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on Valentine's Day.

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FEBRUARY 19-25, 2020

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Graduates of the 2017 Citizens Fire and Rescue Academy class.

Applications Accepted for Community Fire and Rescue Academy

Want to learn more about the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department? Want to participate in an interesting, fun-filled, eight-week program that will show you what firefighters and paramedics do every day?

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CFRA Application will be accepted until March 9, 2020. The Academy will begin March 26, 2020, and will meet for eight consecutive Thursdays, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and ending on May 14, 2020. There is no charge to participants.

To learn more about the program and to sign up, go to: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire-ems/cfra>

It is important to note the Community Fire and Rescue Academy is a vehicle that provides an overview of, and in-depth look at, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. The Community Fire and Rescue Academy is not intended to train participants as firefighters/EMTs or to assist in an emergency situation.

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A Chance to View the Fascinating and Incredible

2019 Audubon Photography Award Winners Exhibition stops in Reston.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

There's still time to visit the traveling 2019 Audubon Photography Award Winners Exhibition presented in association with Nature's Best Photography. Running through Feb. 26, the photos covering a range of species and geographic locations can be viewed for free at Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive in Reston. The exhibit showcases ten large-scale, award-winning and runner-up images selected from 2,253 entrants hailing from all 50 states, Washington D.C. and 10 Canadian provinces and territories.

"This is the 10th year of the competition, and the third time Walker Nature Center and Audubon Society of Northern Virginia have partnered to present the show. Up until four years ago, the photographs were only shown in "Audubon Magazine," but in 2017, large-scale prints were offered for exhibition to Audubon chapters throughout the United States," said Joanne Bauer, contact for the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia. "It is always a delight to see visitors' reactions to the prints and hear which one is their favorite, although it is so hard to pick. The prints have inspired lots of memory sharing and pure awe about our avian neighbors nearby and afar. We couldn't ask for better partners than Audubon Society of Northern Virginia and Friends of Reston," said Nature Center Manager Katie Shaw.

MANY of the award-winning images displayed in the Walker Nature Center portrayed irreproducible moments in avian life. Photographer Kevin Ebi shot the "incredible image" as one viewer at the Nature Center described it of a Bald Eagle and red fox kit in a dramatic struggle over a rabbit. "I expected to have only a split second to capture the theft in one explosive frame; instead, the eagle snagged the fox and rabbit, carrying both 20 feet off the ground," said Ebi in his "Story Behind the Shot" that accompanied the image. A moment-by-moment account followed, leading up to the final scene in the avian drama.

In addition to the "Story Behind the Shot" that accompanied each photo was a "Camera" description, noting model, type of lens, shutter speed, f-stop and ISO setting. Photographers used either Canon or Nikon cameras to shoot the images on display, no cell phone images here. However, pros did not necessarily shoot all the winning photos exhibited and neither was the Grand Prize Winner, a professional. Judges selected local amateur photographer Kathrin Swoboda as Grand Prize Winner, given her photo of a Red-winged Blackbird taken at Huntley Meadow Park, Alexandria, and shot with a Nikon. In the "Story Behind the Shot," Swoboda said, "I visit this park near my home to photograph blackbirds on cold mornings, often aiming to capture the 'smoke rings' that form from their breath as they sing out."

According to Bauer, the Walker Nature Center seemed like an ideal setting for the exhibition. "Visitors get a close-up view of high-quality photographs in a natural setting where the view out the windows



Susan Sims, Reston Association Staff, Walker Nature Center takes a closer look at a Professional Honorable Mention Winner at the 2019 Audubon Photography Award Winners Exhibition held at Walker Nature Center in Reston.



Kyle and John Cygrymus wonder how Kathrin Swoboda, Photographer and Grand Prize Winner in the 2019 Audubon Awards, captured the smoke rings formed from the breath of a Red-winged Blackbird she photographed early morning in Huntley Meadow Park, Alexandria.

reflects the beauty wildlife photographers find in the wider world," Bauer said. On Sun., John and Kyle Cygrymus of Pennsylvania visited the Walker Nature Center. After exploring the nearby grounds and pathways, they viewed the exhibit. "I made sure I was here early enough so I could enjoy the Walker Nature Center and the Audubon Photography Award Winners Exhibition," said John. With a smile, Kyle added: "I'm a bird aficionado; my favorite is Eastern Wild Turkey." Inside, father and son wandered about the exhibit. They got close to the images, looked hard, laughed and went from one to the next, sharing what they liked and what they didn't. "Incredible," said John. Hands down, father and son, voted Ebi's photo of the Bald Eagle their favorite.

