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Great Falls CONNECTION

Great Falls Dancer is Paris Bound

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Community Rallies To Save the Farm

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Four Local Teams Compete On Global Stage

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Emilie Gregory demonstrating a ballet position called 'penché' at Chatham University. She was selected to train at the dance school of the National Opera in Paris, France this summer.

WELLBEING

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OPINION, PAGE 6 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 12 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 14



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PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Master of Ceremonies Corky Palmer addresses the Save the Farm Rally, sponsored by the Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm on Thursday, May 31, 2018, at the Pavilions of Turkey Run.



PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Dr. Virginia Norton of McLean addresses the Save the Farm Rally, sponsored by the Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm on Thursday, May 31, 2018, at the Pavilions of Turkey Run.

A Save the Farm Rally

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Residents try to save Claude Moore Colonial Farm, which may close in December.

The U.S. National Park Service wants to close Claude Moore Colonial Farm at Turkey Run in McLean on Dec. 21, 2018. Since 1973, the farm has been a living history 18th century museum that portrays family life on a small, low-income farm just prior to the Revolutionary War. A Save the Farm Rally, sponsored by the Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm, was held on Thursday, May 31, 2018 in the pouring rain, at the Pavilions of Turkey Run, to get the word out to residents on what they can do to save it.

According to Elliott Curzon, a member of the Board of Directors of Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm Negotiating Committee, the Parks Service has told them that they intend to close the farm in December because they would not sign their agreement.

“The basic issue is that the agreement that they presented would increase our operating costs and reduce our ability to generate revenue. And it would put us into a death spiral. The key issues are the term of the agreement, the operating limitations they would impose on us, and the ability to generate revenue by operating the Pavilion. Those are the issues we’ve been trying to deal with for some months,” he said.

He added: “It took the Park Service six years to begin negotiating seriously and they presented a take-it-or-leave-it demand. The upshot is that we intend to save the farm through the assistance of our Congresswoman, Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10), and the aid of other members of the House, including our local delegation who are questioning the Park Services’ activities with respect to our agreement. The farm is unique; we are the only independently operating, self-funding farm in the United States. We get no financial support from the Federal government. In our view, we should be the exemplar of a public-private partner-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Since 1973, the Claude Moore Colonial Farm has been a living history museum serving 2 million visitors.

ship but the Park Service doesn’t see it that way yet.”

ACCORDING TO DR. VIRGINIA NORTON of McLean, President of the Board of Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm, as a result of receiving notice that the Park Service intends to close the farm, “we will use every resource available – public, private, legislative, administrative – to keep the farm open and operating for the public,” she said.

“We are rallying the troops, really, to write their Congressmen, to write their Senators. Barbara Comstock, our representative, has introduced legislation H.R.-5201, and we want it to be passed and we need our Senators to introduce the companion bill in the Senate and so we are encouraging them to do that. And if they want, they can write the Park Service and Secretary of the Interior, Ryan Zinke, and so we are rallying the troops,” she said. Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton is also a co-sponsor of legislation

introduced to keep the farm open.

Dr. Norton said there is a petition on Change.Org with almost 5,000 signatures directed to Secretary Zinke, asking him to intervene and relieve them of having to follow the Park Service rules that only apply to Park Service sites.

According to Jenny Anzelmo-Sarles, a spokeswoman for the National Park Service: “There continues to be a lack of understanding about the agreement the National Park Service offered to the Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm. We acted in earnest to ensure the relationship’s future, exhausting all possible legal options to continue the relationship including a potential lease, a potential concessions contract, and finally a proposed 10-year cooperative agreement. The cooperative agreement included standard terms for National Park Service partners across the country. At the end of the day, the Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm rejected all of these options.”

“While the National Park Service and park

visitors benefit from the services of partners, concession operators and volunteers, national parks belong to all Americans, and none of them are privately operated,” she said.

“The National Park Service is focusing on the future. We look forward to working with the public and the many dedicated volunteers to shape what that looks like,” she said.

OF THE RALLY with 100 people that included hot dogs and a cash bar, Anna Eberly, Board Member of the Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm, said: “The idea is to get people together, let them know what we’re doing to save the farm, hear their ideas to saving the farm and then give them materials and literature that they can hand out to their friends and co-workers so that we can get the word out even more. The purpose is to keep the farm operating; that’s all we want to do.”

Added Farm Site Manager Daniel Gray: “I would be very disappointed if the farm closed because the visitors would be losing the expertise of our 18th century farmers, our costume interpreters who have studied history and who are very experienced from a first-hand perspective from being out in the fields and actually using the tools and wearing 18th century clothes all day.”

Tim Meisburger, a Board Member who built a copy of the Ball-Sellers farmhouse on the property and who has been volunteering since 1986, added: “I think that our objective is to save the farm for the children of the region. I think adults really love coming out here but more than anything, the children are the ones that they don’t know where food comes from; they are not used to animals; they’re not used to crops. They have no real exposure to farm life and they have less and less exposure in school to history — so the farm serves two purposes to help teach the children about their past but also helping them to live in the world.”

SEE COMMUNITY, PAGE 7



Cooper's Division 2 team includes students Nick Spoto, Katie Merrill, Raman Mathur, Connor Oakes, Mulan Pan, Natalie Hutchinson and Aliaa Saleh.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Forestville Elementary team includes students Yona Sankar, Zachary Ulman, Jibrán Salam, Justin Kim, Allison Zhan, and Peter Popenko.

Four Local Teams Compete on Global Stage

Great Falls, McLean students compete in Odyssey of the Mind World Finals.

Four local schools recently competed at the World Finals competition for Odyssey of the Mind (OM), a "brainy sport" that combines a high level of various creative skills, including solutions-based script writing, a live 8 minute performance, art creation and engineering. The World Finals competition event was held this year at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa over Memorial Day break and hosted hundreds of State and Country champion teams from all over the world. The essence of the OM competition is in-depth creative problem solving focused on one of 5 chosen problems, with teams divided by grade level, which is based on the oldest student on a team (Division 1 is elementary, Division 2 is Middle School and Division 3 is High School). One of the unique aspects of competing in Odyssey of the Mind is the mantra "Absolutely NO Outside Assistance allowed," meaning only team members themselves can create original problem solving ideas, build structures, create artwork, etc. Family, friends, teachers and even their own Coach are forbidden from helping the team create any aspect of their solution and performance. In addition, all teams compete in what is called

a "Spontaneous" session. This is where the team is placed in a room and given a hands-on or verbal problem to solve on the spot within a 3 or 5 minute time frame. Only Judges are allowed to be present in the room as they observe how creative and cohesive the team works together to solve the on the spot problem.

THIS IS THE FIRST YEAR that 4 local schools earned spots to compete in the World Finals. The teams include Langley High School, two Cooper Middle School teams and one from Forestville Elementary. These teams earned first or second place at the Virginia State competition in April, with the Langley team winning the coveted "Ranatra Fusca" award for exceptional creativity in their problem solution.

The Division 3 Langley High School team competed in a problem named "Mockumentary, Seriously?," also known as the Classics problem, and placed 17th out of 60 US and International teams. The team recounted the classic Peter Pan story with a humorous twist in a live performance, including voice overs. An original set was created involving an artistic wooden structure to simulate Peter Pan flying, a hand-

made treasure chest with a working combination lock, an 8 foot articulating crocodile and costumes, all hand made using over 1,000 paint chip samples. This team had combined students from Langley HS, Cooper MS and the Langley school.

The Division 3 Langley High School team includes students Cassie Dallas, Macey Jacobs, Zoe Wang and Juliette Kim and was Coached by Jim Dallas.

