

Directed by Deborah Rudd, the Spring Hill Elementary School Chorus wowed the crowd with their singing abilities at Saturday's I Love McLean Party at the McLean Community Center. Parents stood by filming their performance.



Loving McLean

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Tremendous Needs Still Not Funded

FXCO School Board adopts \$3.2 billion budget seeking \$172.2 million increase.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

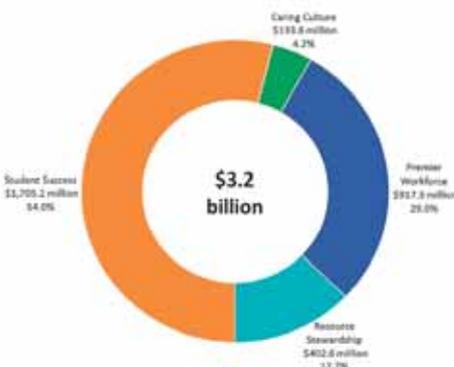
“I am happy to see the Superintendent’s Proposed FY 21 budget focuses on many of the things I feel strongly about, such as increasing our student health and wellness efforts, workforce development, market competitive compensation for our teachers and instructional assistants, and serving our special needs families. Adding money for activity directors, counselors, on-time graduation coordinators, substance abuse prevention specialists and behavior intervention specialist training can make sure we are providing students and families some of the supports they need to be successful. Our Trades for Tomorrow program is just one way to make sure we are providing students with the opportunity to enter our Northern Virginia workforce, and I would like to see that expanded,” said Elaine Tholen, Fairfax County School Board Member, Dranesville District.

During the Thursday, Feb. 6, 2020, School Board Meeting, the FY 21 budget for Fairfax County Public Schools reached a key milestone on its pathway to final approval by the Board of Supervisors in May. The Board approved a motion to adopt the Advertised Budget of \$3.2 billion, which represented an increase of \$172.2 million, or 5.8 percent, over the FY 20 Approved Budget. The motion carried unanimously with School Board Representatives Karen Corbett Sanders, Chair (Mount Vernon), Tamara Derenak Kaufax, Vice-Chair (Lee), Elaine Tholen (Dranesville), Megan McLaughlin (Braddock), Melanie K. Meren (Hunter Mill), Karl Frisch (Providence), Stella Pekarsky (Sully), Ricardy Anderson (Mason), Rachna Sizemore Heizer (Member-at-Large), Abrar Omeish (Member-at-Large) and Karen Keys-Gamarra (Member-at-Large) voting yes. School Board Representative, Laura Jane Cohen (Springfield), was absent.

MCLAUGHLIN introduced the motion. “I’m hopeful the Board of Supervisors will consider full funding for this Fiscal Year 21 budget... Later on, we will be discussing the amendments that so many of the board members have brought. It simply reflects the fact that there are tremendous needs that have still not been able to be funded due to the recent recession,” she said.

While Sizemore Heizer agreed with the tenor of the budget and its themes in terms of staff support and serving the school system’s “neediest kids,” she wanted to make sure the Board first focused on supporting all its students and staff. “That should be the primary focus,” she said. For Anderson, “all of it” was important. “It’s just a matter of how to balance our needs with

FY21 Proposed Aligned By Strategic Plan Goal Area



- \$3.2 billion School Operating Fund budget; a 5.8% increase
- Largest investments support Student Success and Premier Workforce
 - \$1.7 billion, or 54% aligned with Student Success
 - \$917.3 million, or 29% aligned with Premier Workforce

The \$3.2 billion The School Operating Fund Fund budget by Strategic Plan Goal areas.



Karen Keys-Gamarra,
Fairfax County School Board Member, Member-at-Large



Abrar Omeish,
Fairfax County School Board Member, Member-at-Large



Elaine Tholen,
Fairfax County School Board Member, Dranesville



Dr. Scott S. Brabrand,
Division Superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools

our finite resources,” she said. McLaughlin said that the budget represented the Superintendent and his team’s best thinking and would put them “on a good path forward.”

“I’ve highlighted my priorities and will be sending in amendments when we look at this again. I just want to put in another plug for...the importance of identifying areas of savings and reapportioned means of our funds to give us confidence in the budget we are moving forward with. I would have loved to have had that in advance of tonight’s vote,” said Omeish. Although the Approved Budget for the School Operating Fund represented an increase over the FY 20 Budget, it came as little surprise. According to the 2021 Budget forecast presented by Fairfax County Public Schools representatives on Nov. 26, 2019, to a joint meeting of the Board of Supervisors and School Board, expenses had continued to increase and the School Board budget needed to address Board and community priorities and school enrollment growth.

The FY 21 Approved Budget purposefully aligned with four stated Strategic Plan Goals. The most significant investment, \$1.7 billion or 54 percent of the budget supported Strategic Plan Goal 1: Student Success, to reach, challenge, and prepare every student for success in school and life. The largest changes from FY 20 included funding for enrollment and student demo-

graphics at \$28.8 million and centralized instructional resources at \$9.4 million.

The second most significant investment, \$917.3 million or 29 percent of the budget supported Strategic Plan Goal 3: Premier Workforce. The largest changes from FY 2020 included step increases for eligible employees at \$50.1 million and a market competitive compensation scale adjustment of 1 percent at \$25.3 million. The FY 21 budget also included a Classroom Instructional Support (CIS) salary scale enhancement at \$2.7 million for the second year of a three-year plan to bring the salaries of instructional assistants and public health training assistants to 50 percent of teacher salaries in the salary scale for teachers with a bachelor’s degree.

The approved budget allocated \$601.6 million for special education, an increase of 7.5 percent over the FY 20 Approved Budget to support nearly 1000 additional special education students by funding teachers, assistants and attendants. It also included multiple special education and preventive investments. A total of \$3.5 million was allocated to elementary special education chair positions at elementary schools with large special education populations and \$0.9 million for substance abuse prevention positions.

