

Great Falls Girl Scouts Win Gold Award

NEWS, PAGE 6



Five Girl Scouts from Troop 1991 in Great Falls earned the highest recognition in scouting. From left: Juilanna Grimson, Eliza Pastore, Jacqueline Grimso and Maya Alexander Van Scoyoc at the Girl Scout Chalet in Adelboden, Switzerland. Not pictured: Stuthi Iyer.

McLean, Langley High Communities Weigh in on Boundary Adjustment

NEWS, PAGE 3

Master Naturalist Program Graduates Spring Class

NEWS, PAGE 7

OPINION, PAGE 4 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

PRSRPT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EASTON, MD
PERMIT #322
POSTAL CUSTOMER
ECR WSS
ATTENTION POSTMASTER:
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL
REQUESTED IN HOME 12-17-20



COSTA

DENTISTRY

\$1,000 OFF

— VENEERS —

(703) 757-0833 | DECEMBER 1-31, 2020 | COSTASMILES.COM

10135 COLVIN RUN RD, SUITE 230, GREAT FALLS, VA 22066

minimum of four veneers to qualify for offer | some exclusions apply

NEWS

McLean, Langley High Communities Weigh in on Boundary Adjustment

Capacity relief sought with eyes on Langley High School.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Public Schools presented three possible options and a no change option for capacity relief at McLean High School during a virtual community meeting held Mon., Dec. 7. One hundred eighty people tuned in at the start of the presentation to learn more about the adjustment process to move students from McLean High School to Langley High School. In her welcome, Eileen Tholen, School Board Member Dranesville District said they were continuing the boundary process now “in preparation for the fall.” Overcrowding has remained an ongoing issue at McLean for the past decade, even with mitigation measures.

School officials emphasized the presentation of Options A, B, and C was step two of a five-step boundary adjustment process. There would be no vote that evening. The School Board would vote to approve the boundary adjustment at a later date, proposed to be Spring 2021.

FCPS Assistant Superintendent, Region 2, Fabio Zuluaga, said that staff included feeder middle school information in the evening’s presentation based on input collected during earlier boundary scope meetings. That included information on Longfellow Middle School feeding into McLean and Cooper Middle School feeding into Langley.

“The bottom line here is we are overcapacity at McLean High School,” said Zuluaga. McLean currently has a population of more than 2,350 students in a school designed for a capacity of 1,993 students. In comparison, Langley High School has 1,972 students and completed a recent renovation to accommodate 2,370 students.

Zuluaga said the School Board makes boundary changes based on one important policy, School Board Policy 8130. “The school board makes boundary adjustments based on what is the effectiveness in how we are using our buildings, how the boundary change would improve instruction, safety and security for the schools that are involved and what are also the implications... for families and students moving from one school to another school,” he said

FCPS Facilities Special Projects Administrator Jessica Gillis said that over the past decade, McLean increased its capacity deficit from “slight” in SY 2009-10 to “substantial” in SY019-20, increasing membership by 487 students. Even with Schools adding temporary classrooms, removing hallway lockers to reduce crowding, and installing a modular 12-classroom unit to replace some

property trailers, overcrowding continues and is expected to increase.

“It is important to recognize that our current enrollment at Longfellow Middle School is 1,334, and the school was designed for 1,374. We all know that Cooper is going to be renovated...The current enrollment for Cooper is 992 students, and the renovation (to be completed around 2023) will design the school for 1,120 kids,” said Zuluaga.

Gillis presented three possible boundary options using estimated SY 2019-20 student numbers. She emphasized enrollment estimates did not show phasing/grandfathering and no current students attending Longfellow/Cooper or McLean/Langley would be reassigned.

❖ Option A - Reassigns 131 students from McLean to Langley and 53 students from Longfellow to Cooper in the Colvin Run ES split feeder area and a portion of Westbriar ES.

❖ Option B - Reassigns 190 students from McLean to Langley and 78 students from Longfellow to Cooper in the Colvin Run ES split feeder area, a portion of the Spring Hill ES split feeder area and a portion of Westbriar ES.

❖ Option C - Reassigns 240 students from McLean to Langley and 113 from Longfellow to Cooper in the Spring Hill ES split feeder area.

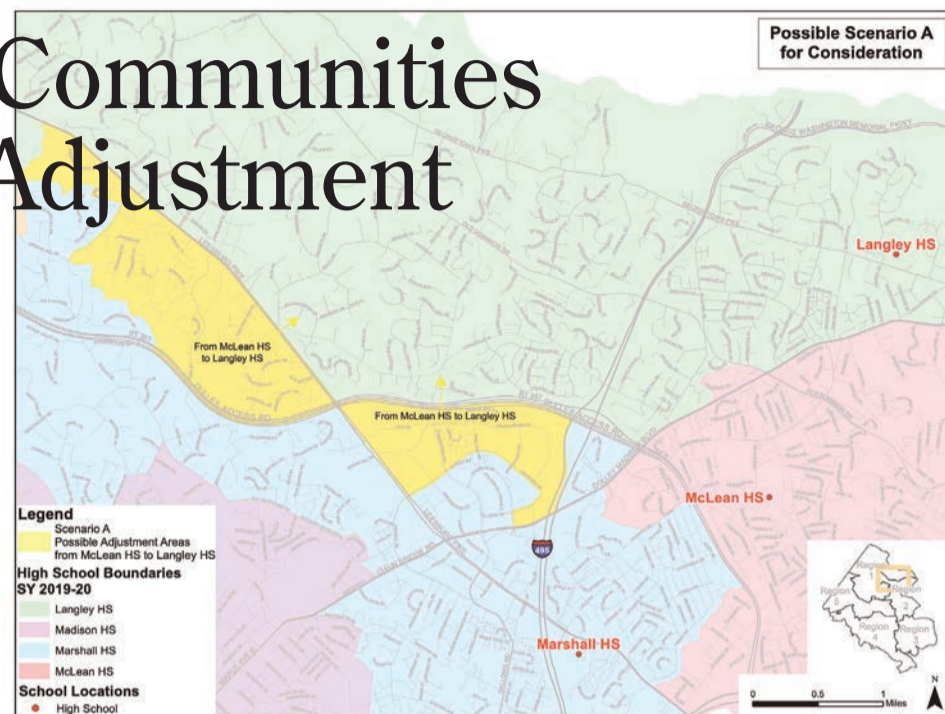
No Boundary Change Option. Projections showed a five-year capacity increase at McLean and Longfellow while Langley’s student enrollment decreased from 1,972 to 1,855.

“At the end of the day the School Board will decide, any other phasing plans, other than attrition,” Gillis said. The next steps in the boundary process are the evaluation of comments through Dec. 2020. Dates will be determined for staff recommendation to the School Board, School Board Public Hearing, and School Board Action. The anticipated effective date of the boundary adjustment is SY 2021-22.