The Division 3 Cooper Middle School team competed in a problem named "Triathlon Travels," also known as the Vehicle problem and placed 29th in the World Finals. The team designed and built a highly original human powered vehicle, which two members rode in and navigated around a complex set of obstacles, while other members performed and narrated an entertainingly creative performance in unique hand made costumes. This team combined students from Cooper MS and Langley HS

The Division 3 Cooper team includes students Duncan Gibb, Colin Montie, Jackson Frankel, Marin George, and Sophia Montie and was Coached by Keith George.

The Division 2 Cooper Middle School team competed in a problem named "Animal House," also known as the Balsa wood building problem. The team designed a small structure entirely from balsa wood designed to hold as much weight as possible, while also performing a creative Egypt-

tian themed solution-based performance, which included a 7 foot Sphinx and a 6 foot Sarcophagus. At the State competition, the Cooper team's balsa structure held a whopping 974 pounds, which at the time was the highest weight held by any team in the U.S. this year. At the World Finals, the team finished in top 10, with their structure holding 790 pounds.

Cooper's Division 2 team includes students Nick Spoto, Katie Merrill, Raman Mathur, Connor Oakes, Mulan Pan, Natalie Hutchinson and Aliaa Saleh and was Coached by Mark Spoto.

THE DIVISION 1 Forestville team, competed in a problem called "Emoji, Speak for Yourself" and placed 16th out of 38 U.S. and International teams. This was this team's first time competing in OM, following a strong history of past Forestville OM teams. The team created 3 dimensional emojis and through an entertaining and moving performance communicated the life story of a once famous, but now forgotten, emoji. Their performance included choreographed dance, a unique robot that contained a team member, texting displays and sounds, all without any spoken language by team members.

Forestville's team includes students Yona Sankar, Zachary Ulman, Jibrán Salam, Justin Kim, Allison Zhan, and Peter Popenko and was Coached by Uzma Salam.



Cooper's Division 3 team includes students Duncan Gibb, Colin Montie, Jackson Frankel, Marin George, and Sophia Montie.



Langley High School Division 3 team includes students Macey Jacobs, Zoe Wang, Cassie Dallas and Juliette Kim.



PHOTOS BY JAMES DIEDRICH

Great Falls Write's Group authors gather before the event. Standing, from left: Nancy Hannan, Clarence Ashley, Jennifer Hammond, Adriaan Verheul, Mary McKay, Darlene Dietrich, Bill Lewers, J. Robert DiFulgo. Seated: Jody Politzer, Catherine Mathews, Kristin Clark Taylor (founder GFWG), Mary Dacoba, Pu-Chin Hsueh Waide.

Great Falls Authors Meet Neighbors, Each Other

Great Falls Library sets up the "Great Falls Local Authors Collection," a section entirely dedicated to local authors.

For two hours during the late afternoon on Saturday, June 2, 2018, the Great Falls Public Library was turned into a spirited book fair where local authors presented, discussed, signed and sold their works to interested visitors. The event, the fourth annual "Celebration of Local Authors" was organized by the Great Falls Writer's Group (GFWG) and drew a good crowd in spite of the soggy weather and the looming threat of thunderstorms.

"It was a moment of creative convergence," said Kristin Clark Taylor, the founder of the GFWG, referring to the diversity of authors, books and genres present at the event. Almost all genres of books were represented: there were historic novels and contemporary works, literary works, self-help and how-to books, biographies, illustrated books, nursery rhymes and thrillers, all taking the reader to real and imagined worlds in the U.S. and overseas.

Authors were advertising their works and trying out different versions of their pitch to interested visitors, who were going around the authors' tables with a glass of wine and a plate of finger food. Many of them left with new books to read, all of them signed by the author.



Author Catherine Mathews talking about her books.

There were many instances of authors exchanging books as well, sharing their works and insights, which is one of the reasons why the GFWG was set up in the first place. For a list of authors and books, see the article by Christina Tyler Wenks in the Great Falls Connection of May 16.

"In this popular culture of rapid texting and emails," said Myrna Stuart, the co-chair of the GFWG in opening the event, "we value the lasting impact of words written with meaning and clarity." To help ensure such lasting impact, the Great Falls Library has set up a section entirely dedicated to local authors. It is hoped that the "Great Falls Local Authors Collection," which will continue to be expanded, will enable our local authors to reach a wider readership.

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Potential for Progress on Pension Reform

BY PAT HERRITY
SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT SUPERVISOR
(R)



The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors finally appears poised to make additional changes to the county's unsustainable pension plan. After delaying action for the last three years, a number of options have been put on the table for the board to consider at its June 26 Personnel Committee meeting. There has been some board support for adopting the entire package but the outcome is far from certain. If the package is adopted it will reduce pension costs for new employees by 19 to 25 percent and will still leave county employees with a pension plan better than any of our surrounding jurisdictions. While I believe the board missed the opportunity to develop an overall compensation plan that would provide a mix of salary, pensions, and benefits that would attract the best employees and teachers, these changes are meaningful and I support all of the changes to the general county employee pension plan and most of the changes to the public safety plans.

Currently, employees that begin employment with the county right out of school can retire as early as age 55 with a full pension benefit

that is higher than those of surrounding jurisdictions. On top of that pension benefit they get a benefit unheard of today — a pre social security supplement — as early as age 55. The pre social security supplement is an additional county paid supplement that equals the social security payment they would have received if they were 67. Unlike real social security payments that increase with

cost of living (less than 1 percent last year), this county paid benefit increases at a guaranteed 3 percent. These retirement benefits are far in excess of what is typical in today's work environment — even in the public sector.

Fairfax County currently has an unfunded pension liability in excess of \$5.5 billion. Pensions alone currently cost the county 30 cents on top of every payroll dollar (about 70 cents if you include all benefits). Funding our pension liabilities competes with employee and teacher salary increases and our ability to fund the high quality of services county residents have come to expect. Since joining the board in 2008 I have been advocating to address our compensation and pension issues.

County staff did an outstanding job of simplifying this very difficult material. Here a link to the details: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/board-personnel-committee-meeting-may-22-2018>. The changes are anticipated to take effect for new employees hired after July 1, 2019 and because they appropriately impact new employees only, the savings will be in future years.

The proposed changes are summarized below:

- ❖ Increasing the Minimum Retirement Age from 55 to 60 and set it at 50 for public safety employees

- ❖ Increasing from the Rule of 85 to the Rule of 90 – full retirement at salary plus age for general county employees

- ❖ Increasing the Salary Averaging Period from 3 years to 5 years

- ❖ Eliminate the Provision that increases the retirement annuity by 3 percent annually

- ❖ Increase the Employee Contribution Rate by approximately 1 percent

The changes were presented as a package and there was some support for enacting the entire package of reforms; however, the board may advance a more limited package of reforms at its meeting on June 26. Unfortunately, it appears as though the public will not have a formal opportunity to weigh in on the reforms until after the package has been selected and it comes to public hearing in September or October this year. It is important that supervisors hear from residents before the Personnel Committee meeting on June 26 with their opinions on the package.

Green for Medicaid

BY EILEEN FILLER-CORN
STATE DELEGATE (D-41)



Pressing the green “yes” button at my desk on the floor of the House of Delegates last Wednesday night was literally the most consequential vote I have ever taken. It truly was the best day for me, ever, in the Virginia House of Delegates.

People often ask me why I serve, and I always respond “because I truly want to make a difference.” The fact is, if I were ever in doubt, I can look at this vote and say, yes we can and yes we do make a difference, in this case, to over 300,000 Virginians who had no insurance. These people are not just statistics, they are neighbors, family members and friends.

