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March 10.....	April
April 10.....	May
May 10 .....	June
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August 10.....	September
September 10.....	October
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## HEY THERE, FABULOUS READERS!

Can you feel it in the air? – Persian New Year, Nowruz, is just here! It's that enchanting time where it is all about embracing new beginnings and getting into positive vibes. So, let's bid farewell to the winter blues and get ready to welcome the fresh wave of Nowruz energy.

So, let me share a little glimpse into the Persian New Year celebration I got invited to last year. They decided to shake things up and invited their friends and family, regardless of culture or religion, and made us try creating the symbolic "Haft-Seen." Admittedly, I had absolutely no idea what it was, and our artistic skills might need some polishing, but the joy we shared while putting together our unique display made it all worthwhile.

The symbolic "Haft-Seen" (seven things that start with letter S) elements that hold special meaning during Nowruz – Sabzeh (sprouted wheatgrass), Samanu (sweet pudding), Senjed (oleaster fruit), Seer (garlic), Seeb (apple), Somāq (sumac), and Serkeh (vinegar). These seven items symbolize various aspects of life and nature, each contributing to the richness of the celebrations. I encourage you to look it up and learn a little about different cultures.

Now, get ready to join me as I tell you about our March stars – the incredible Farboudmanesch-Tamjidi family! Their story is great, and you're in for a delightful journey as we explore their world. From heartwarming family adventures to those serene moments that capture the essence of living your best life, they've got it all. Other than being Amazing Medical Professionals (GI and Dermatology specialties), THEY ARE SO MUCH FUN!!! Enjoy their story.

*Gloria*





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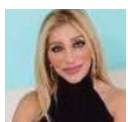
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# Social4Good

HELPS BRING HOME  
BABIES SAFELY AND KEEP  
THEM HEALTHY

By **SHARON GRACE**  
Photos by ED SHANAHAN

Providing essential supplies for at-risk babies was Social4Good's (S4G) January project in support of Jennifer Bush Lawson Foundation's (JBLF) Nursery Project.

Jennifer Bush-Lawson Foundation's Nursery Project was first launched in the midst of the global pandemic to support economically disadvantaged families as they brought at-risk babies home under unprecedented circumstances. The project provides critical supplies which support safe sleep and encourages the breastfeeding relationship.

In conjunction with the Virginia Hospital Center Outpatient Clinic and through partnerships with supporters like S4G, local Arlington moms' groups, and Aetna Better Health Virginia, JBLF has already served more than 100 families post-delivery with a variety of nursery supplies.

JBLF's Nursery Project's impact number rose with S4G's efforts. The group raised over \$4,500, which included \$2,700 for the purchase of car seats and pack-n-plays and \$1,800 in in-kind donations for the creation of breastfeeding kits. New car seats mean at-risk newborns leave the hospital and travel safely during their first two years of life. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) states that all infants should ride in rear-facing car seats from the moment they leave the hospital until they're at least two years old. Pack-n-plays are a cost-





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efficient way to help prevent sudden unexpected infant death (SUID), the leading cause of death for babies one month old until one year old in Virginia and nationwide.

In addition, 30 S4G volunteers created 27 breastfeeding kits and wrote notes of encouragement at the January social held at a member's house. The kits and notes will help support a healthy breastfeeding relationship.

"Our clients, many of whom are working moms, simply don't have access to outlets needed for electric breast pumps. The manual pumps S4G has provided are an essential part of promoting a successful breastfeeding journey for these moms and their babies," said Kelly Garrity, Executive Director of JBLF.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the World Health Organization recommend exclusive breastfeeding for about the first 6 months, with continued breastfeeding along with appropriate complementary foods for up to 2 years of age or older. Unfortunately, gaps in resources and support result in wide disparities for

breastfeeding moms based on race, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability. JBLF's programs are helping to close this gap in Arlington County and other local communities.

The S4G members at the January gathering learned more about the important work of JBLF from Ms. Garrity. JBLF was formed out of a desire to support the most vulnerable in NOVA communities. Their vision is to provide economically vulnerable, at-risk women with access to critical medical support and supplies during pregnancy and after delivery. S4G is proud to contribute to making that vision a reality.

S4G is an all-volunteer, grassroots organization that brings together engaged women who want to meet new people and support the organizations that make our community strong. Each month, this column will highlight S4G's monthly project to raise awareness on critical needs in our community and local nonprofits making a difference.