“In FY 20, we completed a multi-year plan to bring teacher salary scales to the market

average,” said Dr. Scott S. Brabrand, division superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools. “The proposed FY 21 budget continues to prioritize market competitive compensation for our teachers and staff. My goal is to have FCPS leading the way in teacher compensation in our region. We recognize that teachers have the power to change lives and deserve salaries commensurate with the critical work they do each day in our classrooms. Our focus is achieving success for each of our more than 189,000 students, and that can only be accomplished by ensuring that we have the ability to recruit and retain the very best teachers,” he said.

“We recognize that teachers have the power to change lives and deserve salaries commensurate with the critical work they do each day in our classrooms.”

— **Dr. Scott S. Brabrand,**
Division Superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools

In a separate action, the Board also approved a motion to defer consideration of all budget amendments to the April 30 and May 14, 2020 work sessions as well as additional meetings as they became available before the Board took its final action on the budget for May 21, 2020. McLaughlin introduced the motion and provided the first comment. “Our Fairfax County family knows this Board was recently seated together just a little over 30 days ago. When you are looking at a \$3.2 billion budget and a board of 12 that are so deeply dedicated to ensuring that this budget spends the money in the most effective and efficient manner possible to meet the needs of each and every child and also honor our hard-working employees, it will take more time for this Board to review over the next several months what are the various areas of funding priorities different board members would like to propose,” she said.

McLaughlin said passage of the amendment meant that the Board would be able to revise and change

Realizing Dreams and Filling Jobs

BY ANNE M. KRESS, PHD AND
TODD ROWLEY

This session, General Assembly members are considering a proposal that would help close the Commonwealth's skills gap by providing workforce scholarships to individuals without access to the community college education required to gain these skills. This proposal is a win-win-win: assisting students, growing businesses, and developing our communities.

We are describing Governor Northam's "Get Skilled, Get a Job, Give Back" (G3) budget initiative. G3 is a last-dollar workforce scholarship program designed to create opportunities for low and middle-income families. The support it provides would make-up the difference between what financial aid covers and the actual cost of tuition, fees, and books for targeted programs in high demand fields.

Qualifying students must select a career field in which employers cannot find enough qualified candidates. In Northern Virginia, these include IT, Cybersecurity, and Healthcare. In other words, G3 is an investment in continued and accelerated regional economic growth.

Because of Northern Virginia's historically low unemployment rate, it has become clear that we need to "Grow our Own" workforce through educating more people to fill high-demand and high-value positions. In fact, finding and developing talent has emerged as the top concern of members of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce. For that reason, the G3 plan has already earned the official endorsement of the Chamber.

Our initial estimate is that approximately 12 percent or 8,400 Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) students could be eligible to participate in G3, and our data show that 60 percent of NOVA students work part-time while pursuing college. They want to and need to work but lack the credentials needed to find full-time employment in high demand fields. Many cobble together multiple part-time jobs, which makes them take much more than two years to complete an associate degree. This workforce-based initiative would make it easier for our students to place a priority on quickly completing their education and finding sustaining wage careers. These graduates can stay in our region, building their families and contributing to their communities.

The Commonwealth wants G3 recipients to understand their responsibility to those who are supporting their education, so in return for this financial support, G3 students will be asked to "give back" to our state by completing two hours of community or public service for each credit hour in which they are enrolled.

Through offering more NOVA students a chance at the American Dream, we do much more than help individual students; we assure a competitive business climate, continued regional growth, and graduates connected to the communities they serve. NOVA is committed to assuring that every student succeeds, every program achieves, and every community prospers. G3 supports this mission, and we encourage you to voice your support for this transformational program.

If you would like to let General Assembly members know you support the Governor's G3 initiative, please let them know. If you are unsure who your delegate and senator might be, you can access whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov, then enter your address and find out.

Anne M. Kress, PhD is Northern Virginia Community College's new President. Todd Rowley is Chair of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce.

Natasha McKenna and the OneFairfax Imperative

One white man's journey to the cause of equity.

BY THOMAS G. GOODWIN

Natasha McKenna died five years ago today, [Feb. 8, 2015] naked, cold, frightened, shackled, muzzled, and Black, after a rough afternoon at Fairfax County jail. The social and racial inequities that contributed to her death still loom as the OneFairfax policy is extended throughout county government.

I wasn't thinking about racial inequity when I volunteered to help Sheriff Stacey Kinkaid manage what became a long hot summer of investigation, protests, and relentless adverse publicity. I wasn't even necessarily thinking about my civic duty: Here was a rare (unpaid) opportunity to work on a difficult case.

Natasha was a victim of several mental illnesses including depression. She died unexpectedly following a traumatic extraction from jail intended to enable her to get access to care, but that wound up with her being tased four times by a team of deputies. The entire episode was recorded. The Washington Post excoriated the Sheriff five (!) times editorially. I advocated a "let's-release-the-video-and-keep-our-heads-down" PR strategy that found a credible alternative villain in America's broken mental health system. An investigation found no wrongdoing.

But something very wrong obviously did happen, and my inability to grasp it fully in the moment will cause readers of color to shake their heads wearily at my clueless white privilege. I didn't get it: I believed (still do) the deputies involved meant Natasha no harm. I believed (still do) Sheriff Kincaid's human compassion matches her lifelong passion for public safety: The county's DiversionFirst program

she championed has become a national model.

Epiphany for me arrived in the form of the social theory of "intersectionality."

Well-known to people of color, intersectionality explains how categorizations such as race, class, gender, sex and disability create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Natasha was the personification of Intersectionality: She was Black ... naked, an inmate, indigent, a woman, and her mental condition seriously had deteriorated. Had I been in Natasha's place, would the outcome have been the same?

OneFairfax recognizes that, five years after Natasha's death, we as a community no longer can afford to be unaware about how inequitable life is in Fairfax. Public policy in housing, zoning, transportation, hiring, and in public safety job opportunities has long been infested. Many in our ever-more-diverse community suffer from one or more disadvantages attributable to intersectionality.

There is much to work on:

- ❖ Our unsustainable school boundaries remain unchanged, heavily weighted in favor of under-capacity wealthier, whiter school districts, poorer districts strain at the seams.