As I drove back from Richmond that night, I think it finally sunk in: Medicaid expansion will become a reality in Virginia. We passed a budget that reflects our values, providing well-deserved access to healthcare for over 300,000 people, teachers and state employees will receive raises, there will be additional money for mental health and for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities and insurance will be provided for people with autism up until age 21, while funds will be added to our rainy-day fund.

I have always gone to Richmond with a goal to listen and get things done, working with everyone, finding areas of commonality. This budget is a perfect example of Democrats and Republicans coming together to do what is

right for the Commonwealth and its citizens. Gov. Ralph Northam, former Gov. Terry McAuliffe, all of our Democratic members of the House and Senate, as well as a number of Republicans and so many others: individuals, groups and stakeholders worked earnestly in support of Medicaid expansion for over five years and we finally did it.

We were victorious because everyone came together and because we elected so many new diverse but like-minded voices into the House of Delegates in November of 2017. As our Democratic leader aptly put it, we showed “the power of 49.” But 49 is not 51; we needed leadership on the other side of the aisle, as we had through Speaker Kirk Cox, Appropriations Chairman Chris Jones and Commerce and Labor Chairman Terry Kilgore who were instrumental in leading support among Republicans in the House. Senators

The most important vote I have ever taken.

Emmett Hanger, Dick Saslaw, George Barker, and Janet Howell were essential in leading the Senate as well, and Lieutenant Governor Justin Fairfax broke a number of ties in the Senate to block hostile amendments to our budget. This was truly a team effort.

Thanks to the passage of this budget there will also be funding for more judges and additional individuals with disabilities will have access to Medicaid waivers. Investment was increased in economic development while additional money will be provided to expand broadband and preserve our AAA bond rating. Through this budget, we will create opportunities for working families to thrive. We will build a better, healthier, stronger Virginia.

I will always remember pressing that green button on my desk on May 30, 2018 while watching the vote board light up green in support of a budget we can all be proud of. During my time in office, this was truly the most important vote I have ever taken.

Send Father's Day Photos

Father's Day is Sunday, June 17, and once again this newspaper will publish a gallery of Father's Day photos.

Every year at this time, we put out the call for photographs of fathers and their children, grandfathers and their children and grandchildren.

Send in photos with the following information: the town where you live, the names of everyone in the picture, the approximate date the picture was taken, the ages of the children and a sentence or two about what is happening and where the photograph was taken. Be sure to tell us your town name and neighborhood. Photos are due by June 12.

You can submit your photos online at www.connectionnewspapers.com/fathersday. You can also email photos to editors@connectionnewspapers.com.

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Community Rallies to Save the Farm

FROM PAGE 3

Corky Palmer, Master of Ceremonies for the rally who ran the Environmental Learning Center and Gift Shop for 10 years, added: "The significant thing about Claude Moore Colonial Farm is that it is a family-oriented place. My wife first started here back in 1990 with kids for the Environmental Living Center, would bring them out for overnight camping for three nights of camping and she is always hearing back from her students how wonderful it was that they got to come to Claude Moore Colonial Farm."

Chris Weiss, retired Fairfax County teacher and volunteer since 1986, added: "I certainly hope there will be no closure and I think that would be a real big mistake for the community and the state of Virginia, Maryland, the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania, all the people who come here and have the experience of seeing an indentured farm, so I certainly hope the powers-that-be get their senses together and realize it's such a valuable asset for the community to have."

Cindy Palmer, a retired Fairfax County teacher from Chantilly, added: "We need to keep the farm opened because it's the only place where children and families can come and see how common people lived.



PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Members of the Board of Directors for Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm (from left): Elliott Curzon, Tim Meisburger, Anna Eberly, and Dr. Virginia Norton.

You've got places like Mount Vernon and Williamsburg, but that's how the wealthy lived. This shows how 90 percent of Americans were living at the time. We need to save that."

"This place is beautiful; it's authentic; it's a wonderful place to bring children or a family to learn as much about history and the real history of what people went through back then," said JoAnn Abbott, a volunteer re-enactor from Dale City who attended the rally. "I love re-enacting and I love teaching. I've been a teacher in the past; I've been a re-enactor since my 20s... Leave this little oasis of history and beauty so our children can learn from it."

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Great Falls Scout Creates Garden at Forestville Elementary

On Saturday, May 26, Eagle Scout candidate Jamison Alexander Huang of Troop 673 gathered in Great Falls with his parents James and Deborah Huang and 30 Scout and parent volunteers to install a learning and butterfly garden for Forestville Elementary School. This project was Jamison's Eagle Scout service project.



Thirty scout and parent volunteers helped install a learning and butterfly garden for Forestville Elementary School.

The project entailed construction of four cedar planter boxes, removing sod, transporting soil to the boxes, building trellises and planting seedlings and various plants. Jamison was involved in all stages of this project from planning, fundraising and managing the construction and planting.

Jamison is a seventh grade student at Cooper Middle School and member of Boy Scout Troop 673 of Great Falls since he crossed over from Cub Scouts in March 2016. Jamison has been a Scout since the age of 6. He was a Cub Scout with Pack 3944 in Beijing, China, transferring to Pack 673 in October 2014. Jamison quickly achieved the rank of Life Scout by the September 2017. Additionally, he was inducted as a member of the Order of the Arrow (OA), Scouting's National Honor Society, in June of 2017, and most recently achieved OA Brotherhood.

on learning by bringing science, math and social studies to life.

Three of the raised beds will be used for the purpose of growing plants - all of which are native Virginian species. These native plants include flowers such as coneflowers, veronica, clethra and geraniums, fruit bushes such as raspberry, blueberry and blackberry, and vegetables such as beans and squash. Swamp milkweed was planted in the final planter box to create a butterfly garden that would attract monarch butterflies.

A major accomplishment for Scouting is to achieve Eagle Scout status - the highest-ranking achievement in Scouting. To earn this ranking, a Scout must demonstrate Scout Spirit, service and leadership. Jamison is an enthusiastic and active member of his Troop, participating in meetings and outings, such as backpacking,



Jamison Alexander Huang is a seventh grade student at Cooper Middle School and member of Boy Scout Troop 673 of Great Falls

hiking and camping. He has held leadership positions such as Patrol Leader and Den Chief and participates in the Troop's Patrol Leadership Council (PLC) meetings. To date, Jamison has earned a total of 64 merit badges, 21 of which are required for the Eagle Scout rank. He will continue to earn more merit badges at summer camp with his Troop in North Carolina this June. Jamison lists attending the National Boy Scout Jamboree held at the Summit Bechtel National Scout Reserve in West Virginia in July 2017 as one of the highlights of his Scouting career. He will be returning to Summit Bechtel Reserve this summer to attend a high adventure camp in July.

At the completion of his project, the soon-to-be Eagle Scout wanted to express his thanks to everyone who played a role in each stage of the

project. "I would not have been able to be successful in this project without the support of my parents, generous donations from family and friends, donations from Home Depot and Meadow Farms, encouragement from the teachers and administrators at Forestville and the hard work of my Troop mates and adult Scout leaders," said Jamison. "I wanted to make the learning garden for Forestville students because I wanted to give back to my community and my elementary school to create a learning environment that will be a powerful environmental tool. It is also my hope that students will grow to appreciate nature at Forestville for many years to come!"

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



From left — Erika and Anna Castellano



Kayla Fekel of Ashburn, right - pictured with Anna — was also named to the Northeast Regional All American team.

