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PHOTO BY TORY JUNKINS

DogFest Goes Virtual

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Puppy raiser Heidi Cummings, member of the Tyson-based Capital Chapter of Canine Companions for Independence®, made the service dog-themed quilt she is raffling off and donating proceeds to 'DogFest Washington DC | September 20-Virtual'. Cummings is holding her puppy in training, LaValle, as her release dog, Auckland, sits by her side.

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NEWS

Moving Schools to Dismantle Systemic Racism

NAACP holds virtual Town Hall.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County NAACP held a virtual Town Hall on Wednesday, Aug. 5. President Sean Perryman moderated discussion between Education Committee Chair Sujatha Hampton, Ph.D., Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Scott Brabrand Ed. D, and other staff. They focused on Fairfax County NAACP Education Committee Priorities 2020-2021 created to ensure educational equality of rights and eliminate race-based discrimination in the school district.

Throughout the 90-minute conversation, Hampton challenged Brabrand to live up to the school district's ideals, push for change and employ metrics and firm deadlines to goals.

"I'm watching you like a hawk," Hampton said.

Brabrand responded that in partnership, they should "watch together and learn together. ... I'm committed to doing the work ... I am serious as the leader of this system, about taking us where we need to go and I want to be a partner with the NAACP in doing that," Brabrand said.

The Town Hall began with a discussion on COVID-19 and how to protect vulnerable FCPS students, faculty and staff. Perryman said they couldn't talk about systemic racism without talking about COVID and the shutdown of schools. It was going to impact Black students as well as students of color disproportionately.

Brabrand said Covid exposed many inequities in the school system. "We are going to do everything we can to have a very strong virtual start and have all of our kids connected. And we will have metrics to begin the conversation with the community about how we can deliberately, carefully, safely ease back into school," he said.

Hampton said she and others in health and science fields were not comfortable with information the County's Health Department shared.

As a solution, Brabrand said he was working with the Virginia Department of Health and County Health Department for guidelines and metrics. They would establish decision-making policies on how to dial-up or, if necessary, dial-down students attending in-person school. The district would make certain health conditions were as low risk



Sean Perryman, president of the Fairfax County NAACP



Sujatha Hampton, Ph.D., Education Committee Chair of the Fairfax County NAACP



Scott Brabrand, Ed.D., Superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools

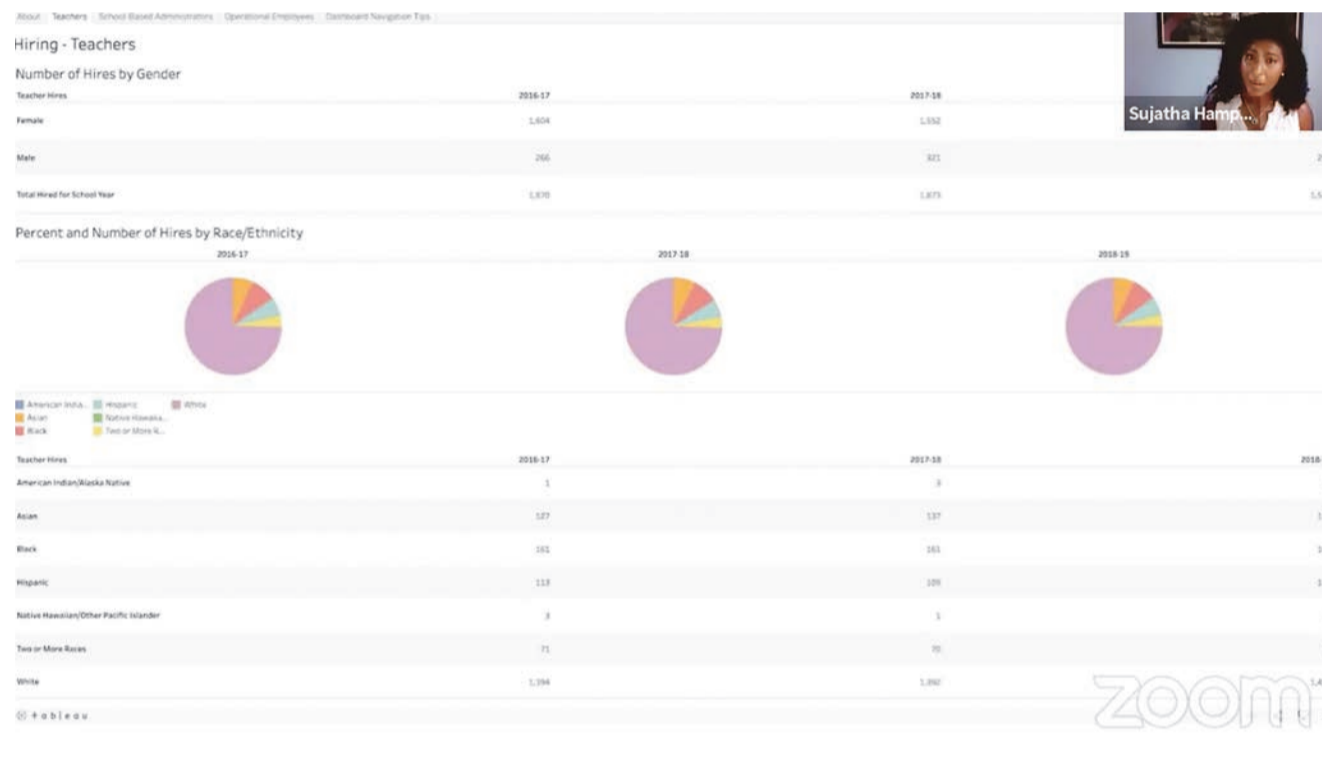
workers and restorative justice specialists, district data showed an over-representation of Black and brown children with behavior incidences.

