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Dunn Loring Center To Become School

NEWS, PAGE 2

The Fairfax County School Board approved repurposing of Dunn Loring Administrative Center as a new elementary school providing capacity relief at Shreve-wood Elementary School in Falls Church and the Dunn Loring, Tysons, and Falls Church communities.



**Keller Williams McLean/
Great Falls Posts Record
\$1.1b in Home Sales**

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Announces His Retirement**

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Dunn Loring Center to Become School

Capacity relief coming for Shreveewood ES and Tysons Periphery.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION



Karl Frisch, Providence District Representative on the Fairfax County School Board.



The Fairfax County School Board approved repurposing of Dunn Loring Administrative Center as a new elementary school providing capacity relief at Shreveewood Elementary School in Falls Church and the Dunn Loring, Tysons, and Falls Church communities.

A new school project to help bring sustainable capacity relief for Shreveewood Elementary School and the Dunn Loring, Tysons, and Falls Church communities is on the way.

On Jan. 5, in a vote of 10 to 0, with two members absent, the Fairfax County School Board approved a proposal presented by Karl Frisch, Providence District Representative, to use available bond funds to establish a school at the current Dunn Loring Administrative Center. The site previously housed an elementary school from 1939 to 1978 and is a suitable site already owned by FCPS.

According to Frisch, the school system can repurpose the building with a \$36.8 million renovation with sufficient available bond funds.

Even with program changes and space adjustments to accommodate growth in the short term, Shreveewood Elementary continues to experience overcrowding and a capacity deficit, as reported in each of the last CIP (Capital Improvement Program) reports. Capacity analysis at Shreveewood reached 118 percent in 2019 and is projected to be 120 percent in 2025.

"I am grateful to the many parents and school staff who have shared their capacity concerns with me over the past year. If not for their persistent advocacy and willingness to think outside of the box, this would not have been possible," said Frisch.

According to FCSB documents, in 2017 and 2019, voters approved bond funds

initially earmarked for a new elementary school in the Fairfax/Oakton area without attaching it to a specific location as part of the school bond referendum. Two elementary schools in the area no longer have capacity needs once indicated.

Leaving the project undated allows staff to focus on Return to School. Planning, permitting, and construction, though, is generally a five-year process. Boundary adjustments will be in line with the opening of the new school.

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Keller Williams McLean/Great Falls Posts Record \$1.1b in Home Sales

The Covid pandemic in 2020 didn't hold back the Keller Williams Realty office in McLean/Great Falls from setting a new record in northern Virginia for the highest sales volume by a single brokerage. Their agents closed \$1,133,544,680* in real estate sales during the worst health crisis the country has seen in 100 years.

"We had been knocking on the door of \$1 billion in sales for the last three years," said Amina Basic, the Team Leader and CEO. "But we never imagined in our wildest dreams it would happen during a pandemic with 'stay at home' orders from our governor for three months."

After Gov. Ralph Northam issued his order in mid-March, "our industry panicked about what to do. But our amazing agents knew what to do. They doubled their efforts to care for all of their clients who had housing needs," Basic said.

The national real estate market dropped about 35 percent



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED
Amina Basic

in the following 3-4 months, and the Keller Williams office saw a drop of about 30 percent before it started a record pace. "We never closed our office. We adopted new protocols to keep our agents and their clients safe, and we encouraged them to reach out to their communities like never before to help out in this time of need. We all pivoted immediately and found ways to work with title and lenders and get deals closed."

The office has 276 agents registered with the regional multiple listing service. It grew by 25 agents during 2020 with many top producers. "It just proves that we have the tools, training, support and leadership to help our agents thrive during difficult times. I couldn't be more proud of our wonderful agents and their dedication to their clients and communities," Basic said.