- ❖ A person of color likely will not be hired as a school administrator here.

- ❖ Kids of color lag behind their white peers in academics, even as the schools become increasingly diverse.

- ❖ And, incredibly, in parts of our affluent community there is no reliable source of food.

- ❖ Five years after Natasha's death, and ten years after they started work, dedicated leaders, residents and businesses still seek an elu-

sive solution to the intractable shortage of affordable housing. Decades of discriminatory official government policy take time to reverse.

The research underlying OneFairfax reveals that when equity becomes part of the premise of public policymaking, positive results follow. This finding is all the more potent when we recognize that individuals who once were known collectively as "minorities" soon will be the majority in Fairfax: we need all hands on deck if we want to continue to thrive.

Fortunately, "equity" already is a routine component of county decisionmaking. The pursuit of equity does not require that people of color or underserved residents receive special treatment or quotas that reduce someone else's slice of the pie, only that they have an equal opportunity to pursue their own potential. Here in Fairfax we have lots of pies.

The question of how Natasha McKenna died will always be controversial. But we know why she died. Racial and social inequity, whether it is rooted in virulent racism or clueless white privilege, has long outlived its cruelty, or for that matter its usefulness, to Fairfax.

I will never be "woke," but at least I'm awake. Today I offer my volunteer time to citizens' groups including the OneFairfax Community Roundtable, the Human Services Council and the Council to End Domestic Violence. Many opportunities abound for residents – you, for example — to boost Fairfax County's future as a great place to live, work and play, by rallying around equity and fairness in public policy.

Natasha McKenna left behind a seven-year-old daughter. Let's do this for her.

The writer is a member of Human Services Council Fairfax County; Member, Steering Committee Council to End Domestic Violence; Chairman of the Board of Directors Shelter House, Inc. and Member OneFairfax Community Roundtable.

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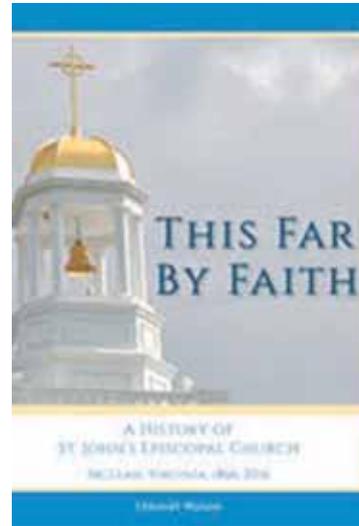
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History book authors Deborah Watson and Ramona Speicher (seated) and Sandy Smoot (right) with display designer Lori Wiseman and St. John's Episcopal Church's new rector The Rev. Joshua Walters at the display featuring the church at Dolley Madison Library.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



St. John's newly published history contains almost 300 photos, and facts and anecdotes about the McLean church.

Library Display Features McLean Church

Throughout the month of February, a display at Dolley Madison Library in McLean is featuring St. John's Episcopal Church. The display illustrates the church's history and close relationship with the community of McLean and presents a newly published book recounting the church's first 150 years.

The book, "This Far by Faith, A History of St. John's Episcopal Church, McLean, Virginia 1866-2016," was co-authored by parishioners Deborah Watson, Sandy Smoot, and Ramona Speicher. Together with parishioner and designer Lori Wiseman, they created the library display of facts and photos. A diorama depicting early parishioners worshipping together in a

private home is enchanting young library goers. Inspired by the church's 2016 "Jubilee150" celebrations, the book contains almost 300 illustrations and photographs, many of which have not been seen before. It tells the story of the church's earliest days as a Sunday school in a log cabin, and the physical relocation of its 1870's building, rolled on logs to be closer to the trolley tracks that would bring rapid growth to the hamlet of McLean. Many names and locations cited in the book will be familiar to current McLean residents, but the historical details and anecdotes bring fresh insights. The book is available for purchase through the church office (703-356-4902).

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HOME LIFE STYLE



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Textiles in vibrant colors like these throw pillows, can brighten the day of your Valentine.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PICKET FENCE

A set of Swedish towels can be a game changer for those who are environmentally conscious.

Valentine's Day Gifts for the Home

There's still time to give the gift of style.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Boxes of chocolates and bouquets of flowers are ideas that might come to the minds of those who are still on the hunt for the perfect gift to give on Cupid's Day. Though we celebrate St. Valentine in just two days, home décor aficionados come to the rescue with a few chic gift ideas for the home design enthusiasts in your life.

"Whether you love to cook or you just love to eat take-out, a pop of color on the countertop will bring a smile to your face every time you walk into your kitchen," said Anne Walker of Anne Walker Design. "For a gift that will bring joy for years to come, surprise your significant other with a bright red Kitchen Aid Stand Mixer and a set of red silicone spatulas for Valentine's Day. Such a joy to use and a delight for the eye."

A set of Swedish towels can be a game changer for those who are environmentally conscious and obsessively clean, says Courtney Thomas of the Picket Fence a home décor and gift boutique in Burke, Virginia. "You can use Swedish towels to clean anything you'd clean with a paper towel," she said. "But they're reusable and you can throw them in the dishwasher when they get dirty."

Eco-friendly and made entirely of biodegradable cellulose or a combination of wood pulp and renewable cotton, Swedish towels can be used for household cleaning projects that range from spills on a counter tops to water spots on a mirror.

For a gift that does double design duty, a candle in

a reusable vessel is an option that Thomas suggests. "We have some candles that come in a pottery container and once the candle is gone, you can still use the pottery," she said. "It's like a two-for-one. Pottery is food safe and can go in the oven and dishwasher if you want to make a dip or something in them."

For those who decide to give flowers on Valentine's Day, add a vase for displaying those buds, suggests Walker. "Instead of spending more than \$100 on roses for your sweetheart, spend under \$100 on [an] unbelievably gorgeous cocoon Vase by Danish design house, Holmegaard," she said. "Fill it with a beautiful selection of fresh flowers [and] instead of having the roses for a few days, your beloved will have this gorgeous, stylish vase for a lifetime."

