

# McLean CONNECTION

HomeLifeStyle  
PAGE 6

The crowd of the McLean Fourth of July celebration held at Churchill Road Elementary School. The event was sponsored by the McLean Community Center.

## Festive Fourth In McLean

NEWS, PAGE 3

Local Real Estate Market:  
Poised for Strong Activity

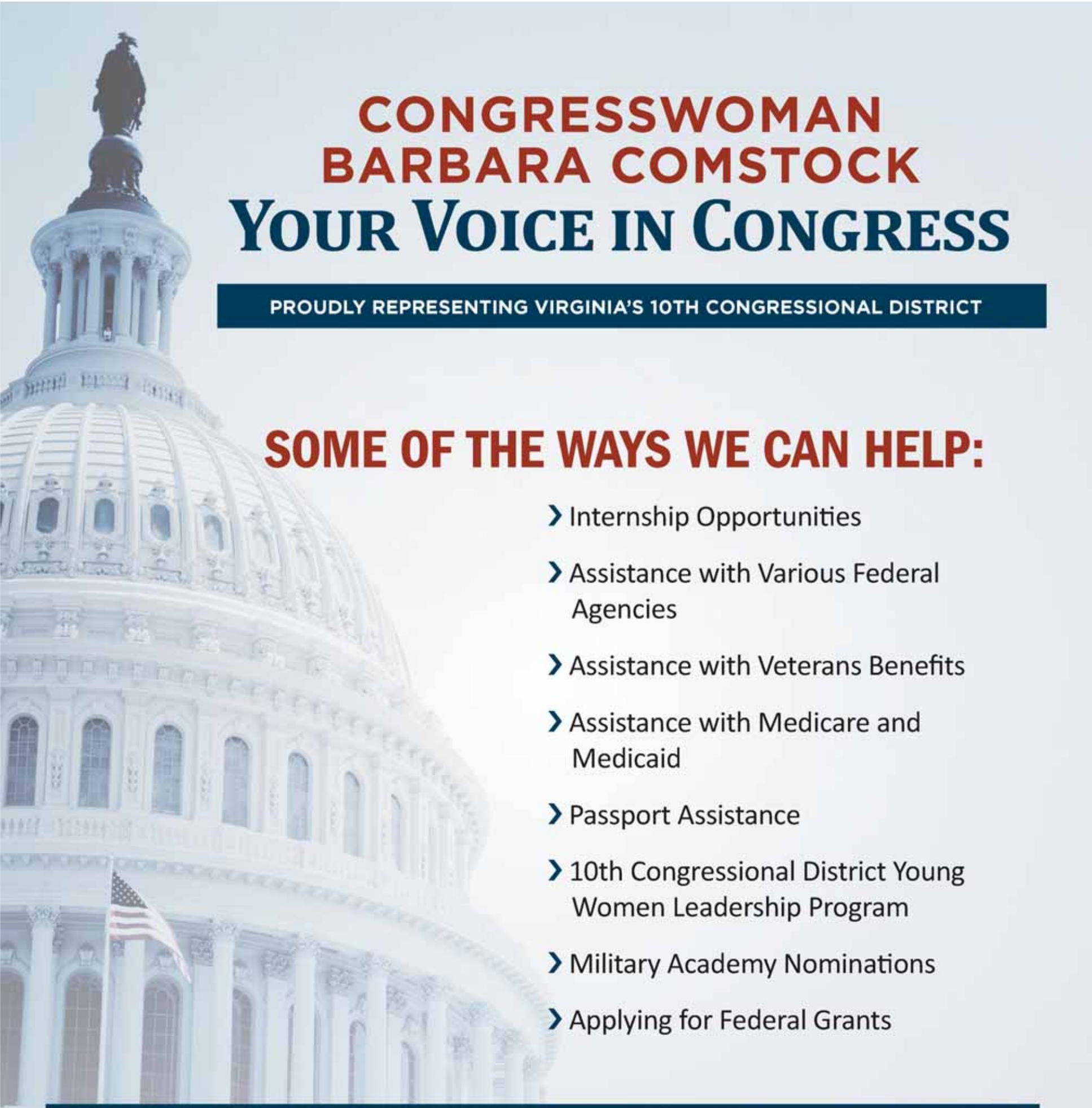
NEWS, PAGE 5

New Train Rolls Into  
Clemjontri Park

NEWS, PAGE 8

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Hannah and Nick Nequist of McLean with son A.J., 18 months.



Chie Cole of McLean (center) with children Chris and Ashley, both 13.

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

# Fourth of July Celebrated in McLean

About 4,000 people enjoy fireworks, picnics, food trucks and a DJ at Churchill Road Elementary School.

With temperatures in the mid-90s, close to 4,000 people from the McLean community came out for the annual Fourth of July fireworks held at Churchill Road Elementary School on July 4, 2018. The event sponsored by the McLean Community Center included fireworks, food trucks, and a DJ to help celebrate the nation's 242<sup>nd</sup> birthday. The MCC has been sponsoring the fireworks, which are discharged from Cooper Middle School, for about 30 years, said Catherine Nesbitt, Special Events Manager with the McLean Community Center.

— STEVE HIBBARD



Sarah Blynn with son Jackson, 3, of McLean enjoy the Fourth of July festivities at Churchill Road Elementary School in McLean.



Joel Chen, 9, and brother Harry, 5, of McLean enjoy the Fourth of July festivities at Churchill Road Elementary School in McLean.



Roberto Devoto of McLean with son Cesar, 4.



Lucy Danoff with daughter Ellie, 6, of McLean enjoy the Fourth of July festivities at Churchill Road Elementary School in McLean.



The Widdifield family of McLean: Jonathan and Kayleen with Annabel, 10, Claire, 7, and Emmy, 5.

# OPINION

## Safe Virginia Initiative Looks 'Beyond Thoughts and Prayers'

The ADAMS Center event focuses on communities of faith's response to violence.