Keller Williams McLean/Great Falls, 6820 Elm Street, McLean, VA 22101, 703-636-7300

County Residents List Assembly Expectations

Fairfax County General Assembly Delegation holds pre-2021 Session Public Hearing.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County General Assembly Delegation held a Pre-2021 Session Public Hearing on Saturday, Jan. 9. Limited to 70 two-minute speaker slots for County residents who signed up ahead of time, this was an opportunity for delegation members to hear constituent concerns as they prepared for the upcoming session that convenes on Wednesday, Jan. 13 and adjourns on Saturday, Feb. 27. All speakers registered in advance could submit video or call in to submit live testimony during the hearing. Speakers could also submit written testimony by email.

Residents urged the Fairfax delegation to support strengthening our public schools, childcare, and Human Services, expanding access to affordable housing, protecting our environment, modernizing transportation infrastructure, and more. They provided testimony.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey McKay welcomed all and thanked Senator Richard (Dick) L. Saslaw (D-35) for conducting the public hearing. McKay named actions from banning firearms on county property, removing Confederate monuments from the county courthouse, passage of the Clean Economy Act, which had allowed Fairfax County to procure the largest solar PPA project in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and increasing and improving access to one of the most fundamental rights as Americans, voting for no excuse early voting, easing ID re-



Marissa Brown of Vienna and her son Paul

quirements and allowing valid drop boxes. However, McKay said, “We need additional financial support from the state of course, and additional state flexibility to weather this storm...The number one thing counties need right now is flexibility to be spry and be able to do what is necessary to meet the needs of people in their communities. And we know communities throughout the Commonwealth are very, very different and that flexibility has never been more important to counties than it is today.”

SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE Tamara Derenak Kaufax (Lee District) spoke next. Addressing the Fairfax Delegation, she said that as the state legislative liaison, on behalf of the entire school board, they were concerned about budget implications associated with some of the proposed changes and the difficulty they have in acquiring the necessary local resources. “Please consider more flexibility on your local match requirements.” “We urge you to continue to hold harmless provisions for student enrollment losses, as we believe they’re temporary... Please avoid imposing state level one-size-

fits-all mandates, particularly in these uncertain times.”

Marissa Brown of Vienna and her son Paul said there was much to do in the upcoming session. Paul said he was a person with autism. He waited more than six years on the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver List. Marissa said they were concerned that Virginia’s current reimbursement rates don’t support hiring a high-quality workforce.

“This is essential in order to recruit staff who really understand the needs of people with developmental disabilities, particularly people with complex needs like Paul. And as I get older, I need to have the confidence that the system of services and support will be there for our son...Finally, criminal justice reform needs to include people with disabilities who are often severely impacted through arrest and incarceration, instead of services and supports,” Marissa said.

Tom Blackburn, president of the 4500 member Audubon Society, addressed three topics saying the Society enthusiastically supported a bill considered by Sen. David Marsden (D-37) and Del. David Bulova (D-37). It required a study of the sale of

“We need additional financial support from the state of course, and additional state flexibility to weather this storm...”

— Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeffrey McKay

invasive plants and encouraged the use of native plants. “Next climate change: ASV (Audubon Society Virginia) supports several of the initiatives to address climate change. In particular, we support Senator Boysko’s proposed legislation that would require the Board of Housing and Community Development to fulfill a statutory obligation to keep Virginia’s building code, consistent with the International Energy Efficiency code. We also urge passage of a bill that would allow retail customers to purchase 100 percent renewable energy from licensed energy suppliers,” Blackburn said.

MORGAN JAMESON said far too often he’s seen lifelong residents move out of the County to find affordable housing. He said, “Fairfax County is already experiencing a deficit of 31,000 affordable dwelling units and rental homes... The gap between the need and supply will grow considerably without new approaches...Affordable housing is critically important for all Virginians but obtaining it is particularly challenging in Northern Virginia where housing is increasingly out of reach for low and moderate income earners. Therefore, please allocate funding to the Virginia Rental Mortgage Relief Program, expand resources available, and increase funding for the Virginia Housing Trust Fund.”

