

CONNECTION McLean ♦ Vienna and Oakton



The Pandemic canceled McLean Day in 2020 and in 2021, it was a drive-through event. This photo from 2019 shows the joy of McLean Day which drew an estimated 10,000 visitors that pre-pandemic year.

STUDENT PHILANTHROPY, PAGE 4 ♦ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 10 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11

**McLean Resident
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McLEANDAY Est. 1915
It's Back!
PAGES 6-7

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

FRIDAY/MAY 20

Dulles Corridor Advisory Committee Meeting. 9:30 a.m. Virtual Meeting. DCAC will meet to receive updates on the Silver Line Metrorail construction project and the Dulles Toll Road. DCAC is an eight-member committee that advises the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority on issues related to the management, improvement and expansion of the Dulles Corridor,

as well as changes to toll rates on the Dulles Toll Road to fund roadway improvements and the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project (Silver Line). The Committee includes representation from the Airports Authority, Fairfax County, Loudoun County and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Visit <https://mwaa.zoom.us/j/89621190593>. Join via Telephone:

Dial: (215) 446-3649 (USA) or (888) 557-8511 (US Toll Free)
Conference code: 9920925

SATURDAY/MAY 21

Mental Health First Aid. 1-5 p.m. At Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple

Ave. E, Vienna. This is an 8-hour course, presented in 2 4-hour blocks on May 14 and 21, designed to give community members key skills to provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/8882192>

SATURDAY/JUNE 4

Join Cub Scouts. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. At St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Children in grades K-5 are welcome to join Great Falls Cub Scout Pack 55 for fun, adventure,

life skills, camping and more. Visit the raingutter regatta and learn about our pack. Visit the website: <https://www.gfvascouts.com/>

SHEPHERD'S CENTER OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA SPRING 2022 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The Shepherd's Center of Northern Virginia continues to offer educational, health and wellness and entertaining programming to our Senior Community. The programming includes Adventures In Learning, Active Wellness Classes, Great Discussions Book Club, Caregivers' Support Group and

much more.

The Adventures In Learning program began in April and repeats every Thursday for 8 weeks. There is ongoing AIL programming all year long. Topics this session include Health & Wellness, Arts & Entertainment & Travel as well as World Affairs Past & Present.

The Active Aging and Wellness Program is an Exercise Class to improve strength, balance and mobility for older adults. This class is held on Wednesdays (via Zoom) from 10:45-11:45 a.m. for eight week schedules. The cost is \$50/session and you can learn more about it and register on the website.

The Great Decisions Book Club is held the 3rd Friday of every month from February – November. Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. This program is designed by the Foreign Policy Association to bring people together in study groups to discuss, debate and learn about important global challenges of our time.

The Caregivers' Support Group, started in 2002, is for caregivers of adult family members. Most of the care receivers have dementia, but that condition is not a requirement. Some are cared for at home, some in local assisted living facilities, and some are out of state. Meetings are gently facilitated and encourage sharing of feelings, problems, helpful information, and bright spots. These sessions are held the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month from 10:00-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. For more information, contact Jack Tarr, 703-821-6838, jtarr5@verizon.net; or Lynn Rafferty, 703-508-1365, radmom8992@gmail.com.

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna Caregivers' Support Group takes place first and third Thursday of each month, 10-11:30 a.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax (UUCF) - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. For caregivers to adult family members with dementia. First and third Thursdays of every month. Hosted by Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna, scov.org. Contact facilitator Jack Tarr at 703-821-6838 or jtarr5@verizon.net.

Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group. 703-941-7000, www.havenofnova.org or havenofnova@verizon.net.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers Needed. PRS is looking for empathetic and caring volunteers to make phone calls to older adults who may be feeling socially isolated. The commitment is one 3-hour shift per week for one year. Located in Arlington. Ages 21 & up. Intensive training provided. Learn more and apply: prsinc.org/caring-volunteering/. Questions? Email lpadgett@prsinc.org.



