2018.

"We will have lots to say about Frank in the future," said Hudgins.

Sully District Supervisor Kathy L. Smith will also search for a new planning commissioner.

"I guess it's a day for Planning Commission announcements," she said at the supervisors' meeting.

Smith's Planning Commissioner Karen Keys-Gamarra announced her resignation effective Oct. 25. Keys-Gamarra won a special election in August to fill the at-large

School Board seat vacated by Jeanette Hough two years into serving her four-year term. Hough resigned after her husband accepted a position overseas.

Of Keys-Gamarra, Smith said, "As much as I would have loved for her to continue as my planning commissioner, it's just not possible to do both jobs."

Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herry followed.

"I have no news on my planning commissioner," he said. "That is good."

Herry's Planning Commissioner is Peter Murphy who also serves as chair of the Planning Commission and was first appointed to the commission in 1982.

MURPHY ANNOUNCED at-large commissioner Janyce Hedetniemi's immediate resignation at the opening of the Planning Commission's public hearing on Oct. 26.

"It's a great loss to the commission, she knows it, we all know it," said Murphy. "We appreciate everything you have done for us."

Chairman Sharon Bulova appointed Hedetniemi in 2013 and plans to appoint her successor at the Board meeting on Nov. 21.

Murphy read a full version of

Hedetniemi's statement to the commission:

"Tonight, I step away from this wonderful experience as an at-large member of the Fairfax County Planning Commission. ... From capital improvements to land use and parks, schools, the environment and more, here it is, we give it all, through regulations, procedures, judgement and intuition, always in public view, and sometimes until 2 in the morning."

"I am proud to have shared the title of commissioner with my esteemed colleagues," she wrote. "Commissioners, the honor has been mine. I wish you all the best in your continuing efforts for the betterment of Fairfax County."

THE PLANNING COMMISSION on Sept. 14 voted to change the start time of public meetings in January from 8:15 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., in part to encourage additional citizen participation and to keep meetings from lasting as late into the night.

The Planning Commission advises the Board of Supervisors on all matters related to land use in Fairfax County, a particularly busy time right now reviewing redevelopment along the Silver Line. The commission holds public hearings, often multiple times a week, and often brings together residents, developers and county planners to work through concerns and conflicts.

This includes the location and character of public facilities; amendments to the Comprehensive Plan; amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, the Public Facilities Ordinance, and the Subdivision Ordinance; rezonings and special exceptions; approvals of final development plans; and also sometimes advises the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Planning commissioners are appointed by the Board of Supervisors for four-year terms



Kenneth Lawrence,
former Providence District Commissioner

on a staggered basis. Each of the nine supervisory districts has a representative, and three members are appointed at-large.

PHILLIP NIEDZIELSKI-EICHNER replaced Kenneth Lawrence as the Providence Planning Commissioner on Jan. 11, 2017.

Lawrence died in December 2016 after serving 13 years on the Planning Commission.

"Ken had a difficult role, responsibility for Providence District at an exciting time, doing new and ambitious things in Tysons and elsewhere," said colleague James Hart, at-large planning commissioner.

"His public service responsibility was a part of his core being. He gave the County all he had," said Hart.

Hart and Lawrence were sworn in on the same day 13 years ago.

"I could count on one hand the number of votes Ken and I disagreed in that 13 years. I couldn't begin to count the number of hours we spent in meetings together, so many topics," he said. "Ken's legacy added so much to Fairfax County. ... We absolutely will have more and better parks in Tysons thanks to him. His commitment improved our quality of life."

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Future Quest. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. at GMU's Johnson Center, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. College and career conference for area middle and high school students with disabilities, as

well as their parents, teachers and other professionals. Featuring more than 40 workshops and exhibits related to successful life after high school. Free. There is free parking in Lot K, or in the Mason Pond Parking Garage for \$8. Visit www.futurequestgmu.org to register or email futurequestnova@gmail.com.

School Open House. 10 a.m. at BASIS Independent School, 8000 Jones Branch Drive, McLean. Meet subject expert teachers and school

leadership, to learn more about the school's liberal arts and STEM program. This event features an information presentation, and a question and answer period. Visit info.basisindependent.com/december-open-house for more.