MCC Executive Director Announces His Retirement

McLean Community Center (MCC) Executive Director George Sachs is announcing his retirement effective Friday, May 7, 2021. At the time of his retirement, Sachs will have served as the executive director at MCC for 11 years (2010-2021). The MCC Governing Board will be conducting a national search for his replacement with hopes of identifying his replacement by the end of March 2021, to allow time for a transfer of institutional knowledge from Sachs to the new director.

Sachs said during his tenure, “There was never a dull moment or lack of challenges.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCC

George Sachs

Among them was his successful leadership of the recent renovation and expansion of the center’s

40-year-old Ingleside Ave. facility. The five-year, \$8-million-dollar project involved securing an architectural firm to design and plan the renovation, working with Fairfax County staff to secure contracted services, closing the center for two years and relocating programs and services, and the entire MCC staff to four separate locations in McLean, overseeing the construction from beginning to end, returning programs and staff to the facility upon the renovation completion and creating a new slate of programs and services in the newly expanded facility.

Sachs’ career in the Recreation, Parks and Leisure Services profes-

sion started in 1974, when he was hired as a Recreation Specialist with the Fairfax County Department of Recreation. He later was hired by the Fairfax County Park Authority and opened the first RECenter at Wakefield Park, now named Audrey Moore RECenter. He left the county in 1982 to open the new Fieldhouse Sports Complex at George Mason University and managed the university’s recreation and sports facilities. While there, he also became an adjunct professor for the Department of Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services. In 1991, he was hired as the Deputy Director of MCC under Executive Director Page Shelp. Four years later, he moved to South Carolina, where he owned and op-

erated what grew to be a chain of five recreation, health and fitness centers.

Sachs returned to Fairfax County in 2009 and was hired to manage MCC’s Old Firehouse Teen Center. A year later, the MCC Governing Board appointed him the community center’s new Executive Director.

At age 70 George has decided to enter his next phase in life, retirement, and plans to now become an active participant in a variety of programs and activities similar to the ones he has been directing for the past 47 years of his career.

For more information, call MCC at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711.

INSURRECTION

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



COMMENTARY

Last Thursday's one-word headline in the Richmond Times Dispatch was in such a large font that it extended across the entire width of the newspaper: INSURRECTION. The generally conservative newspaper that was in its history the mouthpiece of massive resistance against school desegregation could have termed the events at the United States Capitol the previous day a riot, a disturbance, or a protest. That they and many others chose insurrection as the best description of what happened is an indication of the seriousness of it.

No one expressed the situation better than Senator Mitt Romney in his prepared speech delivered at the Capitol as soon as the insurrectionists had been forced out: "We gather today due to a selfish man's injured pride and the outrage of his supporters whom he has deliberately misinformed for the past two months and stirred to action this very morning. What happened here today was an insurrection, incited by the President of the United States."

An insurrection is defined legally as the act or an instance of revolting especially violently against civil or political authority or against an established government. Under federal law, whoever incites, assists, or engages in any insurrection against the authority of the United States or the laws thereof, or gives aid or comfort thereto, shall be fined and/or imprisoned; and shall be incapable of holding any office in the future.

The rights to assemble and to petition the government are protected in the Constitution. America is known for its open protests to bring injustices to the attention of government officials and the public. Some would say that such actions are as American as apple pie. What happened last week is different. Incited and directed by the President of the United States, his lawyer and a retired general who was recently pardoned by the President, thousands of persons marched from near the White House to the United States Capitol where for the first time since the British occupied the Capitol in 1814

took over the building for a short time.

It is essential that the Congress and the justice system take appropriate action against those who incited, led and participated in the insurrection. Defense of our democracy demands it. Likewise, we need to understand why the Capitol was left so defenseless when it was well known that a major bullying of the Congress was going to take place that day as the President had been talking about for weeks.

The Guardian offered a perspective: "A group of white supremacists from throughout the country who had been radicalized by the rants and misinformation from the President occupied a space that has been the citadel of democracy." About the ease with which the insurrectionists took over the Capitol it observed, "The contrast with the mass deployments of over 5,000 troops for the Black Lives Matter protests in the summer could not have been more glaring. Then, Washington resembled a city under occupation."