**O**n July 5, the Safe Virginia Initiative (SVI) hosted its first Northern Virginia event, "Beyond Thoughts and Prayers," at the All Dulles Area Muslim Society Center in Sterling.

In keeping with the title, the event focused on communities of faith's response to gun violence, as well as violence in general. Representatives from Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, Catholic and Quaker communities addressed the assembled crowd, while a number of members of the House of Delegates listened to the varied concerns of those assembled. Attendees came from all sides of the firearms debate, from members of Moms Demand Action to members of the Virginia Citizen Defense League.

The program began with a number of faith leaders discussing how their faith dictates how to respond to violence and gun violence in



**From right: Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (speaking) and Delegates Kathleen Murphy, Rip Sullivan, Wendy Gooditis, Danica Roem, Mark Levine, Jennifer Boysko, Kathy Tran, David Reid, Vivian Watts, Ken Plum and Karrie Delaney.**

particular. Next, various questions were posed to the audience about how they would like to see officials respond to gun violence, what laws were sufficient and what should be changed.

Members of the crowd discussed "gun free zones," firearm carry in places of worship, and whether or not faith leaders should speak about methods to prevent gun violence from the pulpit. The event ended with an "open mic" for audience members to speak about what the General Assembly can do to reduce gun violence moving forward.

Just a few weeks following the Parkland tragedy in Florida, the

Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates announced the formation of a bipartisan Select Committee on School Safety. While the committee's formation was considered historic, it was announced that the select committee would not address gun violence nor discuss potential legislative solutions with regard to guns. Following this announcement, the House Democratic Caucus formed the Safe Virginia Initiative (SVI). The SVI is organizing events between May and October of this year related to gun safety. These events will continue to occur throughout Virginia and will include public input. Prior events have included a

town hall focusing on inner city violence in Richmond and a panel on the nexus of mental health and gun violence in Lexington.

The Safe Virginia Initiative is co-chaired by Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41) and Del. Kathleen Murphy (D-34) and includes the following regional co-chairs: Del. John Bell (Northern Virginia), Del. Chris Hurst (Southwest), Del. Delores McQuinn (Metro Richmond) and Del. Marcia Price (Hampton Roads). The group will work with experts from the Office of the Governor, the Office of the Attorney General, local leaders from both parties and law enforcement to draft policy proposals for the next legislative session.

"I appreciated the opportunity to hear from a diverse group of people on how to best curb and combat gun violence," said Filler-Corn. "This is the whole point of the Safe Virginia Initiative, we want to hear from everyone, because only by finding common ground can we move forward in a substantive manner on these issues. I look forward to continuing this conversation across the Commonwealth over the next few months," she added.

Those interested in following the activities of this working group can like the "Safe Virginia Initiative" page on Facebook or follow @svi\_va on Twitter.

## Teenagers Organize 'Rally to Reunite'

To the Editor:

In light of the humanitarian crisis on the border, high school students were not able to sit back and watch people struggle and suffer. Virginia teenagers, Tarina Ahuja, Perrin McHugh, and Bee Hyland, organized a rally titled "Rally to Reunite" that took place in front of the ICE building in Fairfax.

The event was full of inspirational speakers and performers, loud chants, colorful signs, and a pervading message that the people are watching and refuse to stay silent. The speakers included Rajwant Singh, president of EcoSikh; Mansimran Kahlon, the vice chair of the 10th District Democratic Committee in Prince Williams County; and a musical performance by Gurl Music.

The enthusiasm was contagious. Cars, pedestrians, and cyclists would stop to cheer and show their support for the cause creat-

ing a larger sense of unity and solidarity with the separated families. Throughout the day, speakers and organizers emphasized the need for both adults and young people to vote.

According to these young people, civic engagement, no matter your age, is the key to creating a government that we can be proud of. The students emphasized that having young people involved is what will bring our country forward. They emphasized that youths have new ideas, new perspectives and also will be the ones with solutions in the future. Many people have told these students that young people do not belong in politics, but they hold strong in their belief that the voice of their generation is valuable and something that is necessary considering our current political climate.

**Tarina Ahuja**  
Ashburn



**Rally organizers, from left: Bee Hyland, 17, Leesburg; Tarina Ahuja, 16, Ashburn; and Perrin McHugh, 17, McLean.**

McLean  
**CONNECTION**

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by  
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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# REAL ESTATE

## Poised for Strong Activity

### Market in McLean and Great Falls: First half 2018 Recap, second half predictions.

BY KAREN BRISCOE

The first half of 2018 is on the books. The number of real estate transactions in McLean and Great Falls is softer than in the same period in 2017, with 562 transactions versus 623 the previous year. The good news is that in comparison to one decade ago in 2008, sales are up over 56 percent.

The upper bracket market which is \$1.25 million plus has significantly improved over the past decade and remained constant year over year.

The affordable price points of under \$1.25 million has been impacted by supply relative to demand. As there are not as many choices available to buyers, their options are to either raise their price point, make concessions, or put their move on hold until more choices became available.

Further the impact of the tax reform is now being fully realized. The ability for home purchaser to leverage the mortgage interest deduction and property taxes affects those market segments that are over



Karen Briscoe

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

\$750,000. In McLean and Great Falls, that represents 70 percent of the market.

As we move into the second half quarter of 2018, there are strong indications that homes positioned correctly in price and condition will sell for solid prices. The forces of supply and demand can be as powerful as gravity. Thus, should demand continue to remain strong relative to supply, some market segments may experience price appreciation. In those scenarios, home sellers will enjoy the “best of times” market conditions.

The second half of 2018 is poised for strong market activity. In these situations, home buyers often can benefit from purchasing in an upmarket. It is in these scenarios where buyers can purchase with the confidence that they are buying well.

Karen Briscoe with HBC Group at Keller Williams is an active and experienced Realtor® in the Northern Virginia marketplace. Alongside her partner Lizzy Conroy and team, she works with sellers, buyers, investors and builders in all price ranges. [www.HBCGroupKW.com](http://www.HBCGroupKW.com), 703-734-0192, [Homes@HBCGroupKW.com](mailto:Homes@HBCGroupKW.com).