According to Hampton, the mostly white teacher workforce "clearly have some issues because Black kids are not so bad." She said, "The problem is that when you only have teachers who are feeling threatened by their students to this degree, and nobody is reviewing whether the systems are put in place before they are disciplined, there's a problem...You should be able to look at the IEP for any child that's there and see their behavior intervention plan. You should be able to see all the things, all the steps the

school took before they got there. There are ... just gigantic, gaping holes where people didn't do due diligence. And that is tragic." Hampton described differences between schools. "It's a culture thing," she said.

Brabrand said there would be new behavior codes for the school year. They would, as Brabrand said, "make teachers dive deeper before they're referring a kid to the office."

"And we're going to do a paper review of discipline data...Our issue is solving it systematically... Real-time data tracking for discipline; quarterly follow up with Doctor Ivy... If there's trends that are of concern around disproportionality, we're going to address it, just the same way that we would look at addressing attendance or



Percent of FCPS teacher hires by race/ethnicity

as possible. Brabrand announced the public would see the "first draft at our August 18 Work Session."

HAMPTON voiced concern that the majority of County support staff who worked with vulnerable school populations had not been reached to participate in earlier district surveys. According to Hampton, unions represented only 30 percent of those individuals. "We need you to protect them," she said to Brabrand. Hampton added that the school district must commit "to gathering data, to reviewing the data, to analyzing the data with new metrics that are anti-racist (and) doing follow ups and having deadlines... Otherwise nothing happens, we just keep waiting," she said.

Hampton introduced the second Education Priority of Fairfax NAACP, to create an effective model for the Equity and Cultural Responsiveness Team by the end of the academic year. Brabrand said after hearing concerns voiced by members of NAACP and others regarding the new Chief Equity Academic Officer position, he changed course.

He intended to decouple the role and instead create two jobs. One would be Chief Equity Officer with a full range for the entire organization and the other Chief Academic Officer. "I would seek a national consultant to assist us in hiring both those key positions," Brabrand said.

Hampton said they were there to help and might have perspectives not yet considered. "You cannot achieve radical transformation, with exactly the same profile and exactly the same people at the table. It is not possible; and assuming anti-racism is a fairly new thing for systems to be considering, you have to be looking for somebody completely new, a totally different mindset," she said. Hampton offered Brabrand side-by-side "Traditional vs. Anti-Racist" job descriptions.

Brabrand and Hampton turned their attention to racial bias viewed through the lens of the disproportionate number of behavior incidents in the schools involving Black and brown children. Although the district provided School-based Intervention Programs for Behavior with a consulting system of counselors, psychologists, social

grades," he said.

Dr. Frances Ivy added they had found all schools were not reporting on the same form.

Perryman introduced the third Education Priority of Fairfax NAACP, to increase hiring and retention of Black and Latinx teachers, accessing it semi-annually in a public forum. Perryman asked, "Don't we have something like 26 schools that don't have anything but white teachers?"