THE SHOW will be on exhibit through Feb. 26 at the Walker Nature Center's Nature House. The hours are Monday and Wednesday-Friday, 9-5 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. and Sunday 10-4 p.m. The show will be exhibited next at Huntley Meadows Visitors Center, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria, from March 4 - 25.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Chloe Richmond and Brendan Miers of Chantilly prepare for a romantic tour of Reston Town Center in a horse-drawn carriage on Valentine's Day.

Clip Cloppin' to That Lovin' Feeling

Horse-drawn carriage rides in Reston Town Center.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Reston Town Center offered a bit of that lovin' feeling Valentine's Day, Fri., Feb. 14. Once again, picturesque horse-drawn carriages pulled by teams of Belgian Draft horses toured the downtown center and attracted couples, families and friends to the magical fun. Proceeds benefited the Scholarship Fund of Leadership Fairfax.

The crisp air was not a deterrent to Chloe Richmond and Brendan Miers of Chantilly, who climbed aboard for a fairytale clip-clop ride down Market Street. With driver John Moore of Harmon's Horse Drawn Carriages at the reins, the couple snuggled under a blanket in the forward seat at the rear of the vis-à-vis. Richmond said she planned the evening for Miers. "It's my Valentine's Day gift. Next, we're going to dinner and seeing a movie, Richmond said.

Karen Cleveland, President and CEO of Leadership Fairfax,

also enjoyed the opportunity for a bit of magic. "We love celebrating at Reston Town Center with all the happy couples and families on Valentine's Day. The carriage rides bring nostalgia into Reston and add the perfect romantic touch. My husband and I plan to take a ride before having dinner at Mon Ami Gabi," said Cleveland. As the evening wore on, the carriage rides delighted not only couples but also families and friends alike, topping off their Valentine's Day celebrations with a little fun.

Leadership Fairfax is a registered 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization.

According to its website, the nonprofit offers community leadership development programs to a broad range of applicants. For some, the Scholarship Fund allows them to participate in the program and, as graduates, better reflect the community in which they live and work. Visit www.leadershipfairfax.org for more information.

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

OPINION

Black History Month 2020

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



A tradition in the House of Delegates that has come about in recent years is to have a speech at the beginning of each daily session during February about a Black person. Some speeches are about well-known historic figures; most are about lesser-known Black persons who have made contributions to their communities and to the state. After all, the point of Black History Month is to have all of us gain a greater knowledge and appreciation of Black persons' contributions to our history. The Legislative Black Caucus organizes the event, and I am pleased to have been invited to speak each year at one of the daily sessions. This year I spoke about the late Gwen Ifill of PBS NewsHour and Washington Week in Review who was the first Black woman to become a national news commentator. I always appreciated receiving the daily news from her in her calm and professional manner. Not all speeches are about historic figures; one del-

egate spoke this year about his experiences of growing up Black.

I predict that in future years a speech will be made on the floor of the House of Delegates about the 2020 Virginia General Assembly being a transformative event in Black history. Black experience accounts for a major portion of the story in a state that unfortunately has been known for centuries for its racist policies. The first enslaved Africans were brought to Virginia in 1619, and the slave codes that were enacted to keep them subjected as slaves were inhumane. When the tobacco fields were no longer productive, Virginia's chief source of income became the selling of slaves into the deep South. Even the freeing of the slaves with the Civil War did not bring equal rights to Virginia's Black population. Slave codes were replaced by Jim Crow laws. Voting by Blacks was restricted. Their separate schools and other accommodations were not equal.

Supreme Court decisions and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 brought about changes that started Black

people on the way to greater freedom. A successful lawsuit against gerrymandering in the state along with greater voter participation brought about a record number of Black candidates being elected to the General Assembly. Black legislators took on greater roles of responsibility in the 2020 session of the legislature. The first Black woman was elected Majority Leader of the House of Delegates, and the first Black woman was elected President of the State Senate. While there had been a few Black committee chairs over the years in the House of Delegates, half of the fourteen committee chairs are now Black. Vestiges of Jim Crow laws that remained in the Code even though they had been overturned by the courts are being stripped away. Localities are being given permission to deal with Confederate monuments that were the symbols of Jim Crowism. Laws that were unevenly applied to Black persons are being amended or repealed. Black cemeteries are being cared for as the Confederate cemeteries were for many years. A commission is going to look at the teaching of Black history in our schools to ensure that it tells the whole story. Major strides are being made in this month of Black history!