THROUGH DEC. 3

Coat and Blanket Drive. Nova Relief Center is holding a blanket and coat drive for Syrian and Iraqi refugees

who have fled their homesto escape the violence from the civil war in Syria. Paxton Van Lines and Maersk are donating their services this year. Donated blankets and coats should be new or gently worn, and may be dropped off at any designated drop-off location below. To make a tax-deductible donation, visit NOVA Relief Center's website at www.NOVAReliefCenter.org
 ❖ Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2719 Hunter Mill Road,

Oakton
 ❖ Office of Supervisor John Foust, McLean Governmental Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean

MONDAY/DEC. 11

FCPS Community Conversations. 6:30-8 p.m. at Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Road, Falls Church, Cafeteria (Region 2). Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)

SEE BULLETIN BOARD, PAGE 15

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

Vienna-Wide Food Drive. Through Dec. 31, bring food contributions to Vienna Town Hall - 127 Center St. S; Vienna Arts Society-115 Pleasant St. NW; Bikes@Vienna-128-A Church St. NW; Caffe Amouri-107 Church St., NE; Evolution Fitness- 216 Dominion Road, NE; Rexall Drug Store-150 Maple Ave. W; Drs. Covell, Stack and Henon- 120 Beulah Road, NE; Patrick Henry Library (co-sponsored by Supervisor Cathy Hudgins) and the Vienna Community Center. Girl Scout Troop 2684 will be helping NEVCA by picking up the food. Sponsored by Committee for Helping Others. Call 703-281-7614.

Textures Exhibit. Through Jan. 7, various times at the Vienna Arts Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW. Call 703-319-3971 or visit www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

Great Falls Farmers Market. Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 778 Walker Road, Great Falls. Music, vendors, fresh produce, fresh prepared food, delightful bakery, spices from around the world, wild-caught fish, grass-fed, free-range meats, organic-fed poultry and eggs. Email kathleen@greatfallsfarmersmarket.org.

Fit for Life Classes. Wednesdays through Nov. 22, 11 a.m.-noon at Bruen Chapel United Methodist Church, 3035 Cedar Lane, Fairfax. Sponsored by the Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna, to improve strength, balance and mobility for older adults, taught by instructor, Michele DeGarmo. \$5. Call 703-281-0538.

Free Tai Chi. Every Saturday, from 7:55-9 a.m., Introduction and Beginners' Practice, meet on the outdoor basketball court located directly behind the Dolley Madison Public Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave. in McLean Central Park, McLean. Call 703-759-9141 or visit www.FreeTaiChi.org.

The Freeman Store & Museum Wednesday through Sunday noon-4 p.m. 131 Church St. NE, Vienna. The Freeman Store & Museum is dedicated to Preserving and promoting Vienna's heritage through the identification, preservation, and interpretation of history significant places, events, and persons. Historicviennainc.org

Bingo Night. Sundays. 4 p.m. Flame Room, Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center St. S, Vienna. \$10. vvfd.org/bingo.html.

Gentle Yoga. Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. Emmaus United Church of Christ, 900 E Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Gentle Kundalini Yoga, one free introductory session, senior discounts. Increase flexibility, improve breathing and health, reduce stress. Ravi Kaur has 15 years experience teaching yoga. \$15 per session. www.edimprovement.org. 571-213-3192.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Langley High Chorus will host its annual Renaissance Feaste at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 1, and Saturday, Dec. 2

Langley High to Host Renaissance Feaste

To kick-off the Holiday season, the Langley High Chorus will host its annual Renaissance Feaste at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 1, and Saturday, Dec. 2, for an evening of dinner theater and choral music.

More than 80 students from Langley's award-winning choir will take guests back to 16th century England, where they will be entertained by

minstrels, jesters, and ladies and gentlemen of the Langley Madrigals as well as Langley's Chamber, Concert, Treble and Select Choirs, who will perform in an English court setting.

Reservations are required. Tickets and more information are available online at www.langleychorus.com.

Fundamentals of Watercolors.

Mondays 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at The Arts of Great Falls, 756 Walker Road, Great Falls. Artist Lorrie Herman will help students get comfortable working with watercolors and understanding this medium. Visit www.greatfallsart.org.

Evening Painting.