Those who want to give a gift that offers a luxurious night's sleep should consider a silk pillow case, says Amanda Mertins of Patina Polished in Alexandria.

"They're a wonderful gift because they're good for your hair," she said. "And silk stays cool which might be good for those who get hot at night."

There's nothing more classic than a silver picture frame adorning one's side table or book case, suggests Mertins. "When we are designing a living room, we often walk into someone's house and see photos of their loved ones displayed in a hodgepodge of frames like wooden frames and ceramic frames. Giving silver frames allows photos of your family or children to be displayed tastefully in classic silver frames"

Bursts of color in the form of textiles can brighten them home of one's valentine, advises Mertins. "Tablecloths, runners and napkins in silk, velvet and cotton by Ardmore Design make a beautiful table setting," she said. "There are some wonderful, washable throws in all different colors that make great gifts. People love because their pretty and washable."



PHOTO BY JESSICA WALLACH/GREATERDEPTHMEDIA.COM.

From left: Amy Swaak, Hannah Menchhoff, Nancy Daugherty, Linda Sullivan, Jeanne Harrison, John Foust, Dalia A. Palchik, Matt Barry, Todd Putt, and Sol Glasner.

Traveling Players Studio Opens in Tysons Corner Center

A ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the opening of Traveling Players Studio in Tysons Corner Center was held on Wednesday, Feb. 5.

Jeanne Harrison, Founder & Producing Artistic Director for Traveling Players Ensemble, kicked off the evening recognizing the people instrumental in making the Traveling Players Studio a reality: Matt Barry, AVP - Property Management; Todd Putt, Senior Manager Marketing; and Hillary Zahm, Senior Development Manager, with Macerich, the owner of Tysons Corner Center. Sol Glasner, President of the Tysons Partnership provided strategic networking.

ELECTED OFFICIALS and key donors were on hand to celebrate this milestone with Traveling Players. Dalia A. Palchik, Fairfax County Supervisor for Providence District, and John Foust, Fairfax County Supervisor for Dranesville District, congratulated Traveling Players on their new rehearsal space. Chairman McKay was represented by Hannah Menchhoff, Communications Specialist. Joining the ribbon cutting ceremony were Linda Sullivan, President & CEO of ARTSFAIRFAX; Amy Swaak, President of the McLean Community Foundation; and Nancy Daugherty, Arts Education Specialist with the National Endowment for the Arts who have provided invaluable grant support to Traveling Players over the years.

Most people know Traveling Players Ensemble as the nationally awarded educational theatre company with vibrant summer programs in residence at The Madeira School. For 18 years, Traveling Players has trained young artists in grades 3-12 in classical theatre and performed in beautiful historic places, like Shenandoah National Park where they perform Shakespeare in the Park. Beginning in 2007, they expanded to include winter performances and school-year classes in the McLean community, most recently at the Old

Upcoming Activities

❖ In April, Traveling Players will launch a brand new Spring Break Acting Intensive Camp. Students in grades 6-8 who want to deepen their acting training or get to know Traveling Players better will spend the week in scene study workshops where they will delve into the core of the scenes through rehearsals and improvisational games that teach foundational acting skills.

❖ Beginning this summer, Traveling Players has expanded their award winning offerings of auditioned programs. Performers, new and returning, in grades 4-8 now have the option of either registering for camp as normal or auditioning for a faster paced, more in depth training.

❖ High School Students in grades 8-12 can audition for the elite pre-college programs: four-week Shakespeare Ensemble or seven-week Shakespeare Troupe. The next round of auditions are Feb. 15, 16, and 17 in the Studio at Tysons Corner Center.

Firehouse Teen Center.

"We are overjoyed to be aligned with Macerich as a Community Partner," says Founder and Producing Artistic Director, Jeanne Harrison, "Tysons Corner Center is already so popular with our families and audiences. Our students loved performing on The Plaza this past summer and already consider the Studio a second home in which to train and perform during the school year."

THE STUDIO opened Jan. 11 with 32 students beginning rehearsals for *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*. These shows will be performed for the public in Tysons Corner Center on March 14, 15, 21, and 22.

The new 4200 square foot Studio allows Traveling Players to work with more students year-round, taking acting classes, auditioning, rehearsing and performing, all in the mall and on the plaza in metro accessible Tysons Corner Center.

For more information, visit travelingplayers.org or call 703-987-1712.

What's Not to Love About McLean?

The third annual I Love McLean Party held at the McLean Community Center.

BY OLIVIA ANELLO
THE CONNECTION

On Saturday afternoon, the McLean Citizens Association hosted the third annual I Love McLean Party at the McLean Community Center. Many local organizations and families were in attendance, such as members of the McLean Volunteer Fire Department, the McLean Community Village Association, and the Spring Hill Elementary School Chorus. Carolyn Gore-Ashe, an art teacher at Spring Hill Elementary and a board member of the McLean Project for the Arts, made sure to get a good viewing spot before the choral performance to “watch [her] girls.” The theme of the party was the utmost support for one another, and the sense of community.

Bill Crosby, Treasurer of the MCA, spoke of the many great qualities about McLean. A resident of McLean since 1980, Crosby remembers doing research about the area with his wife while his children were young; “We found [McLean] on the map and the area was great, it was good for kids, but also in close proximity to D.C., the education is the best... It was all a matter of finding a house.” Crosby’s children started in Churchill Road Elementary School in McLean and went through Longfellow Middle School, then graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School. Both children went on to have successful college careers, one graduating from Harvard Law School, and the other at the top of her class at the University of Virginia. Crosby mentioned that he and his children “owe it all to the education they received in McLean and Fairfax County.” He also concluded that “Everything is just right about McLean.”

Another one of the many great things about McLean is that the town is for all ages, and the McLean Community Village Association is what helps to keep it that way. The MCVA’s goal is to be a resource for those who are retired and to keep them engaged in the community. Juan Tuason, President of the MCVA, is a McLean native himself, and grew up attending Saint John Academy and Bishop O’Connell High School. A father of four, Tuason’s children were also young graduates of Saint John Academy and have gone on, or are about to graduate from McLean High School and Bishop O’Connell. Tuason admired the stability of McLean and expressed that “the community is everything.” He continued, “My kids and their friends have grown up together, we’ve known them and their families for the last 11 years... They’re all like second cousins at this point,” Tuason reflected and said, “Us parents have gotten job offers in the last several years, and we all think, ‘How could we possibly uproot this life in McLean?’”