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PHOTO: MARATHONFOTO

PHOTO BY MIKE MACOMBER

Front row (left to right): Jessica Averbuch, Laurie Rice, Amy Dowe; Middle row (left to right): Cynthia Lima, Garrett Tingle Sr., Watson McBride, Sarah Buckley; and Third row (left to right): Kevin Horst, Jonathan Strongsmith, Garrett Tingle Jr., Candice Burroughs, Todd Foy, Lina Saliba, Heather Abbott, Malina Jacobowitz.

Lina Saliba crosses the finish line at the 126th Boston Marathon in Boston on April 18. She fundraised nearly \$9,000 for The Heather Abbott Foundation.

McLean Resident Runs 126th Boston Marathon for a Cause

Athlete inspired by strength and courage of 2013 Boston Marathon bombing survivor.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Nine years ago, two bombs were detonated amid crowds of on-lookers near the finish line of the annual Boston Marathon. The domestic terror attacks killed three people and injured more than 260, including Heather Abbott and 16 others who lost

limbs.

On April 18, Lina Saliba of McLean ran the 126th Boston Marathon as a member of Team-Limb-it-Less, raising \$9,050 for The Heather Abbott Foundation. Abbott had her left leg amputated below the knee after sustaining injuries from the second blast. Donations and organizations that supported the bombing victims funded multiple prosthetics for

Abbott, allowing her to return to a life of paddleboarding, running, and wearing high heels.

Now, the Heather Abbott Foundation's mission is to help other amputees recover and return to the lives they love.

"I am so grateful for having had this unique opportunity to combine my passions for running and helping others by participating in the 126th Boston Marathon through

the Heather Abbott Foundation," Saliba said. Her donation supports the foundation's mission to help other amputees recover and return to the lives they love. Saliba continues to raise funds for the charity through GivenGain.

The Heather Abbott Foundation (HAF) team that Saliba was part of collectively raised nearly \$109,000

"I had the opportunity to meet a couple HAF beneficiaries at our

team brunch the day prior to the race," Saliba wrote on her fundraising page. "The Boston Marathon journey was an incredible experience from start to finish. I will always remember turning right onto Hereford Street and left onto Boylston Street and seeing Heather (and our team manager, Kevin) as well as other HAF supporters cheering me on toward the finish. The Boston energy was truly magical."

Effective Covid Treatment Available

SOURCE: FAIRFAX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Staying up to date with vaccination, and continuing to practice layered prevention strategies remain critical strategies to stem the spread of COVID-19 illness in our communities. Vaccination not only prevents COVID-19 but also makes illness less severe if you do become infected.

But what if you have chosen not to get vaccinated, or still get sick even after receiving vaccine, and are at increased risk because you are older or have a chronic

medical condition? This is where treatment can be important.

People who are more likely to get very sick include older adults, people with chronic medical conditions or a weakened immune system, those who are overweight, and women who are pregnant.

If you are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19, effective treatment is now available that can prevent illness from becoming worse leading to hospitalization and death. People who are more likely to get very sick include older adults, people with chronic medical conditions or a weakened immune system, those who are overweight, and

women who are pregnant.

Several types of treatment are available, which may be used at different times or in different groups of patients. Talk with your healthcare provider to get more information about the range of options.