Lake Anne Progress Despite Governance

BY JOHN LOVAAS
RESTON IMPACT PRODUCER/HOST



Lake Anne is the historic center of Reston, the heart of Robert E. Simon's nationally renowned planned community and a visually lovely place to live or visit. While it is pretty all year round, spring is my favorite time at Lake Anne.

Washington Plaza, the commercial part of the Lake Anne Village Center was built in 1964-5 and was an active gathering place for the new community initially with only a few hundred residents. As Reston grew and new commercial centers opened, commercial activity slowed and some businesses, including the Safeway grocery, closed. In the 1990s, Lake Anne's decline was palpable.

With the 1998 opening of the Reston Farmers Market in the commercial parking lot and a bustling coffee house on the Plaza, things improved a bit around the turn of the century. Later, a Limited Liability Company expanded a Plaza crafts market, donating some of its vendor space rental fees to Plaza beautification.

In the last four years, several new businesses opened on the Plaza, including: Lake Anne Brew House, New Trails Cycling, Lake Anne Coffee House and Wine Bar, Teapot and Cupcakes, and Your Loyal Tailor. A promising new "dive bar" restaurant, Local VA, is poised to open this week! And, the Lake dilapidated pier will be totally reconstructed by RA over the next couple of months. While a couple of empty storefronts remain, the Plaza is once again a charming, vibrant place.

INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE

Sadly, squabbling among the commercial and residential unit owners who make up the Lake Anne Condominium Association (LARCA) continues. The latest discord exploded three months ago following the election of three new members to the condo's 5-member Board of Directors. The

insurgents won handily, promising to straighten out troubled finances, address sorely needed infrastructure maintenance and repair, restore transparency in management, etc. A tall order!

The new Board elected a new member President. She set out to keep the campaign promises by contracting a forensic audit by a major accounting firm to identify sources of financial management problems, and what is needed to improve financial controls and restore the association's financial stability.

The entrenched old guard is fighting to overturn the election by ousting the new President and putting a stop to the independent audit. To her credit, the new President, despite a negative whispering campaign, is standing firm. The forensic audit is underway.

Furthermore, based on information "presented to the Virginia AG's (Attorney General's) office, and the Fairfax County's Commonwealth Attorney's office attention of possible wrongdoings", the Fairfax County Police are investigating "the possible Fraud case..." in the association.

The lead Police detective in the case said in an email to LARCA's attorney, "I can only rec-

ommend that all future votes to remove, change other members [of the Board], enact new laws, etc. etc., be placed on hold until this investigation is complete. I would also urge anybody that has knowledge of this investigation not damage, remove or destroy any paperwork that this office and the Forensic Accounting Firm need to conduct a fair and complete investigation." That is, do not remove new Board members or in any way impede the work of the forensic audit now underway, or damage, destroy, remove any documents needed for the forensic audit or the police investigation. The lead detective stated that "no one person is currently a Person of Interest, rather currently the entire operation of actions done by LARCA [in] the previous years."

The quotes above come directly from the lead detective's email of Feb. 12 to the LARCA attorney at the time.

Write

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

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1606 King St.
Alexandria VA 22314
Call: 703-917-6444.
By e-mail:
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NEWS

Soul Stirring 'The Diary of Anne Frank'

Coming to CenterStage from Reston Community Players.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Reston Community Players (RCP) next production is the heart-wrenching drama of The Holocaust from the perspective of a brave 13-year-old Jewish girl. It is "The Diary of Anne Frank." Adapted from the pages of the original book, CenterStage audiences will be able to see and hear "Anne Frank" as an impassioned drama.

"The Diary of Anne Frank' holds themes of family, fear, and love; all seen through the eyes of a young girl," said Jolene Vettese, President, RCP. "They are themes that resonate particularly in today's world; ones we believe are very important for today's audiences."

The RCP's production of "The Diary of Anne Frank" aims to capture the claustrophobic realities of the daily existence of eight people hiding from the Nazis in a concealed storage attic for two years. Anne's spirit is revealed as she voices her belief, "in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart."