The McLean Project for the Arts also joined the festivities on Saturday to express their love and gratitude for McLean. Executive Director, Lori Carbonneau addressed



MPA board members Silvija Strikis, Barbara Hawthorn, Lori Carbonneau, and Pamela Danner share their upcoming projects for the community.



Carolyn Gore-Ashe, an MPA board member and art teacher at Spring Hill, assisted children with designing Valentine’s Day cards.



The McLean Citizens Association displayed posters for every decade the community organization has been running. Formerly called the McLean School and Civic League, the MCA has been serving McLean for more than 100 years.



MCVA President, Juan Tuason, addressed the crowd and shared the importance of supporting every member of the McLean community.

the crowd and was accompanied by several MPA board members. Carbonneau and her board members were eager to share the MPA’s latest initiatives for McLean, that involve the potential development of an arts

and education center at Clemyjontri Park. The center would be inside the former Lebowitz family home, and would allow the space for printing presses, ceramic wheels, and other studio equipment that will be

available to students enrolled in MPA camps and programs. The MPA and the Fairfax County Park Authority will host an open house at the McLean Community Center on Feb. 24 at 6:30 to further discuss the plans.

PHOTOS BY OLIVIA ANELLO/THE CONNECTION

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Hogwart's Vacation Bible School

Registration. At Holy Comforter Episcopal Church, 543 Beulah Road, NE, Vienna. The camp dates are June 22-26, 2020 for morning or afternoon sessions. Children 5 through 11 years old are invited to participate in this popular and unique summer camp experience which explores the Christian themes and lessons in the Harry Potter stories. Holy Comforter Episcopal Church in Vienna is magically converted into Hogwarts School where children attend "classes" taught by favorite professors including Professors McGonagall, Snape, Hooch, and Binns. Teenage prefects lead age level groups to their activities and all students share a closing snack in the Great Hall. This year's theme will be based on book 2, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. Registration forms will be in the Church Office and online. More information: http://www.holycomforter.com/Children/Vacation_Bible_School/

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. They play on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna. For more information, visit the web site www.goldengirls.org

"The Royal." Now thru Feb. 23. At 1st Stage in Tysons, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. "The Royale" by Marco Ramirez, Directed by Paige Hernandez. Jay "The Sport" Jackson dreams of being the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world, but in the racially segregated world of boxing in 1905, the odds are stacked against him. When a crooked boxing promoter hatches a plan for "the fight of the century," "The Sport" might land a place in the ring with the reigning white heavyweight champion. Show times are Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 and 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$42 general admission, \$39 seniors (65+), \$15 students and military. Purchase online at www.1ststage.org or 703-854-1856.

Library Display Features Church. Thru March 1. A display at Dolley Madison Library in McLean is featuring St. John's Episcopal Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The display illustrates the church's history and close relationship with the community of McLean and presents a newly published book recounting the church's first 150 years. The book, This Far by Faith, A History of St. John's Episcopal Church, McLean, Virginia 1866-2016, was co-authored by parishioners Deborah Watson, Sandy Smoot, and Ramona Speicher. Together with designer Lori Wiseman, they created the library display of facts and photos. A diorama depicting early parishioners worshipping together in a private home is enchanting young library-goers. The book is available for purchase through the church office (703-356-4902).

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 12

Preschool Storytime. 10:30 a.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Have fun with your child and build early literacy foundations for reading success. Age 3-5 with adult.

Mystery Book Club. 1 p.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Join in the monthly unraveling of a whodunit or thriller. The February selection is Anatomy of a Murder by Robert Traver. Adults.

Qigong Introduction. 2 p.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Learn to practice the Ancient Chinese exercises of Qigong to improve your health and increase your vitality. Adults and Older Adults. No registration necessary, but space is limited to first 20 people. First come, first served.

Maggie Miles Performs. 7:30 p.m. At Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave., E, Vienna. Meet alt-pop newcomer Maggie Miles, a 20-year-old alternative artist, that is much like her peers Maggie Rogers and Billie Eilish, she exudes authenticity which the modern generation is desperately craving.

FRIDAY/FEB. 14

Karate for Kids. 5 p.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Join the Karate to gain powerful tools for self-defense, inner-

Celtic Concert

Beth Patterson will appear at the Old Brogue Irish Pub on Feb. 23.

SUNDAY/FEB. 23

Beth Patterson Performs. 5 p.m. and 7:15 p.m. At The Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. The Old Brogue Irish Pub and Barnaby Productions, Inc. present the 31st season of family friendly, Winter Traditional Celtic Concerts. Featuring internationally recognized Celtic musicians, the concerts are performed in a listening room by the fireside. Tickets must be purchased in advance at www.oldbrogue.com: \$20 general admission/\$15 children under 12. Visit oldbrogue.com or call the Old Brogue at 703-759-3309.



Boolean Girl Clubhouse

The Boolean Girl Clubhouse meets Feb. 22 in Falls Church.

SATURDAY/FEB. 22

Boolean Girl Clubhouse. 1-4 p.m. Campus of Virginia Tech Falls Church, Think a Bit Lab, 7054 Haycock Road, Falls Church. Join Arlington-based nonprofit Boolean Girl at the clubhouse. Hosted in partnership with Virginia Tech, girls and non-binary individuals will learn to code and build electronics in a fun, collaborative setting. Scholarships available for families in need by registering for the Boolean Girl Clubhouse Scholarship. All experience levels are welcome. Cost is \$5-\$65. Email brian.moran@booleangirl.org. Visit the website: booleangirl.org/clubs

strength and a strong, healthy body. Ages 4 and up.