Brabrand confirmed the district had 25-26 schools that had no instructional staff of color. He added, "That is a problem, and that is not acceptable."

Perryman questioned why the number of teachers of color had not changed in two years, even though there was a supply out there.

Brabrand explained the district's decentralized hiring process had moved it to central. He said, "(It) doesn't mean you are going to pick diverse candidates out of that bigger pool...This is something I'd love your

SEE NAACP, PAGE 7



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VIENNA POLICE HIGHLIGHTS

The following summary contains various incidents of general interest as well as vehicular crashes handled by the Town of Vienna Police Department from July 31 – Aug. 6, 2020.

INCIDENTS

Suspicious Event -- 900 Block Fairway Drive, NE Oct. 1 between 12 a.m. and 10:48 a.m. A resident reported that someone had used her profile to impersonate and defame her on social media by posting inappropriate and explicit material.

Lost Property -- 200 Block Com-

mons Drive, NW Between Dec. 21, 2019, at 10 a.m. and July 25 at 8 a.m. A resident reported that one of his firearms is missing.

Animal Case – Quarantine -- 100 Block Wilmar Place, NW July 26, 9:51 a.m. On Aug. 4, ACO Barker received an animal bite report from the Fairfax County Animal Control for an incident that occurred on July 26 where a friend's dog bit a child. ACO Barker spoke to the owner of the dog and advised them of the quarantine procedure.

SEE POLICE, PAGE 6



Hunter Mill Road over Colvin Run Bridge Replacement Fairfax County

Virtual Design Public Hearing

Wednesday, September 16, 2020, 7-8:30 p.m.
www.virginiadot.org/huntermillcolvinrun

Find out about plans to replace the weight-restricted (ten tons) one-lane Hunter Mill Road bridge over Colvin Run. The new bridge will have two lanes separated by a median/splitter island. The project also includes an improved trail crossing south of the bridge, landscaping in the median/splitter island, and abutments for a new trail bridge over Colvin Run (Fairfax County will construct the trail bridge in the future).

The hearing will be held as a **virtual/online meeting**. Information for accessing and participating in the meeting will be posted on the project website (www.virginiadot.org/huntermillcolvinrun). The VDOT project team will make a presentation beginning at 7 p.m. and be available to answer questions after the presentation until 8:30 p.m.

Review project information and meeting details on the VDOT project website or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-259-3256 or TTY/TDD 711 to make an appointment with appropriate personnel.

Pursuant with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR 771, a Programmatic Categorical Exclusion (PCE) is being prepared as per agreement with the Federal Highway Administration. In compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 and 36 CFR Part 800, information concerning the potential effects of the proposed improvements on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places will be available with the PCE.

Give your comments after the presentation, submit your written comments by **September 28, 2020** via the project website, by mail to Mr. Vicente Valeza, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or email meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "Hunter Mill Road over Colvin Run Bridge Replacement" in the subject line.

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State Project: 0674-029-358, P101, B643
UPCs: 110499, 110433
Federal: STP-BR09 (295), BR-5B01 (164)

DogFest Goes Virtual

COVID affects fundraising efforts, virtual platform spurs creative responses for the Sept. 20 event.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Cheshire family of Great Falls is raising its 14th Canine Companions for Independence® (CCI) service puppy. In between teaching their dog a reported 30 some commands, Jacqueline Cheshire, CCI's Capital Chapter President, and dedicated volunteers are planning the chapter's seventh annual fundraiser, "Dog-Fest Washington DC |September 20-Virtual." Previously anchored at Reston Town Center, the event relocated to Facebook amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. They hope for a healthy bottom line from event proceeds to help support the non-profit organization that provides highly trained assistance dogs free of charge to people with disabilities. Costs run \$50,000 per dog, according to Cheshire.

While precautions related to coronavirus forced organizers to reimagine the charitable event, they also needed to factor into their business model diversified fundraising to counter lost revenue streams and creative event



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Cheshire family of Great Falls with the dogs they raised, Buckner, the black Lab, and Zeno, the Golden Retriever. Top - from left: Nikki Cheshire, Raymond Junkins and Ben Cheshire. Bottom - from left: Tory Junkins and Jacqueline Cheshire.

planning. Cheshire said, "We need to keep funding these dogs, raising these dogs, and getting them trained and into the hands of people with disabilities, even though there's a pandemic...Revenue is down, 20 to 30 percent this year... We have very few sponsors because we've not been able to go

out and show off the dogs... On the day of the event, ordinarily, we'd have vendor booth fees...and percentage of sales fees...Last year's event attracted over 600 participants and raised over \$90,000." On Aug. 4, Cheshire said they had raised \$38,000.