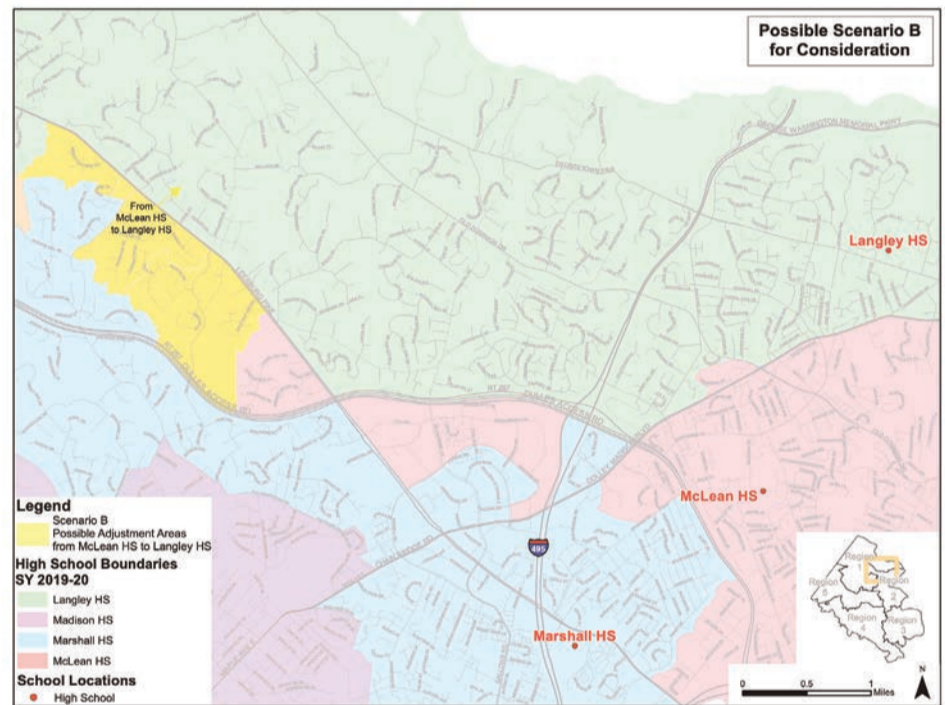
A small group discussion followed with feedback posted anonymously on the website. It will be shared with the school board.

For more information about the McLean High School boundary adjustment process, visit Information on the Mclean High School Boundary Adjustment and Feedback on the Dec. 7 meeting found online.

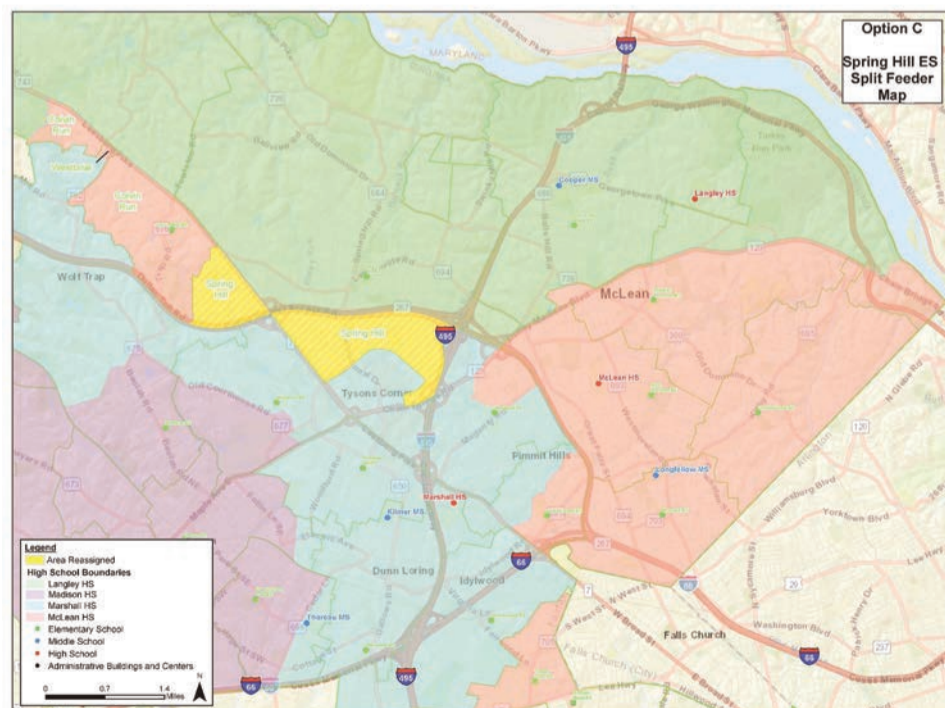
Online Comment: Great Falls Citizens Association: “Members of the GFCA Special Committee on Schools (SCS) submitted feedback during the meeting in favor of Option A, if a boundary adjustment is to proceed at all. Importantly, SCS members shared feedback that any boundary change plan should be accompanied with a commitment by FCPS school board to start the process for a long-overdue physical expansion of (McLean) MHS. Boundary change Option A includes students from the Colvin Run ES



Scenario A Map shows possible adjustment area from McLean HS to Langley HS.



Scenario B Map shows possible adjustment area from McLean HS to Langley HS.



Scenario C Map shows possible adjustment area from McLean HS to Langley HS.

SEE BOUNDARY CHANGES, PAGE 8

A Green New Deal

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



COMMENTARY

In accepting the Democratic nomination for president, Franklin D. Roosevelt promised a "new deal" for the "forgotten man." In the midst of the Great Depression the country responded to Roosevelt's promise by electing him president four times. The ensuing legislation in the first hundred days of his administration and throughout the subsequent years as president produced a new deal that transformed the government from a laissez-faire approach to a broader role of government in the economy.

Dozens of bills over as many years set up new agencies of government including the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) that put people to work on public projects, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) that provided cash subsidies to farmers while controlling the production of staple crops, and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) that provided cheap electricity and flood control over seven states. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) acts

moved the federal government actively into monetary policy. There are many more.

Increasing concerns in recent years over climate change and economic inequality have led to a call for a "green new deal." While there have been many statements at the national and state levels as

to what constitutes a green new deal, the most comprehensive definition is a resolution introduced in Congress in 2019 that calls for transitioning the United States to use 100 percent renewable, zero-emission energy sources, including investment into electric cars and high-speed rail systems, and implementing "social cost of carbon" policies as part of addressing climate change. The resolution also addresses universal health care, increased minimum wage, and preventing monopolies as well as the needs of poor and disadvantaged people.

The Green New Deal Virginia is a coalition that includes environmental organizations as well as civil rights and social justice groups and community-based organizations. For the groups that make up the coalition as well as their ob-

jectives, go to <https://www.greennewdealva.com/>. A recent article on the movement written by some of its leaders explains that "Virginians right now are facing a multitude of crises that Green New Deal Virginia directly addresses, including the economic downturn, racial and social inequities and the public health emergency. The Green New Deal is innovative because it is not trying to address each crisis in isolation, but instead it is building community around a collective response to these problems, and prioritizing community voices. . ."

In many ways the challenges facing our country and our state—climate change, income inequality, hunger, COVID19 and health care generally, criminal justice reform and others are somewhat different but at the same time of a similar magnitude as those faced by President Franklin Roosevelt when he promised a new deal to the nation. I support a Green New Deal and like the first New Deal it faces many years of legislative action to be accomplished. A single omnibus bill that promises to meet all its objectives in one action will not be successful. A commitment now to recognize the problems we face and taking the multiple steps to deliver a green new deal can be successful even faster than the dozen years it took President Roosevelt to deliver on his promise.

LETTERS

Covid Alerts Via Mobile?