"Anne Frank" is directed by the notable regional director Gloria DuGan. In the title role of Anne is Sophia Manicone. Veteran actor Michael Kharfen portrays her father, Otto Frank.

"This is a story about real people and their lives. It's based on the actual words that Anne wrote in her diary," said Manicone. "It's a story not unlike many millions of other young girls and people who died in the Holocaust."

The role of Anne "is such a challenge. There are many monologues and I am on stage for almost the entire show," noted Manicone.

"I want to honor Anne and others who suffered her same fate by sharing her story in a way that touches the audience and makes it feel real to them."

Manicone added, "I think the fact that this story is the story of a young person with all of the emo-



Sophia Manicone as Anne Frank in Reston Community Players production "The Diary of Anne Frank."

Where and When

Reston Community Players present "The Diary of Anne Frank" at Reston Community Center's CenterStage, 2310 Colts Neck Road in Reston. Performances Feb. 28-29, March 6-8, and March 13-14, 2020. Curtain time 8 p.m. except for a 2 p.m. matinee on March 8. Tickets: \$28 (adults), \$24 for students and seniors. Call (703) 476-4500 or online at www.restonplayers.org. **Notes:** CenterStage is accessible and offers listening devices for the hearing impaired. This performance has simulated war sounds and cigarette smoking

tion and hopes and dreams that teenagers today feel provides a rare perspective to this historical event and helps people my age feel a personal connection to this story."

For Steve Palkovitz, who portrays Mr. Dussel, a dentist forced into hiding, "My hope is that the play will touch everyone, in some

way, regardless of the knowledge they possessed when they walked into the theater."

"As humans, we really are all connected regardless of race, religion or any other differences. I urge you to remember Anne's story as you go about your life," said Madison Chase who plays Margot Frank, Anne's older sister.

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LETTERS

Thank You, Reston

To the Editor:

The Reston Community Center Board of Governors and staff want to express their appreciation to the nearly 200 people who came out on a cold and rainy February Monday to contribute their ideas about RCC's future.

The event was designed to begin a conversation that the Board and staff will be having with and throughout the community for the next several months as we explore the development of a new strategic plan to take effect in 2021. A film by Storycatcher Productions about Reston Community Center's past, how it fulfills its mission and what it seeks to be in the future, was screened. It will continue to be refined, and then posted to RCC's YouTube page with other RCC video stories and Board of Governors meetings. A film summary of the Feb. 10 "RCC: Past and Future" event will also be posted.

Following the film, Dr. Kara Fitzgibbon, director of the University of Virginia's Center for Survey Research, presented findings from RCC's 2019 Community Survey that UVA conducted. The full report, including the data appendices, is posted on the Reston Com-

munity Center website: <http://bit.ly/RCCSurveyReport>. As Dr. Fitzgibbon noted in her presentation, the data collected is extensive and will be a foundation from which RCC can explore strategic planning priorities to serve Reston effectively and efficiently.

The energetic conversation in the RCC Community Room that followed the survey report-out composed the second half of an energizing evening. Yes, the noise level grew challenging and there were too frequent interruptions; but the amount of positive energy and creativity that flowed was very impressive, nonetheless. The comments shared with the Leadership Fairfax facilitators from all the people eagerly offering them will be compiled and presented to RCC Board and staff teams. More meetings with smaller groups and more individualized focus areas will take place.

Even with the abundant creativity and breadth of feedback received on Feb. 10, there is still a lot of discovery to come. RCC will engage with the community in meetings on each individual strategic plan pillar to delve more deeply into the topics to get

greater focus on various aspects of each. Pursuit of new facilities always necessitates lengthy investigation – not only to find out if there is support for a new building, but also what the ramifications are financially, what program elements should be served, how new facilities should function and by whom they should be operated. RCC is at the beginning of that exploratory process. Similarly, new programming, pricing, communications platforms and tools – all these pillars of RCC planning will require further conversation and research.

Participants who registered for the Feb. 10 event will be contacted if they left questions to be answered, and they will be invited to continue their involvement as RCC plans meetings for the months to come. People who want to join the conversation will be welcome – news about meetings will be posted and advertised.

The beginning of RCC's future is off to a great start; thank you for joining the conversation.

Beverly Cosham

Chair, RCC Board of Governors

Leila Gordon

RCC Executive Director

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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.

