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HomeLifeStyle
PAGE 7

McLean CONNECTION

Abby Covington, Haley Rose, Erica Bass and Benji Harris in McLean High production of '9 to 5.' The show runs April 26, 27, and 28 at 7 p.m., with matinees April 28 and 29 at 2 p.m.



'9 to 5' at McLean High

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PHOTO BY ANNA KATE WOMACK
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PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Ananya Amirthalingam, of McLean, a junior at Langley High School and one of the student photographers on the 100Camera Bangladesh team.



From left — Sumaiya Haque, of McLean, the team leader on the 100Camera Bangladesh team and a junior at Langley High School, Andrew Kim, of Fairfax, the team filmographer and a junior at Thomas Jefferson High School, and Mehran Sajjad, of McLean, one of the team's student photographers and a junior at Thomas Jefferson High School, at one of the projects recent fundraisers.

Express Yourself!

Give them the camera, show their perspective.

BY ANANYA AMIRTHALINGAM

Do you remember the first time you held a camera in your hands? Can you picture that power? That thrill? That heightened clarity? That feeling of being able to momentarily change the way the world is viewed? It is easy to imagine these feelings as someone living in Northern Virginia, a place filled with people who actively support and value the arts.

I am lucky to go to a school — Langley High School — that prides itself on its Fine Arts program. I am lucky to live just miles away from some of the most beautiful art galleries in the country. I am lucky to simply be encouraged by my parents, friends, teachers and others, to pursue my passion of photography.

We are all so lucky as members of the Northern Virginia community, that we often forget of many people who are denied these creative outlets. Many people are not given the chance to pursue an art education. Nor do they see daily the power of artwork. Some rarely have access to cameras.

That is why I joined 100Cameras Bangladesh. 100Cameras Bangladesh is a snapshot project of 100Cameras - a non-profit organization whose goal is to allow children to capture and share their stories through photography. Led

by Sumaiya Haque, a junior at Langley High School, and her photography teacher, Amanda Archibald, 100Cameras Bangladesh similarly aims to empower the children of Dhaka, Bangladesh, a community primarily consisting of sweatshops workers, to use photography as a platform to express their experiences in underdocumented migrant communities.

This summer, our team of high school students, which include student filmmaker Andrew Kim (a Thomas Jefferson High School Junior), student photographers Mehran Sajjad (a Thomas Jefferson High School junior) and myself, will travel to Dhaka, Bangladesh. Once in Dhaka, we will be collaborating with Teach For Bangladesh, a non-profit organization whose objective is to expand educational opportunity in less developed communities, to conduct a two week photography course for elementary schoolers.

Our course curriculum explores both storytelling and technical photography skills that will enable the children to share their unique perspective that comes from the culture and history of their country.

Upon our return to the United States we intend to host an art show in the Northern Virginia area, where local advocates and government leaders will be invited to hear the stories of these children. We will hold auctions and sell the photographs. One hundred percent of the proceeds will fund the most pressing communal needs, such as flood protection, thus enabling the children to see

the long-term impact of their own contribution.

In addition to monetary contributions, the cameras are donated so that they can continue projects with the children after our departure. As students who understand firsthand the benefits of growing up in an area in which art is celebrated and encouraged, we hope to provide these children with a creative outlet that will allow them to receive a more diverse education, while positively impacting their community.

Our project is unique in that it aims to uncover the injustices occurring in migrant communities through our camera lenses as well as from the perspective of the children facing social injustice — in essence, producing a thought-provoking fusion of perspectives. Additionally, this project will hopefully shed some light on the injustices occurring throughout migrant communities in Bangladesh which unfortunately lack sufficient media representation.

Consequently, we also hope to empower these children to exercise their powerful capabilities and develop their communities, thus bringing awareness to their lives. By seeing their art and stories

shared with others inside and outside of their communities, these children will feel pride in their work and accomplishments.

Through local networking, we have begun fundraising in hopes to cover the costs for cameras and lodging. But we need your support. As a community that appreciates the beauty and enrichment art offers to everyday life we hope you all see the necessity for a project like this. With your help we can help inspire a new generation of artists and influencers.

Everybody has a story to tell. We believe in the wonderment of kids, their curiosity and innocence, their view of the world and how they can make a difference in their communities. By supporting us you are not just funding a project, you are providing the catalyst to change these children's lives. You are giving these children ability to feel that joy, thrill, and power that comes with holding a camera; you are giving them the ability to change the world.

Want to find out more? Go to www.100camerasbangladesh.weebly.com There you will find our GoFundMe page. Your donation makes a difference: <http://gf.me/u/gqiwgb>

Film Viewing, Discussion on Non-partisan Redistricting

The McLean Area American Association of University Women (AAUW) is sponsoring a program on Tuesday, April 17 at 7 p.m. in the Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave, McLean, featuring One Virginia 2021 and presentation of the film, "Gerryrigged" with discussion to follow the viewing. The meeting is open to the public.

One Virginia 2021 is a civic non-profit organization founded to advocate for a non-partisan redistricting of the Commonwealth of Virginia. One Virginia 2021 promotes an independent redistricting commission with non-partisan criteria and is co-patroned by Virginia Senators Jill Vogel (R) and Louise Lucas (D).

Comstock Announces Military Academy Day

U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) announced the annual 10th Congressional District Military Academy Day. This year's Military Academy Day will be held on Saturday, April 21 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Loudoun County Public School Administration Building located at 21000 Education Court, Ashburn. The event is free and open to all students, parents and guidance staff who are interested in learning more about the nation's service academies.

Representatives from all of the service academies — Army, Navy, Air Force, Merchant Marine and Coast Guard — will be in attendance. Representatives from the Marine Corps ROTC program, the Virginia Army National Guard, Virginia Military Institute, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and The Citadel have also been invited. Additionally, the American Legion and Randolph-Macon Academy will be represented. Each of the academies will make a presentation and students will be able to meet with admissions staff and ask questions.

Confusion, Anger, Agenda Difficulties

Public safety committee meeting focuses on ICE, without ICE at the table.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust asked a series of questions to try to elicit an answer from county law enforcement about whether Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers sometimes detain and arrest people on civil warrants when assisting county officers on criminal investigations.

“Fairfax County gang task force does not have a member of ICE participating on it, is that correct?” said Foust.

Chief of Fairfax County Police, Col. Edwin C. Chief Roessler, answered first. “We’re part of the Northern Virginia gang task force and there is a criminal element of ICE associated with that task force,” he said, “so to answer the question, we do associate with ICE in that task force for criminal investigations.”

Foust continued: “My question is, what role does ICE play on the gang task force? If a crime is committed, you don’t need ICE there to enforce the law, correct?”