To the Editor:

Given the evolving COVID-19 restrictions and guidance in response to another wave of infections, I believe I have an idea for information proliferation. We should leverage mobile device push notifications like we do for severe storms and Amber Alerts. This could reach citizens who don't have TVs, don't watch or listen to local news, and don't follow any state political accounts on social media. We are fighting a ton of misinformation during this pandemic, which necessitates clearer and widespread communication. I urge Gov. Northam, Del. Simon and Sen. Saslaw to consider leveraging this technology that we already use. We need mobile device push notifications, to communicate changes in COVID-19 restrictions and potentially guidance in a way that could reach more people.

Katharine Weintraub
Vienna

December is Puppy Mill Awareness Month

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Third article in a series.

A puppy store's assurance that it buys only from licensed breeders is no better than suggesting anyone who has a driver's license is a good driver. Puppy mill breeders are required to be licensed under the national Animal Welfare Act (AWA). However, federal animal regulations for breeders are well known to be woefully lacking, requiring only the most basic care. Inspections are few and random, and violations are not dealt with severely, allowing a cited breeder to continue operations for all but critical problems.

Buyers should be wary of puppy stores' claims that all is well with their sourcing. Under Virginia's regulations, stores can not buy from breeders who are not licensed, or who have had a number of critical violations in recent years. Unfortunately the limited staffing of US Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspectors and the estimated more than 10,000 facilities that must be inspected, mean that inspections are few and chances of problems going undetected are high. The USDA's "risk-based" inspection model translates to inspections as seldom as once every two to three year for many breeding operations.

Neither does the AWA ensure that dogs are happy or live a quality life, only that facilities meet minimum humane standards. Those standards include, for example, cage size must be six inches larger than the size of the dog, no more than 12 dogs in a cage, must be provided food and shelter. Only recently has USDA



PHOTO COURTESY MONICA GOOD

Animal activists picket one of Virginia's only 18 puppy stores

proposed that dogs have a continuous water supply, instead of twice daily water offerings. Further there is no uncaged time requirement, no limit of the number of dogs kept, and no limit on the age or number of times bred. And significantly, no requirement for socialization to humans. What level of care, quality, and socialization to humans do you think is even possible when breeding operations have hundreds of dogs and profit is the operating goal?

For more insights into the dog breeding industry, readers may wish to read, "The Doggie in the Window," by journalist and national Emmy Award-winning television producer, Rory Kress.

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

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

Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Free digital edition delivered to your email box. Go to connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe

NEWS DEPARTMENT:
greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com

Kemal Kurspahic
Editor ❖ 703-778-9414
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

Mercia Hobson
Community Reporter
mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com

Ken Moore
Contributing Writer
kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Salome Howard-Gaibler
Display Advertising
703-415-5394
salome@connectionnewspapers.com

Debbie Funk
Display Advertising/National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment
Advertising
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
[@MaryKimm](https://twitter.com/MaryKimm)

Executive Vice President
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic
Art/Design:
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
Ali Khaligh
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



OPINION

Santa waves from the back of the truck while Mrs. Claus untangles the bell necklaces for the elves to distribute to children in this year's Christmas Tree Lighting in Great Falls.

PHOTO BY
MERCIA HOBSON/
THE CONNECTION



A Fresh Outlook: Looking Ahead with Optimism

I'm thankful to have witnessed many examples (big and small) of this spirit in Great Falls.

BY DR MARY BABCOCK ©

As we close the chapter on 2020, many may feel tattered and beaten down as they look to 2021. We are all survivors of a whirlwind year where many of us felt a roller coaster of emotions including tragedy, adversity, uncertainty, and loss. Choosing to be optimistic is not perpetuating a Pollyanna or excessively cheerful attitude while ignoring negative emotions and experiences. It is facing the adversity, experiencing these emotions as they occur and believing for an opportunity to survive victoriously through it. Optimists see a difficult situation and choose to find a way, anyway. They persist to support the downtrodden, to overcome, to problem solve and ultimately to add value to others around them. To all reading this, you have exemplified these actions at some point in your life, if not everyday. You are an optimist. You are an everyday hero.

I'm thankful to have witnessed many examples (big and small) of this spirit in Great Falls and only have room here to list a few:

- ❖ The Langley HS Junior Optimist club persisting to meet virtually through the pandemic and writing letters of encouragement and gratitude to health care workers laboring in COVID units, many of them sacrificing time from their families as they have to be quarantined from them.

- ❖ Mike Kearney, owner of the Old Brogue Irish Pub which has been integral to community gatherings for years, playing live music on his patio so many patrons can still celebrate St Patrick's Day, safely socially distanced outdoors.

- ❖ Community members who designed and produced artful masks and sold them for just \$5 in front of Safeway when there was a shortage of masks in stores. If we have to wear masks, why not make them beautiful and spread cheer!

- ❖ The Great Falls Optimist club providing Thanksgiving meals and Holiday meals for local families in need, which they have done

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

for years.

- ❖ Celebrate Great Falls' successfully booking Santa and Mrs Claus so they wouldn't be denied spreading holiday cheer to our children

at the Christmas tree lighting ceremony. What a wonderful event it was!

And the list goes on. If you have an example of optimism in Great Falls, big or small, we invite you to post it on our Facebook page so we can celebrate them with you!

As a community, we are always better together. And together, we can look forward to 2021 with a face of positivity, hope and optimism. From the wise words of poet Christian D. Larson, author of the Optimist Creed, I invite you to free yourselves from the same resolutions you broke in 2020. Instead, promise this for yourselves for the coming year:

"Promise Yourself

To be SO STRONG that nothing can disturb your peace of mind. To talk health, happiness and prosperity

to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel that there is something in them. To look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true.

To think only of the best, to work only for the best and to expect only the best.

To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the GREATER ACHIEVEMENTS of the future.

To wear a cheerful countenance AT ALL TIMES and give every living creature you meet a smile.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have NO TIME to criticize others.

To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear, and too happy to permit the presence of trouble."

Dr Babcock serves as Treasurer of the Great Falls Optimist Club and is Medical Director, Artius Integrative Medicine nestled in the heart of Great Falls. She and her family have been part of the Great Falls community for 17 years.

Edward Jones®
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Is your investment strategy tailored to your life goals?

Let's Talk

(703) 810-9006



April DuBois
Financial Advisor

@ april.dubois@edwardjones.com
facebook.com/ejfaaprildubois
edwardjones.com/april-dubois

Member SIPC

State Farm Insurance

G. STEPHEN DULANEY

IN GREAT FALLS

State Farm™
AUTO • HOME • LIFE
FINANCIAL SERVICES

Like A Good Neighbor, State Farm Is There.®

Open Saturdays

Complementary Insurance and Financial Review

Visit www.gstephendulaney.com



703-759-4155

731-C WALKER RD. · GREAT FALLS, VA

State Farm Insurance Companies
Home Office Bloomington, Illinois

Proud Supporter of Military Appreciation Mondays

Great Falls Girl Scouts Win Gold Award

Five Girl Scouts from Troop 1991 in Great Falls earn the highest recognition in scouting.