MONDAY/FEB. 24

NARFE Dulles Chapter 1241 Luncheon. 11:30 a.m. At Amphora Diner, 1151 Elden Street, Herndon. Featuring speaker Pete Kirby, Retired Fire Chief, Centreville Fire Department, who will speak on fire prevention and response. The cost of the luncheon is \$18.15 which includes tax and a small gratuity.

TUESDAY/FEB 25

INOVA Blood Drive. 1 - 5:30 p.m., beside the Pavilion at Reston Town Center, Reston. Schedule Bloodmobile appointments at 1-866-256-6372 or inovablood.org.

Paving and Restriping Meeting. 6:30 p.m. At Terraset Elementary School, 11411 Ridge Heights Road, Reston. The Fairfax County Department of Transportation will hold community meetings in every district of the county this spring with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to discuss proposed 2020 paving and restriping projects. The first meetings will be held in the Hunter Mill and Springfield Districts in February. The meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m., with a formal presentation beginning at 6:45 p.m., followed by time for questions, feedback and comments. For residents who cannot attend the meetings in person, the meeting presentation will be available on the District paving and restriping webpages, and feedback may be submitted online for two weeks following the meeting. Visit the Fairfax County 2020 Paving and Restriping Program: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/2020-paving-and-restriping>.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 26

DMV2Go at the Pavilion. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. At the Pavilion at Reston Town Center, Reston. The wireless office on wheels offers all DMV services: driver's license and ID card applications and renewals, driving records, vehicle titles, license plates, decals, order disabled plates, and more. Information on all services available at dmv.virginia.gov/general/#dmv_2go.asp.

THURSDAY/FEB. 27

Affordable Housing For Seniors: Preservation Project Kick-off. 1:30 p.m. At Hunters Woods Fellowship House, 2231 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Join in a kick-off of a major renovation project on the 225-unit Hunters Woods Fellowship House. They are investing \$12 million to modernize and upgrade this important community landmark that helps so many seniors who otherwise could not afford to live in the Reston area. Hear from all the key stakeholders - including the residents - what this project means to them and to the community.

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

ONGOING

STEM Professionals Needed. Volunteers are needed to assist K-12 STEM teachers in northern Virginia as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2019-20 school year. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488 or donaldrea@aol.com.

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that feeds, clothes and educates children in need. Assistance League's philanthropic programs touch the lives of thousands of children, including those at 11 Title 1 elementary schools in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need through Weekend Food for Kids, tutoring programs and providing new clothing and layettes. To learn more, email: info@aln.vg, or visit www.aln.vg

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One Step Forward, Hopefully Not Two Steps Backward



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

And so, what happens next? There's calm and then there's an eventual storm. The storm to which I refer is what will happen after the March 2nd meeting with my endocrinologist when she will assess and determine the next step in my post-thyroidectomy treatment. Presumably, in conjunction with my oncologist, a coordinated plan will be implemented for treating my two cancers. I can't imagine however, that being treated for two cancers, simultaneously, will be easier than being treated for one. And I doubt, although I don't know, that one medicine will be recommended for the treatment of both my non-small cell lung cancer and my thyroid cancer. We'll know soon enough.

In the interim, I intend to acknowledge and appreciate how easy these next few weeks will be. No appointments with doctors, no diagnostic scans, no procedures, no medicine - and no side effects, and no lab work other than as needed, to measure my calcium and magnesium levels and any other thyroid-related effects. Moreover, I am free to come and go as I please. And it does please me. Because I've earned it. I deserve it and I'm going to bask in it. You think being a cancer patient under constant treatment - for nearly 11 years is in any way amusing? Hardly. I make fun of it to make light of it. Otherwise, the weight of it would crush me. And even though my father always said I had broad shoulders, I'm always fearful that the next result will be the straw that finally breaks this camel's back. After all, I'm only human.

But for now, February 9, as I sit and write, I am three weeks and one day to my next reckoning. And since it's early days yet to know what life will be like after that March 2nd appointment (radiation and/or chemotherapy possibly), I will try to be blissfully ignorant and not think too much how easy and unencumbered my life is at the present. As a cancer patient, ceding control where you can and securing it where you thought you couldn't are keys to managing expectations and minimizing aggravation. Unfortunately, there is no one key that unlocks all doors. And there are plenty of doors, and plenty of doctors too, and plenty of fear waiting for one of your doctors to walk through any of these doors to deliver the results from your most recent cancer-related whatever.