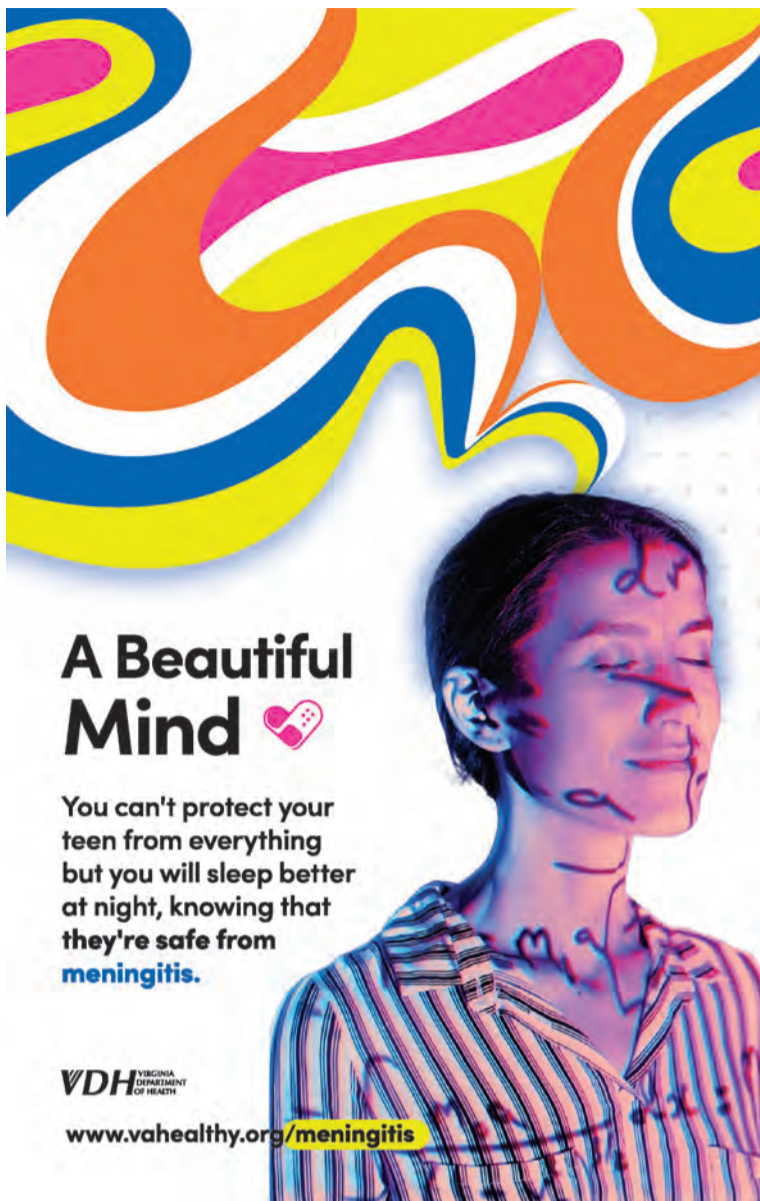
An expert panel of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) identified Paxlovid (ritonavir boosted nirmatrelvir) as the preferred therapy with strong evidence supporting its use. In a randomized clinical trial, Paxlovid was 88% effective in preventing hospitalization or death from COVID-19 among high-risk patients. In that trial, there were no deaths among people who received Paxlovid compared with 12 deaths among those who received placebo.


Other Treatment Tips

The Fairfax Health District shares the following information about COVID-19 treatment:

If you test positive and are an older adult or someone who is at increased risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, treatment is available. Contact a healthcare provider after a positive test to determine if you are eligible for treatment, even if you only have mild or moderate symptoms. You can also visit a Test to Treat location and, if eligible, receive a prescription from a provider at that location. <https://aspr.hhs.gov/TestToTreat/Pages/default.aspx>

SEE COVID TREATMENT, PAGE 5



A Beautiful Mind 

You can't protect your teen from everything but you will sleep better at night, knowing that they're safe from meningitis.

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

www.vahealthy.org/meningitis



PHOTO COURTESY OF BLESSED SACRAMENT YOUTH MINISTRY

These students raised \$2,500 to provide medical care, including mental health services, for children who are victims of the war in Ukraine.

Young Philanthropists

Madeira student organizes toy drive for child victims of the war in Ukraine.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

During a spring break trip to Hungary to visit family, Annamaria Toth Konya Tannon, brought a bit of cheer to the lives of children who are caught in the crosshairs of the war in Ukraine. She delivered more than 200 toys that she'd collected with the help of her classmates and teachers at the Madeira School in McLean, Virginia.

"I spoke to my grandmother, who lives in Szeged, about different supplies I could bring," said Tannon. "[She] told me that almost everyone she knew donated clothes and other items specific to adults. That made me think about the children and how they could not bring many toys along in their haste to evacuate. This inspired me to have a toy drive."