“We can investigate on our own,” Roessler said, but “these gang members don’t adhere to boundaries, so to conduct an investigation we have to cross boundaries. So, at times it’s prudent to use the task force and a criminal investigator from ICE or the FBI or other federal agencies to hunt these criminals down and arrest them.”

“If there is an ICE officer on your gang task force, and I understand criminal side, do you have a standing policy that says that they shall not make an arrest for a civil detainee while participating on your task force?” asked Foust.

Roessler said, “It’s our goal and our general orders dictate what our police officers in Fairfax County can and can’t do for the civil side of that, And it’s not my goal as your chief to go out and enforce the civil portion of that.”

“That’s not the business that we’re in,” he said.

“That’s what I’m trying to get at,” said Foust. “Because what I perceive is you’re out in the community with one or more ICE agents who are arresting people while participating on your task force for non-criminal conduct.”

“And that’s what we don’t want,” said Roessler.

THE BOARD’S PUBLIC SAFETY committee met Tuesday, April 3, to discuss these



Foust



Bulova



Cook



McKay



Kincaid



Herrity



Roessler



Keen

issues together.

“Our board was looking forward to a frank and open discussion with ICE about their enforcement activities in Fairfax County, which is what ICE had agreed to originally. It is unfortunate that this opportunity was derailed,” said Chairman Sharon Bulova.

ICE didn’t take a seat, although Adonnis T. Smith Sr., Washington Field Office Enforcement and Removal Operations, was listed on the agenda along with Barbara M. Gonzalez, assistant director, Stakeholder Engagement – Victims of Immigration Crime Engagement (VOICE).

“There was a lot of disagreement about federal participation today,” said Public Safety Committee chairman and Braddock District Supervisor John Cook.

ICE officers spoke from the audience to say that they were present and ready to speak at two points during the meeting.

“We appreciate you being here,” said Bulova. “There were a lot of organizations that actually asked to have a seat at the table, including ICE and including VOICE. There were others [immigrant advocates] who believed that this was going to be a public forum or a public hearing which it is not. This is a committee meeting of the Board of Supervisors.”

Bulova said later on Facebook: “ICE then asked that a representative from the Victims of Immigration Crime Engagement (VOICE) Office be at the table as well. Since VOICE’s mission (giving voice to victims of crimes by illegal immigrants), while admirable, was not germane to the subject of this meeting, I asked they not be a part of the discussion. ICE then presented us with an ultimatum — hear from all of us or none of us. ICE representatives chose instead to sit in the audience,” Bulova wrote.

“Prior to this meeting my office also heard from pro-immigrant rights groups who wished to have a seat at the table during the meeting. They were told ‘sorry’ for a similar reason — their issues were off topic and this was a Board Committee Meeting

and not a public forum.”

Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity disagreed. “I think they are our law enforcement partners and I think they should be able to participate, but I’ll respect the decision of the chairs,” said Herrity.

Still, ICE and its partnership with local law enforcement continued as the topic of the meeting.

FOUST QUESTIONED Col. Douglas W. Keen, Chief of Police, City of Manassas, and chairman of the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force.

“Do you allow ICE agents participating on the task force with your officers to make arrests for non-criminal conduct?”

Keen answered: “There are no ICE agents assigned to the task force. It is a local and state task force. We will work with ICE, just as the captain said, as another tool just like the FBI, DEA, Secret Service or any others. There are times we may ask for ICE assistance and they will help us on that criminal investigation.”

“I think we’re all comfortable with the criminal side,” said Foust. “What you seem to be evading is, do they take into custody while participating on your task force persons presumed or assumed to be in violation of non-criminal immigration rules.”

“I don’t dictate what ICE does,” answered Keen. “That would be their policy. When they are a member of the task force, they are there for criminal apprehension purposes.”

“ICE, it would probably be best if they explained, if they had an opportunity, they have two different divisions, they have a criminal division and they have a civil division. The criminal division is working with us,” said Keen.

Roessler said: “We don’t want the community to be looking at us as if we’re using a criminal as a proxy to get into a house and say, ‘You, you and you, come with me.’”

“I hope that’s exactly accurate because that is not consistent with what I was led to believe, which was that these ICE agents

do indeed take people into custody while on raids with you for violations that are not criminal activities,” said Foust.

ICE had been active in Route 1 area, said Roessler, and the FCPD asked ICE to alert them when and where they are conducting raids in the county so that police know if they get a call for example for a home invasion or robbery, they won’t respond.

“Obviously, they are federal law enforcement officers and they have absolute right to go into that community, I as a chief cannot override that federal right and that’s where the confusion is in the community. It’s not your police department in Fairfax County that’s conducting the civil raids, it’s ICE, and that’s their job.”

SHERIFF STACEY A. KINCAID informed ICE in January that the Sheriff’s Office would terminate its intergovernmental service agreement (IGSA) with ICE on May 23, following the required 120-day notice.

The “Sheriff’s Office will no longer hold inmates past their release date unless an ICE administrative request to detain the inmate is accompanied by a criminal detainer issued by a court,” according to Kincaid.

The City of Alexandria, on May 23, will be the only one of 123 jurisdictions in Virginia to maintain its intergovernmental service agreement with ICE, said Kincaid.

“Our compliance with Code of Virginia will not be compromised,” she said. “Our conclusion to terminate this agreement was done after a thorough very intensive process.”

Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay asked if the decision would impact criminal investigations of the gang task force.

“Little to no impact on the gang task force,” answered Keen.

“Little to no impact, make sure everybody heard that,” said McKay, “because facts matter and facts really matter when you are dealing with people’s emotions. And when you’re trying to scare people in Fairfax County into believing things that are happening that are not happening.”

THE MAJORITY of the board supported Kincaid’s decision.

“When you terminated the ISA, it was undoubtedly predictable on your part that there would be those who would try to make a political issue out of this, would try to scare people. I appreciate the courage you showed, you did the right thing,” said Foust.

“It was the right decision to make,” said McKay.

“I’ve got to tell you, from all the officers that I’ve talked to and from my years on this board the number one most powerful tool we have in Fairfax County is a community that can trust and will talk to law enforcement to solve our crimes,” said McKay. “What’s happening at the federal level and

SEE ICE, PAGE 11

OPINION

Expansion of Health Care in Virginia?

After years of hoping, it's possible Medicaid expansion will come on April 11; say a prayer.

The most important, impactful accomplishment of the Virginia General Assembly session for 2018 is set for Wednesday, April 11, after our newspapers' presstime. In agreeing on a budget, assembly members are expected to approve expanding Medicaid which would provide health insurance some

EDITORIAL

200,000 to 400,000 Virginians who have been living without coverage, and consequently mostly without health care.

More than 10 percent of residents of Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax County do not have health insurance.