To learn more about S4G or to support local nonprofits, visit [www.Social4Good.community](http://www.Social4Good.community).

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# The Farboundmanesch - Tamjidi Family

By KATIE CULLIGAN Photos by TATIANA DOVE





## THIS MONTH'S FEATURE PROUDLY SPONSORED BY:

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The Farboundmanesch - Tamjidi Family was gifted a pillow that reads, "Your family is God's favorite sitcom." This statement about sums up the family of four humans and five dogs, as I had the good fortune to witness their hilarious, unbridled dynamic in real time (albeit over zoom). This is a group that I could actually see wanting to tune in every week to watch their lovingly zany family antics.

But when characters are this good, word of mouth is everything, so let me introduce you to the fun fab four. We have successful patriarch who doesn't take himself too seriously, Ramin Farboudmanesch (54) and his accomplished, tenacious wife, Pantea Tamjidi (51). They have two lovely teenage girls, the high school senior who had a knack for disappearing during Zoom call, Ava (17), and the patient high school sophomore, Sofia (15), who stuck it out for the full 1.5 hours of our interview.

If we were to do a spin-off prequel to our beloved sitcom, we would follow the plot of how Ramin met his wife, Pantea. The two connected on April 3rd, 1993, at the restaurant Paper Moon (now Fabio's) in Washington, DC. Ramin was in his first year of medical school at GW University, and Pantea was in her undergraduate as a pre-med at Georgetown University. "There are so many 'best

memories' with that woman that are hard to describe, but the night that we met was already epic" because Pantea did not want to share her number with Ramin, so he had to pry it out of her. A real will-they/won't-they of sorts. She had always been sweet and innocent, so she could not give him a wrong number." This is all before cell phones existed, so she wrote it on a metro card." I'm glad to know the couple's origin story is still local to the DC area (can we please get more comedies filming in the DMV?).

In a flashback episode, we learn that Ramin spent the majority of his high school years in Rosenheim, Germany, from 1979-1986, as his mother was German. His family immigrated to California as he started "The College Years TM" at SDSU and transferred to the University of California, Irvine, to study pre-med and biology. From there, he was accepted to GWU Medical School, where he graduated <cue bittersweet season finale>. He then spent his internship and residency at GW Medical Center and specialized in Gastroenterology at MedStar Washington Hospital Center. Once he completed his fellowship, he joined a five-man Gastroenterology group in Washington, DC, but left after eight years to open up his own practice in Washington, DC, in March of 2010. Since then,



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he has expanded his practice to two locations, one in DC and one in Tysons Corner, called "Advanced Gastroenterology and Hepatology of Greater Washington," or AGH of GW for short. His practice now consists of just him and six staff members. I see another spin-off in the mix.

As for Pantea's origin story, she immigrated directly from Iran to Dallas, Texas, and moved from there to McLean High School in 1988, where she graduated Cum Laude. Ramin jokingly boasts, "She was and is a nerd." She was then accepted to Georgetown University for Biology as a Pre-med student. After the Paper Moon meet-cute, Pantea applied to GW for medical school. Ramin focused his protagonist energy on using this application as an excuse to propose to her so they could have a "couple's match," which is an unspoken kind of tactic when a husband and wife apply to the same program. Though, as Ramin puts himself "Well, I never proposed. I just merely suggested it in the study room of Georgetown Library, and she responded, 'I guess! That was it.'" That's a full 30-minute episode in itself! Luckily, Pantea then got accepted to GW Medical School, and from there, she was on her way to becoming an OB/GYN resident. But, plot twist, at the last minute, she changed her mind and pursued a dermatology residency. Because dermatology residency is quite a competitive field, she had to perform a research fellowship for two years after her internship, followed by three more years of Dermatology residency, all at Washington Hospital Center.

During her residency, she was given the opportunity to buy her own dermatology practice in Chevy Chase. After 12 years of practicing in Chevy Chase, she expanded to a second practice in the same location with her husband in Tysons Corner. They now share a waiting room together. <I can picture season two of that workplace spin-off>.

Back to our original show: let's get to know the two teenage daughters. We met oldest daughter, Ava, who enjoys spending her time with friends, playing soccer and volleyball, and hitting up the gym three times a week. She attends BASIS Independent McLean School and, for the past two years, has been House Leader and President of BASIS's "Earth House," which she described to me as kind of like Hogwart's houses. Now I want to see their sorting hat. Her father teases that "she has now been overcome with the 'senioritis' disease, doing her best to stay away from her parents and younger sister." That being said, Ava plans to study biology in college and not head straight to pre-med to keep her options open.