As gruesome images of destruction continue to dominate media coverage of the war in Ukraine, students like Tannon are working to meet the needs of its youngest victims. Their help is particularly impactful because they are in the same age group as the demographic they are working to serve.

"It is very sad to think about the experiences of the refugees from war, but it is heartening that so many people in the United States and Europe are trying to help these refugees," said Tannon. "Everyone was happy to donate, and many people even bought new toys for the drive. I know their donations are very much appreciated and loved."

It is through charitable activities that students can empower themselves to bring change when they see injustice in the world, say educators.

"The great thing about student philanthropy at Madeira is that students really take charge of the experience because they are so passionate about helping the world beyond our local community," said Kelli Perkins, Dean of Student Life and Culture. "When we

think of Madeira's mission of launching women who will change the world, we tend to think first about cultivating leadership skills. Service to humankind is a critical component of effective and transformative leadership."

Tannon's parents, Annamaria Konya Tannon and Jay Tannon, say that a commitment to serving others is one of their family's core values. "We found our daughter's empathy and compassion for the innocent victims of war heartening," said Jay. "Naturally, we are proud of her efforts to help in a small way, alleviate the anxiety these children must face. We think that those of us in a position to help people in need should do so."

Tannon delivered the toys to the The Hungarian Red Cross. "I spoke with the volunteers who transferred the donations to the villages on the Hungarian border with Ukraine," she said. "They told me that ... the Ukrainian children receiving the items would be so happy to have them."

A group of students from Potomac, Bethesda and Chevy Chase hosted a spaghetti dinner recently and raised \$2,500 for the health care needs of children impacted by violence in Ukraine.


The young philanthropists, members of the Youth Ministry at Blessed Sacrament Church in Chevy Chase, donated the funds to Project Hope, a humanitarian organization that sends medical professionals to assist with disaster relief efforts in countries around the world.

Bethesda resident John Walsh, son of Project Hope's founder William Walsh, attended the dinner and announced that 100 percent of the money raised by the students will be used to provide care to seriously ill Ukrainian refugee children.


One of the most significant medical concerns is the long-term effects of war and trauma on the mental health and emotional well-being of the victims, reports Rabih Torbay, Project HOPE's President and CEO. "A majority of the refugees and asylum seekers are women and children who are unsure whether they will ever see their husbands, fathers, and sons again. Families have been ripped apart. We must ... remember that, unlike physical wounds, [mental health] injuries are not easily seen or stitched up."

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

McLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER
2022 GOVERNING BOARD ELECTION



Vote on McLean Day!



The Governing Board and staff of the McLean Community Center (MCC) strongly encourage all qualified residents to vote for members of its 2022-2023 Governing Board. Your vote sends a very important message of your support of the Center's programs and services.


WHEN & WHERE
Vote between the hours of 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. at the McLean Day 2022 festival on Saturday, May 21, at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Rd.

REQUIREMENTS TO VOTE

1. You must be a resident of the MCC tax district (Dranesville Small District 1A); however, you need not be registered to vote in the general election.
2. You must be at least 18 years old by McLean Day to vote for an adult candidate. Adults may vote for up to three candidates.
3. You must be 15 through 17 years old by McLean Day to vote for youth candidates. Youth voters have two votes and may vote for one candidate in the McLean High School boundary area and one candidate in the Langley High School boundary area.
4. You must bring identification as proof of residency, such as a driver's license, passport or utility bill, or you may sign a sworn affidavit statement.

In-person voting at McLean Day is open only to individuals who did not vote early by absentee ballot.

QUESTIONS? Contact MCC at elections@mcleancenter.org or 703-790-0123/TTY: 711.

mcleancenter.org 

NEWS

Effective Covid Treatment Available

FROM PAGE 3

Follow CDC guidance on testing for COVID-19 and use the Treatment Locator or call 1-800-232-0233 (TTY 1-888-720-7489) to find a testing location that can provide treatment if you test positive. <https://covid-19-test-to-treat-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com/>

Don't delay: Treatment must be started within the five days of when your symptoms began.

Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccination is still the best way to prevent serious outcomes of COVID-19, including severe disease, hospitalization and death.