The benefits are huge. A celebratory press release goes out any time 10 or more jobs come to any place in Virginia. But estimates are that finally accepting the available federal money

to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act would generate about 30,000 jobs.

It will make all of us who live and work in Virginia healthier by ensuring that our fellow residents have access to healthcare, to medications to treat contagious illnesses, to vaccinations, to preventive and acute care. We don't want the people who ride with us on the Metro or wait in line at motor vehicles to be sick without a reasonable way to be treated. We want the people around us to be healthy. It makes everyone healthier.

Virginia has bypassed about \$10 billion by not having expanded Medicaid since it was possible.

Now is the time.

So many advocates have pressed for this for

so long, that it seems almost surreal as the possibility approaches. While I don't often pray for particular outcomes, I think a prayer for hundreds of thousands of people to receive life-affirming health care is in order.

Del. Ken Plum of Reston wrote in his weekly column: "By the time you are reading this column I will be back in Richmond for the serious work of the legislature of passing a budget for the next biennium. The outstanding issue to be resolved is the expansion of Medicaid to nearly 400,000 Virginians who do not have health care even though taxes are being collected in Virginia to pay for the program. I support the Governor in his insistence that we approve the expansion. Thanks to all the citizens who have been calling and writing supporting the program. I will be back with details on the budget issue as soon as it is resolved."

Fingers crossed.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

New Neighbor

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



On a recent early morning walk from my home in the South Lakes area of Reston I met a new neighbor that I learned lately moved into the area weeks ago. I would not call the new neighbor friendly; he seemed to be more disinterested in me although his family acted a bit jittery with me being around. While he may not have been interested in me, hundreds have been interested in and curious about him. A photo I took of him that I posted on social media has elicited nearly 400 reactions. I continue to use the male pronoun, but truthfully I am not sure of the neighbor's gender.

I introduced the new member of our community on social media as being an albino deer, but I was quickly corrected. The almost white deer did not have the pink eyes, pink nose, and pinkish hooves of an albino deer. One neighbor suggested that he was probably a piebald deer. Although I grew up in rural Virginia where there is a lot of wildlife, I had never heard of a piebald deer. That sent me to the internet where I learned that contrary to popular belief, a piebald deer is not a cross between a normal whitetail deer and an albino. The origin of the word "piebald" comes from "pie" meaning "mixed up" and "bald" meaning "having a white spot".

Piebalds have various amounts of white and brown patches similar to a pinto pony, and they have

normal brown eyes and nose with black hooves like a normal whitetail deer. Their coloration is due to a rare inherited genetic defect that fortunately affects less than one percent of the white-tailed deer population because it also may result in the deer having short legs, scoliosis of the spine, internal organ deformities and other health conditions.

At the risk of turning this story into another diatribe on my part about the importance of diversity in our community and the need to welcome all, I will end with an acknowledgement that some people do not want another someone in the community who may eat their flowers. It does make me appreciate our trails and natural areas where we can see our animal neighbors. When you see our piebald deer near Snakeden Branch Trail or wherever else in Reston, take a photo if you can and share it on my Facebook page, Kenneth R. Plum. We want him to feel welcome. You might want to call him by the name I understand Terraset Elementary students have given him: Blanca.

By the time you are reading this column I will be back in Richmond for the serious work of the legislature of passing a budget for the next biennium. The outstanding issue to be resolved is the expansion of Medicaid to nearly 400,000 Virginians who do not have health care even though taxes are being collected in Vir-



Piebald deer of Reston

ginia to pay for the program. I support the Governor in his insistence that we approve the expansion. Thanks to all the citizens

who have been calling and writing supporting the program. I will be back with details on the budget issue as soon as it is resolved.

McLean
CONNECTION

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REAL ESTATE

McLean & Great Falls Quarterly Market Analysis of Home Sales (Based on Final Closed Price):

1 st Qtr 2018 compared to 1 st Qtr 2017 and 2008						
2018 1 st Qtr Total Sales: 210						
Zip Code	>\$3 Mil	\$2-3 Mil	\$1.25-2 Mil	\$1-\$1.25 Mil	\$750k-\$1 Mil	<\$750k
22101	4	8	15	14	27	16
22102	3	2	3	8	12	59
22066	0	0	9	11	12	7
Total:	7	10	27	33	51	82
Combined Total Upper Brackets: 44			Combined Total Lower Brackets: 166			
2017 1 st Qtr Total Sales: 242						
Zip Code	>\$3 Mil	\$2-3 Mil	\$1.25-2 Mil	\$1-\$1.25 Mil	\$750k-\$1 Mil	<\$750k
22101	1	7	31	21	33	19
22102	1	1	5	7	10	55
22066	1	3	12	10	18	7
Total:	3	11	48	38	61	81
Combined Total Upper Brackets: 62			Combined Total Lower Brackets: 180			
2008 1 st Qtr Total Sales: 132						
Zip Code	>\$3 Mil	\$2-3 Mil	\$1.25-2 Mil	\$1-\$1.25 Mil	\$750k-\$1 Mil	<\$750k
22101	3	5	11	4	8	23
22102	1	2	2	1	6	38
22066	0	3	11	2	6	6
Total:	4	10	24	7	20	67
Combined Total Upper Brackets: 38			Combined Total Lower Brackets: 94			

First Quarter Market 'Softer' Than in 2017

The second quarter 2018 is poised for strong activity in McLean, Great Falls market.

BY KAREN BRISCOE

The number of real estate transactions in McLean and Great Falls closed out the first quarter 2018 softer than in the same time period in 2017, with 210 transactions vs. 242 the previous year. In comparison to the 2008 market just one decade ago, the number is up almost 60 percent. Allow me to speculate on the reasons I see for the market shift.

First, there was uncertainty as to the effect of the tax reform that took place in the fourth quarter of 2017. This caused many people to put their moving decisions on hold.

Second, inventory levels in many segments were low relative to demand. With not as many choices available to buyers, they either had to raise their price point, make concessions, or put their move on hold until more choices became available. Many chose to wait.

Third, the weather was not cooperative! The groundhog saw his shadow and that foretold more winter-like weather, which was an accurate prophecy. Early spring-like weather is a key attribute to



strong first quarter market sales. Now that the cherry blossoms are in peak season, I predict stronger spring like real estate market activity.

Home sellers in the area experienced in many cases the "best of times" market conditions in 2016 and 2017. As we move into the second quarter of 2018, there are strong indications that homes priced well and in good condition will sell for solid prices. Should demand continue to remain strong relative to supply, some market segments may experience price appreciation.

Home buyers in the area can purchase with the confidence that purchasing in an up market cycle frequently proves advantageous over time. The second quarter 2018 is poised for strong activity. Begin working with an experienced agent now to beat the rush.