The family's youngest daughter, Sofia, loves cooking and baking, much to her parents's relief. She started baking during COVID and has not only continued but has also expanded her cooking portfolio. Her favorite recipes include Persian desserts like Zoolbya and a good, juicy steak (McLean Butcher, we're looking at you!). Sofia enjoys both soccer and skiing. She also loves to volunteer anywhere she can, and she is currently campaigning for the





Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Her fundraising campaign can be found at <https://events.lls.org/nca/svoynova24/sfarboud> and ends on March 16th. Sofia is extremely active at her school, BASIS, organizing events and managing both the high school and middle school basketball teams. She reflects that her current favorite class is art, due to its peaceful nature, so it feels “like a break.” Sofia freely admits that she is often the planner of the family’s travels, with successful results. Though, as her father interjects, “there is some self-interest involved,” since she gets to go on these trips.

When I asked if the two sisters get along, Sofia exclaimed, “Ava tried to flush me down a toilet...when I was two.” Though this fact was hotly debated for the next few minutes between family members, my takeaway is that every good sitcom about a family needs a healthy dose of sibling rivalry.

Of course, not every episode can take place in the family room. Sometimes there are one-off episodes involving travel, and in this family’s case, there’s likely an annual episode central to their favorite pastime, skiing. Ramin has been skiing for 44 years, Pantea and Ava for 13, and Sofia for 10. Ramin reflects, “When we are on the slopes, it’s a great time to bond and make fun of my wife.” This is explained by the fact that Pantea loves skiing but is said to be worried about falling and hurting her wrists (understandable). When not skiing in Aspen or Utah, the family travels to the Caribbean for spring break and Europe for summer vacation.

In regards to other physical activities, Ramin enjoys all sports and has dabbled in many of them, from soccer to volleyball. Both of the daughters have been playing soccer since they were six and have continued to play on the MYS soccer team. "Which means our weekends are always tied up with soccer matches. Just recreational, not travel!"

Pantea adores yoga and hasn't missed a day in the past four years. She also relishes taking care of her family and friends. Ramin states, "We entertain a lot and have people over almost every other weekend or so," so expect a lot of guest cameos each season! The couple prides themselves on having thrown some epic fundraising holiday parties to benefit the Parkinson's Disease Program at Georgetown, something near and dear to their hearts, with 150-250 people attending.

But wait! We haven't given their five dogs the credit they deserve. They have one long-haired German Shepherd, Pasha, one pure white toothless (literally) Pomeranian, Rex, and a mix Pomeranian, Coco. And in a very special episode, Pantea found herself delivering Coco's two puppies at home! She thanks God for the "Dog Delivery Kit" she found on Amazon. All they can say is that they now have a "zoo in the house."

When it comes to McLean, the family currently lives off Towlston Road, close to Wolf Trap, but has lived in the McLean area all of their "Virginia lives." Ramin says, "McLean has an amazing number of pleasant people from all walks of life and cultures; we have relished the friendships that we have made here in McLean." Pantea loves the melting pot aspect and hearing so many languages around here. For her, McLean has always been home. She even remembers when Tyson's Galleria was just a plot of land. She exclaims, "Once you live in this area, it's hard to go anywhere else." I think a lot of us readers, err, viewers, can relate to that sentiment. While the family loves their city for the proximity of great restaurants and DC, Pantea appreciates that "downtown McLean is still downtown McLean [and that] the small businesses around this area are gems [and] feel like family."

The family is originally from Iranian and German descent, so while they celebrate traditional German holidays, including Christmas to the umpteenth degree with up to twenty six decorated trees, hello holiday episode, they also have always celebrated Nowruz, the Persian New Year.

For those unfamiliar with Nowruz, the Persian holiday coincides with the Spring Equinox annually in March. The Farboudmanesch family elected to be in our March issue so they could share more of their culture with readers. The decor pictured in these photos focuses on the idea of new life and purity. This includes the "Table of the Seven S's" and begins with a fire jumping ceremony on the Tuesday before the holiday that the family often sets up in their driveway.

Both parents are vocal about how proud they are that both of their daughters have taken an interest in exploring more about their culture. Sofia elaborates, "Your culture adds a lot of personality to you," and the two teenagers felt motivated to reconnect with their Persian culture. I don't know about you, but I would love to see a sitcom showcase an episode on Nowruz.