The Girl Scouts of the Nation's Capital recently acknowledged the power and dedication shared by an elite group of young women who earned the Girl Scout Gold Award in the 2020 Annual Yearbook. Five members of the Great Falls Service Unit Troop 1991 — Maya Alexander Van Scoyoc, Jacqueline Grimson, Julianna Grimson, Eliza Pastore, and Stuthi Iyer — were among those acknowledged for this prestigious accomplishment. Due to COVID-19, the in-person ceremony recognizing Gold Award recipients in the Nation's Capital from the 2020 was postponed.

The Gold Award represents the highest achievement in Girl Scouting, recognizing girls who demonstrate extraordinary leadership through remarkable Take Action projects that have sustainable impact in their communities and beyond. The Gold Award is earned by Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts and only 5.4 percent of eligible Girl Scouts successfully earn the Gold Award. Approximately 200 girls out of more than 60,000 scouts from 25 counties in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and DC earned the Gold Award. Gold Award Girl Scouts spend between one and two years on their projects, building on many prior years of Girl Scout participation.

GREAT FALLS TROOP 1991 was formed when the girls were in Kindergarten and continued through high school. Over 12 years, the troop completed hundreds of hours of service, sold thousands of boxes of cookies, enjoyed many camping trips and high adventure activities, visited the birthplace of Girl Scouts in Savannah Georgia, and traveled to the GS Chalet in Switzerland to complete a week of hiking, whitewater rafting, and activities with other Girl Scouts from around the world.

Maya Alexandra Van Scoyoc Zepda: For her Gold Award, Maya Alexandra taught health care workers and new mothers in rural Guatemala how to use inexpensive tape on cleft lip babies to prepare them for reconstructive surgery. After traveling to Guatemala with Partners for Surgery, she noticed that during post operation of cleft lip and palate surgeries, many times the reconstructed lip split, especially in babies. She discovered that taping the babies' lips well before surgery many times prevented lips from splitting and therefore additional surgeries. When she returned home, Maya Alexandra worked with Georgetown University surgeons to select an appropriate tape that was both effective and safe for young babies. She returned to Guatemala and trained locals and mothers on the proper use of the tape and secured a supply of tape to provide to Guatemala health care workers to distribute.

Maya Alexandra was a Girl Scout for 13 years and earned the highest awards at each level of scouting. She graduated from Lang-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

From left: Julianna Grimson, Eliza Pastore, Jacqueline Grimso and Maya Alexander Van Scoyoc at the Girl Scout Chalet in Adelboden, Switzerland. Not pictured: Stuthi Iyer.

ley High School and attends University of Miami.

Jacqueline Grimson: After hearing about a shooting at a local pizza restaurant near her high school where the shooter was motivated by "fake news," Jacqueline wanted to help prevent this from happening again. "Fake news," or media misinformation, was a hot topic in the 2016 Presidential election and it has become increasingly more challenging for consumers of information to identify truth from fiction.

After much research, she realized that middle schoolers were the best target audience for her project, since many were just becoming "plugged in" to social media and didn't have the tools or experience to recognize false information and clickbait. Her goal was to give middle school students the tools to become savvy consumers of information. She researched, tested, and developed a curriculum for middle schoolers and presented it to Higher Achievement, a non-profit that works with underserved middle and high school students to prepare them for college. Higher Achievement asked Jacqueline to teach her curriculum, "Media Matters," in a summer school. She led a month-long session for three different classes of students and then provided her curriculum to Higher Achievement to be used throughout the school year. Jacqueline continues to volunteer as a mentor to High Achievement students.

Jacqueline was a Girl Scout for 13 years and earned the highest awards at each level of scouting and the Silver Trefoil Service Award (300 hours). She also served the Teen Advisory Board for the GS of the Na-

tion's Capital, GS Congressional Aide, and as a Delegate at the GS National Convention in Ohio. Jacqueline graduated from Sidwell Friends High School and attends NYU.

Julianna Grimson: As a new driver, Julianna noticed that there were many poles or trees that were placed extremely close to the road, making it dangerous as a driver at night or in fog when the visibility is low. She has lived in Great Falls her entire life and was aware of several fatal accidents on the rural roads. After one Sunday morning when she saw that a driver hit a utility pole on a road close to her house and was hospitalized with life-threatening injuries, she decided to take action against this issue in her community.

Julianna, a Girl Scout for 13 years, focused on making roads in Great Falls safer for drivers for her Gold Award Project. She set out to identify all the precarious poles or trees in Great Falls that are close to the roads and work with Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to install reflectors or signage on them. Not only are these poles dangerous to Great Falls drivers, but they are especially dangerous to out-of-town drivers who are unfamiliar with our roads. Julianna worked with the Great Falls Transportation Committee, VDOT, law enforcement/first responders, and County Supervisor's Office to identify and mark hazardous obstacles near the side of rural roads. Julianna led her community and partnered with the state government to install 20 new signs on dangerous utility poles and obstacles to improve safety on Great Falls roads.

Julianna also earned the highest awards, the Bronze and Silver Award and the Sil-

ver Trefoil Service Award (more than 300 hours of service). She served on the Board of Directors for the GS of the Nation's Capital representing more than 60,000 girls from three states and DC in the largest GS Council in the US and also served as a GS Congressional Aide. Julianna graduated from Sidwell Friends High School and attends Vanderbilt University.

Eliza Pastore: After visiting the Our Chalet (an international Girl Guide/Girl Scout center) in Adelboden, Switzerland and observing insect boxes while hiking, Eliza decided to focus her Gold Award project on Virginia native insect sustainability and native insect pollinators to raise community awareness on methods to encourage the population of beneficial native insects.

Northern Virginia is rapidly losing its green space to development. Building a bug box is a way to foster and protect pollinators in the area. She began her project researching and speaking with master gardeners and farmers-in-residence about bug boxes for farming, municipal and personal use and learned how to target certain insects specifically. She worked with Fairfax County park rangers at Riverbend Park to build and place a bug box in the park, targeting bees, beetles, and spiders. The insects build nests inside hollowed bamboo and drilled branches arranged in a wooden box in late fall and lay eggs that will safely hatch by spring.

Eliza led an educational program at Riverbend Park with a dozen children in attendance to learn about native insect sustainability and to build their boxes to put in their backyard. Eliza also developed a curriculum and lesson plan so that volunteers at Riverbend Park may host similar programs in the future.

Eliza was a Girl Scout for 13 years and earned the highest awards at each level of scouting. Eliza graduated from Langley High School and attends Vanderbilt University.

Stuthi Iyer: Stuthi has been a Girl Scout for 12 years. For her Gold Award, Stuthi conducted a series of Science Technology Engineering Arts and Math (STEAM) Workshops for a group of students at a Title 1 elementary school in Herndon, Virginia. She wanted to provide students with a novel research opportunity that the Fairfax County curriculum doesn't typically provide, instill an interest in STEAM at an early age, and provide resources for these students so that they may achieve their goals without financial constraint. The workshops culminated in a Science Fair where she helped students make and present novel research.

Stuthi earned the Silver and Gold Awards and the Silver Trefoil Service Award and was a Congressional Aid. Stuthi graduated from Thomas Jefferson and attends University of Pittsburgh.



PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Ichthyology field trip learning fish identification led by Fairfax County Stormwater Planning team shown using electro-fisher unit.