Great Falls Girls Make All American Teams

Erika and Anna Castellano of Great Falls were recently named to United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) All American Teams in fastpitch softball. Erika was selected to play corner infield for the Northeast Regional 12U team and Anna will play corner infield for the Northeast Regional 9U team.

Erika and Anna played many seasons with Great Falls Softball before joining their current travel teams. Erika has played for the Ashburn Shooting Stars for three years, and is currently on the Shooting Stars 12U team, which recently earned a berth to the 2018 NSA World Series in Clearwater, Fla. Erika's Shooting Stars teammate and friend, Kayla Fekel of Ashburn, was also named to the Northeast Regional All American team and will be playing Middle Infield. Their 12U Northeast Regional

team includes players from Del., Md., N.C., N.J., N.Y., Pa., and Va. Anna plays for the 9U Vienna Stars. Her 9U Northwest Regional All American team includes players from Ala., Clif., Mch., N.C., N.J., Pa., Va, and Wash.

The regional teams in each age group will compete against each other in the USSSA All American Games for the All American Games title. The regional teams are made up of elite fastpitch softball players from the following eight regions: the Far West, Northwest, Midwest, Central, Great Lakes, Southeast, Atlantic, and Northeast. Tryouts were held from January through April in eighteen cities throughout the country. The Games will be played in Viera, Fla., at the new USSSA Space Coast Stadium and Complex from July 30-Aug. 4.

Electrical Event Causes Great Falls House Fire

On Wednesday, May 30, at 10:55 a.m., units from Fairfax County Fire and Rescue and Loudoun County Fire and Rescue were dispatched for a house fire in the 900 block of Holly Blossom Court in the Great Falls area of Fairfax County.

Units arrived on the scene of a two-story, single family home with significant fire in an attached garage. The fire extended into the main house. Crews quickly used fire hose to extinguish the garage fire. Additional fire hose was advanced into the house to stop the fire from spreading further. A second alarm was requested to bring additional resources to the scene. One occupant was evaluated for a minor injury and declined transportation to a hospital. Three firefighters sustained minor injuries. One was treated on scene and two were transported and released from the hospital. One occupant was home at the time of the fire. The occupant saw smoke coming from the rear garage door. Upon investigation, a fire was discovered in the garage. Simultaneously, a neighbor saw fire coming from the garage and called 9-1-1. Smoke alarms sounded after the fire was discovered.

Fire Investigators determined that the fire was accidental in nature and started in the garage. The cause of the fire was an electrical event involving extension cords and a power strip - according to Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department news release.

A total of two adults have been displaced as a



Units arrived on the scene of a two-story, single family home with significant fire in an attached garage.

result of the fire. Red Cross assistance was offered and declined. Damages as a result of the fire are estimated to be \$149,500.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT

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WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

Share Volunteer Kevin Gallen Dies

The Share has announced that Kevin Gallen passed away on May 27. Gallen was a devout Catholic, long-term Share volunteer and a tireless supporter of both the furniture program and our Share's food pantry. Mass of Christian burial took place on Friday, June 1 at 11 a.m. at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church, 1020 Springvale Road, Great Falls, Virginia. Memorial contributions may be made to Catholic Relief Services at support.crs.org in memory of Kevin Gallen. Additionally, online condolences may be made at www.adamsgreen.com.

Townhall Meeting in Great Falls

The Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA) will hold a townhall meeting on Wednesday, June 13 at 8 p.m. at the Great Falls Grange, 9818 Georgetown Pike. Speakers will be the two state legislators who

represent Great Falls in Richmond: State Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31) and Del. Kathleen Murphy (D-34). GFCA will present an overview of major local issues. The legislators will discuss the highlights of the recent General Assembly session and take questions from residents, including issues of local concern such as Metro funding, Route 7 widening and related transportation issues; environmental concerns such as stormwater management, tree preservation, MTBE cleanup in the village area, and artificial turf fields. The public is invited to attend. GFCA will also hold its annual board of directors and officers election that evening, starting at 7:30 p.m. in the lower level of the Grange. The election ballot will be available for all GFCA members in good standing, and includes positions for President, Vice President, Treasurer and six Directors. All GFCA members, and all residents of Great Falls, are encouraged to attend. For more information, visit <http://www.gfca.org>.

PEOPLE



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Emilie Gregory performing at YAGP in Philadelphia where she placed top 12 in the Junior Contemporary Category.

Great Falls Dancer is Paris Bound

Emilie Gregory to train with the 'Ecole de danse' of the Paris National Opera.

Emilie Gregory, 16, of Great Falls — a dancer with CityDance Conservatory in North Bethesda, Md. — was selected to train at the dance school of the National Opera in Paris, France. The summer school offers a unique opportunity for young dancers from all over the world to train at the world's oldest ballet school. Emilie, who placed in the advanced level, is looking forward to receiving specialized professional training to improve technique, artistry and expression through intensive workshops and master classes. Acceptance into the program is competitive to say the least. Of the 670 candidates who auditioned in January for the summer program, only a few were selected for the advanced program.

EMILIE began studying ballet seriously in 2011, with Classical Ballet Theatre in Herndon until 2017 when she auditioned and was offered a scholarship to join CityDance Pre-Professional Division in North Bethesda. CityDance - located at the Strathmore Music Center, offers a Vaganova ballet program taught by leading ballet masters such as Stanislav Isaaev, Andrea Long, and Irina Vakhromeeva. In addition to Ballet training, Emilie participates in CityDance's extensive repertoires of performances including a guest appearance with the Great Russian Nutcracker presented by Moscow Ballet as well as numerous contemporary performances held at the Historic Lincoln Theater in Washington, D.C., Strathmore Music Center, CityDance studios, and other guest venues. Emilie credits CityDance Artistic Director Lorraine Audeoud Spiegler for the heartfelt encouragement and opportunities presented to her to perform in multiple venues. Emilie's past summer intensive programs have taken her to Miami City Ballet where, at the conclusion of her summer program she was offered a merit scholarship covering full tuition and housing for year-round training, San Francisco Ballet, and Pittsburgh Ballet where she gained a partial scholarship, and was offered a spot in the year-round program. Emilie has also competed and placed two consecutive years in both classical and contemporary events at the Youth America Grand



Emilie Gregory demonstrating an arabesque at Chatham University.

Prix (YAGP) in Philadelphia.

A RISING ELEVENTH GRADER at Langley High School, Emilie's schedule is a balancing act, having to juggle stringent academic requirements, some of which will include AP classes in the Fall, dance training, and working part-time as a Math tutor in Great Falls. Such schedule requires not just time management skills which she mastered mostly rushing to Ballet classes and rehearsals, but also having her parents' unwavering support. While pre-med is a major she'd like to pursue, Emilie's goal is to be accepted in a famous dance program at a prestigious University, "After all," says Emilie, "it's hard to let go something you've been doing for so many years..." Such goal requires sacrificing weekends and evenings with friends and family, but as Emilie puts it "short term sacrifice is worth it to achieve long term gains." In that spirit upon Emilie's return from Paris she will participate in a series of leadership conferences on Medicine and Health Care sponsored by the National Student Leadership Conference from Aug. 1 - 9 at Harvard Medical School.

For more information about CityDance Conservatory training programs, call 301-581-5204 or visit <https://www.citydance.net/training-classes>.



PHOTO BY DJ COREY/COURTESY 1ST STAGE

Matthew R. Wilson, Jessica Lefkow, Ethan Miller and Teresa Castracane in "Swimming with Whales" at 1st Stage. The show runs through June 24, 2018 in Tysons.