Ramin simply puts it, "We are a crazy bunch [whose] special talent is to absolutely drive me nuts - and all of them, including my wife, have a PhD in this."

As charismatic as this family is, I don't expect they'll be leaving for the soundstages of Universal Studios anytime soon, since they've lived in McLean for 27 years. I think we're pretty lucky we get to have this sitcom-worthy family in our own backyard. Eat your heart out, Chuck Lorre.



## FAST FIVE Questions:

### 1. Favorite McLean Restaurant

The Capital Grille - "It's our Cheers"

### 2. Favorite McLean Coffee Shop

Star Nut Gourmet - "I love the spring afternoons outside."

### 3. Favorite McLean Family Hangout

Roccos

### 4. Favorite McLean Tradition

McLean Day

### 5. Favorite McLean small business

Chesapeake Bagel - "The kids literally grew up there."





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## 5 Tips for a Healthy Mouth

By **DR. ALLIE LONNEMAN**  
Island Children's Dentistry

Dr. Allie Lonneman, a local pediatric dentist at Island Children's Dentistry, shares 5 ways to keep your kiddos teeth happy & healthy!

**SCHEDULE THE FIRST VISIT BY AGE 1** – Did you know as soon as a child's first tooth erupts, they are ready for a visit to the pediatric dentist? Our office, as well as the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, recommends bringing your children to see a dentist by age 1 or within 6 months of the eruption of their first tooth. Early visits allow younger children an opportunity to acclimate to a new environment and establish good oral habits that can set them up for a lifetime of healthy smiles and positive dental visits.

**VISIT A PEDIATRIC DENTIST** – Just like you take your children to a pediatrician for their doctor's visits, it's important to see a pediatric dentist for their dental checkups! Pediatric dentists receive an additional 2-3 years of specialized training on children's dental health needs, as well as pediatric growth & development. Your child deserves to see a specialist.

**IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO START BRUSHING** – Prior to the teeth erupting, it is recommended to introduce a finger brush with non-fluoride toothpaste to your kiddo's routine. Clean the gums regularly by wiping them with a finger brush, burp cloth or gauze pad. When the teeth erupt, brush them twice a day with a rice sized amount of fluoride toothpaste.

**LEARN THE BENEFITS OF FLUORIDE** – Fluoride is nature's cavity fighter! Not only does it remineralize teeth, but it also helps prevent tooth decay by making our teeth stronger and more cavity resistant. While we acknowledge fluoride's critical role in a healthy mouth, it is important to use safe doses as excess intake can have unwanted effects. For kiddos under the age of 3 (prior to spitting out their toothpaste), we recommend a rice sized amount of toothpaste. Older kiddos, who spit out their toothpaste, can brush twice daily with a pea-sized amount of toothpaste.

**MAKE IT FUN!** – Get creative with your child's oral health routine! Play your kiddo's favorite song while you brush. Brush your teeth together. Read books about dental health or trips to the dentist. By introducing the "dentist" at home in an environment they are comfortable in, you are giving your child a better opportunity to feel more in control and prepared for their dental visits.

At Island Children's Dentistry, we strive to make your children's visit to the dentist a positive one. Whether it's blowing bubbles, learning to brush with the help of our stuffed dinosaur, watching their favorite movie or earning a toy and a balloon at the end of the visit – we do whatever we can to help create a positive environment. Start your kiddo off on the right foot by following these 5 tips & scheduling a visit at Island Children's Dentistry!

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# CONFESSIONS OF A DOUBLE D LOVER

By BRIAN MASON

Keller Williams Realty Kingstowne Alexandria

Honestly, who does not love a good Double D? Delightful Debt in housing is such a terrifying process to someone who is new to the process; however, it can be very exciting once you get the hang of it. I have assisted about half of my home buyers into this process and they always thank me for the insight. What am I talking about specifically? Well, it is utilizing the equity in your home for future investments instead of selling your home to obtain the equity. Sure, it will put you more into debt, it might increase your monthly payments, but the debt is delightful because it allows you more opportunities and the tax benefits associated with it. Remember, I maybe Retired from the U.S. Army with a Master's in Psychology but I am not a CPA, so always consult with a tax expert before making this decision to determine what is best and legal as everything changes with a swipe of a pen!