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

1 <sup>st</sup> Half 2018 compared to 1 <sup>st</sup> Half 2017 and 2008						
2018 1 <sup>st</sup> Half Total Sales: 562						
	>\$3 Mil	\$2-3 Mil	\$1.25-2 Mil	\$1-\$1.25 Mil	\$750k-\$1 Mil	<\$750k
Zip Code						
22101	10	20	67	40	78	28
22102	6	6	20	18	31	130
22066	0	3	35	20	39	11
	<b>Total: 16</b>	<b>Total: 29</b>	<b>Total: 122</b>	<b>Total: 78</b>	<b>Total: 148</b>	<b>Total: 169</b>
	<b>Combined Total Upper Brackets: 167</b>			<b>Combined Total Lower Brackets: 395</b>		
2017 1 <sup>st</sup> Half Total Sales: 623						
	>\$3 Mil	\$2-3 Mil	\$1.25-2 Mil	\$1-\$1.25 Mil	\$750k-\$1 Mil	<\$750k
Zip Code						
22101	10	17	80	50	88	44
22102	4	7	17	14	21	148
22066	2	6	28	26	50	11
	<b>Total: 16</b>	<b>Total: 30</b>	<b>Total: 125</b>	<b>Total: 90</b>	<b>Total: 159</b>	<b>Total: 203</b>
	<b>Combined Total Upper Brackets: 171</b>			<b>Combined Total Lower Brackets: 452</b>		
2008 1 <sup>st</sup> Half Total Sales: 360						
	>\$3 Mil	\$2-3 Mil	\$1.25-2 Mil	\$1-\$1.25 Mil	\$750k-\$1 Mil	<\$750k
Zip Code						
22101	7	9	23	17	38	71
22102	6	7	9	2	15	83
22066	0	7	24	13	17	12
	<b>Total: 13</b>	<b>Total: 23</b>	<b>Total: 56</b>	<b>Total: 32</b>	<b>Total: 70</b>	<b>Total: 166</b>
	<b>Combined Total Upper Brackets: 92</b>			<b>Combined Total Lower Brackets: 268</b>		

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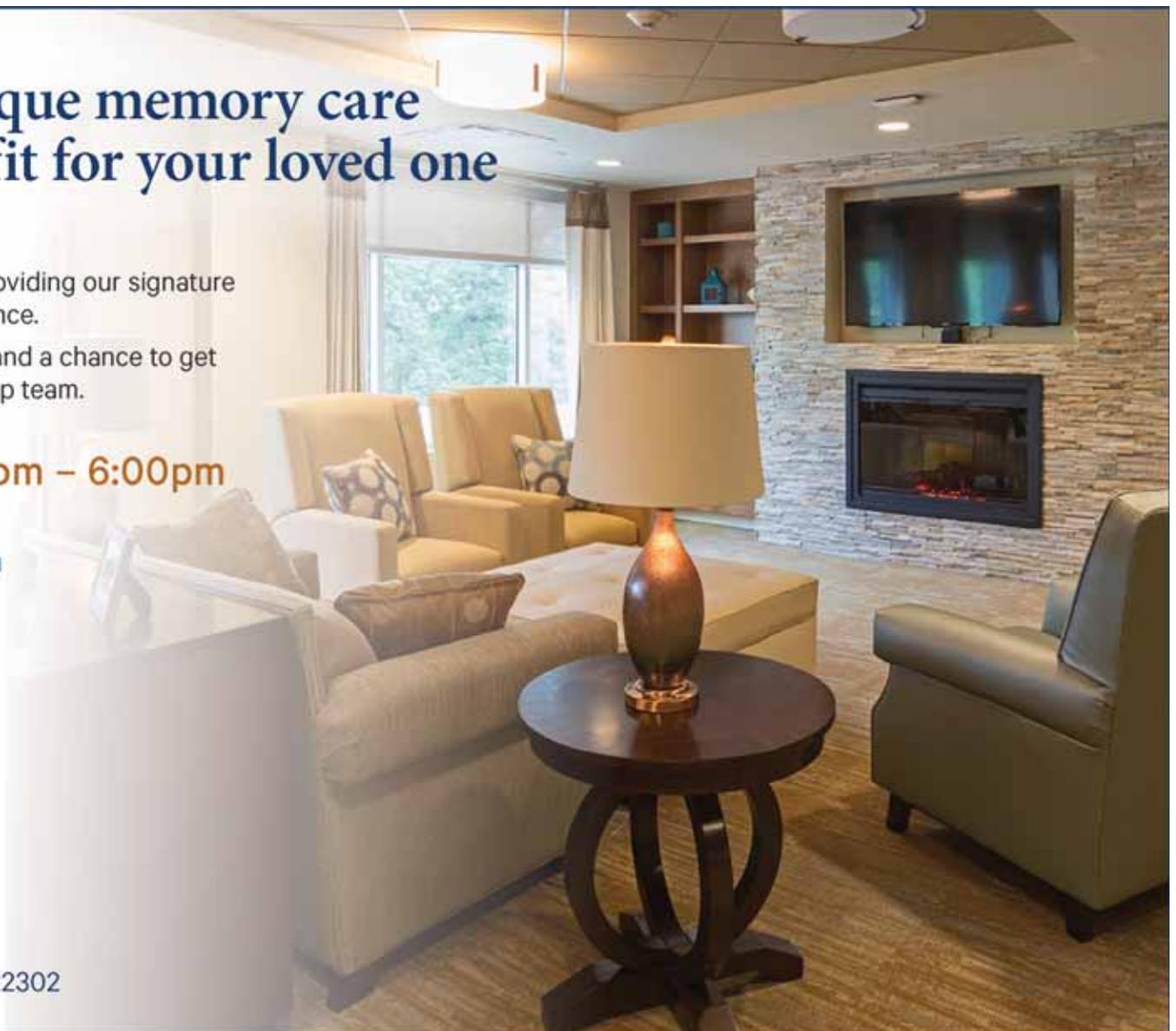
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## Home LifeStyle



Low flower arrangements, like these from Patina Polished Living, add elegance to a tablescape.