Karen Briscoe with HBC Group at Keller Williams is an active and experienced Realtor in the Northern Virginia marketplace. Karen, alongside her partner Lizzy Conroy and team, works with sellers, buyers, investors and builders in all price ranges. www.HBCGroupKW.com, 703-734-0192, Homes@HBCGroupKW.com.

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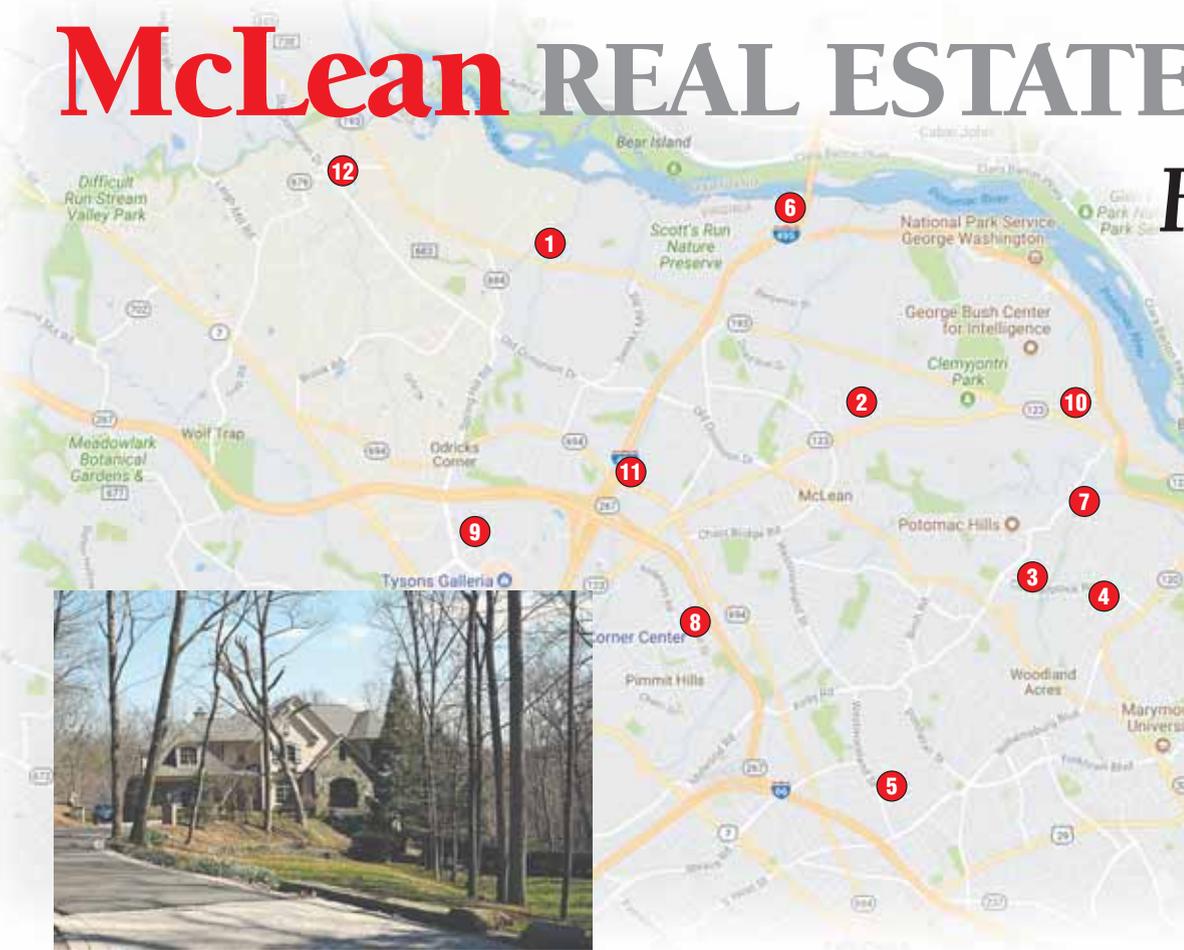
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McLean REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/THE CONNECTION

February, 2018 Top Sales

IN FEBRUARY 2018, 55 HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$590,000-\$225,000 IN THE MCLEAN AND FALLS CHURCH AREA.



12 909 Chinquapin Road — \$1,100,000



2 1125 Ormond Court — \$2,205,000



11 1310 Scotts Run Road — \$1,130,000



10 1137 Basil Road — \$1,225,000



7 1424 Laburnum Street — \$1,395,000



3 6138 Tompkins Drive — \$2,080,000

Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal	City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	PostalCode	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 7853 LANGLEY RIDGE RD	8	10	2	22102	MCLEAN	\$5,450,000	Detached	5.21	22102	8000 GEORGETOWN PIKE	02/27/18
2 1125 ORMOND CT	6	6	2	22101	MCLEAN	\$2,205,000	Detached	0.37	22101	RUCKERS LANGLEY	02/13/18
3 6138 TOMPKINS DR	6	6	2	22101	MCLEAN	\$2,080,000	Detached	0.36	22101	CHESTERBROOK WOODS	02/15/18
4 1700 CRESCENT LN	6	5	2	22101	MCLEAN	\$1,600,000	Detached	0.43	22101	CHESTERBROOK WOODS	02/20/18
5 6517 ELMHIRST DR	6	5	1	22043	FALLS CHURCH	\$1,574,900	Detached	0.23	22043	CHURCHILL	02/23/18
6 613 RIVERCREST DR	6	6	1	22101	MCLEAN	\$1,410,000	Detached	0.80	22101	RIVER OAKS	02/08/18
7 1424 LABURNUM ST	5	4	0	22101	MCLEAN	\$1,395,000	Detached	0.52	22101	CHESTERBROOK WOODS	02/20/18
8 1755 PIMMIT DR	6	6	1	22043	FALLS CHURCH	\$1,350,000	Detached	0.33	22043	PIMMIT HILLS	02/14/18
9 8220 CRESTWOOD HEIGHTS DR	2	2	1	22102	MCLEAN	\$1,240,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22102	ONE PARK CREST	02/12/18
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PHOTO MERRIFIELD GARDEN CENTER

The colors of Camellia blooms can be enjoyed now, says David Watkins of Merrifield Garden Center.



PHOTO AMERICAN PLANT

Preparing a spring garden includes pruning, mulching and fertilizing, says Haynes Davis of American Plant in Bethesda.

Spring in Bloom

Preparing and planning a colorful warm-weather garden.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

One of the most anticipated rites of spring is the vibrancy of the first blooms on flowers and trees. However, this beauty can only be savored after the weeding, pruning and planting are finished. While preparing and planning a spring garden is not an effortless endeavor, local landscaping gurus say that an organized plan can make it more manageable.