U.S. Army CPT Gavin White of

Herndon was injured after stepping on an IED while serving in Afghanistan. He applied for an assistance dog with Canine Companions for Independence and matched with Stuart IV in 2015. White and his wife, Karissa, wrote in an email that as a result of the injury, he lost his right leg above the knee and had extremely limited use of his left leg. They added: "Stuart helps Gavin every day, assisting in the application of prosthetics, retrieval of items, and increases his mobility either by walking on Gavin's weak side or letting Gavin know that people are around him... 'Whenever I have Stuart with me, people provide the room I need to use my wheelchair and get around... When I am feeding or changing my daughter it's great to have Stuart there to help. He will pick up items that are dropped or take things to my wife if my hands are full.'"

Dog lovers and supporters can participate in 'DogFest Washington DC |September 20 Virtual' through the newly minted Facebook event page. "This DogFest will certainly be one to remember," said Tory Junkins, Cheshire's daughter. Junkins is taking videos

of the dogs for promotion and education. The celebration begins at noon and features a lineup of the human-canine bonding and testimonials by graduates, "almost like a mini telethon," said Cheshire. "Two contests are running. "One is the best dog trick...and the other competition is submitting a photograph of your dog in a costume... People will vote on Facebook." Winners will receive a basket of dog items.

Volunteer forces remain stable during COVID. Stephanie Dagata said, "Puppy Raising is fulfilling, joyful, and educational. It can also be frustrating at times, tiring at times and defeating at times but this is where our wonderful CCI family comes into action. We are all here to help."

"To raise from a puppy of 8 weeks old to 18 months or so, and then turn these loved beautiful puppies, very well behaved to the advanced training (center) and change another's life, is truly a labor of love and giving," said Deb Push of McLean.

Visit Canine Companions for Independence to learn more or to donate.

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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg

VIENNA POLICE HIGHLIGHTS

Suspicious Event -- 1100 Westbriar Court, NE Between July 30 at 5 p.m. and July 31 at 12 p.m. A resident reported that someone opened the gate leading from her driveway to her backyard.

Animal Case -- 300 Block Dominion Road, NE July 31, 8:19 a.m. Officers responded to the area for the report of a sick raccoon. The animal was in grave condition and was euthanized by an officer.

Suspicious Event -- 1100 Westbriar Court, NE Between July 31 at 2 p.m. and Aug. 2 at 11 a.m. A resident reported that someone moved a table on her rear deck and bent the umbrella stand.

Shoplifting -- Giant Food 359 Maple Avenue, East July 31 between 6:50 p.m. and 7 p.m. On Aug 1, an employee reported that a man stole bottles of champagne the previous evening. The employee stated that this was the same man who shoplifted from the store on July 24.

Computer Harassment -- 200 Block Church Street, NE Between Aug. 1 at 12:01 a.m. and Aug. 6 at 6:30 p.m. A resident reported that she is receiving harassing messages from her children's father through a social media business page.

Vehicle Tampering -- 900 Block Frederick Street, SW Between Aug. 1 at 7:30 p.m. and Aug. 2 at 4 p.m. A resident reported that someone rummaged through his unlocked

vehicle.

Suspicious Event -- 200 Block Locust Street, SE Aug. 1, 10:51 p.m. A resident called 911 to report an argument she had with her roommate over the thermostat. The resident was counseled on her use of the 911 system.

Arrest -- Telephone Case -- 200 Block Locust Street, SE Aug. 1, 10:51 p.m. On Aug. 2, MPO Lose obtained a misdemeanor warrant charging Annoying Phone Calls for a resident for misuse of the 911 system. The resident had been counseled on numerous occasions by our officers and by the Fairfax County Community Response Team regarding her use of the 911 system for non-emergency calls. MPO Lose served the warrant on the 68-year-old woman from Locust Street, SE in Vienna and released her on her signature.

Assault -- 200 Block Locust Street, SE Aug. 1, 11:30 p.m. On Aug. 2, after being served with a warrant, the resident reported to the officer that her roommate threatened her the previous night. The resident was advised of the warrant procedure should she wish to pursue charges against her roommate.