Top desserts with summer floral designs or fresh flowers.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PATINA POLISHED LIVING

# Designing a Midsummer Table

Using flowers and color to create a summer wonderland.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Along with sunshine and longer days, summer offers an array of design opportunities. From backyard barbecues to brunch in the garden, the right decor can add a touch of flair to a midsummer gathering.

Designing a table with the vibrant colors of summer fruit creates an air of liveliness, says interior Bridget Francis of Colors by Bridget. “Watermelon, blueberries and strawberries are plentiful now, so if you’re serving them you can use those colors as a base for your tablescape,” she said. “Think zinnias and red roses with white serveware.”

Limiting a tablescape to two or three colors lends simplicity to a design, advises Francis. “For example, I use light blue and white dishes with white table linens,” she said. “I add floral arrangements with white and pale pink roses and blue hydrangeas, some white votives, and voila, a crisp, clean summer table.”

When creating those dinner party arrangements, make sure the height of the flowers is low so that guests can see and talk to each other, advises Amanda Mertins of Patina Polished Living. “Flower arrangements are supposed to be a lovely addition to the table, not an irritant because they’re blocking your view,” she said. “I just love a beautiful arrangement that you can look down and see, and that everyone at the table can enjoy. Right now hydrangeas and roses are big. When we make arrangements we’re adding rosemary and lavender for a touch of green.”

“Etched glass hurricanes are a beautiful addition to a table setting,” said Todd Martz, owner of Home on Cameron. “They create a lovely ambiance for an outdoor setting and let you stay outside longer to enjoy the stars and fireflies.”

Be it a frosty margarita or a glass of tart lemonade, infusing summer drinks with summer foliage adds warm weather appeal to a gathering. “Think of a few rose petals floating in a pitcher of sangria or sprigs of lavender in a pitcher of lemonade,” said Francis. “It not only looks and smells great, but the flowers can infuse the drink with a subtle hint of flavor.”

In fact, Francis says that summer blooms can be

incorporated into meal prep. “I think that a cake with simple white icing, decorated with pink roses and blue hydrangeas is the epitome of summer elegance,” she said. “I also use a pastry squeeze pen to make flower designs for cupcakes. You can use the pen to squeeze whipped cream to make flower toppings for ice cream. It’s especially pretty when they are the same flowers that are in your centerpiece.”

“For additional table accents, add a decorative shell or accessory to hold down napkins,” said Martz. “Try placing a tray in the center of the table to keep all the dining essentials in one place, making it easier to bring them out and take them in.”



A few scented candles, grouped in the center of the table, creates a festive look, says Todd Martz of Home on Cameron.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



Limiting a table design to one or two colors of summer can create an elegant tablescape.

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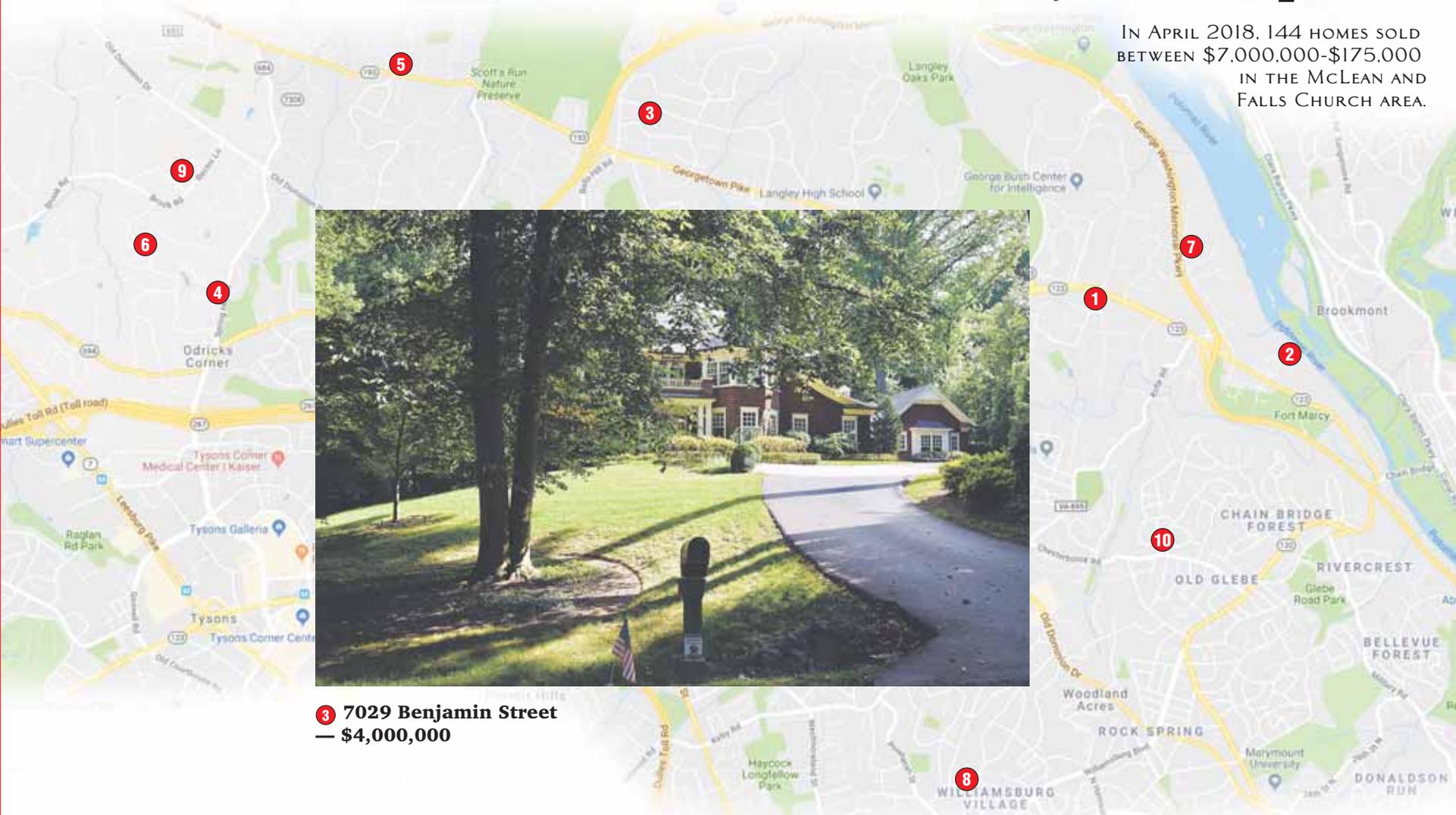