"The first thing you need to do is cut back any ornamental grasses like Liriope two to four inches off the ground so the brown, tired-looking leaves are gone before the new leaves start to grow," said David Watkins, general manager of Merrifield Garden Center. "If you wait too long it's tough to separate old from new and you end up getting brown on the new leaves."

Removing all of the leaves and other debris from the flowerbed is the next step, advises Haynes Davis of American Plant in Bethesda. "Cut back any perennials or ornamental grasses that have not already been cut back and prune out any dead branches from existing shrubs," he said. "I fertilize at this point with ... a slow-release, organic fertilizer that works for blooming and evergreen plants. Lastly I put down a fresh layer of mulch and then the beds are ready for spring."

Preparing to have a perfectly manicured lawn for spring begins by raking removing all of the fallen leaves, adds Davis. "Having your PH tested would be a good idea because now would be the time to put down lime to get your soil to the correct acidity level which is 5.8 to 6.5," he said. "This is also the time to put down pre-emergent [herbicides] to keep the weeds from coming up, but you have to remember, if you put down a pre-emergent you cannot over seed for six to 12 weeks, depending on the product you are using."

Cutting away dead or overgrown branches to stimulate new growth comes next, says Watkins. "I would prune any branches on

shrubs and trees that are crisscrossing and rubbing against each other," he said. "Then edge, mulch and fertilize your plants. Remove old mulch first and put down two to three inches of new mulch, but make sure you don't put it too close to the trunk of the plant."

When whipping a garden into shape for spring, Alexandria-based landscape designer Ruth Tinsley believes in engaging the senses. "If you plant fragrant spring flowers like Honeysuckle, Phlox, Butterfly Bush and roses, they will give you a pleasant aroma when you are walking through your yard or garden," she said. "Plant them in large swaths to get the biggest impact."

Butterfly Bush and Stock are two flowering plants that do double-duty, advises Tinsley. "They not only have a nice fragrance, but they will add beautiful color to your yard or garden. Butterfly bush is relatively hearty and has vibrant pink and purple blooms, and Stock comes in a vivid, dark-red color."

Until temperatures are warm on a consistent basis, Davis offers a caveat about planting flowers. "I would only plant Pansies and Violas for flowers outside," he said. "They will give you good color all the way up to the time to plant summer annuals, which is when we have sustained night time temps around 55 degrees, usually around mid-April. For perennials about the only thing you can plant now would be hellebores."

"Forsythia bushes are blooming now. They're one of the first to bloom," added Watkins. "Shortly Camellias and Azaleas will start to bloom."

Options for plants that can tolerate cooler temperatures are plentiful, advises Watkins. "All of our trees and shrubs can be planted now and it's great to get your garden started early so there's less maintenance in the summer," he said. "All of our ornamental trees like Cherry, Redbud, Crabapple and Dogwood can be planted now."

"As for shrubs, you can plant anything right now as long as it has been acclimated and does not have new tender growth," added Davis. "We have all of our plants that are tender either in our greenhouses or covered with frost blankets until the temperatures warm up."



PHOTO AMERICAN PLANT

Pansies and Violas can be planted now to offer bright colors to a spring garden, says Haynes Davis of American Plant in Bethesda.

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CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Oakton Farmers Market. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax Church, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Year-round weekly farmers market in Oakton. Local produce, meats/eggs, dairy, baked goods, and more. Admission is free. Visit community-foodworks.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 for more.

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 for more.

MCC Summer Camps. Plan now to register children for MCC's enriching summer camp programs for children ages 3 through 18. Summer Camp Registration begins Monday, Feb. 5, for MCC district residents and Monday, Feb. 12, for all others. Visit www.mcleancenter.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12

Opening Exhibition Reception. 7-9 p.m. at 1446 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. "Erratic Landscapes: New Works by Artemis Herber." Working with the humble material of recycled corrugated cardboard, German-born, Maryland-based artist Artemis Herber creates massive depictions of space and place. On display April 12 to June 3. Visit MPA@ChainBridge.com.

Astronomy for Family Fun: Stars. 8-9 p.m. at Turner Farm Park's Observatory, 925 Springvale Road, Great Falls. Look through telescopes to explore the universe and learn about the solar system and the night sky. This event will focus on stars. Children must be accompanied by a registered adult. The cost is \$8 per person. Call 703-324-8618 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/turner-farm/family-fun-stars.

THURSDAY/APRIL 12-MAY 6

"Fly By Night." At 1st Stage in Tysons, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. It's 1965 in New York City and the lights are about to go out. But not before a melancholy sandwich maker becomes enchanted with two sisters in this bittersweet romantic tale about finding hope in a world beset by darkness. Play by Kim Rosenstock, Michael Mitnick, and Will Connolly, directed by Kathryn Chase Bryer. \$38 general admission, \$35 seniors (65+), \$15 students and military. Visit www.1ststage.org or call 703-854-1856.

Christylez Bacon: The Human Beatbox. 8 p.m. at The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. GRAMMY-nominated Christylez Bacon is a dynamic member of the hip-hop movement, bringing innovation to an art form already known for mixing urban musical styles. Cost is \$20/\$14 MCC District residents. For Old Firehouse activities call 703-448-8336.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY-APRIL 13-14

The Art of Persian Cuisine. 6-10 p.m. at Entyse Bistro, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Drawing inspiration from the 13th-century Persian poet, Exclusively Events' Poopak Golesorkhi, and Chef Ahmed



Erica Bass and Benji Harris in McLean High production of '9 to 5.'



PHOTOS BY ANNA KATE WOMACK.

Newcomer Judy (played by Abby Covington) needs to find the strength to face her cheating ex-husband and face the future.

McLean High to Present 9 to 5

Get up and work as McLean High School's "TheatreMcLean" presents Dolly Parton's hit musical comedy, "9 to 5." The show runs April 26, 27, and 28 at 7 p.m., with matinees April 28 and 29 at 2 p.m. at McLean High School's Burke Auditorium, 1633 Davidson Rd, McLean. For more information and to order tickets, visit theatremclean.org.

Based on the 1980 film starring Dolly Parton, the Tony-winning musical follows three strong women in the workplace taking care of business. Combatting Franklin Hart, their misogynistic boss who constantly underestimates them, Violet Newstead, Judy Bernly, and Doralee Rhodes band together to overcome their personal struggles and take control of the company that kept them down. What a way to make a livin'!