Through what has been one of the most disturbing days of our history I remain hopeful that we will be able to undo the many wrongs of the last four years and the racism of hundreds of years. I pledge myself to working as hard as I can to make it happen!

Superintendent Brabrand Presents FCPS Budget for FY 2022

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand presented a \$3.1 billion Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Proposed Budget to the Fairfax County School Board at its business meeting on Jan. 7. Overall, the FY 2022 Proposed Budget represents an increase of \$0.4 million, or 0.01 percent, over the FY 2021 Approved Budget.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted FCPS in numerous ways," said Brabrand. "As a result, this budget focuses on our most pressing needs. I have designed the budget to prioritize the instructional and social-emotional needs of our students so they can continue to learn and grow despite the ongoing challenges of this pandemic."

The FY 2022 Proposed Budget includes funds to continue supporting students' technology and instructional needs by enhancing digital instructional and web conferencing tools, cybersecurity protection, and the continuation of the lease obligation for FCPSOn.

"We are asking for an additional \$42.7 million, or 2.0 percent, in the County transfer to continue offering expanded preschool special education classes; address retirement rate increases and rising health care costs; expand and support our response to meet student

needs arising from the pandemic; and offset decreasing revenue from state, federal, and other sources," he added.

To begin to meet the prescribed changes to the Standards of Quality (SOQ) by the Virginia Board of Education, the budget includes \$4.9 million and 50 positions to fund staffing adjustments at the elementary level for the English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) program. In response to the update to the Code of Virginia that authorizes collective bargaining for public employees, the budget includes \$0.5 million and three positions for a collective bargaining team to support the new requirements and activities.

While the FY 2022 budget does not contain compensation increases for most employees, the proposed budget does include \$3.0 million for the third and final year of the three-year implementation plan to bring salaries of instructional assistants and public health training assistants to 50 percent of the bachelor's degree teacher salary scale.

"Now more than ever, collaboration with our county funding partners is vital," said Brabrand. "Working with the County Executive and the Board of Supervisors, we have been able to create a practical budget that will address our most pressing needs for FY 2022. We have pri-



COURTESY OF FCPS
Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand

BUDGET PROCESS SCHEDULE

The presentation of the FY 2022 Proposed Budget is the starting point of the budget process, which ends in May with the School Board's adoption of the Approved Budget.

The Fairfax County School Board will hold a work session on Tuesday, Jan. 12, a public hearing on the FY 2022 budget on Tuesday, Jan. 26 and Jan. 27, if needed, and an additional budget work session on Wednesday, Jan. 27.

The School Board will adopt its Advertised Budget on Feb. 18 and present it to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, April 13. Additional budget work sessions and public hearings will occur through May. The FCPS FY 2022 begins July 1, 2021.

Information about speaking at a budget public hearing and a list of relevant budget dates, along with updates and budget news, is available online.

itized the needs of students above all as we navigate the changing educational landscape during this pandemic."

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Creating a Calm Interior

PHOTOS BY CHRISTY KOSNIC

Soothing spaces offer serenity during difficult times.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

In the current times of turbulence and uncertainty, many are looking for a haven for serenity and calm. For some, a home's interior has become that place. "We have a lot of clients that ache for a calm interior," said Sallie Lord of Grey Hunt Interiors, who recently designed two spaces to evoke such feelings. For a client who derived serenity from time spent on the water, Lord designed a living room that is reminiscent of sand and sea. "We used soft tones in this room to create a sense of calm," she said. "On the ceiling is a subtle, soft blue-green fabric wallpaper that creates an elegant, by-the-water vibe. We even had custom art painted of the lake that the owner grew up by. It makes you want to dive in, grab a drink and relax."



For a client who derived serenity from time spent on the water, interior designer Sallie Lord of Grey Hunt Interiors designed a living room that is reminiscent of sand and sea.