- 1. MORTGAGE INTEREST DEDUCTION:** One of the most significant tax benefits of refinancing is the ability to deduct mortgage interest on your federal income taxes. If you refinance and the new mortgage is for the same purpose as the original mortgage (for example, to buy, build, or improve your home), the interest on this new loan is generally deductible, just as it was for the original mortgage. This deduction can substantially reduce your taxable income, leading to significant tax savings.
- 2. NO TAX ON BORROWED MONEY:** When you refinance and take cash out from your home equity, the money you receive is not considered income and, therefore, is not taxable. This is a stark contrast to selling your home, where profits above certain thresholds may be subject to capital gains tax. This means you can access the equity in your home for renovations, debt consolidation, or other needs without worrying about immediate tax implications.
- 3. POINTS DEDUCTION:** If you pay points to get a lower interest rate on your refinanced mortgage, these points are deductible. The deduction can be taken in the year you pay the points if the loan is used to buy, build, or improve your main home. However, if the loan is for other purposes (like debt consolidation or buying a second home), the points deduction may be spread over the life of the loan.
- 4. AVOIDANCE OF CAPITAL GAINS TAX:** Unlike selling your home, where you might be liable for capital gains tax if your home's value has appreciated significantly, refinancing allows you to tap into your home's equity without incurring this tax.
- 5. CONTINUED APPRECIATION IN YOUR ASSET (HOME):** I am sure there will be a time when the market may have a dip, but based on historical data, homes just go up in value. When you refinance, you keep that home as an asset and able to enjoy the future appreciation.



## REAL ESTATE STATS

ADDRESS	CITY	BEDS	BATHS	STRUCTURE	CURRENT PRICE
35a Elsiragy Ct	McLean, VA 22102	7	8/4	Residential	\$10,000,000
Lot 1 Elsiragy Ct	McLean, VA 22102	7	8/4	Residential	\$10,000,000
8911 Georgetown Pike	McLean, VA 22102	6	7/2	Residential	\$9,895,000
8537 Old Dominion Dr	McLean, VA 22102	9	10/1	Residential	\$8,500,000
35b Elsiragy Ct	McLean, VA 22102	6	7/3	Residential	\$7,560,000
1034 Founders Ridge Ln	McLean, VA 22102	8	8/3	Residential	\$5,990,000
8423 Brook Rd	McLean, VA 22102	6	6/2	Residential	\$5,100,000
893 Georgetown Ridge Ct	McLean, VA 22102	6	7/2	Residential	\$4,750,000
7686 Ballestrade Ct	McLean, VA 22102	6	6/2	Residential	\$4,150,000
1200 Dominion Ct	McLean, VA 22102	7	8/1	Residential	\$4,495,000

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# VINSON HALL Built to Last

By **STEPHANIE LAWRENCE** Vinson Hall Retirement Community

Trends come and go, but there are certain things that are built to last. Vinson Hall Retirement Community is one of those. For 54 years, this senior residential community in McLean has been a local legend, home to generations of military and government leaders and their families who served our nation. Since opening its doors, Vinson Hall has drawn remarkable, accomplished people to its campus, and that remains unchanged.

At the same time, VHRC's ability to adapt and embrace change is one of the reasons the community has endured. What began as a residence exclusively for widows of naval officers gradually expanded to welcome ever-wider circles, opening up over time to every branch of the military and all government agencies in independent living, and to individuals with no military or government background in our assisted living and memory care communities.

This year, VHRC's eligibility requirements have once again shifted. We are still a non-profit community with strong ties to the community of McLean. But now, for the first time and in response to strong community interest, the board of directors has lifted the military and government eligibility requirements for its independent living apartments.

"Up until now, we often had to turn away people in the local community who didn't have a military or government background, so we are excited to be able to serve more people with all that VHRC offers," said Stephanie Lawrence, Senior Director of Marketing. "Our residents are also thrilled that friends who didn't qualify before will now be able to join them."

Vinson Hall's secret to standing the test of time? Celebrating the legacy that makes this historic treasure in McLean unique—and embracing change.

“

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TO BE ABLE TO  
SERVE MORE  
PEOPLE WITH  
ALL THAT VHRC  
OFFERS.”



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Vinson Hall Retirement Community, where military or government association is no longer required, has residents who come from a variety of backgrounds.

They all have one thing in common: a spirit of adventure. Whether they are returning from a vacation to Italy or a trip to the grocery store, our residents love coming home to Vinson Hall Retirement Community.