A Message of Hopefulness

"Swimming with Whales" at 1st Stage.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Written by D.C. area playwright Bob Bartlett, an affiliated artist with the National New Play Network, "Swimming with Whales," is a moving family drama about strained family relationships, with abundant magical moments. Its ultimate message is one of hopefulness even with the strains of living. Directed by Alex Levy, the 1st Stage production of "Swimming with Whales" is a mixture of magical realism, laughter and healing from heartbreak with an unlikely wellspring propelling the story into a spiritual parable. The wellspring for understanding is a solitary juvenile whale swimming near a Nantucket beach. The whale is able to communicate, in his own way, with chosen humans who chose to listen.

Theatrical magic for audiences at "Swimming with Whales" begins the moment the stunning set design developed by Kathryn Kaweck, with exquisite lighting design by Robbie Hayes come into audience view. Along with Cindy Landrum Jacobs' detailed props and Sarah O'Halloran's sensitive sound design, the production has a visually "you are there" seashore location. There is plenty of faux-sand, a wood shingled cottage, beach chairs, the sea and clouds and, of course, some empty beer cans and a grill.

As the play opens, the audience meets Patrick (a sadly trenchant Matthew R. Wilson), a local fisherman who has done

1st Stage presents "Swimming with Whales," at 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. Performed through June 24, 2018. Performances 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 (Senior 65+), \$15 (Student/military). Call 703-854-1856 or visit www.1stStage.org. Note: Wheelchair accessible. Free parking is available. 1st Stage is about 2 blocks after leaving the Silver Line's Spring Hill stop.

something unthinkable and trying to talk his way out of the consequences with a local park ranger named Gracie (portrayed with kindness and understanding by Jessica Lefkow). As time goes by, a teen-ager named Owen (an acerbic, marvelously sullen, Ethan Miller) appears in tow with Anne, his mother (Teresa Castracane portraying an overwhelmed mother). Owen has many a medical issue. He even hates the sand. Clashes are immediate.

There are many long-time connections between the "Swimming with Whales" characters including that Owen's dad is Patrick, and that the three adults grew up together each deeply involved with Owen's upbringing. The anthropomorphic whale, not an easy design element to depict, is endearingly portrayed by a human actor, Nate Shelton.

Bartlett's "Swimming with Whales" probes big issues related to loss and resilience, along with comic moments full of good natured teasing surrounding how best to eat pancakes and how teenagers cannot fathom thinking their parents could ever have been young lovers and aging hippies.

"Swimming with Whales" has plenty to ponder. Most of all, the 1st Stage production leaves both its human characters and audience more optimistic for the future.

WELLBEING

Families Meditating Together

Family mindfulness practices can boost overall wellbeing.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Sitting on cushions in a dimly lit corner of the living room, a family of five struggles to relax. But when a lithe woman in flowing yoga pants and a pale grey ballet-wrap top brings her hands together and the gentle sound of Tibetan meditation cymbals fills the air, their eyes close, their shoulders relax and they begin to breathe deeply.

"This is how I like to begin all of my family sessions," said meditation teacher Pleasance Baechli of Transcendental Meditation and Mindfulness Center in Bethesda, Md. "It allows people to calm their minds and bring their attention to the breath and what's going on in their bodies. For a moment, there's nowhere else they need to be and nothing that they need to do."

This is the nature of a family mindfulness session, a chance for families to unplug and disconnect from a world of tablets, smart phones, long commutes, sports practices, homework and errands. Such sessions, says Baechli, offer opportunities for families to reconnect with one another and strengthen their bonds, and are not as difficult to establish as one might think.

"Mindfulness can sound complicated and confusing, especially for children," she said. "But it's simply a state of awareness, and that just means noticing what we're feeling and what we're sensing at the present moment. And it's noticing those thoughts and feelings without judgement or criticism. It's accepting them and letting them pass through our bodies."

Carving out time to meditate in a overloaded schedule can be tall order, but simplicity can help overcome that roadblock. "Unfortunately, the older the kids get and the more activities they have, the harder it gets to make time for quiet and meditation, even though we need it more, of course," said Elizabeth Rees, a mother of three and the associate rector and leader of meditation practices at Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church in Alexandria. "I try to teach my kids breathing techniques and we have a few favorite meditations that we practice periodically before bed. There are also some great [smartphone] apps [like] Insight Timer, Calm and Headspace."

Understanding what mindfulness is and what it is not can help avoid frustration from unmet expectations. "Grasping the concept of mindfulness is tough for some kids and sitting still for long periods of time to practice can be torture," said Baechli. "Mindfulness is simply focusing on your thoughts and feelings as they are right in this moment. That's it. Mindfulness is not a cure-all. Don't expect it to turn your high-energy son into a quiet child or your daughter



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Cymbals and meditation cushions are tools that mindfulness teacher Pleasance Baechli uses in her family mediation sessions.

who has trouble paying attention and is struggling in school into a straight-A student. That's probably not going to happen."

What it can do however, when practiced over time, is help regulate emotions and strengthen one's ability to concentrate and focus, advises Anne Navolio, Ph.D., a child psychologist based in McLean. She points to a 2012 study by researchers at the University of Washington which credits weekly mindfulness sessions with an improved ability to concentrate. She also references a 2016 study by the University of Wisconsin which showed that even a five minute meditation session each day can increase one's ability to deal with stressful situations. "For beginning a daily practice, start with shorts sessions, especially for young children. Even one-minute of sitting can be beneficial," she said. "And if your kids aren't even interested in that, don't force it."

Incorporating meditation music and concepts that children can understand can make the process easier, advises Baechli. "I like to use cymbals at the beginning of a practice or sound a bell," she said. "Those sounds usually last about 30-45 seconds and sometimes I tell kids to sit quietly and focus on what they're hearing until they can no longer hear it. I also tell kids, especially boys, to use their superhero senses to determine what they can hear and smell all around them."

Spending time outside, either on a hike, nature walk or a trek through the park, can be an opportunity to practice mindfulness as a family, says Navolio. "Simply walking in silence for even a few short minutes and noticing birds, squirrels and cars that are passing or even the scents of freshly mowed grass or food cooking in a restaurant you pass can be a mindfulness practice."

Leading by example can get children engaged in mindfulness practices. "I encourage and model gratitude and attention to small things in the world around us," said Rees. "I definitely think the more mindful and present we can be, the less angst we will have about the past and the future, neither of which we have much control over."

"Unfortunately, the older the kids get and the more activities they have, the harder it gets to make time for quiet and meditation, even though we need it more, of course."

— Elizabeth Rees, Associate Rector, Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church

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CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

“Swimming with Whales.” Through June 24: Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.; Fridays at 8 p.m.; Saturdays at 2 and 8 p.m.; and Sundays at 2 p.m. at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. This world premiere production invites audiences into a world of healing, compassion, and renewal. While Visiting his family’s secluded cottage on the shores of the Atlantic ocean, Owen, a typically urban 15-year-old boy, and his fisherman father clash until an unlikely and healing communion with an injured whale awakens in Owen a forgotten boyhood and connection with the sea. General admission, \$33; senior (65+), \$30; student and military, \$15. Closed captions and audio description will be offered for select performances. Purchase tickets at www.1ststage.org or 703-854-1856.

Photography Exhibit: “Nature’s Palette.” Through June 30, at Katie’s Coffee House, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Cindy Dibbs takes every opportunity to enjoy and photograph nature whether hiking in Great Falls National Park, Glacier National Park or strolling along the beach. Her photos reflect the beauty of nature and she hopes the images will inspire others to protect and treasure the valuable gift of nature. Visit www.cindydibbs.com.

Vienna Art Society Exhibition. Through late June at North County Government Center, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. Visit viennaartsociety.org.