None of which concerns me right now, or rather it shouldn't. And if there's any port in this storm where I can offload some anxiety and get in a little R&R, literally, figuratively, hypothetically, magically, unexpectedly, I should jump at the chance. I am reminded of a conversation I had with my oncologist years ago when I experienced a similar interval between treatment. The medicine I was on had stopped working so we needed to start another, another with unknown benefits and side effects. My oncologist suggested that since I felt good, perhaps we should delay the beginning of the next infusion and that I should take that trip I had always dreamed of because I might never feel this good again. I didn't then and I won't now. When I jump however, I can barely get off the ground.

I haven't exactly been presented this time, with this kind of do-before-you-die opportunity, but there is an eerie familiarity to my circumstances. And though I've been down this road trying-to-find out before, I can't be at all certain to what kind of twists and turns await. The last thing a cancer diagnosis provides is a guarantee. Actually, that's wrong. A cancer diagnosis does provide a guarantee: that there are no guarantees. And so, as I prepare for the next phase of my life, the one that begins 11 years after being diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV and being given a 13 month to two-year prognosis to boot, I will quote the late, great Satchel Paige: "Don't look back. Something might be gaining on you."

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

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

AARP Tax-Aide Program. Feb. 1 to April 14. At RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Tuesdays: 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.; Thursdays: 4:30 p.m./– 8:30 p.m.; and Saturdays: 9 a.m./– 3 p.m. Free. For taxpayers with low and moderate incomes with special attention to those 60 and older. AARP's Tax-Aide program was created nearly 40 years ago to assist older adults as well as persons with low and middle incomes in successfully navigating the tax code. All tax preparation is free and confidential. For more information, contact the Lifelong Learning Program Director, Casmera Lebron at 703-390-6157.

RCC Collecting Dresses and Accessories. Feb. 1-29. Reston Community Center is accepting donations of gently used dresses and accessories for its 18th annual Diva Central Dress Drive. From Feb. 1 – 29, RCC will be collecting the items at its Hunters Woods and Lake Anne locations. In addition to dresses, RCC needs donations of shoes, jewelry, handbags and shawls. Donations are tax-deductible and may be dropped off Monday – Saturday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., Sundays. This year's dress and accessories giveaway event is planned for Saturday, March 28, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at RCC Lake Anne, 1609-A Washington Plaza in Reston. All local middle and high school students are invited to attend and "shop" for dresses, shoes and other accessories for free.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 19

Podcast Club. 6:30 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. If you enjoy bite-size stories that you can listen to, come discuss a monthly selection of podcasts. You can listen on a computer or a mobile device through any of several free apps. Every month listen to at least four episodes of your choosing of the podcast.

THURSDAY/FEB. 20

Weekend Food for Kids. 10-11:30 a.m. At Dominion Energy, 3072 Centreville Road, Herndon. Join in this fun event to support local children. Assistance League of Northern Virginia invites community members to the Weekend Food for Kids monthly packing. This critical program provides nonperishable food over the weekend to children who receive free or reduced-price meals at local Title I elementary schools. Arrive at 9:30 a.m. if you would like to help with setup. Free. Visit the website www.alnv.org

Toddler Storytime. 10:30 a.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Featuring Elmer the Patchwork Elephant. Design your own "unique" elephant like Elmer. Age 2 with Adult. No registration required. Call: 703-689-2700.

Managing the Loss of a Loved One. 2-4 p.m. At RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Rd, Reston. Participants will learn how to manage all of the practical and legal details that follow the death of a family member. Free; registration required, #500489-0A.

Magic Tree House Book Club. 4:30 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Read to Discuss: Day of the Dragon King by M.P. Osborne. Copies available at the Children's Desk. Grades 3-4. No registration required.

Creative Response at GRACE. 7 p.m. At GRACE, Reston. A short presentation by an expert is followed by open conversation responding to the gallery's Moira Dryer exhibit. Free. Sponsored by Reston Community Center. Call 703-471-9242; Visit www.restonarts.org

Race in Virginia – How We Got to Where We Are Now. 8-9:15 p.m. At Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation, 1441 Wiehle Ave., Reston. Featuring Jennifer Ritterhouse, author of Growing Up Jim Crow: How Black and White Southern Children Learned Race and Discovering the South: One Man's Travels Through a Changing America in the 1930s. She is a professor at George Mason University. Visit www.nvhcreston.org

THURSDAYS, FEB. 20-MARCH 12

Introduction to Band Saw Box Making. 6:30-9:30 p.m. At RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts



Herndon High School Broadway Cabaret

Herndon High School's Cabaret will take place Feb. 21-22 at Herndon High School.