"We have a lot of clients that ache for a calm interior."
— Sallie Lord of Grey Hunt Interiors

As home offices have become more important than ever, Lord says she has worked to marry functionality with relaxation. "One of my clients wanted us to create a space that inspired her, but that mainly calmed her," said Lord. "Her life is very busy and go, go, go and she needed a retreat to unwind." Shades of lavender and white helped create that aesthetic. "We used wallpaper from the Vern Yips line of [textile manufacturer] Trend on the ceiling to give the space the spice and power that reflects her spirit, but calmed the room down with soft lavender walls, crisp whites, and soft textures, such as those used in her custom drapes. This room worked so well that she often finds her children in her space relaxing."



Shades of lavender and white can create a serene and soothing aesthetic.

whites, and soft textures, such as those used in her custom drapes. This room worked so well that she often finds her children in her space relaxing."

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-Werner Heisenberg

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LIGHT UP MCLEAN HOLIDAY DECORATING CONTEST

McLean Community Center and The Old Firehouse Center announce the winners of the first annual Light Up McLean, Holiday House Decorating Contest. More than 420 residents voted and have decided the following results:

- Best Overall
1st Place -- House 1, The Kelleher Family, 1829 Briar Ridge Ct.;
2nd Place -- House 5, The Buck Family, 6619 Heidi Ct.;
Most Original/Creative
1st Place -- House 7, The Schomburg Family, 1804 Sheridan Ct.;
2nd Place -- House 4, The Sullivan Family, 904 Lawton St.;

- Best Holiday Theme
1st Place -- House 2, The Abraham Family, 6163 Kellogg Dr.;
2nd Place -- House 6, The Weimer Family, 1241 Ingleside Ave.

TUESDAY/JAN. 19

Caregivers Support Group. 10 a.m. Virtual via Zoom Shepherd's Center serving Oakton-Vienna-Res-ton-Herndon (SC)
SC hosts a support group for caregivers of adult family members with dementia the first and third Tuesdays of each month. Their virtual, facilitated meetings are from 10:00 to 11:30 am. Contact facilitator, Jack Tarr, at jtarr5@verizon.net for details on joining the meeting via zoom or

see the SC web site: <https://www.scov.org/announcements>.

SATURDAY/JAN. 23

With the start of the new year, many people have made resolutions to improve their health. Be Fit McLean, a virtual health and wellness fair produced by the McLean Community Center (MCC), can help them meet resolution goals by providing health-enhancing information. Be Fit McLean, a live, virtual health fair event, will be held from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 23. Admission is free; however, registration is required. To register or for more information, visit www.mcleancenter.org.

Public Notice

Burke & Herbert Bank, headquartered at 100 South Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia, has submitted an application with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation for approval to relocate its branch from its current location of 332 Maple Avenue East, Vienna, Virginia to 302 Maple Avenue West, Vienna, Virginia.

Any person wishing to comment on this application may file his or her comments in writing with the Regional Director of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Atlanta Regional Office, 10 10th Street NE, Suite 800, Atlanta, GA 30309-3849, not later than 15 days after the date of this publication. The non-confidential portions of the application are on file at the appropriate FDIC office and are available for public inspection during regular business hours. Photocopies of the non-confidential portion of the application file will be made available upon request.

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CALENDAR

NOW TO FEB. 7

"Winter's Tales." Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic, 2905 District Avenue, #105, Fairfax. Winter can be many things--- quiet, simple, elegant, cold, dark and hopeful. Winter's shadows are long and its daylight is precious. It is a season of white and blue, of cold and fire, of hibernation and regeneration. In "Winter's Tales" at the Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic, the gallery's artists demonstrate in a variety of mediums how they respond to the coldest and darkest time of the year. The exhibit features beautiful paintings, fine art photography, ceramics, exquisite jewelry and fabric art.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 13

MCC 2021 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration. 7 p.m. Hosted by the Staff at The Alden, McLean. Virtual Book Discussion on "The Sound of Freedom: Marian Anderson, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Concert That Awakened America" by Raymond Arsenault. "The Sound of Freedom..." recounts the life of Black contralto Marian Anderson and her experience as a Black woman in the classical music field. Arsenault gives context to Anderson's historic 1939 concert at the Lincoln Memorial, drawing on her own words and those of scholars. They will discuss this book that celebrates civil rights and the performing arts. Register online at www.aldentheatre.org.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 13