Tuesdays 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. at The Arts of Great Falls, 756 Walker Road, Great Falls. Jill Banks focuses on oil painting fundamentals with two sessions each of still life, landscapes, and portrait/clothed figure from a live model. Visit www.greatfallsart.org.

FRIDAY/NOV. 24

Wagon Ride at Dusk. 4:30-5:30 p.m. at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Sunset trip through the park. Call 703-759-9018 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/.

NOV. 24-26

Thanksgiving Weekend Show.

Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Spring Hill ReCenter, 1239 Spring Hill Road, McLean. Approximately 80 juried artisans offering original, handmade arts and crafts, including decorative painting, fused, etched, painted and stained glass, ceramics and pottery, hand-painted silk, woodworking handweaving, photography, paintings and drawings, clothing and functional textiles, jewelry and much more. All of the artists and artisans will be on hand to answer questions and talk about their work. \$5, free for children 12 and under. Email anneclark01@comcast.net or call 703-391-5611.

MONDAY/NOV. 27

Explore the Moon by Telescope. 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Turner Farm, 925 Springvale Road, Great Falls. Explore the lunar surface is marked by craters and lava flows billions of years old. Call 703-324-8618 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/turnerfarm/.

TUESDAY/NOV. 28

Canadian Musician Mappe Of. 7 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E. Performing his debut album "A Northern Star, A Perfect Stone." Visit www.jamminjava.com.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 1-2

2017 Renaissance Feaste. 7 p.m. at Langley Halle at Langley High School, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Holiday celebration featuring costumed servers, jesters, minstrels, musicians, and the Langley

Madrigals. Visit langleychorus.com. **Orphe and the Book of Heroes.** Friday at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. in the Oakton High School Robert "Skip" Bromley Auditorium, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna. \$10. Visit oaktondrama.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Breakfast With Santa. 8:30-10:30 a.m. at St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Free community event open to all to benefit Housing Up and Samaritan Ministry. Suggested donation is a new unwrapped toy. Call 703-759-2082.

Live Puppy Nativity. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist), 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. Bring dogs to dress up as part of the nativity. Costumes provided. Free. The church's youth group will be on hand to accept donations for Second Story. Visit www.GoodShepherdVA.com.

Home for the Holidays Musical. 7:30 p.m. at The Falls Church Episcopal, 115 E. Fairfax St., Falls Church. Tysons Mclean Orchestra performs with Melissa Mino. Call 703-893-8646.

SUNDAY/DEC. 3

Victorian Christmas Fund Raiser. 1-4:30 p.m. at the Historic Mount Hope mansion, Oak Street, Falls Church. The Victorian Society at Falls Church is hosting "The Spirit of Christmas Past" at the Historic Mount Hope mansion on Oak Street in Falls Church to benefit Creative Cauldron, a non-profit performance arts organization. Email

vicsofc@hotmail.com or terryhooperknapp@aol.com.

McLean WinterFest Parade. Parade entertainment begins at 2:30 p.m. and the parade will step off at 3:30 p.m. sharp. The parade route will be the same as previous years: Old Chain Bridge Road from Fleetwood Road to Elm Street. WinterFest 2017 will have food trucks again this year in the Langley Shopping Center. Visit www.mcleanwinterfest.org.

Christmas Concert. 4 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. NE, Vienna. The Christmas portion of Handel's Messiah, presented by the Vienna Presbyterian Sanctuary Choir with soloists Leah Inger, soprano; Jennifer Matthews, alto; Tim Augustin, tenor; and Joshua Hong, bass. Commentary by Senior Pastor Pete James. Call 703-438-0718.

STARTING DEC. 8

Watercolor Workshops with Joe Phillips. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Vienna Arts Society, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Class each Friday until Jan. 1. Call 703-319-3971 or visit www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

FRIDAY/DEC. 8

Gift Collection. 9:30 a.m.-noon at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. NE, Vienna. Collecting new, unwrapped gifts and gift cards for children and teens. The North East Vienna Citizens Association is sponsoring the event with help from Girl Scout Troop 2684. Visit nevca.wordpress.com.

SUNDAY, DEC. 10

Blue Christmas Service. 3:30 p.m. at Katie's Coffee House 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. A non-traditional service of remembrance and hope, brought to you by Great Falls Area Ministries. Call Carol Wright 703-582-1640.