SATURDAY/FEB. 15

Faith & Public Policy Breakfast. 8:30-10:30 a.m. At Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. This Faith & Public Policy Breakfast will be on the topic of Youth & Criminal Justice Reform. Our speaker is Theo Stamos, former Arlington County Commonwealth's Attorney. The program will begin with a light breakfast; the program will begin at 9 a.m. in the Chapel. You do not need to be a member of Lewinsville to attend; all are welcome. Call the church office during normal business hours: 703-356-7200. Visit the website: <https://www.lewinsville.org/events/faith-public-policy-breakfast/>

Art, Flowers, Chocolates. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Artists' Atelier & Arts of Great Falls Gallery, 756 Walker Road, Great Falls. Join Atelier members and guest artist, jeweler JJ Singh in an all-day celebration of the "Reflections of Love: Art of the Heart" exhibit featuring art in diverse mediums and styles. Free. Email:



tales and music that celebrate the traditions of Africa. Presented by Bright Star Theatre Company and sponsored by the Friends of Oakton Library. All ages.

Singer-songwriter Rorie. 8 p.m. At Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave., E, Vienna. She will debut her full-length album 'Valley in the Mirror' released on Jan. 31.

FEB. 15-16

Coffee Readings. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At the Turkish Coffee Lady in Tysons Corner Center, Ground Floor, McLean. The promotion is inspired by the Turkish tradition of reading your fortune in the coffee grounds found at the bottom of the cup after enjoying a delicious brew: Turkish coffee dregs known as "telve" allows fortune readers to see your future in the most scrumptious way. As part of the Valentine's Day campaign, visitors who shop on February 14th can enter a raffle for complimentary fortune reading sessions, coffee workshops and other surprise gift items. A BOGO special will also warm the hearts of gourmet coffee lovers on Valentine's Day. Space is limited. Private sessions can be booked on turkishcoffeelady.com. Guests who make their bookings online will receive a 10-minute reading, authentic Turkish coffee and gourmet baklava. For questions and reservations, email at hello@turkishcoffeelady.com or call (202) 670-4360.

SUNDAY/FEB. 16

Breakfast Buffet. 8 a.m. to noon. At Vienna American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, N, Vienna. Breakfast buffet for adults \$10, children 12 and under \$4.

Get omelets, scrambled eggs, blueberry pancakes, bacon, sausage, biscuits and gravy and more. Call 703-938-6580.

Cooperstown String Quartet. 4 p.m. At Saint Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Uniting faculty from the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and East Carolina University, this quartet has played on several continents and at the most prestigious venues in the world. Their illuminating and penetrating understanding of Beethoven bring you from his early tribute to Haydn (op. 18 no. 1) to his fully-formed, almost radical later style (op. 130). Students 17 and under and active military are admitted free of charge. A pre-concert lecture by Music Director A. Scott Wood will begin at 3:15 pm, 45 minutes prior to the start of the concert. A reception will follow the concert, at which attendees may meet and chat with the performers and fellow music lovers. Tickets are \$40 and may be purchased at the door, online at <http://www.amadeusconcerts.com> or via telephone at 703-759-5334.

KAPO Concert. 5 p.m. and 7:15 p.m. At The Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Featuring KAPO: the music of Karen Ashbrook and Paul Oorts. The Old Brogue Irish Pub of Great Falls, and Barnaby Productions, Inc. present the 31st season of family friendly, Winter Traditional Celtic Concerts. Featuring internationally recognized Celtic musicians, the concerts are performed in a listening room by the fireside. Tickets must be purchased in advance at oldbrogue.com: \$20 general admission/\$15 children under 12.

TUESDAY/FEB. 18

Toddler Tales. 10:30 a.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Have fun with your child and build early literacy foundations for reading success. Age 18 months-3 years with adults.

History Comes Alive. 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. At River Bend, 375 Walker Road, Great Falls. Great Falls Senior Center (GFSC) is welcoming back Mary Ann Jung's interactive shows. This award-winning actress and Smithsonian scholar has been recreating history's most fascinating women for more than 35 years with a style like no other. Jung researches and writes her own scripts and performs in authentic costumes, accents and attitudes for her character's eras. This year, learn the story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who was an abolitionist, human rights activist and one of the first leaders of the woman's rights movement. Reservations are required; email Polly Fitzgerald at pollyfitz1@verizon.net or call 703-759-4345. Membership dues (\$25 per person) and applications for 2020 will be available at the Hospitality Table or visit gfseniors.org and pay online.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

School Board Adopts \$3.2 Billion Budget

FROM PAGE 3

any portion of the Advertised Budget before the final vote on May 21. “It is not restricted simply to the \$6 million line item for staffing initiatives. Instead, board members can continue to propose budget questions and additional amendments beyond those submitted tonight. Currently, we have 23 proposed amendments that have been posted to board docs... “I know you’ve spent countless hours looking through this incredibly complex budget to try and determine again how do we honor our students and employees in the best manner possible,” she said. McLaughlin added she looked forward to continued conversations on school nurses, middle school start times, class size relief, substitute pay, challenges in attracting substitutes and equitable pay raises for Fairfax County Public School employees that mirror county government employees. “We are one Fairfax family. I feel it’s going to be extremely important that whatever pay raises the county executive to determine through the revenue can be afforded to county employees. I hope they will recognize and honor that same amount of funding needs to be identified and provided to the school system so we can honor our same hard-working employees,” she said.

Anderson said that as they continued to look at the budget and talk about priorities, she would bring to this work, the lens she brought to her previous work. “How do we advance all of our groups; how do we balance finite resources again to advance every single stakeholder that we have, students, teachers and all of the other groups ... I’m also looking forward to having some conversations regarding equity. For me, that is the lens through which I take a look at this budget. How do we ensure that we are closing the gaps wherever they exist,” Anderson said referencing future discussions on the amendments.

Frisch asked for clarification if, during the future work sessions, they would be able to discuss program budgets as well the advertised budget. Sanders said that the Board would be having a retreat on March 9. “Strategic Plan and individual programs will be reviewed with the board so that we can take a deeper dive on how each of the individual programs contributes towards the strategic objectives and provide you with the opportunity to influence that going forward,” Sanders said.