Found Property 2-- Vienna Fire Station 400 Center Street, South Aug. 2, 7:59 a.m. A citizen turned in a money clip with U.S. currency to the fire station.

Petit Larceny -- 1000 Block Fairway Drive, NE Aug. 2, 2:30 p.m. A resident reported that one of her license plates was stolen from her vehicle.

Arrest -- Warrant Service-- 400 Block John Marshall Drive, NE Aug. 3, 2:31 p.m. At the request of the Fairfax County Police Department, officers responded to a residence in an attempt to locate a man who had an active warrant for his arrest in the County. MPO Lyons arrested the 67-year-old man from Beachcomber Lane in Houston, Texas. He was transported to the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center, where the misdemeanor warrant for Indecent Exposure was served on him.

Telephone Case -- 1000 Block Fairway Drive, NE Aug. 4, 10:14 p.m. A resident reported that he is receiving threatening text messages from an acquaintance.

Fraud -- Giant Food 359 Maple Avenue, East Aug. 6, 3:52 p.m. A citizen reported that she noticed her wallet was stolen after her bank notified her that her credit cards and debit card were being fraudulently used at Giant Food.

Assist EMS -- 100 Block Patrick Street, SE Aug. 6, 8:26 p.m. Officers responded to an apartment to assist rescue personnel with an alcohol overdose. The man was transported to an area hospital for treatment.

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Obituary

Obituary

Nancy Litchfield Hicks



Nancy Litchfield Hicks of McLean, VA passed away on August 2nd at her home, following a courageous 6 year struggle with the neurological disease Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP).

Nancy was born in Danbury, CT to Robert Litchfield and Marjorie Litchfield (née Schneider) on July 9th, 1960. She was a graduate of Danbury High School, Gettysburg College, and University of Richmond School of Law. She married Harry Joseph "Hal" Hicks on August 24th, 1985 and they were happily married for nearly 35 years. After practicing law in Richmond, New York, and D.C. for 10 years, she left the legal profession in 1995 to spend more time with her children. She was a devoted wife, a dedicated mother, and a dear friend. There was never a person with a heart as pure, or a smile as warm as Nancy.

Nancy's pride and joy was her family, whom she loved more than any of them deserved. She is survived by her husband Hal, sons Josh, Matthew, and Billy, daughter-in-law Jess, granddaughter Zoey, and sister Linn. They will all miss her terribly.

In heaven, she joins her father Robert, mother Marjorie, aunt Virginia, and father-in-law Harry.

Memorial services will be delayed until the fall in light of the current pandemic. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that donations be made to CurePSP (psp.org). Additionally, the family would like to thank Maria, Mary, Tutu, and Mirabel for the love and care they showed Nancy when she needed it most.

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- 90+ points – You rank as an active leader. Congratulations!
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- Socially distance (10 points)
- Follow informed news sources, both sides! (20 points)
- Register your support/use of Post Office and mail-in voting (10) (\$, letters to Congress, newspaper, SM)
- Register your support for adequate number of voting stations (10) (ditto)
- Sign up as a census taker (5)
- Sign up to work at voting stations (5)
- Vote! (20 points)

Eileen Curtis
Great Falls

NAACP Holds Virtual Town Hall

FROM PAGE 3

help on... (and) how to create cohorts of support for new Black teachers and Latino teachers to say yes... We need folks to be able to be courageous enough when they are offered the job to take it with us in those schools... We are not going to have schools that continue not to hire teachers of color... There are some schools that have more work to do to create that environment, and we're going to get it addressed this year."

Discussion of the fourth priority goal keyed into the roles, limits, and domain of Principals and Regional Area Superintendents to ensure during the 2020-2021 school year a system of effective oversight on issues of equity. Hampton questioned outcome differences between schools, given their principals and respective atmosphere in their schools as related to equity. "Maybe you have to look at what has kept principals from running buildings... (You) have that responsibility to do that oversight of principals," she said.

Brabrand responded that in the past, some principals used the resources they had better than others. He said, "This year equity is part of every principal's goal... There shouldn't be any discipline disproportionality... There shouldn't be any academic gaps. We have coaches to help us do that... We need to do it at a deeper level and focus it around equity," Brabrand said. He added they would be held accountable. Hampton said, "You need to put the right people in those jobs. I think that you need to reward that sort of attitude."