Medications to treat COVID-19 are free, whether or not you have health insurance. While there is no cost for tablets (such as

Paxlovid), there may be a co-pay for infusion or injection of a monoclonal antibody product. For those using the Test to Treat program at a pharmacy clinic, health insurance, including Medicaid, also will pay the cost of the consultation; those who do not have health insurance would be responsible for the consultation fee.

More information on COVID-19 treatments and therapeutics can be found here. <https://www.hhs.gov/coronavirus/covid-19-treatments-therapeutics/index.html>

Stay Informed About COVID-19

Call the Health Department Call Centers Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., for questions about COVID-19 (703-267-3511) or vaccines (703-324-7404). You also can email ffxcovid@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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 ? Info Tent #2 ? Info Tent #4
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COMMUNITY STAGE SCHEDULE

11:05 a.m.
Art in Motion

1:05 p.m.
McLean Community Players

1:45 p.m.
(the) Unruly Theatre Project


2:25 p.m.
McLean High School Chorus

3 p.m.
Teen Character Awards

4 p.m.
G'NASH

Saturday, May 21
11 a.m.-5 p.m.

MCC Governing Board Elections **Friday Night Rides**
10:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday, May 20, 2-10 p.m.



Back to School

If your child is entering 7th grade they must have the **Meningitis, HPV, and Tdap** vaccines in order to enroll. Talk to your doctor and vaccinate them now!

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

vdh.virginia.gov/backtoschool/

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NEWS

PHOTOS BY TOM MANNING/THE CONNECTION



Jonathan Besko, 39 from Vienna, as he crosses the finish line.



George Bochenek, 36 from Vienna, sprints to the finish with a time of 1:33:16.

Westfields Sprint Triathlon Draws Hundreds

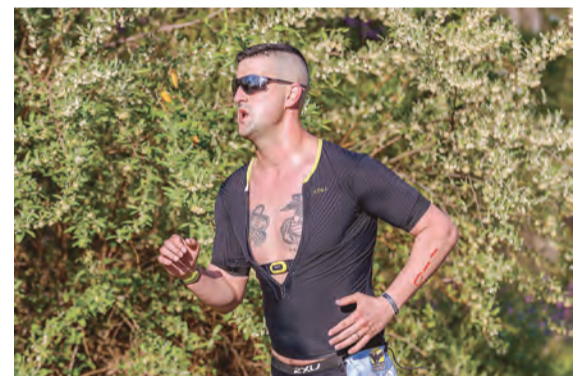


Susan Pan, 53 from Great Falls, finishes the Westfields Triathlon.

Splash & Dash for kids.

The eighth annual Westfields Triathlon took place on April 24 at the Cub Run RECenter in Chantilly. The event was hosted by the Westfields Business Owners Association and put on by Revolution3 Triathlon. The sprint distances included a 250-yard pool swim, a 12-mile bike ride, and a 3.1-mile run. Todd Burns, 42 from Arlington, placed first overall with a time of 54:47.81.

New for this year was a sprint distance duathlon option with a 1 mile run. There were also two shorter Splash & Dash swimming and running distances for the kids. The Westfields Triathlon kicked off the triathlon season in the DC Metro area.



Kasey Klopfenstein, 28 from Vienna, during the 3.1 mile run.



The Westfields Triathlon begins a little after 7 a.m. with the elite competitors.

Westfields Triathlon

PHOTOS BY TOM MANNING/THE CONNECTION



Michaela Witczak, 37 of Centreville, during the 12 mile bike ride.



Melissa Mattes, 57 from Centreville, is enjoying her ride.



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Here's What's Happening at MCC!

The Old Firehouse



Open House for Rising 7th Graders
Monday, May 16-Friday, June 10
Free admission

T.G.I.F. Carnival Rides



Enjoy McLean Day rides!
Lewinsville Park
Friday, May 20, 2 p.m.-10 p.m.
Buy tickets online or onsite.