Vienna Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-noon, Saturdays, through Nov. 3 at Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. The Vienna Farmers Market, hosted by the Optimist Club of Greater Vienna, has more than 30 vendors from across the region, the Vienna Farmers Market provides locally-sourced fruits and vegetables and homemade eats. Throughout the year, great music will be featured to accompany your shopping. Visit www.optimistclubofgreatervienna.org/ for more.

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.

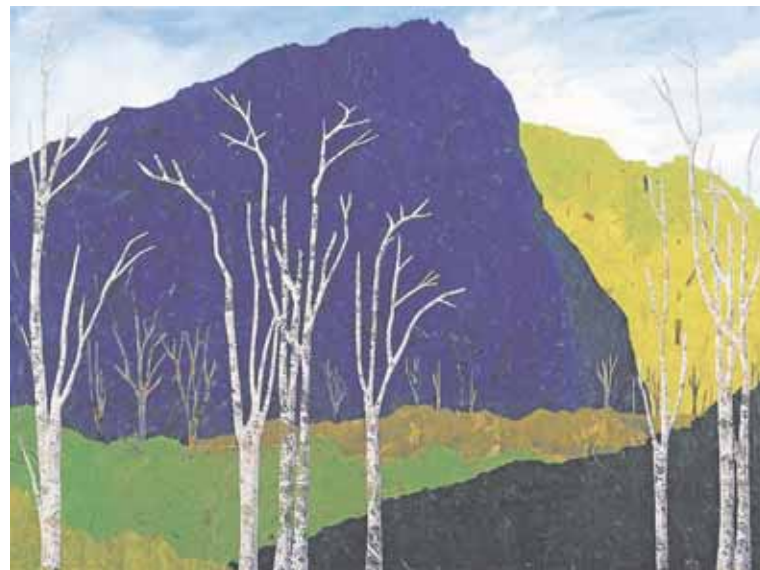
The Freeman Store & Museum Wednesday through Sunday noon-4 p.m. 131 Church St. NE, Vienna. The Freeman Store & Museum is dedicated to Preserving and promoting Vienna’s heritage through the identification, preservation, and interpretation of history significant places, events, and persons. Historicvienna.org

Bingo Night. Sundays. 4 p.m. Flame Room, Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center St. S,

‘Exploring Colors & Textures’

A solo painting exhibition by Ramin Abraham. An opening reception is planned for Friday, June 22, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Exhibit runs June 22-July 31, gallery hours at IACC, Pars Place, 2236-C Gallows Road, Vienna. Email info@iacommunitycenter.org or call 703-314-7240 gallery hours.

By Ramin Abraham



Roberta Pruett Beasley Exhibits at Great Falls Library

“Blue Mountain” by Roberta Pruett Beasley. Beasley, an artist at the Great Falls Atelier, exhibits mixed media, paintings and collage at the Great Falls Library large conference room, June 2 – 30, 2018. The artist will be there to meet the public and answer questions about her art on Saturday, June 16, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. More at robertabeasley.com

Vienna. \$10. www.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.

The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia, a senior women’s softball league, is looking for players. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. Games are on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna, April-October. Other activities during the year. Visit www.goldengirls.org.

Colvin Run Mill open 11-4 p.m. daily, closed Tuesday. 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Fairfax County’s operational 19th century water powered gristmill, offers recreational and educational activities for all ages through daily tours, school programs and special events. Fees: \$7/adult, \$6 students 16+ with ID, \$5 children & seniors. Admission to park is free except for some special events.

Fishing Rod Rentals. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Rentals available during Visitor center hours. Fishing tackle and live

bait are available for purchase. Reservations required for group rentals. \$6/rental (2 hour max). Valid driver’s license required. Rod/reel combinations are perfect for beginners and children. A Virginia or Maryland freshwater fishing license is required for those 16 years or older. The park does not sell fishing licenses. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 6

Forestville Elementary Open House. 4-5 p.m. at Forestville Elementary School, 1085 Utterback Store Road, Great Falls. Join the Forestville Elementary teachers, staff and PTA members to see the newly renovated building and the unveiling of the “Tile Wall.” All members of the community are welcome to see the “new” school and enjoy refreshments. Free. Call 703-404-6000 or visit www.Forestville.edu for more.

THURSDAY/JUNE 7

Benefit of Chocolate. 6-8:30 p.m. at Westwood Country Club, 800 Maple Ave., Vienna. The Stroke Comeback Center is hosting the Benefit of Chocolate cocktail reception to support its programs for survivors of stroke and brain trauma. Guests will enjoy a delicious hors d’oeuvres buffet, wine, artisan chocolate and an opportunity to bid on auction items. \$100. Visit strokecomebackcenter.org for more.

Author Event: Joseph Esposito.

7:30-9 p.m. at Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Meet Joseph A. Esposito, the author of “Dinner in Camelot.” Enjoy a glimpse into a long-gone era of politics and cultural activity at the Kennedy White House. Books available for sale and signing. Free admission. Call 703-938-0405 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/3931227 for more.

FRIDAY/JUNE 8

Summer on the Green: Vienna

Idol Finale. 6:30 p.m. area residents can catch a new and diverse musical act at the Town Green or at Chillin’ on Church. Bring blankets and chairs, but please leave Fido and any other pets at home. The concerts are free and open to the public. Rain date is June 9. Visit www.viennava.gov for more.

Tyson’s Concert Series: The

Legwarmers. 6:30-8 p.m. on the Plaza at Tysons Corner Center. Tysons Corner Center’s 5th annual free Summer Concert Series offers a variety of musical guests and has proven to be a popular event for families, couples and teenagers. The Plaza is located off of The Tysons Corner Metro Station of the Silver Line. Guests are encouraged to arrive early. Visit www.tysonscornercenter.com/events/SummerConcertSeries2018 for more.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JUNE 8-9

Used Book Sale. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Pre-sale open to members of the Friends of the Library Thursday, June 7, 6-8 p.m. Membership purchased at the door for the pre-sale-night-only, \$15. Thousands of lightly-used donated books, CDs, DVDs in every category. Many like new. Great for care packages, beach house, building home library, literacy programs, traveling companions. Free admission. Email friendsofthegreatfallslibrary@gmail.com or call 703-757-8560.

SUNDAY/JUNE 10

Northern Virginia FARE Food Allergy Heroes Walk. 9 a.m. at Nottoway Park, 9601 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Registration and activities will go from 9-10:30 a.m. and the walk begins at 10:45. There will be mission driven arts and crafts, a DJ, face and nail painting, engaging activities, allergy friendly vendors, superheroes, games, silent auction, photo booth, and of course, a walk around the park. Registration is free, but required to participate. Visit fare.foodallergy.org.

Max and Zach’s Lemonade Stand. Noon-3:30 p.m. at Chesterbrook Elementary School, 1753 Kirby Road, McLean. Each year since 2014, Max (a leukemia survivor) and his brother Zach hold a charity lemonade stand in support of childhood cancer research. They will have lemonade, treats, snow cones, spin art and more. All proceeds benefit Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation. Free. Donations accepted. Email weinstockmr@yahoo.com or visit www.alexlemonade.org/mypage/1438237.

Concerts on the Green: Scott Kurt and Memphis 59. 6-8 p.m. on the Great Falls Village Centre Green. Sundays throughout the summer, bring a picnic and chairs for an evening of free, live music. Visit www.celebrategreatfalls.org for more.