# McLean REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY DEB STEVENS/THE CONNECTION

## May, 2018 Top Sales

IN APRIL 2018, 144 HOMES SOLD BETWEEN \$7,000,000-\$175,000 IN THE MCLEAN AND FALLS CHURCH AREA.



**3 7029 Benjamin Street — \$4,000,000**



**6 1165 Orlo Drive — \$3,700,000**



**4 8301 Woodlea Mill Road — \$4,000,000**



**7 1111 Crest Lane — \$2,940,000**

Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	PostalCode	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 915 DOLLEY MADISON BLVD	1	1	0	MCLEAN	\$7,000,000	Detached	2.53	22101	LANGLEY	05/14/18
2 5702 FERN HILL RUN	4	5	1	MCLEAN	\$6,575,000	Detached	5.40	22101	MCLEAN GOLD COAST	05/24/18
3 7029 BENJAMIN ST	5	5	3	MCLEAN	\$4,000,000	Detached	1.10	22101	LANGLEY FOREST	05/23/18
4 8301 WOODLEA MILL RD	5	5	3	MCLEAN	\$4,000,000	Detached	0.89	22102	WOODLEA MILL	05/18/18
5 7728 GEORGETOWN PIKE	5	5	3	MCLEAN	\$4,000,000	Detached	1.99	22102	BULL NECK	05/11/18
6 1165 ORLO DR	7	9	2	MCLEAN	\$3,700,000	Detached	0.99	22102	WOODLEA MILL	05/25/18
7 1111 CREST LN	5	8	2	MCLEAN	\$2,940,000	Detached	2.03	22101	CORTES W RANDELL PPTY LT1 SEC2	05/18/18
8 6348 NOTTINGHAM ST	6	6	2	MCLEAN	\$2,850,000	Detached	0.62	22101	FRANKLIN PARK	05/03/18
9 8340 SPRINGHAVEN GARDEN LN5	6	6	1	MCLEAN	\$2,700,000	Detached	1.02	22102	SPRINGHAVEN OF MCLEAN	05/23/18
10 6004 WOODLEY RD	6	5	2	MCLEAN	\$2,515,000	Detached	0.34	22101	CHESTERBROOK WOODS	05/29/18

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**10 6004 Woodley Road — \$2,515,000**

# Picnic Pavillion, Train Roll Into Clemyjontri Park

Local families enjoy a morning at the park, which will dedicate its new amenities in a ribbon-cutting ceremony on July 28.

BY MAIA SPOTO  
THE CONNECTION

A grinning conductor wove his rubber-wheeled train through the grass to welcome locals into the grounds of Clemyjontri park. Nicknamed “Clemy,” the soft rainbow playground is a summer haven for families in the community.

Recently, the park added a trackless train and an additional picnic pavillion. The next project for Clemyjontri will be a new parking lot. Among the families spending the morning at Clemyjontri on Saturday, July 7 was Sterling mother Nicole Ross.

“It’s just an awesome park; it stands out,” Ross said.

“When people ask ‘what are we going to do this weekend,’ they say, ‘let’s go to Clemyjontri!’” Ross took her family to the park to enjoy beautiful weather. This 70-degree, sunny morning attracted enough visitors to fill both of Clemyjontri’s parking lots.

“It’s a nice day, and we wanted the kids to play,” Holly Jahshan, Vienna consultant said next to a set of monkey bars. “We’ve had a lot of fun here.”

Her 4-year-old son Alexander giggled as he climbed up a bright yellow ladder. “He basically learned how to walk here on the soft ground,” Jahshan said. Clemyjontri is a hotspot for casual gatherings, but also for celebrations.

“The first time we came, it was for his second birthday,” Matt Sutor, Fairfax project manager said as he pointed out his son Teddy. Today, the Sutors celebrated Teddy’s fourth birthday at the park.

“This park has become an important piece of the fabric of the community,” Judy Pederson, Public Information Officer for the Park Authority said. “It’s an ingrained part of the daily experience.”

Pederson said Clemyjontri is a hallmark of residents’ childhood memories and a unifying factor in McLean with far more power than the average playground.

The park is special for its inclusivity. Clemyjontri includes a wheelchair-accessible swing and carousel, as well as ramps and rubber flooring that wheels can roll on.

Low monkey bars and wide openings provide easier access for eager children. “It was built so children with developmental and sensory disabilities could also have the playground experience,” Pederson said. “It’s an award-winning, nationally recognized park.”



The Trackless Train rolls through the park. Friends of Clemyjontri funded the train and a “train station” which will open in the future.



Alexander Jahshan, 4, of Vienna is about to tackle the monkey bars. Mother Holly Jahshan said Alexander learned to walk at Clemyjontri.



Sterling’s Nicole Ross holds her 4-month-old daughter Harper at Clemyjontri park.



Teddy Sutor, 4, of Fairfax plays at the park to celebrate his birthday.