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# Feel More at Home AT HOME

By **RACHEL BROWN** The Property Doctor

For many homeowners, updating aspects of the floor plan, landscaping, or décor is a regular part of home maintenance and enjoyment, but far too many homeowners assume that they can't make similar modifications to the comfort and energy and efficiency of their homes. Thankfully, there is no need to settle! Comfenergy and its sister company, 3 Pros Basement Systems, were founded to help homeowners achieve these goals. For over ten years, they have been improving quality of life and property values throughout their large service area.

The goal of both companies is to make homes in the Northern Virginia area more comfortable and energy efficient, and to truly solve any air quality and unwanted, crawl space or basement water issues that a home may have. Their mission grew out of the recognition that many home service providers were not offering solutions to actually solve the root causes of many home performance issues. When providers only address symptoms without resolving the underlying problems, it leads to a continued cycle of costly repairs that can cause property owners to eventually just give up.

That is why, after many years in HVAC and home restoration, the founders of Comfenergy and 3 Pros Basement Systems stepped into the underserved field of "home science," and they are passionate about home performance — improving air quality, health, energy efficiency, and even property values for the homeowners they serve. The three co-founders refer to themselves as the "Home Comfort Guys," and their mission is to "create comfortable, energy efficient, healthy home and work environments by providing value through people, products and

processes." The companies have won numerous awards for their products and services over the last ten years, including being named Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year in 2019 and ranking in the top 5000 fastest-growing private companies in the nation in 2020. The professionals at each company pride themselves on the value they bring and are proud that many of the services they offer pay for themselves within a few years thanks to the energy savings.

That moment when clients can feel and see the difference in their homes is what keeps the team at Comfenergy and 3 Pros Basement Systems excited about what they do. They appreciate all the feedback and success stories they hear from clients, and they are always eager to speak with potential new clients about the possibilities for their homes. Marketing Manager Dan Bomar shares that, "Every home in Northern Virginia could benefit from one of the dozens of products and services that we offer."

Continued on Page 26





### Continued from Page 25

For property owners interested in what Comfenergy and 3 Pros Basement Systems can do for your home or business, the first step is to visit their website for a free estimate. While on the website, you can scan the full range of products and services they provide as well as view before and after photos, case studies, testimonials, and more.

Comfenergy and 3 Pros Basement Systems employ more than fifty staff members, each of whom exemplifies the company culture of service by volunteering in their Northern Virginia communities: organizations such as rotary clubs, local chambers of commerce, youth sports coaching and sponsorship, local schools, and many more. They are a family- and pet-friendly company. In fact, it's not unusual to meet staff members' pets or children when visiting their offices. Often, pets and children are even featured on their websites' "Meet the Team" pages.

The "Home Comfort Guys" would love to serve your family as well and to help you feel more at home ... at home!



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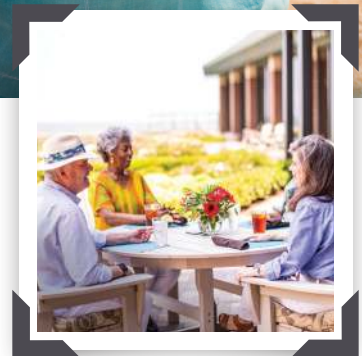
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# BANDS ON THE RUN!

By SARA KESHAVARZ AND DEBORAH WORDEN

Photos by Phil Smith & Justin Rerko



Lace up your running shoes and join the Langley High School and Cooper Middle School bands at the 5th Bands on the Run 5K!

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, April 21, 2024, at 8 a.m.** as we hit the pavement for a fitness-filled morning. This exhilarating event, benefiting the band programs of Langley High School and Cooper Middle School, welcomes participants of all ages and fitness levels.

The history of the 5K began in 2018. Mary Kunkemueller and Ronnie Raju (then co-presidents of the Langley HS Band Association) envisioned this fundraiser, which would bring the community together.

Each year, families of Langley, Cooper, and the elementary schools in the Langley pyramid, along with fellow area runners, are invited to be part of this community-wide celebration. Whether you run like the wind or prefer a leisurely stroll, the Bands on the Run 5K is open to everyone.



Registration is now open, and with kids under age 5 joining for free, it's an opportunity for the whole family to get involved. After crossing the finish line, revel in the post-run festivities with live DJ music, snacks, and the chance to explore sponsor booths.

Band enrollment has steadily been on the rise at both Cooper and Langley.