Master Naturalist Program Graduates Spring Class

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

The 2020 Spring class of Virginia Master Naturalists (VMN) graduated, finally, in a Zoom ceremony on Dec. 14. The 10 graduates from across northern Virginia are now prepared to conduct and participate in area environmental service projects and programs sponsored by the State-wide organization. An additional nine members of the class will complete their elements in coming months. Noting the “great resilience exhibited by the graduates,” Ron Grimes, Fairfax Chapter Vice President, commented on the numerous disruptions caused by the pandemic which extended the Spring class, intended to end in May, well into the Fall.

Graduates completed 12 three-hour classes in earth sciences, four day long field trips to local parks, offered group presentations, and successfully completed a 100-question final examination to complete the course. Final certification as a Master Naturalist requires 40 service hours and 8 continuing education hours, normally completed within six months of course completion. Two graduates already have completed this requirement. The service hour and education requirements are repeated each year to continue certification.

Begun in mid-February, the class met a few times at the Fairfax County Gov-

ernment Center, until Covid 19 restrictions ended meetings in the building. After delivering some on-line meetings during April and May, classes were suspended until instructional plans could be revamped and re-started in September, with re-structured field trips held in October.

“Virginia Master Naturalists” is an all volunteer organization which provides education, outreach, and service for the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas in the Commonwealth. The organization, its training program and projects are jointly sponsored by the following state agencies and departments: Virginia Cooperative Extension; Game and Inland Fisheries; Forestry; Conservation and Recreation; Museum of Natural History; Environmental Quality.

The program is accepting applications now through Dec. 23, for the next Spring class, expected to run from Feb. 18 through May 13. For more information on the program and the Spring 2021 class, visit <http://www.fairfaxmasternaturalists.org/>.



Master Naturalist Program students learn about geologic processes from scientist Cyn-de Sears during Riverbend Park field trip.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CALENDAR

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Let us know about an upcoming event

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

FCPS

APPLY NOW!
Substitute teachers needed!

www.fcps.edu
SEARCH
substitute teaching opportunities

ATTEND ONE OF OUR
VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSIONS
FOR MORE INFORMATION

#SayYESstoFCPS!

VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING

2020 VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

Virginia has voted to have a redistricting commission and you can be part of it!

If you are interested in becoming a citizen commissioner go to our website for more information.

Accepting applications
November 30th through December 28th

Apply Today

<https://redistricting.dls.virginia.gov/>

A Holiday Season Reimagined

The pandemic leads to altered and new traditions.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

When schools adjourn for winter break the anticipation of a COVID-19 pandemic holiday season will become a reality. As festive gatherings are altered or cancelled to help prevent the spread of the disease, many families are faced with the loss of traditions and the challenge of getting into the holiday spirit.

"This year many families will be coping with not being able to spend the holidays with extended family or to travel in the way they usually would," said Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D. "Although some may appreciate a break from obligation many may be grieving the loss of time spent with loved ones, as well as missing their usual routines and traditions."

Creating new holiday rituals or adjusting old ones can help minimize feelings of longing and melancholy. "Families can work toward recapturing some of these traditions at home," said Isenberg. "Perhaps other traditions can continue in a modified way such as baking with Grandma in two separate kitchens connected by a video call during the activity. Maybe kids can do Mad Libs or other games with their cousins over a call."

For those accustomed to traveling during the holidays, a substitute might be driving, walking or biking around the neighborhood to look at Christmas lights. A hike through Rock Creek or Great Falls Park might appeal to families with children from toddlers to teens.

"To make hikes or walks engaging, adults or older children can think ahead about what they may see on the hike or walk," said Sonia Pruneda-Hernandez, College-Wide Chair, Early Childhood Education Program at Montgomery College. "Ask children to look for birds. 'How many birds can we find or hear during our hike or walk?' The next day, focus on animals. 'Can any animals be spotted during the hike?' The following day, collect leaves, have the children take a bag with them and find different leaves then return home and help the child identify the leaves and the type of trees each fell from."

In fact, time spent outdoors can improve overall mood if holiday weeks off from school turn sometimes glum or dull. "Physical exercise gives energy ... and helps regulate sleep," said Jerome Short.

When the weather or circumstances make venturing outside difficult, indoor activities like scavenger hunts can preserve holiday cheer without health and safety risks.

"Hide items throughout the house and give the children clues to find items," said Pruneda-Hernandez. "Items can be simple objects that are in the home like toothpaste, with clues like 'What do you use to brush your teeth?' You can do a different scavenger hunt every day."

"Some fun ideas are reading stories together and then acting them out, creating a scene from the book in a shoebox or playing charades with topics related to the story," said Patty Howick, education instructor at



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Activities like biking or hiking can replace traditional holiday traditions.



PHOTO BY CHAD CONEWAY

Alexandria-based artist Kathryn Coneway is using the creative process to redefine how holidays are celebrated.

"This year many families will be coping with not being able to spend the holidays with extended family or to travel in the way they usually would."

— Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D.

Marymount University. "Writing a letter to a friend, asking an older relative to share a memorable moment in history or taking a walk to observe the changes in nature are some ways to stay connected. Be creative and have fun together."

Trade the hustle and bustle that often accompany the holidays for projects that offer opportunities for reflection and contemplation. "Many of us are used to school concerts or holiday parties and will be missing them this year," said Kathryn Coneway, an Alexandria, Virginia based artist, author, and educator. <https://www.kathrynconeway.com> "This year, perhaps you can take a walk or spend time in nature, take photographs and share them with family or friends."

One idea that Coneway is trying with friends this holiday season is using daily drawing prompts inspired by artist Anna Brones <https://annabrones.com/>. The group uses one short phrase offered by Brones each day to awaken creativity which they use to create a sketch over the course of a day.

"The prompts offer a starting point for a drawing a day," Coneway said. "Families could do them at home together or share with family and friends at a distance and then share through texting or posting photos."

Creativity can help children and adults stay connected to family and customs, suggests Isenberg. "This unusual time is also an opportunity to create new traditions or just to have new experiences," she said.

Vienna Church to Host Christmas Eve 'Journey to Christmas'

A special "Journey to Christmas" will be held Christmas Eve at The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist) in Vienna, marking the first time the church has held an in-person worship service indoors since March. The event will be from 5 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 24, with participants walking through various Advent stations in the church building at 2351 Hunter Mill Road.



PHOTO BY LESLIE JANE FAHRNEY
OF THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Vienna's Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist) will hold its first indoors in-person worship service since March on Christmas Eve. The special "Journey to Christmas" event will be from 5 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 24.

"This will be open-house style so that people can come anytime during this time frame and be safe as they move throughout the church rooms spaced further apart," said Pastor Eric Song. "Communion also will be offered outdoors. We are very excited to celebrate Christmas in a new and creative way this year."

The church has been meeting online for the last nine months as directed by the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church. The district office of the state conference had to approve the church's Christmas Eve plan, Song said. The Worship Committee decided to try to develop a Christmas Eve plan after the church successfully held an approved church rummage sale in September, he added.

"Participants must wear a mask to attend," Song said. "We also will require those attending to sign health acknowledgment forms so that we can keep track of who we are in contact with. We are all working together to make sure we can celebrate Christmas in a safe and healthy way."

Participants are asked to enter through the doors closest to the church's Fellowship Hall,

and they will exit by the sanctuary doors.