Interior Illustrations. 10 a.m. to noon. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Capture a moment in time with your artwork through the unique "Interior Illustrations" program at Sully Historic Site. During this program, you will have the chance to use graphite or pencils to relax and draw a historic interior at Sully. Focus on specific artifacts or capture the essence of life during the early 1800s. The program is designed for participants age 16 to adult. The cost is \$15 per person. Some supplies will be available. Social distancing and face coverings are required. Call 703-437-1794.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 13

The Unruly Theatre Project's Virtual Improv Show. 7 p.m. Join (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. Register online at www.aldentheatre.org.

JAN. 14 TO FEB. 18 (THURSDAYS)

MCC 2021 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration. 7 p.m. Virtual Podcast Discussion Group on "Seeing White"—Season Two of "Scene on Radio" from the Center for Documentary Studies. Where did the notion of "whiteness" come from? Hosts Jon Biewen and weekly guest host, Dr. Chenjerai Kumanyika, delve into the historical origins of whiteness and racism in the U.S. The series looks at the history as well as the social constructs and emotional grappling that Americans engage in when discussing race and whiteness. Register online at www.aldentheatre.org.

THURSDAY/JAN. 14

Virtual Women Who Lead Speaker Series. 7-8 p.m. Virtual Event. The Junior League of Northern Virginia presents talks by women leaders. Features Lieutenant General Gwendolyn Bingham. Cost is \$20. Purchase tickets at jlnv.org/womenwholead. Visit the website: www.jlnv.org

SUNDAY/JAN. 17

Catching Atomic Spies. 2-3:30 p.m. At the Cold War Museum (100% Virtual in the Zoom Room, 1742 Lineweaver Rd., Warrenton. How an Astonishing Work of Decryption Led to the Atomic Spies, the Cambridge Five, and Much More. Presented by the Historian of the National Security Agency. Cost is \$20. Visit the website:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/venona-the-secret-tool-that-found-key-spies-in-the-early-cold-war-tickets-123765105763>

TUESDAY/JAN. 19

Virtual Women Who Lead Speaker Series. 7-8 p.m. Virtual event. The Junior League of Northern Virginia presents talks by women leaders. Features Vicki Warker. Cost is \$20. Purchase tickets at jlnv.org/womenwholead. Visit the website: www.jlnv.org

TUESDAY/JAN. 19

Waterfowl Program. At Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. While some birds may be wintering in the South, there are still plenty to see on local waterways. In fact, for some migratory birds, Fairfax County seems mighty balmy this time of year. Come to Burke Lake Park in January and learn about the birds that are making the lake their home for the cold season. Join the "Waterfowl" program on Tuesday, Jan. 5 or Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2021, to search for birds such as loons, lesser scaups and ring-necked ducks. Bring binoculars and dress for the weather. The program is designed for participants age 12 to adult and runs from 10 to 11 a.m. The cost is \$8 per person. Call 703-323-6600.

FRIDAY/JAN. 22

Family Outdoor Exploration. 1-2 p.m. At E.C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Get your family into the great outdoors with a personalized program led by a naturalist or historian at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park. The "Family Outdoor Exploration" program lets you choose your own exploration. Investigate topics, such as Stream Life, Pond Life, Historic Ice Cream and much more. Once you register, the park will reach out to you to plan your personalized family outing. The cost is \$40 per family for a group of up to nine people age 4 to adult. Call 703-631-0013.

MONDAY/JAN. 25

Unmeltable Snowman Workshop. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. It's always sad to watch a snowman melt away, so discover how you can create a four-season snowman that will still be with you when summer arrives. Sully Historic Site is hosting a series of "Unmeltable Snowman" workshops for families on three Mondays in January - Jan. 4, Jan. 11 and Jan. 25, 2021. At the workshop, you will learn to use a felting process to make an unmeltable snowperson and decorate it with style. Keep your creation through winter, spring, summer and fall. This program is suitable for participants age 5 to adult and is being offered on the hour from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The workshop is designed for a family of up to four people, and the cost is \$20 per family. Call 703-437-1794.