In the year of the Time's Up movement, "9 to 5" is an incredibly relevant piece of theatre. The show remains family-friendly while tackling issues of workplace harassment and

9 to 5 at McLean High

What: 9 to 5 the Musical
When: April 26-28 at 7pm April 28-29 at 2pm
Where: McLean HS, 1633 Davidson Rd., McLean
Tickets \$15
Where to buy
www.TheatreMcLean.orghttps://www.itickets.com/events/396946.html

sexual misconduct.

"It's the right moment to celebrate women taking control of their lives and asserting the power they didn't know was inside them all along," says Music Director Andrew Zimmer. "Telling that story through the medium of musical theatre is especially important — gender equality is a topic that deserves every serious analysis and discussion that the zeitgeist can offer, but let's not forget that it's also a subject worth singing and dancing about."

The musical is directed by Phillip Reid. The cast includes Haley Rose, Erica Bass, Abby

Covington, Benji Harris, Abby Comey, Graham Cole, Ben Cudmore, Carmen Beadie, Rebecca Blacksten, Carena Slotkoff, Eli Wassertzug, Alexandra Lagos, Anna Kate Womack, Ralph Whitfield, Trevor Hazen, John Godwin, Adam Stanton, Syd Kirk, Ruby Larimer, Annalise Kirby, Jordan Prather, Sophie Camus, Julia Luigs, Will Chapman, Alex Weinstein, Easton McCollough, Alexa Lushetsky, Avery Versaw, Amanda Mullet, Bryn Kirk, Eli Wassertzug, Ralph Whitfield, Devin English, Kristen Waagner, Nathaniel Wyerman, Isabella Swigart, Rachel Zhang, and Morgan Rich.

Presented through special arrangement with MTI. All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. 421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019 Phone: 212-541-4684 Fax: 212-397-4684, www.MTIShows.com.

—KRISTEN WAAGNER AND HELEN GANLEY/MCLEAN HIGH

Masouleh, have joined together to bring this whimsical culinary milieu to the heart of Tysons Corner. Cost is \$85/person. Email runitysons@gmail.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 14

Bluebell Festival. 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Volunteers needed to run crafts and activities, help with parking, etc. Sign up at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend/bluebells. Contact the Public Information Office at 703-324-8662 or via Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Library Comic Con. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at George C. Marshall High School, 7731 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Second annual celebration of comic books, science fiction, fantasy, TV, moves and more. Special visitors are expected including Stormtroopers and Ghost Busters. Family-friendly costumes encouraged. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/library-comic-con.

Bluebell Festival. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. See a blanket of bluebells at their peak at Riverbend's Bluebell Festival. There will be food, crafts and face painting for kids, a tour of a model longhouse, live animals, a moon bounce and music. The advance cost for the festival is \$7

per person until April 13; \$9 at the door. Children age two and under are admitted free. Call 703-759-9018 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend.

Model Railroaders Open House. 1-5 p.m. at the Vienna Depot, 231 Dominion Road NE. Northern Virginia Model Railroaders hold an open house at the Vienna Depot each month and on Vienna celebration days, including Viva! Vienna and the Vienna Holiday Stroll. Free admission. Call 703-938-5157 or visit www.nvmr.org.

SUNDAY/APRIL 15

Sweet Yonder. 4 p.m. at Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave., E, Vienna. Sweet Yonder is a fired-up, all-women, bluegrass band. Get tickets at www.JamminJava.com.

Auditions. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Old Firehouse Teen Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Traveling Players holds auditions for Advanced Theatre Camps. The summer theatre camp, in residence at The Madeira School, trains teens and pre-teens in Shakespeare and takes them on tour to perform their shows throughout Virginia. Auditions are open to the public and require registration. The camp will hold an Open House at The Madeira School on April 21 from 1-4 p.m. Visit www.travelingplayers.org or call 703-987-1712.

MONDAY/APRIL 16

The Old Firehouse Teacher Workday Trip. 8 a.m.-7 p.m. Enter a chocolate utopia at Hershey's Chocolate World and create a Hershey Bar, enter the taste-test lab and try to solve the 4D Chocolate Mystery. Admission to all activities and transportation are included in the fee. \$70/\$60 MCC District residents. Visit www.mcleancenter.org.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 18

McLean Newcomers and Neighbors Luncheon. 11:30 a.m. at Punjabi by Nature, 2750 Gallows Road, Vienna. Monica Bhide will discuss her latest novel "Karma and the Art of Butter Chicken." Cost is \$22 per person. To attend, pay at squareup.com/market/mclean-newcomers-club. No reservations will be accepted after Friday, April 13. Visit www.McLeanNewcomers.org.

Pipelines in Virginia. 7-8:30 p.m. at Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Free. Learn how to make an impact to stop pipelines that will damage streams and rivers and ruin scenic views. Sponsored by Sierra Club/Great Falls Group, 350 Fairfax, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions. Visit the website virginia2.sierraclub.org/

TUESDAY/APRIL 19

McLean Historical Society Meeting. 7:30 p.m. at McLean Community Center, in McLean Square Shopping Center (next to Cafe Tatti), 6631 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. Featuring Joe Mornini, founder of Team River Runner, a non-profit adaptive, therapeutic and leadership training program for wounded and disabled veterans. He will discuss teaching kayaking to wounded warriors on Seneca Creek as well as the Potomac crossing of J.E.B. Stuart on this way to Gettysburg. Contact Carole Herrick at 703-356-8223.

FRIDAY/APRIL 20

The Unruly Theatre Project. 7 p.m. at The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Free. Teen improv troupe offers a hilarious night of comedy. For Old Firehouse activities, call 703-448-8336.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/APRIL 20-21

"Blithe Spirit" Play Production. 8 p.m. at Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., SE, Vienna. Noel Coward's famous 1941 comedy. Presented by Vienna Theatre Company and Vienna Department of Recreation. Tickets \$14. Visit www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

ENTERTAINMENT

The ensemble of 'Evita' posing for a picture.



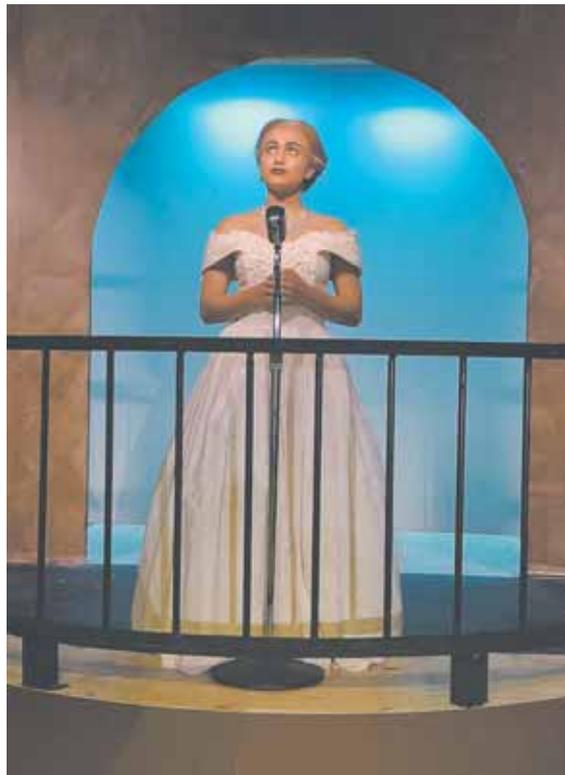
PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

'Evita' at Saxon Stage

Performances begin on Thursday, April 19 through Saturday, April 21 and continue on Thursday, April 26 through Saturday, April 28 at 7 p.m.