NEARING THE END of the town hall, Hampton and Brabrand discussed the establishment of curriculum review committees to study current curricula for racial or cultural bias, especially in the areas of Social

Studies/History/English, and to identify resources and teaching practices that could promote a more inclusive worldview and a complete study of the United States and World History. Such would be completed by the end of the 2020-21 school year.

Colleen Eddy, Coordinator for Social Studies K-12 at FCPS, said they were auditing existing curriculum to remove biased, harmful and racist resources, creating a transformative curriculum. "That means partnering with the right people across the state, focusing on the design principles for culturally responsive pedagogy, and adopting anti-bias and the anti-racist outcomes for our curriculum... with a mindset to fidelity of doing good work that's responsible and has integrity to history."

Finally, Brabrand and Hampton reviewed the admissions process to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJ).

"We want to see obviously that TJ reflects the population it serves," Hampton said. She questioned why Black teens chose not to go to TJ.

Brabrand said, "I expect a conversation about TJ with our school board in the coming months to address a lot of the questions and solutions, not 20 years of status quo where we have tried to do something, but we've settled around the edges, and it has not made a major change. I'm sitting with Karen Keys-Gamarra from the School Board, with Marty Smith, our Chief Operating Officer who oversees TJ admissions, myself and the principal of TJ on a Governor's Task Force led by the Secretary of Education... and the Board of Education Chair."

Due to time constraints, not all 2020-2021 priorities as developed by the Education Committee and part of its Advocacy and Legislative Agenda could be discussed at the town hall. A follow-up meeting is planned.

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"Extensive Metastatic Disease"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Well I certainly don't like the sound of that and I especially didn't like reading it in the "impressions" part of the radiologist's report I received Friday summarizing the previous Wednesday's PET scan. Though hardly a surprise given a thoracic surgeon's description of my original PET scan 11 and 1/2 years ago: "You lit that thing up like a Christmas tree." Still, I would have rather read something a bit less ominous. But I don't suppose being diagnosed with two types of cancer (non small cell lung stage IV and papillary thyroid, stage II) lends itself to a 'bit less ominous.' Besides, 'less ominous' left the building in late February 2009 when I was first diagnosed with a "terminal" disease: non small cell lung cancer.

Not to make light of such a heavy dose of reality but, as Tom Sellick says on his recent television commercial for AAG: "This isn't my first rodeo." And neither is this statement of fact from the radiologist the first less-than-encouraging news I've heard and seen. To invoke Jack Palance (Curly) from "City Slickers" (1991): "I **** bigger than that." I've been living with a version of these words for 11 and 1/2 years. Tell me something I don't know.

Nevertheless, I'll find out what it all means soon enough. Though it might be a bit of a re-hash from a few columns ago stating that since all the tumors in my lungs can't be biopsied, practically proceeding, my oncologist will never know for certain exactly how much of what type of cancer I have. And since one medicine - from what I've been told, can't treat both cancers, life expectancy, treatment protocols, are likely unclear at best. Presumably, we'll treat the cancer which is most prevalent, most aggressive and most treatable/curable? I can only hope that as I sit and write this column, two days before my surgical lung biopsy on Monday, seven days, approximately, until I hear from my oncologist, I'll be able to compartmentalize the worst case scenarios - all of which are out of my control anyway, and try to live life as normally as possible and avoid any rabbit holes of gloom and doom.

Right now, this is just another blip on the cancer radar that has been "blipping" for more than 11 years. Generally speaking, the medical feedback we receive almost always sounds mediocre (and I don't mean fair to middling either). And it never sounds worse than it did in February '09 when I initially was diagnosed and given a "13 month to two year" prognosis. Unfortunately, having outlived my oncologist's expectation by upwards of 10-plus years doesn't guarantee me any favorable news. That was yesterday (yesteryear, actually). This is today, 2020. However, much has changed/evolved in the cancer-treatment world. There have been more drugs approved for the treatment of lung cancer in the last few years than in previous multiple decades, including the introduction of an entire new class of medicine: immunotherapy. It's not exactly game and match but it is night and day.

Still, it's premature until I'm re-diagnosed and placed in a new protocol and see the results - in future CT scans. This pending biopsy may be the storm before the calm or vice versa, quite frankly. As I await results, my glass remains half full, as always. I just have to hope that while waiting for the cancer business to become clear, I don't get so thirsty/anxious that I empty my glass. That wouldn't help anybody, especially me.

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



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