Additionally, Song said, "We will be collecting diapers as part of our gift to the manger, so we encourage participants to donate in this way for those in need. And we'll have a special treat for children, who will be looking for 'Woolly the Sheep' along the way as they journey to Christmas."

The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist) has been active in the Vienna community since 1967. For more information, visit the church website at www.GoodShepherdVA.com or at www.Facebook.com/GoodShepherd-Vienna.

The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist), 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna, VA 22181, www.GoodShepherd-VA.com

Boundary Changes Debated

FROM PAGE 3

split feeder area. This option offers some relief to MHS, solves a split feeder situation at Colvin Run ES, and leaves room for growth at Cooper MS and Langley HS. Leaving capacity room for growth is important because of concerns about the negative student growth forecasts by FCPS for the Langley pyramid. Those forecasts seem inconsistent with Fairfax County analysis that forecast about 4,000 additional households by year 2025 for zip codes 22102 and 22066 which feed schools in the Langley pyramid."

Online comments: Dec.4 Feed-

back on Proposed Boundary Adjustment for McLean HS

Those who live directly off Dolly Madison Blvd. (to go to LHS) and off of Kirby Road North and East of Old Dominion.

Moving both Colvin Run and Spring Hill was preferred by Colvin Run parents to help with carpooling and so there is not an isolated pocket far out still going to McLean.

Option 1 is the best option as it fully relieves overcrowding at MHS.

Scenario B makes most sense.

Consider other options that include neighborhoods near/closer to Langley HS.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Great Falls Woman Dies in Two-Car Crash

A woman has died as a result of injuries from a crash that occurred Sunday, Dec. 7, around 11 a.m. at the intersection of Leesburg Pike and Towlston Road. Detectives from Crash Reconstruction Unit have preliminarily determined that Holly Kuga, 72, of Great Falls, was operating a 2012 Honda Accord southbound on Towlston Road and attempted a left turn onto Leesburg Pike. The driver of a 2017 GMC Sierra was traveling westbound on Leesburg pike and crashed into Kuga's car in the intersection. Kuga was

taken to a hospital where she succumbed to her injuries. Detectives are continuing to investigate whether speed, alcohol or drugs were factors in the crash. Charges are pending further investigation.

Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone – 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477), by text – Type "FCCS" plus tip to 847411, and by web.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

HOLIDAY POP-UP MARKET

The Town of Vienna and Vienna Shopping Center is hosting a Holiday Pop-Up Market Dec. 17-20. The event will take place at 136 Maple Avenue – Vienna Shopping Center in the heart of downtown Vienna (market in the former Tuesday Morning space). The event features a small collection of local artisans ranging from jewelry, home gifts, art, and more. Shoppers can shop safe and explore a variety of hand-made gifts from local makers. The times are: Thursday, December 17, 5:00-8:00 p.m.; Friday, December 18, 5:00-8:00 p.m.; Saturday, December 19, 12:00-5:00 p.m.; and Sunday, December 20, 12:00-5:00 p.m. Reservations and walk-in's welcome. To reserve a shopping time and to view artist line up, visit www.viennava.gov/holidaypopup.

Ninjas Falls Church, 479 South Maple Avenue, Suite F, Falls Church. In collaboration with R Controlled E-Sports, Code Ninjas Falls Church will be holding tryouts for its new XP League esports team and invite elementary and middle-school students to participate in try-outs at the Falls Church Code Ninjas with league play starting in early January. Visit the website: <https://www.codeninjas.com/va-falls-church>

FRIDAY/DEC. 18

McLean Art Society Meeting. 10 a.m. Jane McElvany Coonce, an award winning local artist and teacher, will be the presenter at the Dec. 18 meeting of the McLean Art Society. The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. and the demonstration will take place from 11 a.m.-noon. Ms. Coonce is a former president of both the McLean Art Society and the Potomac Valley Watercolor Society. She is also an instruc-

tor with Arlington County Adult Education. The art topic addressed will be "How to Paint a Rainy Day Scene in Oil". Both meeting and presentation will be conducted on ZOOM. Guests are welcome and anyone wishing to participate should contact M.A.S. President at raymgoodrow@aol.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 19

Drive Thru Live Nativity. 1:30-3:30 p.m. At Holy Comforter, 543 Beulah Road in Vienna. Come celebrate Christ's birth from the safe comfort of your vehicle during Holy Comforter Church's Drive-Thru Live Nativity. It's an opportunity to experience the sights and sounds when Jesus was born. There will be costumed church volunteers and live animals spread throughout the church parking lot.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

NOW THRU DEC. 19

XP League Tryouts. 2-4 p.m. At Code



APPLY NOW!
Classroom Monitors Needed!
www.fcps.edu
 SEARCH

Current Job Openings

Operational Staff Opportunities

Provide in-person classroom assistance to students when a staff member remains virtual.



Past issues of
THE CONNECTION
 NEWSPAPERS

back to 2008
 are available at
<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF>

PRINT AND DIGITAL OPTIONS TO REACH YOUR TARGET MARKET

Email Blasts • Print • Digital Billboards • Sponsored Content • Exclusive Front Page Shoutout • Social Media



THE CONNECTION
 Newspapers & Online

For Advertising: Call 703.778.9431 or Email advertising@connectionnewspapers.com

Same Company, Same Employees,
 Same Great Value - Now Celebrating 20 Years!

TWO POOR TEACHERS

Kitchen and Bathroom Remodeling



- Electrical (ELE)
- Gas Fitting (GFC)
- Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVA)
- Plumbing (PLB)
- Residential Building (RBC)

Fully Insured & Class A Licensed
 Since 1999



Free Estimates **703-999-2928**

Check if your contractor is licensed at the state level
<http://www.DPOR.virginia.gov>

Visit our website: www.twopoorteachers.com

Announcements

LeafFilter
GUTTER PROTECTION

✓ INSTALLS ON NEW & EXISTING GUTTERS

BEFORE LeafFilter AFTER LeafFilter

MADE IN THE USA ACCREDITED BUSINESS LIFETIME WARRANTY A COMPANY OF LHS

15% OFF AND! **10% OFF** + **5% OFF**
YOUR ENTIRE PURCHASE* SENIOR & MILITARY DISCOUNTS TO THE FIRST 50 CALLERS!**

Promo Number: 285

CALL US TODAY FOR A FREE ESTIMATE **1-877-614-6667**

Mon-Thurs: 8am-11pm, Fri-Sat: 8am-5pm, Sun: 2pm-8pm EST

*For those who qualify. One coupon per household. No obligation estimate valid for 1 year. ** Offer valid at estimate only. CSLB# 1035795 DOPL #10783658-5501 License# 7656 License# 50145 License# 41354 License# 99338 License# 128344 License# 218294 License# 603 233 977 License# 2102212986 License# 2106212946 License# 2705132153A License# LEAFFNW822JZ License# WV056912 License# WC-29998-H17 Nassau HIC License# H01067000 Registration# 176447 Registration# HIC0649905 Registration# C127229 Registration# C127230 Registration# 366920918 Registration# FC6475 Registration# IR731804 Registration# 13VH09953900 Registration# PA069383 Suffolk HIC License# 52229-H

Announcements

Announcements

Announcements

Prepare for unexpected power outages with a Generac home standby generator

SCHEDULE YOUR FREE IN-HOME ASSESSMENT TODAY!
844-947-1479

FREE 7-Year Extended Warranty*
A \$695 Value!