## Ribbon-cutting on July 28

Clemyjontri recently opened the trackless train as well as a picnic pavillion, and both features will be dedicated at the ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10 a.m. on Saturday, July 28, 2018. Held at the park, the ceremony is open to the public and will honor the foundations that contributed to the amenities. Foundations include Friends of

Clemyjontri, who funded the trackless train. Additionally, the ceremony will thank Wheat’s landscaping for its work maintaining the grounds and the McLean Project for the Arts for repainting the Clemyjontri Book Statue. Private donor Sue Rowell’s financial gifts supported the liberty swing and picnic areas. Rowell has died,

but the ceremony will honor her family and friends for their additional contributions in her name. The ceremony will also include refreshments and train rides. For more information about Clemyjontri and the celebration, visit the park’s website <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/clemyjontri>.

PHOTOS BY MAIA SPOTO/THE CONNECTION

# ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday.

water sprinklers at 1 p.m. Wednesdays, through Aug. 8. Free and appropriate for all ages. Visit [www.viennava.gov](http://www.viennava.gov).

## ONGOING

**Art Exhibit: "Too Much of Too Much."** Through Aug. 18, gallery hours in the Bullock | Hitt Gallery at MPA@ChainBridge, 1446 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. McLean Project for the Arts will open "Too Much of Too Much: Overstimulated, Overexposed, and Overextended," featuring works by mid-Atlantic artists whose works explore the ideas of overstimulation, excessiveness and bombardment, be it through too much information, activity, expectation, or by any other means. Visit [mpaart.org](http://mpaart.org).

**Row by Row Junior.** Through Oct. 31, local quilt shop proprietors like Jinny Beyer Studio (776 Walker Road, Great Falls) are welcoming children participating in Row by Row Junior to their shops. It's the junior version of the summertime travel event for quilt making fans known as Row by Row Experience. Kids visit shops in person, collect a free sewing pattern, and find inspiration in colorful, creative world of sewing. At home, families can find free tutorial support and activities online by visiting [www.rowbyrowexperience.com](http://www.rowbyrowexperience.com) or [jinnybeyer.com](http://jinnybeyer.com) for local quilting.

## WEDNESDAY/JULY 11

**Summer Stories, Songs, and Sprinklers.** 1 p.m. on the lawn of the Freeman Store, 131 Church St. NE, Vienna. Young children and families are invited to listen to a story, tune into some favorite songs, then have a little casual fun with

## JULY 12-22

**Logan Festival of Solo Performance.** At 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. The festival will gather solo performers from across the country for two-weeks of performances, workshops, discussions, and events. The main stage festival schedule features: "The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey" written by James Lecesne; "Where Did We Sit On The Bus?" written and performed by Brian Quijada; and "Brahman/i" written by Aditi Brennan Kapil. General admission \$20; students \$10; festival passes, \$50. Purchase online at [www.1ststage.com](http://www.1ststage.com) or 703-854-1856.

## FRIDAY/JULY 13

**Three Classical Comedies.** 4:30 p.m. at The Madeira School - Chapel Auditorium, 8328 Georgetown Pike, McLean. After weeks of learning classical theatre, practicing movement and vocalizing, and roasting s'mores over the fire, Traveling Players' youth ensembles will present a festival of three classical plays. \$10 tickets available at the door. For directions to Madeira, visit [www.madeira.org/about-madeira/contact-us/](http://www.madeira.org/about-madeira/contact-us/). Visit [www.travelingplayers.org](http://www.travelingplayers.org) or call 703-987-1712.

**River Fishing by Boat.** 5:30 p.m. at Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Get an introduction to fishing and boating in the "River Fishing by Boat" program.



## Alden Summer Concerts

The Alden's 2018 Summer Sunday Concerts in the Park expand this year to include a "welcome, summer" concert on Sunday, June 3, and then seven concerts from July 1 through Aug. 12. 5 p.m. in McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd. Free parking at Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave. Visit [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org) for more.

**Led by Cynthia Johnson and Andy Valenti, Oh He Dead performs in McLean Central Park on Sunday, July 15, 5 p.m.**

Participants age 5-adult will fish for smallmouth bass and sunfish from a canoe or jon boat. The two-hour lesson starts with an introduction to boating and fishing basics. Previous experience rowing or paddling is not required. Boats, personal flotation devices (PFDs), fishing rods and bait are provided. \$16 per person, and each participant must register. Call 703-759-9018 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend).

**Tysons Concert Series: Matt Nathanson.** 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](http://www.tysonscornercenter.com/events/SummerConcertSeries2018).

**Summer on the Green: Mary Lou & the Drugstore Lovers.** 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](http://www.viennava.gov).

## SATURDAY/JULY 14

**MLB Commemorative Artwork.** 6-9 p.m. at Wentworth Gallery in Tysons Galleria. Meet 3-D Pop Artist Charles Fazzino as he premieres his 2018 All-Star Game Commemorative Artwork Collection, which will consist of original artworks, limited-edition prints on paper and aluminum, and other fine art collectibles, including hand-painted limited-edition baseballs and home plates. RSVP at 703-883-0111 or [tysons@wentworthgallery.com](mailto:tysons@wentworthgallery.com).

## SUNDAY/JULY 15

**Breakfast Buffet.** 8 a.m.-noon at Vienna American Legion Post 180, 330 Center St., N. Vienna. Get omelets, scrambled eggs, blueberry pancakes, bacon, sausage, biscuits and gravy and more. Adults \$10, children 12 and under \$4. Call 703-938-6580.

**Alden Summer Concerts: Oh He Dead.** 5 p.m. in McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd. Free parking at Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave. The Alden's 2018 Summer Sunday Concerts in the Park expand this year to include a "welcome, summer" concert on Sunday, June 3, and then seven concerts from July 1 through Aug. 12. Visit [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org).

**Concerts on the Green: The Unfinished.** 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

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

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

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-Werner Heisenberg

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**ENTERTAINMENT**

**Fiery and So Delicious**

**Restaurant Review: Asian Origin in Tysons**

BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY  
THE CONNECTION

The Tysons' Corner area is replete with go-to restaurants visible to passersby. But tucked away on Pinnacle Drive, a few blocks from the Tysons II center is Asian Origin. Located on a corner spot with nearby trees, this Asian destination is becoming a popular draw for foodies seeking well-prepared Szechuan, Japanese, and a collection of Mainland China dishes.