FRIDAY/JAN. 29

Family Fun Trivia Night. 7-9 p.m. Virtual. At the Old Firehouse, McLean. Gather the whole family around the computer or tablet and get ready for some socially distant trivia. Prizes for winning teams. To register for Old Firehouse events, visit: www.oldfirehouse.org or call 703-448-8336, TTY: 711.

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In Effect, a Trade



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Incurable but treatable non small cell lung cancer, stage IV for incurable but treatable papillary thyroid cancer stage IV. And though it may have taken a while to get re-diagnosed: nearly 11 years, the eagle, as they say, apparently has landed. Nevertheless, I'm glad to still be here. Let me amend that. After being given my first "terminal" diagnosis in late February, 2009, with an accompanying "13 month to two year" prognosis, I am glad to be anywhere. Still, it would have been preferred had I received the thyroid cancer diagnosis originally. If that had been the case, I might no longer be a cancer patient with an incurable form of papillary thyroid cancer. If I remember correctly, generally speaking, papillary thyroid cancer is called "the friendly cancer" because it's so curable. Not for me, and not now.

But "alas poor Yorick," papillary thyroid cancer was not my original diagnosis. As such, I have been treated and lived as a non small cell lung cancer stage IV patient whose life expectancy was shortening by the hour.

However, since I was being treated for lung cancer exclusively, my underlying/real cancer was left untreated - for 11 years. And sure enough, after 10 years or so, the thyroid cancer finally manifested itself with the appearance of my "adam's apple" tumor, as I called it. Left untreated for 11 years, it morphed, if that's even the right word, into a rare form of papillary cancer, the "terminal" kind. The thyroidectomy I had in late Jan. 2020 confirmed it once and for all.

And by "terminal" I mean, there is only one drug presently recommended, Lenvima, for my cancer, and its projected effectiveness is three years, give or take. So far the side effects have been fairly minimal and my first two quarterly CT scans since I began this regimen have shown tumor shrinkage. Very encouraging. However, as they say in the mutual fund business: "Past performance is not an indicator of future results." Therefore, though this trade was officially confirmed in the first quarter of this year, I still live and breathe - with somewhat shorter breath, from one CT scan result to the next. I may think I know how I feel, but not until I receive the results from the oncologist, electronically, will I truly know. This is when the rubber officially hits the road. The diagnostic scan results outweigh any feelings I may have on the subject. As is so happens, my next scan is scheduled for Jan. 13. I should have the results before the weekend. A timetable I've experienced many times since Feb. 20, 2009, the date of my original diagnosis.

The trade, unfortunately did not change this cycle. Nor has the situation of there being one drug available left to treat my cancer. I can remember more than once when my oncologist told me the drug he was prescribing was the last one he had confidence in to treat my lung cancer. Now, the drug I'm taking is also the last best choice available. Different from lung cancer drugs, when the drugs worked until they didn't, the thyroid cancer drug I'm taking has a three-year-ish effectiveness limit. After which, as we say in Boston, "it will be Katie bar the door." At the moment, there aren't any additional drugs to recommend. Given what I anticipated my life expectancy to be, considering the age to which both my parents lived, I would say my thyroid cancer is "terminal".

But that's a rabbit hole I'm not going down. Three years may not be a normal life expectancy (that would age me to 69), but it's ample time, I hope, for the cancer researchers to do their work. And I expect there will be some kind of progress even though the type of papillary thyroid cancer I have is not particularly common. Regardless, I will continue my routine of miscellaneous pills (upwards of 60 per day), alkaline water, lab work, scans, treatment and living my life on semi borrowed time. Granted, it's not ideal, but it's a life with which I'm extremely familiar. I have been there and I will continue to do that.

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



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