TUESDAY/JUNE 12

McLean Historical Society Meeting. 7:30 p.m. in the temporary office of the McLean

Community Center, 6631 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. The program will feature Carole Herrick presenting “A Walk Along the C&O Towpath.” Free, all are welcome. Call 703-356-8223 for more.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 13

Summer on the Green:

Rocknocerous. 6:30 p.m. area residents can catch a new and diverse musical act at the Town Green or at Chillin’ on Church. Bring blankets and chairs, but please leave Fido and any other pets at home. The concerts are free and open to the public. Sponsored by Vienna Moms, Inc. Visit www.viennava.gov for more.

FRIDAY/JUNE 15

Read for Fun. Fairfax County Public Library helps make reading fun by providing tools, access and incentives during its Summer Reading Adventure. The Summer Reading Adventure runs June 15-Sept. 1 and invites all children and teens – birth through high school – to read for fun over the summer. The theme in 2018 is “Reading Takes You Everywhere.” Visit research.fairfaxcounty.gov/summer-reading for more.

Chillin’ on Church with The Rockits. 6:30 p.m. area residents can catch a new and diverse musical act at the Town Green or at Chillin’ on Church. Bring blankets and chairs, but please leave Fido and any other pets at home. The concerts are free and open to the public. Visit www.viennava.gov for more.

Tyson’s Concert Series: Ryan

Cabrera. 6:30-8 p.m. on the Plaza at Tysons Corner Center. Tysons Corner Center’s 5th annual free Summer Concert Series offers a variety of musical guests and has proven to be a popular event for families, couples and teenagers. The Plaza is located off of The Tysons Corner Metro Station of the Silver Line. Guests are encouraged to arrive early. Visit www.tysonscornercenter.com/events/SummerConcertSeries2018 for more.

SUNDAY/JUNE 17

Concerts on the Green: Wes Tucker and The Skillets. 6-8 p.m. on the Great Falls Village Centre Green. Sundays throughout the summer, bring a picnic and chairs for an evening of free, live music. Visit www.celebrategreatfalls.org for more.

FRIDAY/JUNE 22

Tyson’s Concert Series: Mandisa. 6:30-8 p.m. on the Plaza at Tysons Corner Center. Tysons Corner Center’s 5th annual free Summer Concert Series offers a variety of musical guests and has proven to be a popular event for families, couples and teenagers. The Plaza is located off of The Tysons Corner Metro Station of the Silver Line. Guests are encouraged to arrive early. Visit www.tysonscornercenter.com/events/SummerConcertSeries2018 for more.

Summer on the Green: Wayne Tympanick Trio. 6:30 p.m. area residents can catch a new and diverse musical act at the Town Green or at Chillin’ on Church. Bring blankets and chairs, but please leave Fido and any other pets at home. The concerts are free and open to the public. Visit www.viennava.gov for more.

Opening Reception: “Exploring Colors & Textures.” 6:30-9:30 p.m. at IACC, Pars Place, 2236-C Gallows Road, Vienna. A solo painting exhibition by Ramin Abraham. Adults only. Email info@iacommunitycenter.org or call 703-314-7240 for more.

SPORTS

Langley's Hannah Richardson Wins State Pole Vault Championship

Langley High School's Hannah Richardson placed first in the Women's Pole Vault competition at Todd Stadium in Newport News over the weekend, June 1-2.

The Langley Track & Field team took seven athletes to the Virginia 6A State Championship. Of these athletes five competed in the pole vault, the most athletes from a single high school in the event, led by Langley alum and Pole Vault/Jumps Coach Morgan Danner and Head Coach Andrew Diller.

The competition was steep but, sophomore Hannah Richardson cleared 11'6" to take the State Championship Title in the Women's Pole Vault. She has been winning meet after meet this season, including the Liberty District Title and the VA Northern Region Title. She ended the season with the first Track & Field State Title Langley has had in decades. Langley has developed their track team and especially their pole vaulters over the years and finally captured that first-place finish. Also competing at the State meet were Amy Wen, Jim Keyes, Alex Surratt, Camden Hao, Cameron Edgington and Brandon Braswell.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

VA 6A State Champion Women's Pole Vault Hannah Richardson, right, with Coach Morgan Danner, left.



Great Falls Girl Scouts March in Memorial Day Parade

Great Falls Girl Scouts participated in a Memorial Day parade in downtown Washington, D.C. The girls - all from Great Falls Troops - included: Ella Melton, Troop 51045. Olivia Melton, Troop 3015. Ally Melton Troop 90. Kelsey Melton Troop 2784, Lily Brookfield, Troop 2784, Leah Connell, Troop 2784 and Caroline Martell, Troop 2784.

CALENDAR

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PET Connection

Publishes: July 25, 2018 · Ads close: July 19, 2018

Connection readers love their pets. This keepsake edition will feature photos, anecdotes, advice and more about beloved family pets.

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OPINION

Filling the Summer Gap

By JOE FAY
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
 FACETS



FACETS recently threw a party. We recognized 115 students for their excellent academic achievement — all making the A and B honor rolls at their schools. Twelve of these students are graduating, moving on to higher forms of education.

We've gotten to know these students through our youth programs which we operate year-round in four low-income, subsidized communities where the average income for a family of four is near \$18,000. Through the youth program, staff and volunteers offer a variety of educational, preventative and enrichment programs to help young people, including mentoring and tutoring, and a variety of classes such as literacy, art, and computers.

With summer break around the corner, we know we have to work harder to help keep these children and teens from slipping. For kids, summer means fun. Time off for roller coasters, ice cream, picnics, swimming, camps and more. For many moms and dads, summer break means stress. This is especially true for families who live in or near the poverty level, like the young people we serve.

Summer can be a patchwork of child care and babysitters to fill in for the hours normally spent at

school. Or it can mean many hours alone for youth whose parents cannot afford to pay for camps or child care. In addition, summer can be a hungry time for youth who rely on the free and reduced breakfast and lunch programs as a source of nutrition. When school lets out, these meals stop.

That's why FACETS, a nonprofit that works to end poverty, steps in to be a partner to parents and children to ensure more kids in need don't go through the summer isolated, lonely, and hungry. Through our youth programming, FACETS works to make summer break more fun and safer for children living at Robinson Square, Ragan Oaks, Wedgewood, and Barros Circle communities.

Staff and volunteers offer engaging activities to keep kids busy, their bodies active, and their brains working, such as swimming classes, field trips, sports and games and reading and math programs. We also serve hundreds of lunches a week to children who rely on the free and reduced lunch program during the school year.

As extensive as our efforts are, we know there are many more children that are not protected by our summer safety net. That's why we ask that people find ways to engage children in the community by donating to or volunteering for nonprofits that are helping make summer break safe and enjoyable.

By filling the summer gaps, we know that more youth will have opportunities to celebrate academic and life successes.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Claude Moore Colonial Farm: Educational Treasure

To the Editor:

Recent articles in the Washington Post and elsewhere have indicated that Claude Moore Colonial Farm, a regional educational treasure, is in danger of being shut down by the end of the year. We cannot let this happen uninvolved and unopposed. This historic farm must be preserved for the present generation and those of the future to learn about and understand early American colonial history.

Since its inception in 1972 by the National Park Service, this living history museum has portrayed family life on a poor farm family in the 1770s just prior to the Revolutionary War. It is an authentic presentation of colonial times in a natural, hands-on setting, and has educated over two million visitors in a way that is unique to other regional historic properties. Generations of students have taken field trips to the farm and have had the opportunity to enjoy and learn history in a way that no book, classroom activity, or lecture can compete with.