McLean Day 2022



Celebrating Our Hometown
Saturday, May 21, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.
Lewinsville Park
Free admission

Governing Board Meeting



Wednesday, May 25, 6:30 p.m.
Regular Meeting

Presented by The Alden



Performing Arts Documentary
Thursday, May 26, 1 p.m.
Free; Registration required.

Pass on Plastic!



#EarthDayMcLean Contest
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The McLean Community Center
www.mcleancenter.org

Home of The Alden Theatre
www.aldentheatre.org

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CALENDAR

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

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CALENDAR

SATURDAYS UNTIL DECEMBER

The Reston Farmers Market (sponsored by the Fairfax Co. Park Authority) Lake Anne Village 8 a.m.-noon. SNAP beneficiaries receive up to \$20 match <http://restonfarmersmarket.com/>

NOW THRU MAY 25

Watercolor Exhibition. At Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Celebrating a Lifetime of Art showcases the watercolors of Catharine Noland (1920-2020). A reception will be held Saturday, May 14, from 2-4 p.m. Event start and stop times correspond to normal library hours, which are available at: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/great-falls>

NOW THRU DEC. 31

Crafts for Kids. 10 a.m. to 12 noon. At Reston Art Gallery and Studios, 11400 Washington Plaza W at Lake Anne, Reston. Free, themed art projects for children (with guardian) are offered at Reston Art Gallery and Studios every Saturday from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. Visit the website: www.restonartgallery.com

MCLEAN FARMERS MARKET OPENS

The McLean Farmers Market has opened for the 2022 season on Friday, May 6th, at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The market will run every Friday from 8 a.m. to noon through November 11. Local farmers and producers will sell fresh produce and fruits; breads and pastries; prepared foods; meats; herbs; flowers, and more. All products are grown or produced by the vendors and come from within 125 miles of Fairfax County. Visit: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/>

MAY 20-30

The Jurassic Encounter Dinosaur Walk Thru Experience. At Bull Run Events Center, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. The Jurassic Encounter will transform the events center into a walk-through experience featuring more than 50 static and moving, life-like dinosaurs that both entertain and educate. Also enjoy Digging for Bones, the Dino Village, shopping, food, free photo-ops, games, bouncy house and more. The exhibit will open on Friday, May 20 from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. and all other days from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Tickets start at \$19.00 per person (anyone two years and older will need a ticket). Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times. There are also special add-on prize packs for the kids to get souvenirs. Parking for the event is free and pets are welcome. Web: <http://feeltheroar.com>

SATURDAY/MAY 21

Book Signing Event. 2-4 p.m. At Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Emily Suñez, author and illustrator of The Healing Journal: Guided Prompts & Inspiration for Life with Illness, will be signing copies of her book and chatting with attendees at Scrawl Books. Visit the website: <https://www.scrawlbooks.com/event/author-emily-sunez-presents-healing-journal>

SATURDAY/MAY 21

McLean Day. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The free, outdoor festival features a wide variety of rides, games, activities and performances. Patrons can come enjoy the large carnival ride on Friday, May 20, from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. In addition to the large rides on the parking lot, the Kids' Way area of the park offers smaller, ticketed rides especially for younger children. Also, for the young and young-at-heart are costumed superhero characters who will be available for photos. Other free activities include laser tag, Bubble Ball, two rock-climb-



The McLean Day celebration will take place Saturday, May 21 at Lewinsville Park in McLean.

ing walls, balloon twisters, a magician and a petting zoo. Free performances will be offered throughout the festival on the Community Stage. Young dancers enrolled in MCC's Art in Motion Dance classes will open the show at 11:05 a.m. The McLean Community Players will follow at 1:05 p.m. The Alden's Unruly Theatre Project teen improv group will perform at 1:45 p.m., followed by the McLean High School Chorus at 2:25 p.m. The McLean Citizens Association will present its Teen Character Award at 3 p.m. and G'NASH, a five-member rock band comprised of McLean High School students, will perform at 4 p.m. In addition, a Jugglers' Stage, located close to the children's ride area, offers free performances throughout the event. Visit: www.mcleancenter.org/special-events or call the Center at 703-790-0123/TTY: 711.