Saxon Stage's exciting production of the iconic rock opera, "Evita," the captivating rags-to-riches story of Eva Perón, Argentina's beloved first lady. "Evita" follows the life of actress Eva Duarte as she climbs Argentina's political ladder by whatever means necessary. This celebrated Tony award-winning rock opera features a masterful score by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice featuring several of the composers' most famous songs, including "Don't Cry for Me Argentina" and "Buenos Aires." Originally released as a rock opera concept album in 1976, "Evita" evolved into a successful stage production in London's West End, winning the Laurence Olivier award for Best Musical. "Evita" made its Broadway debut in 1979, winning the Tony award for Best Musical, as well as prestigious awards for its leading actors, Patti LuPone and Mandy Patinkin. In 1996, the movie adaptation was released starring Madonna and Antonio Banderas. "Evita" is rarely performed at the high school level due to its demanding vocals and rigorous score.

Langley High School's production stars Cappie-nominated actress Jessica Peros as Eva Perón, Mark Bosset as Ché Guevara, and Sean Leech as Juan Perón. The production also features a large ensemble, including children from local middle and elementary schools. Evita's brilliant score will be played by an 18-piece orchestra comprising many of Langley's talented student musicians. Performances begin on Thursday, April 19 through Saturday, April 21 and continue on Thursday, April 26 through Saturday, April 28 at 7 p.m. Visit saxon-stage.com for information on how to purchase tickets, or go directly to brownpapertickets.com and search "Evita."



Jessica Peros as Eva Perón in Langley High production of 'Evita.'



Sean Leech as Juan Perón and the ensemble of 'Evita' in 'On The Balcony Of The Casa Rosada.'



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Desi Woltmas, New Dominion Women's Club president, and Jennifer Salopek, former president and chairperson of 50 Years of Fellowship and Service Celebration.

New Dominion Women's Club Celebrates 50 Years of Fellowship and Service

New Dominion Women's Club (NDWC) will celebrate 50 years of fellowship and service to the community on Friday, May 4, from 6:30-10 p.m. featuring dinner, an open bar, dancing, photo booth, giveaways and more. The attendees will be supporting this year's non-profit beneficiaries: Friends of Pleasant Grove Church, McLean Project for the Arts, Safe Community Coalition, and SHARE, Inc.

New Dominion Women's Club is a member of the Greater Federation of Women's Clubs as well as the Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce. NDWC is a 501(c)3 civic organization committed to enhancing the quality of life in community through volunteer service and financial contributions while providing an opportunity for fellowship among women. The celebration will be held at The Pavil-

ions of Turkey Run in Claude Moore Colonial Farm at 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Festive cocktail attire suggested. Tickets are \$50 and available in advance online at www.ndwc.org/celebrate-50.

In support of its mission, the club plans several community fundraisers, service projects and activities throughout the year. Members select a minimum of four local non-profit organizations to support annually. Funds raised through club initiatives are awarded directly to those beneficiary organizations, which in 2016-17 totaled more than \$20,000. Founded in 1968, the New Dominion Women's Club was named Outstanding Non-profit Organization of the Year in 2004 and Volunteers of the Year in 2013 by the Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce. For more information about membership, visit www.ndwc.org.

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/APRIL 20-22

Mid-Atlantic Super Strength Weekend

At Tysons Playground Expo Hall, 8500 Tyco Road, Tysons Corner. Includes Drug Free Bodybuilding, Powerlifting, Olympic Weightlifting, Strongman/Strongwoman, Kid/Teen Fitness Challenges and other strength events. Will feature bodybuilder Jeremy Collins, age 38, who has Down Syndrome and had heart surgery when he was 6. Visit massweekend.com or the World Physique Alliance worldphysiquealliance.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 21

Family Fishing Rodeo. 9 to 11 a.m. at Wolftrap Creek in Wildwood Park, 700 block of Follin Lane, SE, Vienna. Pre-registration and \$5 tickets required. Limit of six tickets per household. Remaining time slots are 9, 9:30, 10, 10:30 and 11 a.m. Tickets may be purchased online at viennava.gov/webtrac or in person at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street SE. Participants over the age of 16 must possess a fishing license, available through the Virginia Department of Gaming and Inland Fisheries.

Bluebells and Bloodroots. 9:30-11:30 a.m. at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Learn to identify spring ephemerals and discover their folklore while walking along the banks of the Potomac River. \$8 per person. Attendees should meet at the Visitor Center. Program will be canceled if it rains. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend/bluebells-bloodroots-2.

Open House at Ash Grove House. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Ash Grove House, 8881 Ashgrove House Lane, Vienna. The Fairfax County Park Authority is accepting applications for the rehabilitation and long-term maintenance of Ash Grove House. The Resident Curator Program provides the opportunity for individuals, nonprofit and for-profit organizations to secure long-term lease agreements in public park settings such as Ash Grove Historic Site. Due to limited onsite parking, shuttle bus service will be provided from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Members of the public can access a Fastran bus from Westbriar Elementary School located at 1741 Pine Valley Drive in Vienna. The last return run to the school is at 3 p.m. For application forms, visit online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resident-curator-program. Contact Stephanie Langton, manager of the Resident Curator Program, at 703-324-8791.

Traveling Players Open House. 1-4 p.m. at The Madeira School, 8328 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Traveling Players will hold an Open House for Advanced Theatre Camps. The summer theatre camp, in residence at The Madeira School, trains teens and pre-teens in Shakespeare and takes them on tour to perform their shows throughout Virginia. Visit www.travelingplayers.org or call 703-987-1712.

SUNDAY/APRIL 22

Grinding Mill. Noon-3 p.m. at Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Visit the historic site to see 19th century technology at work as grains are turned in flour and meal. The miller will be grinding, conditions permitting. Take a mill tour for \$7 for adults, \$6 for students 16 and older with ID, and \$5 for children and seniors. Call 703-759-2771 to confirm. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/colvin-run-mill.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY DONNA MOULTON

The Home & Garden Tour will take place in Great Falls, Vienna, and McLean on April 24 as part of the 85th Historic Garden Week in Virginia.