Offer valid August 24, 2020 - December 31, 2020

Special Financing Available
Subject to Credit Approval



*Terms & Conditions Apply

Announcements

Announcements



VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING

2020 VIRGINIA REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

Virginia has voted to have a redistricting commission and you can be part of it!

If you are interested in becoming a citizen commissioner go to our website for more information.

Accepting applications
November 30th through December 28th

Apply Today

<https://redistricting.dls.virginia.gov/>

Announcements

Announcements

Feeling Stressed about COVID?

Virginia C.O.P.E.S. Warmline

877-349-MHAV (6428)

Monday - Friday 9am - 9pm
Saturday - Sunday 5pm - 9pm

OPEN TO ALL VIRGINIANS | YOU ARE NOT ALONE



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

Past issues of



back to 2008 are available at

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF>

DEC. 24

Christmas Candlelight Service. 7:30-8:30 p.m. (Online). Sponsored by Unity of Fairfax. Christmas Eve 2020 will be unlike any in recent memory. This year they conclude their exploration of the four Advent themes with a special service about what we've found in our explorations. Visit the website: <https://christmas-eve-candlelight-service-2020-12-24.eventbrite.com/?aff=cnnews>

CHRISTMAS AT ST. JOHN'S

Christmas Worship at St. John's Episcopal Church, McLean
DECEMBER 20, 10 a.m. A Digital Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols Streamed on Facebook
CHRISTMAS EVE, 7 p.m. Digital Service Streamed on Facebook (with Christmas music). 10:00 p.m. Digital Service Streamed on Facebook (with Christmas music)
CHRISTMAS DAY, Digital service will be available for viewing throughout the Christmas holiday starting at 4:00 pm Christmas Eve through the St. John's website: www.stjohnsmclean.org.
St. John's Episcopal Church is located at 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Call 703-356-4902; www.stjohnsmclean.org.

MONDAY/DEC. 28

Grief Support Group. 6:45 p.m. Virtual Zoom Event. Support group for adults for losses relating to COVID-19 as a result of death, decline or illness, financial impact or spiritual suffering. Support Group takes place 2nd and 4th Mondays monthly through December. Register for the group on the website: <https://www.capitalcaring.org/grief-support-groups-registration/>

NOVEC ACCEPTS USED XMAS TREES

Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative will accept used cut Christmas trees, garland, and holly and ivy sprigs that decked the halls, at its technical center at 5399 Wellington Branch Road in Gainesville, near I-66 and Route 29. Consumers should leave greens -- free of all decorations, ornament hooks, wire, and light strings -- in the parking lot area designated by orange safety cones from Dec. 26 to Jan. 10, 2021.

DWR BOATING ACCESS FEES

The Department of Wildlife Resources wants to alert customers of new legislation going into effect January 1, 2021. The Legislation states: Beginning January 1, 2021, any person using a Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR)-owned or managed facility, including boating access sites, must have a valid Virginia hunting, trapping, or fishing permit, a Restore the Wild membership, an access permit, or current certificate of boat registration issued by DWR to use the facility. This does not apply to persons under the age of 17 or passengers with a permitted operator. The operator must have a permit. Acceptable access permits include: Valid VA Trapping, Hunting or Fishing license; Valid VA Boater Registration (must be Virginia); Valid Daily or Annual DWR Access Permit; Current Restore the Wild Membership. For information, visit: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/boating/access-faq/>

CALENDAR

TYSONS CORNER CENTER HOLIDAY PLANS

Santa Is Back (Now through Dec. 24). Careful consideration has been given to the Santa set to ensure that they are both healthy and magical to meet the moment. Santa will be seated a distance from his guests to maintain a healthful distance, with a physical barrier to prevent young guests from trying to sit on Santa's lap. Santa and his young visitors will wear masks and maintain a healthful distance, in a contactless visit and photo experience fully re-designed to meet the moment.

Grinch's Grotto (Now thru Dec. 31). Located on Level 2 next to A Christmas to Remember. Guests will meet The Grinch and interact with him right in his cave, as well as pose for a photo. Admission includes a free 6x8" printed photo with a playful Grinch catchphrase. With over 20 sayings to choose from, guests can customize their own Grinch holiday memory. Admission also gets you a collectible Grinch ornament. Each ticket allows admission for up to 5 guests to meet the Grinch as a group. This ticket secures your individual time to meet the Grinch and experience his cave. Social distancing and mask usage will be in accordance with local and mall regulations.

NOW THRU THE HOLIDAYS

Santa at Springfield Town Center. Santa and his reindeer have arrived at Springfield Town Center to kick-off the holiday season. In an effort to create touchless experiences and accommodate varying levels of visitor comfort, Santa will be available at Springfield Town Center via numerous experiences and offerings: Picture with Santa; Virtual Experience; Family Pet Photos on Mondays; Family Photos and Visits with Santa. Reservations are required for all Santa and photo offerings.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 16

The Unruly Theatre Project's Virtual Improv Show. 7 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Join in (the) Unruly Theatre Project's virtual fall improv shows from the comfort of your couch! Register online and a Zoom link and password for the show will be emailed to you. Participants must register two hours in advance of showtime. Visit www.mcleancenter.org

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 16

Jane Austen Tea. 2-3 p.m. Reston Regional Zoom, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Make yourself a cup of tea and celebrate Jane Austen's birthday. They'll discuss her books, her life, and her impact. Zoom invites sent to registrants 1-2 days before the event. Teens-Adults. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/7303990>

THURSDAY/DEC. 17

Lúnasa, a Celtic Holiday. 8 p.m. At Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, CenterStage, Reston. Cost is \$25 Reston/\$50 Non-Reston. Irish band Lúnasa brings its holiday show to the CenterStage, along with Dublin-born bouzouki player Daóiri Farrell and rising star Malinda. Part of the Professional Touring Artist Series. Visit the website www.restoncommunitycenter.com/ptas.

DEC. 18 TO JAN. 4

Naturescape Narratives: Chinese Brushpainting. 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. At Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Offering a break from the pandemic, 67 brushpaintings by Tracie Griffith Tso are on exhibit at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods through January 4 offering a 6,000-year-old Chinese artform in a nature-based display.

FRIDAY/DEC. 18

Virtual Family Fun Trivia Night. 7-9 p.m. At the Old Firehouse, McLean. Gather the whole family around the computer or tablet and get ready for some socially distant trivia. Prizes will be awarded to the winning teams! Register online or by calling OFC at 703-448-TEEN (8336).

SATURDAY/DEC. 19

Family Holiday Movie. 2 p.m. Sponsored by The Alden Theater, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Attendees must wear masks and adhere to social-distancing requirements while in the facility. Seating is limited and preregistration is mandatory. Subscribe to The Alden's monthly newsletter (<https://bit.ly/2HSTLhs>) to get the full movie lineup and movie titles. Stay tuned for registration information.