Continued on Page 33



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Continued from Page 31

Band directors Matthew Baker (Cooper MS) and Doug Martin (Langley HS) work together to provide a top-notch musical education to their students. This duo has created a synergy between their two programs, affording students a near seamless transition from middle school to high school band. Martin, who has been at Langley since 2012, often visits band classes at Cooper, so by the time students attend high school, he is a familiar face. Baker, at Cooper MS since 2013, is a frequent visitor at Langley, especially during marching band season. His connection with students is obvious from the warm smiles and waves he receives from his former students.

Working directly alongside Baker are Alex Singer, assistant band director, and Julianna Lee, assistant percussion instructor. Doug Wallace serves as the percussion instructor at Cooper and Langley. At Langley, Martin shares responsibilities with his assistant, Kai Smith. These musicians, along with numerous other sectional specialists, all work together to help students improve their skills and technique.

Funds that we receive from this 5K will help with professional sectional teachers, guest



clinicians, repairing and replacing instruments, equipment, and uniforms, and funding scholarships for students in need to participate in band events.

Come together with friends, neighbors, and families to make this Bands on the Run 5K a harmonious blend of fitness, music, and community spirit. Let's run for a cause and support the vibrant band programs at Langley High School and Cooper Middle School!

**We greatly appreciate our event sponsors. A huge thanks to those local companies who have already pledged their support. If you would like to help us meet our fundraising goal, please contact Sara Keshavarz at (908) 962-5500 to discuss sponsorship opportunities.**



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# Soulful Harmony: A Tribute to Marian Anderson

By RAEA JEAN LEINSTER Photos by Tatiana Dove



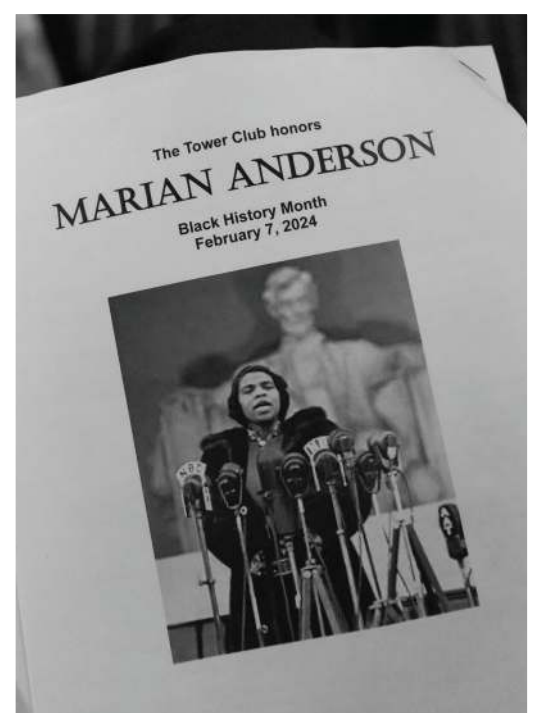
On February 7th, The Tower Club witnessed a night of soul-stirring songs to celebrate Black History Month. Soul Harmony was organized as a special tribute to the legendary Marian Anderson.

The evening featured a stellar performance by Bridgette Cooper, a veteran Broadway star known for her roles in iconic productions like *Show Boat* and *Porgy & Bess*.

This event wasn't just a fundraiser or a gala; it was a sophisticated evening of business networking, presentations, and soul-stirring songs, made possible by the generous sponsorship of Wright Accounting Solutions, Yuck Old Paint, Business Leaders Network, and McLean Living.

Take a glimpse into the elegance and cultural richness of this memorable celebration.

*Sabina Buendia - City National Bank (event sponsor), Former State Senator Chap Petersen, and Raea Jean Leinster (event producer)*



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1: Tower Club members: Tanya Zinn Jones, Karla Williams, Nick Schutt

2: Dr. Vanessa Weaver, Joe Coleman of The Platters, and Raea Jean Leinster

3: Dr. Maurice Springer - Cardinal Insurance & Financial Inc (event sponsor), Sabina Buendia - City National Bank (event sponsor), Former State Senator Chap Petersen, and Raea Jean Leinster (event producer)

4: Raea Jean Leinster, Joe Coleman of The Platters, and Bridgette Cooper (mezzo soprano soloist)

5: Nicole Wright - Wright Accounting Solutions (event sponsor), and her daughter Shaniyah Dixon