McLean Youth Orchestra. 4 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom of the Community Building of Vinson Hall, 1735 Kirby Road, McLean. Visit www.tysonsmcleanorchestra.org or call 703-893-8646.

Christmas Concert. 4 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St., NE, Vienna. A Cathedral Brass Christmas, music from Monteverdi to Gordon Goodwin. Call 703-438-0718.

Christmas Youth Concert. 4 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The youth choir leads with Christmas hymns, followed by reception. Call 703-356-4902 or visit stjohnsmclean.org.

MONDAY/DEC. 11

Santa's Ride for Children. Donate new and unwrapped toys, games, books and gifts to be distributed to children at Fairfax Hospital, Georgetown Lombardi Cancer Center. Email Ruth.Rohr@viennava.gov or call 703-255-6324.

SATURDAY/DEC. 16

Night In Bethlehem Performance. 5-7 p.m. at Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. Nativity scene with live animals. Visit www.andrewchapelumc.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 17

Christmas Concert. 4 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. NE, Vienna. Glorious Sounds of Christmas, a Christmas celebration for the whole family led by the Vienna Presbyterian Sanctuary Choir, the Cathedral Brass, organ, piano, and noted soloists. Call 703-438-0718.

Correction

The Connection Holiday Celebration and Entertainment calendars mistakenly announced a performance by the McLean Tysons Orchestra. There is no concert at Vinson Hall on Dec. 2. The Tysons McLean Orchestra's next performance is a Christmas Holiday concert Dec. 2, 7:30 p.m., at The Falls Church Episcopal in Falls Church with Melissa Mino, soprano. Miriam Burns will conduct concert and Warren Lewis will be an audience participant volunteer conductor. Visit www.tysonsmcleanorchestra.org.

Announcements

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Announcements

Dr Tracie Lanter (also dba McLean Primary Care) is closing her McLean internal medicine office on December 21, 2017. She is relocating her medical practice to Chevy Chase, MD. Dr Amrisha Gupta, Dr Jyotsna Gupta, and Dr Elizabeth Bennett at McLean Medical Center and Urgent Care will be happy to provide continuity of care and be custodian of medical records. Their office can be reached at 703.356.7070 or 703.356.0600

Announcements

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Roundtable

FROM PAGE 3

and nonprofits. "We are cutting our social safety network, one strand at a time," said Mercer.

Multop donned his economist's hat once more to also note that so far he had heard no mention from the GOP plan makers of the debt service on the increasing deficit. "That's another \$200 billion in interest costs that I don't hear them having accounted for." Multop's concern is that Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security benefits will become the targets to shore up the financial levee in the wake of these tax cuts and the domino effect of their implementation.

Another personalized example of the the proposed reforms was offered by attendee Edythe Kelleher. The executive director of Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation, Kelleher could have spoken about impacts to development in that region, but instead, told how cuts to student loan interest deductions and a proposal to tax teacher's assistant stipends would affect her graduate-school son.

"He works, he goes to school, he lives frugally. We provided him with a cheap car." Kelleher says that if a tax on the modest teacher's assistant stipend is adopted, "that's \$6,000 more each year, and he doesn't know where that money will come from."

Cannolly responded to this story by saying the need to educate for competitiveness in the world's marketplace is greater than ever.

The congressman said that making getting an education even more difficult means "some will have to leave school. That's hardly 'making America great again.'"

As the session came to a close, NVAR CEO Conrad asked Cannolly, "What's your advice? What do we do next?"

In addition to the rally call to NVAR membership and AARP members, Cannolly replied, "Run, don't walk and immediately express your concerns to your representatives" at every level of government, and "tell everyone you know."

This plan does not reflect our values and priorities. We can and should do better than this."

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 12

Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand will host Community Conversations to hear what students, parents, employees, and members of the community are thinking about and what issues are important to them. Brabrand welcomes citizens to attend and take part in any of the upcoming sessions that are convenient for them. Citizens needing a translator can make a request for services online. Visit www.fcps.edu/news/superintendent-brabrand-schedules-five-community-conversations-fall.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Are You A Caregiver? Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna Caregivers' Support Group takes place first & third Thursday of each month. February 2nd and 16th, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Join us at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax (UUCF) - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Rd, Oakton, VA. For more info contact facilitator, Jack Tarr, 703-821-6838 jtarr5@verizon.net.