Despite its selection of Japanese fare, which are basically sushi and sashimi offerings, Asian Origin really specializes in authentic Chinese dishes.

An extensive menu needs close scrutiny. If you stop by at lunchtime, staff will hand you a short lunch special menu. That's fine, but unless you read through the major listings of every imaginable appetizer, soup, rice-noodle dishes, plus seafood, pork, chicken, and beef offerings, you will miss out on some amazing fare.

For starters, consider the green onion (scallion) pancake, a flat breadlike dish cut into wedges and served with a savory, not sweet, dipping sauce. Apparently originating in Northern Mainland China, these crunchy appetizers have multiple variations,

some puffy, others flat, but note that even street vendors in China offer these for sale.

Also kick off your meal, lunch or dinner, with wontons, noodle dishes, and a choice of soups, including the beloved Hot and Sour soup, egg drop soup, and a Hot and Sour seafood soup. You could likely fill out your meal with any number of these first-course offerings and feel sated.

As for main course choices, you better hope you come with friends or have an enormous appetite. Staff have marked the dishes that are spicy with a chili, but you can ask the waiter to make it milder rather than hot. That said, consider spooning into General Tso's chicken, Peking duck (half duck more reasonably priced), Kung Pao shrimp, Chengdu salt and pepper shrimp, and the totally classic Chinese dish, Ma Po tofu. Note that this tofu offering apparently originated in a Szechuan restaurant in Szechuan Province, mirroring the beloved spiciness of many Szechua dishes. This may be fiery, but it is so delicious.

If you want a few Japanese samples, pick up some of their rolls.

The Chef's Specials include a Spider Roll, a Chesapeake Hand Roll, and a Dragon Roll. These probably capture the essence of a sushi/sashimi treat.

As more people learn about this relatively new place, you may consider making a reservation. It is probably crowded at dinner time, if lunch is any indication.

Asian Origin, 1753 Pinnacle Drive, McLean, 703-448-5588.  
Hours: Sunday-Thursday, 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-11 p.m.

**DINING**

**CALENDAR**

FROM PAGE 9

www.celebrategreatfalls.org.

**TUESDAY/JULY 17**

**Harmony Heritage Singers.** 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at The Christ the King Lutheran Church, 10550 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The Great Falls Senior Center (GFSC) event features the Harmony Heritage Singers, a men's chorus founded in 1996 by members of the Alexandria Harmonizers singing familiar songs sung from memory and without accompaniment in the rich harmonies that are the barbershop tradition. Lunch included for those who make reservations with Polly Fitzgerald at pollyfitz1@verizon.net or call 703-759-4345. A contribution will be appreciated. Visit gfseniors.org.

**Art Exhibit: New Members.** 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Vienna Arts Society members will be able to exhibit and sell works in two new places - in the society's new space at 243 Church St. and the new Vienna Community Center. Membership application forms are available at the Art Center and at www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

**Explore the Cosmos by Telescope.** 8-9 p.m. at Turner Farm, 925 Springvale Road, Great Falls. In "Intro to Telescopes," learn some astronomy basics and how to set up and use a telescope. The course content will depend on the types of telescopes participants bring. Program is designed for participants age 9-adult. \$8 per person. Call 703-324-8618 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/turner-farm.

**WEDNESDAY/JULY 18**

**Summer Stories, Songs, and Sprinklers.**

1 p.m. on the lawn of the Freeman Store, 131 Church St. NE, Vienna. Young children and families are invited to listen to a story, tune into some favorite songs, then have a little casual fun with water sprinklers at 1 p.m. Wednesdays, through Aug. 8. Free and appropriate for all ages. Visit www.viennava.gov.

**THURSDAY/JULY 19**

**Discover Visitors from Space.** 8-9 p.m. at Turner Farm, 925 Springvale Road, Great Falls. Examine meteorites in a program at Observatory Park called "Meteorites: Explore Visitors from Space." Learn about meteorites, and touch and examine meteorite specimens from the moon and Mars in the roll-top observatory classroom. Program is designed for participants age 6-adult. \$8 per person. Call 703-324-8618 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/turner-farm.

**FRIDAY/JULY 20**

**Tysons Concert Series: Open Park Standoff.** 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.

**Chillin' on Church with Mudlark.** 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.

**SUNDAY/JULY 22**

**Benefit Concert with Sweet Yonder.** 1:30 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. A benefit performanc for SCOV's 20<sup>th</sup> Aniversary. \$20. Tickets at www.ticketfly.com/event/1691320-shepherd-s-center-oakton-vienna/ or at the door. Visit www.scov.org.

**Vegetable Plant Clinics.** 4-6 p.m. At Nottoway Park, 9601 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Focus will be on planning a fall vegetable garden. Fairfax County Master Gardeners will add a focus on vegetable gardening to their Plant Clinic program. Sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension. Contact the VCE Fairfax County Master Gardener Help Desk at 703-324-8556.

**Alden Summer Concerts: Hip-Hop Meets the Music of India (Family Friendly).** 5 p.m. in McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd. Free parking at Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave. The Alden's 2018 Summer Sunday Concerts in the Park expand this year to include a "welcome, summer" concert on Sunday, June 3, and then seven concerts from July 1 through Aug. 12. Visit www.aldentheatre.org.

**Summer on the Green: Vienna Community Band.** 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.

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# BULLETIN

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

## MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board's Merrifield Center** offers a new stand-up information kiosk. Part of a pilot project, the new feature aims to improve the customer service experience and decrease wait times for individuals who are seeking mental (behavioral) health services. To check in, individuals respond to five simple questions, then the CSB's Patient Track software alerts staff. Based on clinicians' schedules and availability, as well as the needs of the client, individuals are triaged and seen by the next available staff member. For more information on available services, call the CSB at 703-383-8500 (Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.). In an emergency 24/7, call CSB Emergency Services at 703-573-5679 or the Fairfax Detox Center at 703-502-7000 (TTY 703-322-9080).