FEB. 21-22

"Broadway Our Way" Cabaret. 7-9 p.m. At Herndon High School, 700 Bennett Street, Herndon. This year's theme is "Broadway Our Way." Although the school is under construction, they are not letting that stop them from performing your favorite Broadway show tunes. This is a high-energy performance filled with singing, dancing, costumes, laughs, tears and quality entertainment. They will be performing songs from "Les Mis," "Shrek," "Beautiful," "Pajama Game," "Addams Family," "Mary Poppins," "Damn Yankees," and many others. Directed by Dana Van Slyke and choreographed by Colby Dezelick. Tickets are \$10.

Neck Rd, Reston. Learn the skills necessary to make unique band saw boxes. Participants will develop basic woodworking skills and how to practice strict safety in the woodshop. Cost is \$95 (R)/\$76 (R55+)/\$143 (NR), #505963-0B

FEB. 20 TO MARCH 15

Ordinary Days. At NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. "Ordinary Days" is an intimate musical about four young New Yorkers searching for love, beauty, and purpose in a big and unforgiving world. Performances are Thursday-Sunday and tickets start at \$40. This production is directed by Jay Brock, who previously directed Eurydice and Assassins for NextStop, and features Bobby Libby, Sarah Anne Sillers, Carl Williams, and Anna Phillips-Brown. Visit the website www.NextStopTheatre.org

FRIDAY/FEB. 21

Family Yoga. 10:30 a.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Enjoy playful yoga, stories and songs with a children's yoga instructor. Bring a mat or blanket. Cosponsored by FRRL. Ages 2-4 with adult.

Pakistan Under Siege. 2 p.m. At Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Featuring author Madiha Afzal. Participate in a roundtable discussion on current events and U.S. foreign policy options. The topic for February is "India and Pakistan." Speaker Ahsan I. Butt, Associate Professor, Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University joins author Madiha Afzal from the Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence, Center for Middle East Policy.

Kids at Hope Program. 6:30-9 p.m. At Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Join in a fun evening of game and activities and let your child experience he or she is "Capable of Success, No Exception." Parents will be encouraged to become Treasure Hunters and seek the hidden talents, strengths, and abilities of their children and others around them. This event is designed for children to share the fun with a caring and significant adult in their life. Therefore, a caring adult must accompany each child. Be entertained and enjoy performances by Herndon students, Zumba, service project, arts and crafts projects, and bingo. Bring your bathing suit to play in the pool. Participants will be served a slice of pizza with additional available for sale. Cost is \$2 per person or \$10 per family. Visit herndon-va.gov/recreation, or call 703-787-7300.

NOW THRU FEB. 21

S.T.E.A.M. Learning. At the Goddard School, 2400 Dulles Town Blvd., Herndon. Little ones will participate in S.T.E.A.M.-centric activities

(science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) and take on the role of engineers for National Engineers Week. During this week, preschoolers will spend their time designing and building structures (mini bridges, buildings, roller coasters, etc.) from classroom materials like blocks, popsicle sticks and more. The fun, hands-on S.T.E.A.M. activities promote creativity, imagination and the love of learning.

SATURDAY/FEB. 22

VIDI Space Film Festival. At Bow Tie Cinemas, Reston Town Center. See screenings of awarded paraworld films and guest speakers through the day including genre celebrities Chad Lindberg, Nick Groff, Kevin Tenney, and Jeffrey Reddick. Visit www.filmfreeway.com/VIDISPACE

Discover Stone Soup. 10-11:30 a.m. At Frying Pan Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Nothing warms you up faster in winter than a hot bowl of soup, and making homemade soup from scratch can be easy. Your group will create a soup based on the children's story of "Stone Soup." You will also learn the history and origins of several different ethnic soup styles and sample each style featured. For participants age 7 to adult. The cost is \$10 per person. Call 703-437-9101 or visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park>.

Stem Club: Spatial Surprises. 10:30 a.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Come navigate the exciting world of robotics and tangrams. Learn to program robots and play math games. Age 6-12. No registration required.