AMONG ITS FINAL ACTIONS, the Board approved a motion in a vote of 9-2 related to the budget introduced by Meren. It directed the Superintendent to update the security plan to include a plan for installing vestibules in schools providing secured visitor access space where none currently existed by April 30, 2020. During the discussion, Pekarsky said she would not be able to support this at this time unless she had an idea of the monetary. Keys-Gamarra said, “We had extensive conversation with our security review, and as I recall these vestibules were part of

that, so I am not understanding why we need this, particularly, when it is not in this year’s budget, and we don’t even know how much money we are talking about.”

Vice-Chair Derenak Kaufax said she was “still very much struggling; that this was a capital improvement plan putting vestibules in a school for security,” and how did that equate putting in this budget. Marty Smith, Chief Operating Officer Fairfax County, said, “When we look to any changes to our buildings we think of those as renovations to our buildings. But the CIP is for overall building renovations, and the CIP is used for new construction. So, when we look at these types of renovations to buildings we have used operating funds in the past to support these types of renovations, while it has an impact on our facilities, it’s not necessarily coming from the same funding stream.”

“We are not committing funds, we are asking for a plan,” said Chair Sanders. According to boarddocs.com, the approved amended motion read, “...move approval of a follow-on motion to direct the Superintendent to bring an update of the security plan to include a plan for installing vestibules in schools to provide secured visitor access space where none currently exists by April 30, 2020. Specifically, compile data about the frequency of schools having entryway vestibules that serve as security checkpoints before visitors gain access to areas with students; compared with schools that, due to design features, allow visitors to cross open space or hallways before checking in to the main office. The plan will include the timeline and cost to outfit all schools with needed vestibules or improvements that will create visitor holding spaces before entering spaces where students are.” McLaughlin, Anderson, Meren, Sizemore Heizer, Tholen, Sanders, Keys-Gamarra and Omeish, Frisch voted yes. Derenak Kaufax and Pekarsky voted no.

“As a board, we have a lot that we want to accomplish. In the weeks ahead, we hope to gain a better understanding of what we can anticipate in state aid and what the transfer will be from Fairfax County,” said Tholen.

SCREENSHOTS VIA FAIRFAX COUNTY VIDEO



Melanie K. Meren, Fairfax County School Board Member, Hunter Mill



Megan McLaughlin, Fairfax County School Board Member, Braddock



Rachna Sizemore Heizer, School Board Member, Member-at-Large



Karl Frisch, Fairfax County School Board Member, Providence

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Employment

Sr. Mgr., Enterprise Info. Mgmt. (EIM) Resource Planning: Establish priorities, analyze reqmnts., bld. detailed dsngns. & schedule releases to maximize efficiency & lead all aspects of dvlpmt. & delivery of EIM projects & releases. Must have exp. in SDLC; Reporting/Analytics Skills in JMP, SPSS, SSAS, SSRS, Crystal Reports, Python, PL/SQL, & Big Data/Hadoop skills incl. HDFS, Storm, Sqoop, Hive, Kafka, Sotr (Hortonworks Data Platform) & Amazon Redshift. Job in McLean, VA. Mail ltr./CV to M. Combs, Hilton Domestic Operating Co., 7930 Jones Branch Dr., McLean, VA 22102.

Announcements



**Brown v. Board of Education
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The Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program was established by the Virginia General Assembly in 2004 to provide educational opportunities for persons who were denied an education in Virginia due to the closing of the public schools during Massive Resistance between 1954 and 1964. The program is open to new eligible applicants for the 2020-2021 school year. For applications and information on eligibility, visit:

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Announcements

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

Job Club. 4 p.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Have questions about finding or excelling in a job? Receive one-on-one help from a specialist. Presented by Service Source. Age 16-Adult.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 19

Preschool Storytime. 10:30 a.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Have fun with your child and build early literacy foundations for reading success. Age 3-5 with adult.

Volunteer for the Environment. 6:30-8:30 p.m. At Providence Community Center, 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax. Join in working to combat climate change and global warming. Activities include campaigning on massive data centers and fighting oil and gas pipelines in Virginia. Come be part of the solutions. Free. Email sbonney001@aol.com.

THURSDAY/FEB. 20

Brain and Breathing. 10-11 a.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, Vienna. In this course, you will learn breathing exercises designed to help support brain function. Instructor: Dr. Charles Masarsky of Vienna Chiropractic. Free. Call 701-255-7801.

Adventures in Learning. 10 a.m. At Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. "Let it Go-Dealing With the Emotional Connection to Items" - Terri Blanchette. Cost is \$45 per semester. To Register/Questions: Call 703-281-0538. View the schedule of classes and registration form at <http://www.scov.org/ail-open-house>.

Acoustic Autumn Live Music. 6:30-9 p.m. At Blend 111, 111 Church Street, NW, Vienna. Laissez Foure is an acoustic swing quartet playing classics from the '30s and '40s. The group consists of acoustic bass, swing rhythm guitar, saxophone/clarinet, and trumpet. In the tradition of New Orleans jazz, the quartet emphasizes an acoustic sound when feasible and plays charts by Armstrong, Ellington, Count Basie and others from the era.

The ABCs of CBD and Medical Marijuana. 7:30-9 p.m. At Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave., E, Vienna. The discussion will provide medical information about CBD/THC, the differences between CBD and medical marijuana, and how people can legally obtain medical marijuana in Virginia. Free. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/5843108>



Nora Jane Struthers Concert

Nashville-based singer/songwriter Nora Jane Struthers with Sarah Borges and the Broken Singles.