## WEDNESDAY/JULY 11

**Public Information Hearing.** 5-8 p.m. at Spring Hill Elementary School Cafeteria, 8201 Lewinsville Road, McLean. The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority is hosting a public hearing to inform and solicit comments from the community about proposed toll rate increases along the Dulles Toll Road. There will be informational exhibits related to the Dulles Toll Road and planned improvements that may be made, the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Silver Line Extension Project, the revenue projections associated with the proposed toll rate increases and how this additional revenue will be spent. Representatives from the Airports Authority will be present to discuss these items. Visit [www.mwaa.com](http://www.mwaa.com) for more.

## THURSDAY/JULY 12

**Story Time: Perspective Taking.** 10-11 a.m. at The Parent Resource Center Library, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 - Room 105, Dunn Loring. This Story Time will highlight books and activities to support perspective taking in young children. Perspective taking is an evidence-based executive functioning skill that forms the basis for children's understanding of their parents', teachers', and friends' intentions. Registration is limited and required for children ages 4-6 and their parents. Visit [www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center](http://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center) for more.

## TUESDAY/JULY 17

**Story Time: Making Connections.** 10-11 a.m. at The Parent Resource Center Library, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 - Room 105, Dunn Loring. This Story Time will highlight books and activities to support this evidence-based executive functioning skill in young children. Registration is limited and required for children ages 4-6 and their parents. Visit [www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center](http://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center) for more.

## THURSDAY/JULY 19

**Story Time: Taking on Challenges.** 10-11 a.m. at The Parent Resource Center Library, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 - Room 105, Dunn Loring. This Story Time will highlight books and activities to support taking on challenges in young children. Life is full of stresses and challenges. Children who are willing to take on challenges do better in school and in life. Registration is limited and required for children ages 4-6 and their parents. Visit [www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center](http://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center) for more.

## WEDNESDAY/AUG. 1

**Application Deadline.** Think and Act Green. The Town of Vienna's Community Enhancement Commission (CEC) is challenging local businesses and nonprofits to adopt green practices and self-certify as "sustainable" based on points earned. Find a list of suggested green strategies and the Sustainability Challenge checklist at [viennava.gov/sustainabilitychallenge](http://viennava.gov/sustainabilitychallenge). Submit to Town Hall at 127 Center Street S., Vienna to the attention of the Community Enhancement Commission. Contact Desiree Di Mauro at [desiree@d2t2.org](mailto:desiree@d2t2.org).

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Find us on Facebook and become a fan! <b>www.Facebook.com/connectionnewspapers</b> <b>THE CONNECTION</b> Newspapers & Online The Connection to Your Community www.connectionnewspapers.com		An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them. <b>-Werner Heisenberg</b>	

## A Relative Unknown



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I knew we had family in Argentina. I knew that one of my maternal grandfather's younger brothers, Simon, had immigrated from Eastern Europe to South America in the early 1900s.

I knew, or thought I knew, that someone from his family – removed or not, I never know, had visited my parents and first cousins a time or two in Florida in the '80s and '90s. But until recently, neither my brother Richard nor myself had ever met any of these distant – double entendre-intended – relations. Well, that ended on Wednesday, June 27, in Union Station at 5:55 p.m.

There outside Gate "G" my wife, Dina and I stood holding a sign with my cousin's name on it: Eduardo Blacher (my middle name is Blacker). He had flown into New York City from Buenos Aires earlier that morning and then boarded a south-bound Amtrak train to visit us in Washington, D.C.

My first cousin, Ronnie (formerly of Florida, now of Massachusetts) with whom Eduardo has corresponded and visited over the years, had emailed us a selfie Eduardo had taken so we had a pretty good idea of his general appearance. Along with our handwritten sign, we were pretty confident the familial connection would be made.

And so it happened a bit after 6 p.m. as he walked through the gate into the station looking around for someone he'd never seen. We cautiously saw one another and then immediately hugged and kissed and said: "Great to meet you!"

Eduardo's English was pretty good so we were able to coordinate our exit from the station where, once outside, we met my brother, Richard, who had been sitting in his car waiting for our appearance. As soon as he saw us, he got out of his car and quickly walked over to Eduardo and likewise gave him a hug and kiss: mishpocheh (Yiddish for family).

When my widowed mother died in 2008, Richard and I felt orphaned, so to speak. Our parents, as in most families, were the keepers of the family faith. Having both been born 10 years before "The Great Depression," they knew the family history dating back to before the turn of the century. When they died (in 2006 and 2008, respectively), their knowledge and memories died with them. It was a palpable loss that Richard and I still feel.

We are lucky though; my cousin Ronnie (my mother's niece) has lots of family information and has become our go-to resource for all things Blacher/Blacker. She facilitated this much-anticipated visit (Eduardo is seeing her next).

To try and put Eduardo's visit in some context; in the 10 years since my mother's passing, given the ages of the surviving family members in the United States with whom we're in touch, we've not really gained any family members, let alone connected with an entire line of cousins going back to before World War I.

Eduardo has three children, four grandchildren, a sister in Israel and parents, both of whom are their mid-80s still alive and well. In familial fact, his father is my grandfather's nephew and knows lots more about my grandfather than I ever did, and has knowledge of the Blacher/Blacker family going back over 125 years as well in and out of our respective countries.

Given the pogroms and the Holocaust, for many Jewish people my age, a treasure trove of family history/knowledge like this was thought to be lost forever. Now, I have found some of it. Talk about filling a void. In facts and feelings, it has – and is about to, fill everything.

For three days, until Eduardo's departure Sunday morning, we rarely left one another's side. In addition to touring Washington, D.C., we shared photos, exchanged email addresses, talked nearly non-stop about everything, downloaded WhatsApp which we'll enable us to message each other in the future, and together on Friday night lit the Shabbos candles and together prayed in Hebrew.

I can't really express how I feel other than to say I've been crying while I've been writing this column. And it's the best cry I've had in years.

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



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