Leafy pathways crisscross the 70 acre grounds and lead students to tobacco and other crops growing in the fields. They pass dark-col-

ored heritage pigs, sometimes rooting in the mud, grazing livestock, to finally reach the rustic colonial family log cabin. Interpreters in colonial dress are there to welcome all visitors. They explain how the cabin was built and used and introduce students to common household items of the past of which they are not familiar with.

The dedicated Friends of Claude Moore Colonial Farm put an 18th Century Market Fair in the spring, summer, and autumn. Merchandise of the past is sold in wooden stalls, craftsmen show off their "old" skills, reenactments take place, and food indicative of colonial times is roasted over an open fire pit and served. Colonial time in all its colorful facets comes to life in this unique environment.

Claude Moore Colonial Farm is an educational powerhouse that needs to be preserved. The

McLean Historical Society strongly urges all parties involved—especially, the National Park Service and the Friends of the Claude Moore Colonial Farm — to preserve this valuable resource for educators, students, and those looking to learn more about the roots of our social history. Its members implore you to find common ground. In this day and age more than ever, everyone needs to get outdoors. There is no better way to do this than by visiting the farm and experiencing a world far removed from the present. Do not let this unique opportunity fall by the wayside.

The McLean Historical Society suggests that you learn more about the proposed closing and if you believe the farm should be preserved, please let your voice be heard.

Carole Herrick, President
 McLean Historical Society

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

Send to:

Letters to the Editor
 The Connection
 1606 King St.
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 Call: 703-917-6444.

By e-mail: north@connectionnewspapers.com

BULLETIN

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Assistance League of Northern Virginia, a volunteer nonprofit, invites community members to join the organization to participate in its Reading Express program. Volunteers provide one-on-one tutoring to first grade students during the school year. To learn more contact VP Membership Mary Gronlund at gronbiz@aol.com or Program Coordinator Lynn Barron at lynnieb517@verizon.net.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Child turning 5 years old by Sept. 30? If so, contact your child's school to make arrangements for kindergarten enrollment. Most schools begin getting information together now for parents of incoming kindergartners, and many host an orientation or open house. All kindergarten programs are full-day and located in FCPS elementary schools. Check your school's webpage or contact the school directly for specific enrollment information and dates of orientation or visit www.fcps.edu/registration/kindergarten-registration.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 6

Grow Your Business. 6-8 p.m. at American Prime, 1420 Spring Hill Road, McLean. Join Tysons McLean Orchestra to network with the tech, telecom, real estate and financial services execs and the professional business community at American Prime. Live music, raffles, discounted drinks tickets and a buffet. \$30 online; \$40 at the door. Visit www.eventbrite.com and search "Instrumental to Business" for tickets.

Community Meeting. 7-9 p.m. at Westgate Elementary School, 7500 Magarity Road, Falls Church. Fairfax County DOT will host a community meeting on proposed Magarity Road Walkway improvements. The meeting will begin with time to review concept plans, followed by a formal presentation at 7:15 p.m. The new 8-foot wide sidewalk is planned for the south side of Magarity Road from Lusby Place to Peabody Drive, and also includes curb, gutter and curbed parking spaces. The walkway will allow more children to walk and bike to school safely. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/projects/magarity-road-sidewalk for more.

MCC Board Pledge of Service. 7:30 p.m. at McLean Community Center Temporary Administrative Offices, 6631 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. The outgoing McLean Community Center Governing Board holds its final meeting. Immediately after it concludes, the incoming 2018-2019 board holds its first meeting and elects officers. Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust will lead the board members as they take a pledge of service. Contact Sabrina Anwah at sabrina.anwah@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-744-9363.

FRIDAY/JUNE 8

Innovations in Health Care. 8-9 a.m. at The Tower Club, 8000 Towers Crescent Drive, Suite 1700, Tysons. As part of the Democratic Business Council of Northern Virginia's monthly Signature Breakfast Series, speakers will discuss pressing issues including how health plans, employers, private sector innovators and children's health advocates are working to improve patient experience, improve health care outcomes, and expand access to coverage, including through the recent adoption of Medicaid expansion by the Virginia legislature. Visit www.dembiz.org/june2018brkfsnm or email novadembiz@gmail.com to register.

MONDAY/JUNE 11

Lunch N' Life: Estate Planning. Noon at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 2589 Chain Bridge Road, Vienna. Join the Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna's (SCOV) Lunch N' Life event with guest speaker Collins Law Firm's Phillip J. Kenny, JD, CFP, an experienced estate planner. Prepayment of \$15 per person required by Wednesday June 6. No refunds. To register, call 703-281-0538. To view event flyer, visit www.scov.org/announcements.

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Creature Comforts



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Can you hear that? Of course you can't. You're there and I'm here. And exactly where am I? As usual on a Saturday morning, I'm sitting at my desk, staring out my window onto to "Belly Acres" (our two acres) waiting for creative lighting to strike.

What it is that you can't hear is the sound of Chino, one of my three male, domestic shorthair cats (there are two other females making for a total of five), purring. Purring so loudly, in fact, and positioned so strategically that I can't look across to my computer screen, grab a tissue from atop my printer or press any keys on my keyboard without seeing him, touching him and/or most definitely, hearing him.

Lying on his side with his back to the computer and his front facing me, I am semi-entranced by the heave-ho of his stomach, the alertness of his ears and the occasional stare and gradual closing of his eyes. Still the purring persists.

Knowing cat behavior, as I've come to after 40-plus years of ownership/cohabitation, I've learned to appreciate their sights and sounds and signs of affection (Chino has now rolled over with his back now facing and touching me, yet another sign of affection and trust, and dare I say, love and devotion). The purring has now stopped because Chino has fallen asleep in his "rocking chair, good buddy," to invoke some old-fashioned CB-Radio-type chatter. Perhaps in Chino's serenity will I find some creative juices to flow.

If you're a cat owner/cat "understander," this behavior is as good as it gets: proximity and tolerance. Cats may not exactly come when you call them, sit on command or fetch, but they most definitely can express love. And it's in these behavioral expressions of love that us cat owners find the greatest joy and the most comfort, so long as we interpret it as such. Nor should we get mad when they exhibit contrary behavior, like ignoring you or walking away when approached or occasionally biting/scratching/clawing the hands that feed, pet and play with them. That's par and it's their course we're playing.

As an experienced "feliner," I am accustomed to and mostly amused by, this behavior. It is a behavior, among many that cats exhibit where you have zero (I was going to say minimal, but let's be honest) control. Accepting that may give you a greater sense of anticipation concerning their behavior. And it's when you can correctly anticipate that behavior where you can find some real satisfaction.

Not that correctly anticipating said behavior will become a reliable part of future interactions, nevertheless; it is understanding that being equal parts right and wrong concerning their behavior - and finding humor in it, is what will make you an enlightened cat owner. It's somewhere between expecting the unexpected and accepting that being wrong twice doesn't necessarily make you right once - and appreciating the difference. It's possible that this awareness may help clarify the cat's meow. Then again ... ?

But so what? Because of their frequently inexplicable shenanigans, I am continually bemused, and as an aside, with five cats in the house full time, never alone. And it's that never being alone that I find the most comforting.

Whether it's feeding time, litter time, petting/playing/sleeping time, shopping time or veterinarian time, I am regularly engaged. Now, whether they're happy about any of it or not, I can't say for sure. Still, it gives us all something to do, someone to see - and something to hear.

Chino has now awakened from his nap. He has positioned himself so that he is laying across my writing tablet, resting almost entirely on my non-writing left hand and purring as loudly as he was at the beginning of this column. But now that I'm nearly finished, I guess he figures he can get in my way, which doesn't bother me in the least. After all, he is a cat; I wouldn't expect anything less.

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

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