Home & Garden Tour

Tour four homes and gardens in Great Falls, Vienna and McLean on Tuesday, April 24, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. – from a “quilt garden” at a 1750 home to a garden and cottage designed for retirement. Advance tickets are \$40 by April 17; tickets on day of tour are \$50 at Meadowlark Gardens, tour homes and the Great Falls Library. Contact Garden Club of Fairfax at fairfax@vagardenweek.org or visit www.vagardenweek.org.



Jeremy Collins

Mid-Atlantic Super Strength Weekend

Includes Drug Free Bodybuilding, Powerlifting, Olympic Weightlifting, Strongman/Strongwoman, Sports Modeling, Kid/Teen Fitness Challenges and other strength events. Will feature bodybuilder Jeremy Collins, age 38, who has Down Syndrome and had heart surgery when he was 6. Friday-Sunday, April 20-22 at Tysons Playground Expo Hall, 8500 Tyco Road, Tysons Corner. Visit massweekend.com or the World Physique Alliance worldphysiquealliance.com.

TUESDAY/APRIL 24

Home & Garden Tour. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tour four homes and gardens in Great Falls, Vienna and McLean – from a “quilt garden” at a 1750 home to a garden

and cottage designed for retirement. Advance tickets are \$40 by April 17; tickets on day of tour are \$50 at Meadowlark Gardens. Tickets sold at tour homes and the Great Falls Library. fairfax@vagardenweek.org. Visit www.vagardenweek.org.

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BULLETIN

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

PARENTS HELPING PARENTS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax or www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html

GOVERNING BOARD CANDIDATES

The **McLean Community Center (MCC)** is seeking candidates to run for seats on its 2018-2019 Governing Board. A candidate must reside in the Center's tax district (Small District 1A-Dranesville). To have their names placed on election ballots, candidates are required to obtain the signatures of 10 McLean tax district residents in their respective categories (either adult or youth). Three adult positions and two youth positions are open this year. Key Election Dates:

- ❖ Sunday, May 6: Candidates Meet and Greet, 2-4 p.m. Sponsored by the Friends of MCC, at the Old Firehouse Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road.
- ❖ Wednesday, May 16: Absentee Voting ends at the MCC Administrative Office and the Old Firehouse Center at 5 p.m.
- ❖ Saturday, May 19: Elections at McLean Day from 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

For more information on the MCC Governing Board Elections, call the Center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, or visit the Center's website: <http://bit.ly/>

Focus on ICE

FROM PAGE 3

the misinformation that's being put out ... about the decision the Sheriff made is making that a lot harder.

"We're one of the safest jurisdictions in the country because our people trust, believe, and speak to us and help us solve crimes," McKay said. "And if we scare people that's not going to happen."

Bulova commented that it is very confusing to the immigrant community and damaging to the trust in county police that ICE agents are conducting raids in the county wearing uniforms that say "POLICE" in large letters across the back.

"It confuses and scares people when they see a uniform that says police and it's not police at all. It's ICE," said Bulova. "It may say ICE somewhere on that uniform but people see police and think it's our Fairfax County police who are actually serving as members of ICE."

HERRITY SPOKE for the minority. He was not in support of Sheriff Kincaid's decision to terminate the agreement with ICE.

"I think we need to continue cooperating with ICE to the fullest extent possible," he said.

"This is about protecting our immigrant community," said Herrity. "It's human trafficking, it's drugs, it's murders, it's crime and we ought to be doing everything we can to get them off the street," he said.

"I'm very disappointed that we invited them here, we have them on the agenda, and they're not able to speak," said Herrity.

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It's A Miracle (Not a Cancer Column) ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... that the green, cotton, chino-type casual-Friday pants I often wear on -in-the-office-Thursdays, lasted as long as they did. Given the number of years I've been stuffing myself into them (not every Thursday mind you, but very regularly), and the weight I've gained, especially since the ultra low point during heavy duty chemotherapy nine years ago, the miracle is that these pants hadn't split wide open on any number of previous occasions.

As it actually happened yesterday, the split was gradual, not along a seam and not offensive to anybody, least of all, me.

And though the tear was understandable, given the psi (pounds per square inch) of pressure they were under, the loss however expected was sad nonetheless. For someone who exults in a limited wardrobe as much as I do, the reduction in available garments I choose to wear - repeatedly, is impactful.

Hardly do I have too many other go-to-pants in the closet. Considering my lack of interest, lack of need and lack of properly fitting alternatives hanging in the balance, when a split occurs, such as the one I've described "heretofore," (Ben Affleck in "Good Will Hunting"), not only is the loss palpable, it is downright inconvenient. Now what? Not that my appearance is ever a priority, but I'd rather not dress for failure.

The problem is, when your clothing options can be characterized as "either or," you're in a bind which, given the pounds that have been added over the winter (let's be honest; more like the preceding fall, summer, spring, winter and fall), you're constantly challenged, especially when attempting to zip up your fly and/or button your pants. Talk about a pointless effort.

If there was a cash reward for such failure, I'd be basking somewhere warm, in semi retirement - with an elastic waistband to do my bidding.

"But alas, poor Yurick." No such reward exists, but thankfully, elastic waistbands do, and not just on underwear, bathing suits, shorts and sweatpants. The question becomes then: How committed do I want to become to such elasticity? Isn't it kind of a slippery slope to rubberize my waistline? My fear is, once I go elastic, I may never go back, and in never going back, I'm also afraid there may be no stopping me, if you know what I mean? And if I'm not to be stopped then am I prepared to live with myself, my ever-expanding self, that is?

I imagine my oncologist wouldn't approve. And I know my internal medicine doctor wouldn't approve (I've already received some electronic advisories to that effect); and I know with 100 percent certainty that my wife, Dina wouldn't approve. She might have married me "in sickness and health, and thick and thin," but she'd much rather I be thin than thick.

Granted, I may be mixing metaphors here, but I trust you get my point. She liked me the way I was, and sort of likes me the way I am, but I'm doubtful she would like me nearly as much if I were to morph into another being.

Ergo, the future is now. Do I continue to pack on the pounds and have less and less clothing that fits - and fewer and fewer excuses as to why that old thing seems to be that same old thing, again; buy new clothes that reflect and lock in my girth, or bite the bullet - not the Entenmann's Pop'ems, Hostess CupCakes, Oreo Mega Stuf cookies or M&M's plain/peanut butter candy and try to lose weight and save some face, literally?

I believe I know the answer. I'm just not sure of the start date. It better be soon because the underwear I bought myself for Christmas is beginning to lose its shape and I'm pretty sure I know the reason; and it's not a manufacturer's defect.

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



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