DEC. 20-30

A Winter Star. Encore Stage & Studio is making spirits bright this season by offering a unique theatrical experience outdoors in the comfort of your car in the parking lot of Temple Rodef Shalom (2100 Westmoreland St., Falls Church). Performances dates are December 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, and 30. Showtimes begin every 15 minutes between 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.; and 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. All entry tickets must be purchased in advance. Entry tickets are Pay-What-You-Can donations, starting at \$5. Ticket proceeds from A Winter Star will be donated to the Arlington Food Assistance Center and Encore's Theatre for All! Fund which provides scholarships and outreach programs. Tickets are available online at www.encorestage.org. To learn more, visit www.templerodefshalom.org.

'Managing the Moments' Videos Just in Time for the Holidays

Too much togetherness cramping your communication style? Too much teenage anxiety taking over the household? Too much frustration with distance or hybrid learning with your kids? When it gets to be "too much," take a few moments to check out a few new video offerings from the Safe Community Coalition's Managing the Moments series.

These short videos are produced by the psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers of the SCC's mental health committee. Topics selected reflect what they are seeing both in their private practices and on the homefront.

The new videos include:

- * Coping With the Holidays – how to make the most of an unprecedented holiday season
- * Creating Coping Capacity – body

awareness and mindfulness techniques to feel more calm and relaxed

* Connecting Through Play – strategies for minimizing frustrations of younger children

* Anxiety in School – an honest look at teenage anxiety straight from a teen being interviewed by his mother

* Your Daily Prescription to Cope with COVID – focusing on ways to nurture yourself These new videos join the original six videos: Deescalating Conflict, Effective Communication, How to Talk to Your Parents, Brain Breaks During Distance Learning, Self-Care and Calming Techniques, and How Are You? All videos and accompanying tip sheets are free and available on the SCC website, mcleanscc.org. Make sure to bookmark the page and watch any time!

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CALL 703-549-0004

FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION

ELECTRICAL	
K & D ELECTRIC	
COMMERCIAL / RESIDENTIAL SERVICE	
Family Owned & Operated	
Recessed Lighting	Licensed/Bonded/Insured
Ceiling Fans	Office 703-335-0654
Phone/CATV	Mobile 703-499-0522
Computer Network Cabling	Service Upgrades
Hot Tubs, etc...	lektrkman28@gmail.com

LANDSCAPING	
Quality Tree Service & Landscaping	
Reasonable prices. Licensed & insured.	
	Summer Cleanup...
	Tree removal, topping & pruning, shrubbery trimming, mulching, leaf removal, planting, hauling, gutter cleaning, retaining walls, drainage problems, etc.
25 years of experience – Free estimates	
703-868-5358	
24 Hour Emergency Tree Service	

Patios & Drainage
Your neighborhood company since 1987
703-772-0500

J.E.S. Services
Free Estimates - Fully Licensed & Insured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting & Landscaping Design • Drainage & Water Problems • Concrete Driveways, Replacement or New • Patios and Walks • Masonry Work or Dry Laid • Paver, Flagstone, Brick, any style you choose • Retaining walls of all types
All work Guaranteed



Sign up for **FREE DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION** to any or all of our 15 papers

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM/SUBSCRIBE



Three Strikes ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... and now I'm out - of the Handel's Messiah sweepstakes. The sweepstakes being to write in 50 words or less "Why do you love Handel's Messiah?" All I can answer is one word: Hallelujah, and I don't mean the chorus either. 'Three strikes' refers to the number of times I have now been subjected to this "holiday tradition." The first time I was an attendee - with thousands of other Washingtonians. In a jam-packed National Cathedral one Christmas season. The second time, while visiting my father-in-law in Manhattan during Christmas, he suggested going to Carnegie Hall to listen to Christmas music (not specified). I jumped at the chance to go to Carnegie Hall. Little did I know until I was handed the program that the Christmas music that night was Handel's Messiah. And most recently, I was sitting on my couch at home channel-surfing when I came across a "Handel's Messiah" rebroadcast from some famous venue in Salzburg, Austria featuring a lead singer, a mestro, an orchestra and choir, all of whom shall remain nameless to protect their stature. Whatever criticism/less than glowing reaction to hearing "Handel's Messiah" a third time should be a reflection on me, not the performers.

I freely admit my cultural deficiencies. I am not inclined to tolerate - too well, these intrusions into my rather mundane world. I have never been to the ballet, rarely have seen a play/musical, never attended a concert

featuring the Four Italian Seniors (as but one example) and am not so inclined to listen to the classics on WETA 90.9 FM in Washington, DC either, especially since Dennis Owens retired in 2005. In my defense, I am a card-carrying (Three Stooges Fan Club) member of the hoi polloi. And to be perfectly honest, I don't feel as if I'm any the worse for the wear of it - or the why. However, you all might disagree.

I am not a complete dunce though. I can appreciate the talent and discipline it takes to master the skills necessary to sing, dance, play an instrument, memorize pages of dialogue, et cetera. The closest I've ever got to enjoying this kind of entertainment occurred at Wolf Trap during the summer concert season. Twice, if I'm not mistaken, I attended the yearly July 4th concert when the National Symphony orchestra performed Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture with 105mm cannons. It's not exactly equivalent to the old Quaker Oats puffed wheat commercials of my youth but it was entertaining nonetheless. However, having now attended a few times, I'm not so inclined to attend again. And believe it or not, I don't feel at all diminished having said so.

I wouldn't say that the three experiences I've had listening to "Handel's Messiah" has thoroughly convinced me that such cultural forays never be considered again. On the contrary, there is a part of me, a small part, that feels as if I'm missing something. Still, I don't feel incomplete, uneducated or clueless somehow. Instead, I feel like one of the bad guys Clint Eastwood gave an advisory to in one of his "Dirty Harry" movies: "punk. A man has got to know his limitations." And I feel as if I know mine. Perhaps there are cultural areas where I could co-exist but I cannot co-exist with "Handel's Messiah." As I titled an earlier column I wrote for Connection Newspapers while actually attending/hearing "Handel's Messiah" - for the first time, at the National Cathedral one holiday season: "Can't Handel It Anymore."

Two more listens since the original, and I can say with certainty, I still can't "Handel" it. I thought that when I realized what I was listening to at home: "Handel's Messiah," having the freedom to get up, move around et cetera, might possibly enhance the experience. Well, it worked. I didn't feel the least bit trapped so after listening for 10 minutes or so, I got up, turned off the television, left the room, came into my home-office and wrote this column. Apparently, I found a way to "Handel" it after all: stop listening and start writing. I feel better already.

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



DIANNE VAN VOLKENBURG

Buy with Confidence. Sell with Success.

Work with the #1 Realtor

Dianne Van Volkenburg and her team of real estate agents and marketing specialists are unsurpassed in providing first-class service to buyers and sellers. In fact, Dianne and her team have one of the highest rates of repeat clients in all of Northern Virginia as former clients, families and friends trust them for their real estate needs.

No One Prepares A Home Better Than I Do!



Great Falls \$1,499,000



Great Falls \$3,699,000



McLean \$1,250,000



Great Falls \$2,399,000



Great Falls \$1,585,000



Great Falls \$3,250,000

Spring Market Starts in January Call Me Today!

LONG & FOSTER | **CHRISTIE'S**
REAL ESTATE | INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE
9841 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, VA 22066
703-759-9190 • GreatFallsGreatHomes.com

703-757-3222
sales@GreatFallsGreatHomes.com