Self Defense for Women. 1-3:30 p.m. At RCC Lake Anne, 1609-A Washington Plaza N, Reston. This one-day workshop for women teaches avoidance, self-defense techniques and awareness skills. Cost is \$10 (R)/\$8 (R55+)/\$15 (NR), #301963-0C.

Afternoon Poetry with Amado Lascar. 2 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Mr. Lascar will read selections from his published works in Spanish.

Mardi Gras. 7-11 p.m. At ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Enjoy a Cajun feast, music, dancing, beads and a raffle. Sponsored by Arts Herndon. Cost is \$50/advance; \$60/door. RSVP at ArtsHerndon.org. Call 703 956 6590 or email info@artsherndon.org

MONDAY/FEB. 24

Nose to Toes Yoga. 10:30 a.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Explore yoga poses and movement while enjoying books and songs with a children's yoga instructor. No experience needed. Cosponsored by FRRL.

Age 3-5 years with adult.
Diabetes Self-Management. 1:30-3:30 p.m. At

RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Rd, Reston. The Diabetes Self-Management Program includes topics such as exercise, dealing with difficult emotions, monitoring blood sugar, meal planning and more. Free; registration required, #503547-0A.

Preschool Storytime — Love Stories. 2 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. This month we will foster your little one's love of reading with stories, songs, and crafts focused on relationships ... the different people (and pets) we love and who love us. Age 3-5 with adult.

TUESDAY/FEB. 25

Baby Play and Explore. 11 a.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Join an hour of unstructured play and social time for babies. Cosponsored by Friends of the Reston Regional Library (FRRL). Age birth-18 months with adult. No registration required. Call 703-689-2700.

INOVA Blood Drive. 1 - 5:30 p.m., beside the Reston Pavilion at Reston Town Center. Schedule Bloodmobile appointments at 1-866-256-6372 or inovablood.org. On-site registration.

Tai Chi. 2 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Join us for a fun Tai Chi fitness class led by local instructor Susan Shen. Adults. Call: 703-689-2700.

Spachats. 7 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Join the ongoing Spanish conversation group. All levels from beginner to fluent are welcome. Adults.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 26

DMV2Go at the Pavilion. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. At Reston Town Center, Reston. The wireless office on wheels offers all DMV services: driver's license and ID card applications and renewals, driving records, vehicle titles, license plates, decals, order disabled plates, and more. Information on all services available at dmv.virginia.gov/general/#dmv_2go.asp.

"Downton Abbey" Movie. 10 a.m. At Meet Me at the Movies – Senior Movie Day at Bow Tie Cinemas, Reston Town Center. Reston Association presents the feature film Downton Abbey. Refreshments and prizes provided prior to movie. Free to 55+. Information: Ashleigh@reston.org. Call 703-435-6577 or visit www.reston.org

Wednesday Morning Book Club. 10 a.m. At Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Featuring A Woman of No Importance. If you enjoy history, biography and memoir, this is the book club for you! Each month, club members choose a new non-fiction title highlighting someone who's experiences offer an interesting perspective on life in both the past and present.

Memory Depot Orientation. 6:30 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Learn about the Memory Depot station, a do-it-yourself location for scanning your slides, negatives and photos and to transfer your VHS or audio cassettes to digital formats!

Off-the-Shelf Trivia. 6:30 p.m. At Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Want to find out how much fun a bookstore can really be? They talk, laugh, wander off topic, compete, listen to music and play trivia. The professional trivia master picks a theme and writes the questions; the staff awards prizes; and the customers are hilarious (and smart).

THURSDAY/FEB. 27

Teen Advisory Board. 7 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Join TAB to gain leadership and volunteer experience and share your ideas about how to make the library a wonderful place for teens! Volunteer hours granted. Age 13-18. No registration required. Call 703-689-2700.

Dollars and Sense. 7 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Monthly group discussion focuses on business leaders and markets. We will be discussing "The Next Millionaire Next Door" Thomas J. Stanley. The event is free and open to the public. Adults.

FRIDAY/FEB. 28

Indian Cooking. 6-7:30 p.m. At RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Learn to cook healthy vegetarian food from different regions of India. This will be a demonstration with some hands-on opportunities. Students will be able to taste the results. Cost is \$20 (R)/\$15 (R55+)/\$30 (NR), #503590-0A.