MAY 21-22

Tephra ICA Festival (formerly Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival). At Reston Town Square Park, 11900 Market St., Reston. Tephra Institute of Contemporary Art (Tephra ICA) and Reston Community Center (RCC) announce the Trisha Brown Dance Company as the headlining performers at the Tephra ICA Festival. TBDC is a contemporary dance company dedicated to the performance and preservation of the work of Founding Artistic Director and Choreographer, Trisha Brown.

MAY 21-22

Girls on the Run Spring Registration. GOTR NOVA will be offering an in-person, 10-week curriculum for the Spring 2022 season. Two in-person 5Ks presented by Cigna will be held on May 21st and 22nd in Sterling and Ballston, respectively. Teams will continue to be school and community-based to further our outreach efforts in being accessible to every girl across Northern Virginia. Currently, 105 teams throughout Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, Loudoun, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William are open for Spring 2022 registration through March 1, 2022. For more information about spring registration and sites for Girls on the Run of NOVA, visit www.gotrnova.org.

SUNDAY/MAY 22

Concerts on the Green. 6-8 p.m. At the Village Centre Green, Great Falls. Featuring Wes Tucker and the Skilletts. Fine Roots rock with a little old school funk. Hosted by Costa Dentistry. Come relax at the Village Centre Green and enjoy laid-back evenings of good music and good times with your neighbors.

SATURDAY/MAY 28

"Sixteen Candles" Movie. 7:30 p.m. At The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Part of '80s movie night. Tickets \$20.

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A Little Perspective



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Last week's column addressed the issue of uncertainty which, as a long-surviving and still-undergoing-treatment cancer patient, I am very familiar. In fact, 'uncertainty' becomes my daily bread whether I'm hungry or not. I learned early on in my cancer life that there are no guarantees. Instead, there are ups and downs all-around. If life in the cancer lane were an amusement ride, it would be the most feared, gut-wrenching, life-altering roller coaster you ever had the misfortune of experiencing. The significant difference being that roller coasters don't kill you. They scare you certainly, but, when the ride is finished so too is your involvement. Unfortunately, for a cancer patient, the ride is never over.

And it's some ride, too. A ride where your life really is at risk, and one that constantly changes direction and takes you places emotionally and spiritually you likely never imagined. Moreover, nothing really prepares you for the diagnosis and it's only the prognosis that might provide a little relief if you're lucky. Many cancers are survivable now compared to the previous generation. Nevertheless, cancer remains the most feared word in any conversation, especially when it's directed at you by an oncologist with whom an appointment has been set after you have taken multiple diagnostic steps to confirm your diagnosis.

For me, the process took about six weeks from when I first went to an emergency room complaining of migrating pain in my right rib cage area (after it being on the left side a few days earlier) and having difficulty breathing and catching my breath to two sets of chest X-Rays, one CT scan, one PET scan and finally a surgical biopsy. I visited multiple doctors in multiple locations until the diagnosis was confirmed and the initial appointment with an oncologist was arranged.

A week or so prior to meeting the oncologist, my internal medicine doctor had called me at work with the results of the previous week's biopsy. When he asked me if I wanted to meet at his office to discuss the results, I figured the news was bad, but I never imagined how bad it would be: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. How bad you ask? "13 month to two years" prognosis, that's how. I was age 54 and half.

Much has changed in the past 13-plus years since that late February 2009 shock. For one thing, and most significantly, my diagnosis. I am now a papillary thyroid cancer patient and have had a thyroidectomy to surgically remove both my thyroid glands. My prognosis however is not exactly "terminal" as it was when I was diagnosed with lung cancer, but it's precarious nonetheless as previous columns have explained (the one medication that's effective has a three-year window: I'm nearing the end of year two) and at present, there's no new options. Still, I can't worry about things for which I have no control (another lesson). As concerns what happens to my life when the 10 mg lenvima is no longer effective? To invoke Scarlett O'Hara at the end of "Gone with the Wind": "I'll worry about that tomorrow."

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



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**** Open Houses: Saturday 5/21 1-3pm
and Sunday 5/22 2-4pm! ****



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