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Welcome to the Club



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

"Some club," as my late mother would likely scoff. And the club to which I refer is, to spin an old Groucho Marx joke: a club you'd rather not join especially if they'd have you as a member. This is of course, the cancer club, a club whose membership continues to grow despite worldwide efforts to the contrary. According to Medscope.com, one in two men and one in three women will be affected by cancer in their lifetime. Hardly a statistic to be ignored. And so, even though I had a rather uneventful/healthy upbringing and further on into adulthood, in late middle age, 54 and five months, Feb. 27, 2009, I was impacted and rudely awakened with a non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV diagnosis - out of the blue, and given a "13 month to two-year" prognosis to boot. As a life long non-smoker with no immediate family history of cancer, whose parents both lived well into their 80s, I was more inclined to worry about the Boston Red Sox pitching depth than I was about cancer.

But cancer, for the past nearly nine years has been my life and amazingly, so far anyway, not the cause of my premature death (what death isn't 'premature?'). And what brightens my day and lifts my spirits more than anything else (other than a Red Sox World Series Championship) is when I meet a newly-diagnosed lung cancer patient who exhibits the can/will do positive-type attitude necessary to endure the inevitable ups and downs to follow. To be selfish, it empowers me and strengthens my own resolve to live life to the fullest (it's not as simple as saying it) and damn the torpedoes.

Within the last few months, I have met, over the phone, two such individuals. The first man, Lee, I met before he even had his first infusion. The second man, Mark, a bit more experienced, I met a year and a half after his first infusion. Each man was engaging, outgoing, confident, enthusiastic and quite frankly, happy to make my acquaintance. You see, after being given a less-than-desirable prognosis, it's helpful to meet someone who, despite having received a similar diagnosis, has nevertheless managed to live almost nine years post diagnosis. (If he can do it, I can do it kind of feeling.)

As for me, the nearly nine-year survivor, meeting cancer patients who are at the beginning of their respective cancer journeys, helps me to reconnect with my roots, so to speak, and share and share alike some memorable experiences, both cancer-related and not. In a way, we get to live vicariously through one another which for me reinforces how lucky I've been to survive for as long as I have.

And not that I need reminding, but it's easy to take for granted one's good fortune and forget - occasionally, the seriousness of my situation and the cloud that hangs over my head.

The sword of Damocles has got nothing on me, literally or figuratively. Living with cancer is akin to nothing really. The chance that you'll survive beyond your prognosis, maybe even have your tumors shrink, or see your scans show "no evidence of disease," creates a kind of tease that cause your emotions to run the gamut. The possibility of living after being told you're dying - and vice versa, perhaps more than once, over your abbreviated - or not, life expectancy, is simply too much to handle/absorb sometimes. It's a roller coaster for sure, but one that rarely comes to a complete stop and never allows you to get off. Moreover, it's not multiple rides, it's one long, endless ride with no guarantees about what happens next - or where it even happens.

Meeting people who are ready, willing and able to confront their cancer future is just as important and stimulating as meeting someone like me who hasn't succumbed to this terrible disease. It's a win-win situation. Particularly significant when at date of diagnosis, it appeared to be a lose-lose. I'm proud to be a member of the cancer club, especially so when I meet people like Lee and Mark.

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



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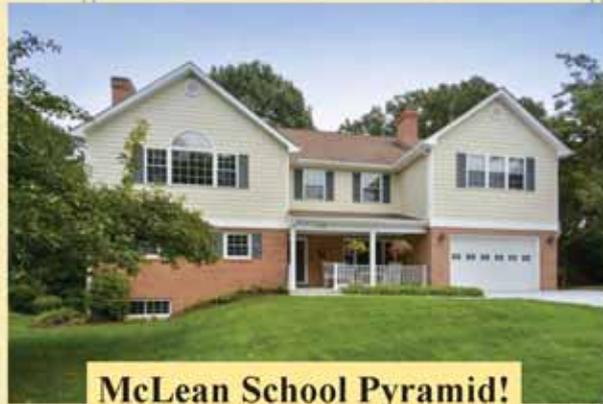
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