6: Raea Jean Leinster (violinist, and event producer), Bridgette Cooper (mezzo soprano soloist), Sabina Buendia - City National Bank (event sponsor), and Nicole Wright - Wright Accounting Solutions (event sponsor)





- 7: Carolyn Westberg, and Philip Croessmann from Croessmann & Westberg (event sponsor)
- 8: Raea Jean Leinster (violinist), Bridgette Cooper (mezzo soprano soloist), & Andrew Clark— Tysons Chamber of Commerce
- 9:: Rachel McLean, Kaye Woody, Andrew Clark - President Tysons Chamber, Dana Bain, and Raea Jean Leinster
- 10: James Collins - US Army Blues Band pianist
- 11: Tim Dudgen - City National Bank (event sponsor), and Sabina Buendia - City National Bank (event sponsor)
- 12: JR Spear - BLN (event signature underwriter)

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# How To Elevate Your Well-being With the Power of Self-Improvement

By **JENNIFER SANDERS** Health Life Teacher



In today's fast-paced world, optimizing your health and well-being has become more crucial than ever. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach to achieving a healthier lifestyle, incorporating self-improvement strategies into your daily routine can significantly enhance your overall well-being. In this article, courtesy of McLean Living, we will explore key ways to optimize your health through self-improvement, providing you with actionable insights that can make a positive impact on your life.

## ESTABLISH A MORNING ROUTINE

Starting your day with purpose and intention sets a positive tone for the hours ahead. Create a morning routine that energizes and motivates you. Incorporate activities like meditation, exercise, or journaling to kickstart your day positively. A well-designed morning routine can boost your mental and physical well-being, providing you with the mental clarity and motivation needed to tackle the day's challenges.

## CULTIVATE SELF-COMPASSION

Self-compassion is the foundation of a healthier mindset. By practicing self-forgiveness and understanding in times of adversity, you can create a nurturing environment for personal growth. Treat yourself with the same kindness you would offer a friend, recognizing that we all have moments of imperfection. This self-compassionate approach not only reduces stress but also boosts your self-esteem, making it a cornerstone for improved mental and emotional health.

## TRANSFORM YOUR LIVING SPACE

Your living environment plays a significant role in your overall well-being. Deep clean your home regularly to ensure a cleaner, more organized space that fosters a sense of calm and order. For more complex home improvement projects, consider seeking expert advice from online resources to find the right tools or products. A well-maintained home not only improves physical health but also contributes to your mental and emotional well-being.

## SEEK HELP FOR MAJOR LIFE CHANGES

If you find yourself struggling with addiction, don't hesitate to seek professional help. Trained counselors are available at various US rehab centers who can provide comprehensive support and guidance on your journey to sobriety, and your health insurance may cover your treatment. During your search for the best facility, take note not just of the cost but also of the treatment plans available, the accommodations, and the reviews left by former patients. This can be a difficult step to take, but prioritizing your well-being by addressing substance abuse is a crucial step toward achieving a healthier and more fulfilling life.



## MASTER TIME MANAGEMENT

Efficiently managing your time is key to optimizing your health. Allocate your time wisely to accomplish tasks and goals effectively. Prioritize essential activities and minimize time-wasting habits that can lead to stress and burnout. Striving for a balanced work-life routine is essential for reducing stress and promoting overall well-being. By mastering time management, you can create space for self-care and personal growth.

## FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET

Embrace challenges as opportunities for growth. Developing a growth mindset means seeing setbacks and obstacles as chances to learn and improve. Cultivate a positive attitude towards self-improvement, knowing that your abilities and intelligence can be developed through dedication and hard work. This mindset shift not only enhances your personal development but also contributes to increased resilience and mental well-being.

## REGULAR SELF-REFLECTION

Take time for introspection and self-assessment. Reflect on your achievements, setbacks, and personal growth regularly. Use self-reflection as a compass to guide your self-improvement journey. By gaining a deeper understanding of yourself and your goals, you can make informed decisions that align with your well-being. Self-reflection is a powerful tool for personal growth and self-awareness.

Optimizing your health through self-improvement is a continuous journey that requires commitment and effort. By practicing self-compassion, maintaining a clean living environment, seeking help when needed, and more, you can empower yourself to lead a healthier and more fulfilling life. Remember, small changes can lead to significant improvements in your overall well-being. So, embark on this path of self-improvement with dedication and watch how it transforms your life for the better.



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