FRIDAY/FEB. 21

Nora Jane Struthers Concert. 8 p.m. At Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave., E, Vienna. Nashville-based singer/songwriter Nora Jane Struthers is a rootsy artist with a bent toward mixing traditional country and contemporary rock stylings into her passionate Americana sound. Also on stage, Sarah Borges and the Broken Singles. Tickets \$15-\$25. Visit www.jamminjava.com

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Announcements

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BULLETIN

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

THURSDAY/FEB. 13

Fostering Protective Factors in Children. 10 a.m. to noon. At Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1, Room 100, Dunn Loring. Every adult can foster protective factors and build resiliency in children and adolescents. Presented by Ryan Dickerson, FCPS School Psychologist and Jenn Spears, FCPS Mental Wellness Specialist. Topics include: What does the Fairfax County Youth Survey data show us? Identifying Protective Factors and Assets (Three to Succeed); Strategies for building protective factors and assets; Understanding resilience and how to increase your child's ability to respond to challenges.

TUESDAY/FEB. 18

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Children and Adolescents. 10 a.m. to noon. At Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance One, Room 100, Dunn Loring. Join Dr. Lisa M. Cullins, attending physician in the Emotion and Development Branch at the National Institute of Mental Health for this highly informative workshop. She will provide current research on: Diagnostic Criteria; Signs and Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as manifested in children and adolescents; Treatment Options, Resources and Collaborations.

THURSDAY/FEB. 20

Adventures in Learning. At Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. 10 - 10:55 a.m. "Let it Go-Dealing With the Emotional Connection to Items" - Terri Blanchette; 11 - 11:55 a.m. "History of Popular Music - South of the Potomac" - Ken Avis "Real Downton Abbey and Surrounding Neighborhood" - John Capps; 1-2 p.m. "Media Bias and Impact of Technology" - Steve Miska; Cost is \$45 per semester. To Register/Questions: Call 703-281-0538. View the schedule of classes and registration form at <http://www.scov.org/ail-open-house>.

FRIDAY/FEB. 21

Parenting Your Teen. 10 a.m. to noon. At Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1, Room 100, Dunn Loring. Learn important strategies to help form a positive relationship with your teen. Topics include: Understanding the development of the teen brain; Recognizing ways to create a positive climate in the home; Identifying constructive discipline approaches; Increasing more productive and effective communication strategies; Presented by Michele Tureaud, FCPS Behavior Intervention Teacher.

MONDAY/FEB. 24

Possible Arts Center at Clemyjontri Park. 7 p.m. The Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and the McLean Project for the Arts (MPA) will host a public open house to discuss the potential for development of an arts and education center at Clemyjontri Park. The meeting will take place in MPA's Emerson Gallery at the McLean Community Center, located at 1234 Ingleside Avenue in McLean.

THURSDAY/FEB. 27

Adventures in Learning. At Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. 10- 10:55 a.m. "The Joy of Planning Ahead" - Rachel McLean; 11 - 11:55 a.m. "Generational Differences for Personality Traits" - Bill Weech; 1-2 p.m. "Journey to the Top of the World" - Colonel Phil Walsh; Cost is \$45 per semester. To Register/Questions: Call 703-281-0538. View the schedule of classes and registration form at <http://www.scov.org/ail-open-house>.

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All Gowned Up



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

All Gowned Up And somewhere to go, or so I thought. I had checked in at the front desk. I was given a number, and almost immediately, it was called. I said good-bye to Team Lourie and was led back to a staging area (beds, curtains, doctors, nurses) where I was told I would see them both before surgery. There I was given a gown, no-slip socks and a hair net to change into, and instructed to place all my clothes (underwear, too) into two plastic bags and then told to pull back the privacy curtain and lie back on the bed.

Within a few minutes a female nurse, part of a very attentive and conscientious staff, began to attend me. She started an I.V. in my left forearm, wrapped a blood pressure cuff around my right bicep and then stuck half-a-dozen or so EKG contacts over the front me and down my legs to monitor my heart. In addition, the typical other vitals: oxygen, pulse and temperature were taken. At that point, it appeared that I had passed muster. My surgeon stopped by for a brief visit and all was progressing normally. Until that is when the anesthesiologist came by for what I thought was the final step. It was the final step alright. She said that "due to an abundance of caution," she was uncomfortable proceeding with the surgery. She explained that the facility (not a hospital) where I was to undergo the surgery, was not fully equipped to respond to certain potential complications which might occur which involved a breathing tube, a ventilator and the weakness of my lungs, so she sent me packing (unpacking actually). Disappointed, as you might imagine, we all left the facility and waited for further instructions.

By the end of the day, arrangements had been made to reschedule my surgery at a local hospital on Wednesday, a mere two day delay. I could live with that. At home, I resumed my post-shower, pre-surgery, infection-preventing scrub as I had for the previously scheduled surgery. This time surgery was scheduled for 1:30 pm instead of the 10:50 am it had been on Monday. Still, if all went well, I could be released that same day, under someone else's recognition of course, given the late hour, but likely recuperating at home in my own bed.

On Wednesday, I arrived at the hospital two hours before surgery as directed and began the now familiar process. Once again I was prepped and ready. This time there were no slip-ups. Around 2:15 I was wheeled into the operating room and introduced to the staff on hand. I was asked my name, date of birth and the reason for surgery that day. Answering correctly, the next step involved an oxygen mask coming down over my nose and mouth and being asked to breathe normally, which I did, and the rest, as they say, is history.

It turned out that the anesthesiologist was right to be cautious. My four-hour outpatient surgery turned into a seven-hour admission-to-the-hospital major surgery with complications. Due to my "Adam's Apple" tumor being embedded into/under my collarbone, a thoracic surgeon was brought into consult about possibly cracking open my chest to get at the remaining cancer. Fortunately, a decision was made not to do so and I was wheeled back to recovery and eventually to my room for the night where at 12:35 am, while lying in my bed, my eyes opened and I saw my wife, Dina and close friend, Rita, who had stayed into the wee hours in an amazing show of support.

The next day, after an uncomfortable night in my hospital bed, I was discharged, four hours after the process began. (As you may or may not know, getting discharged from the hospital is hardly a straight line from your hospital room to your curbside pick up.) I was given instructions, prescriptions and follow-up appointments. My thyroid gland, parathyroid, "Adam's Apple" tumor and a few lymph nodes stayed behind. Can't say that I miss any of them. Still, my body may miss them so I'll likely have some post-op work to do at home. Nevertheless, progress has been made for which I'm grateful.

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



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