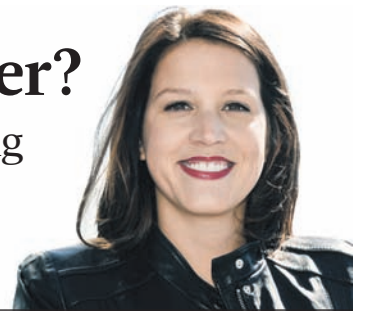


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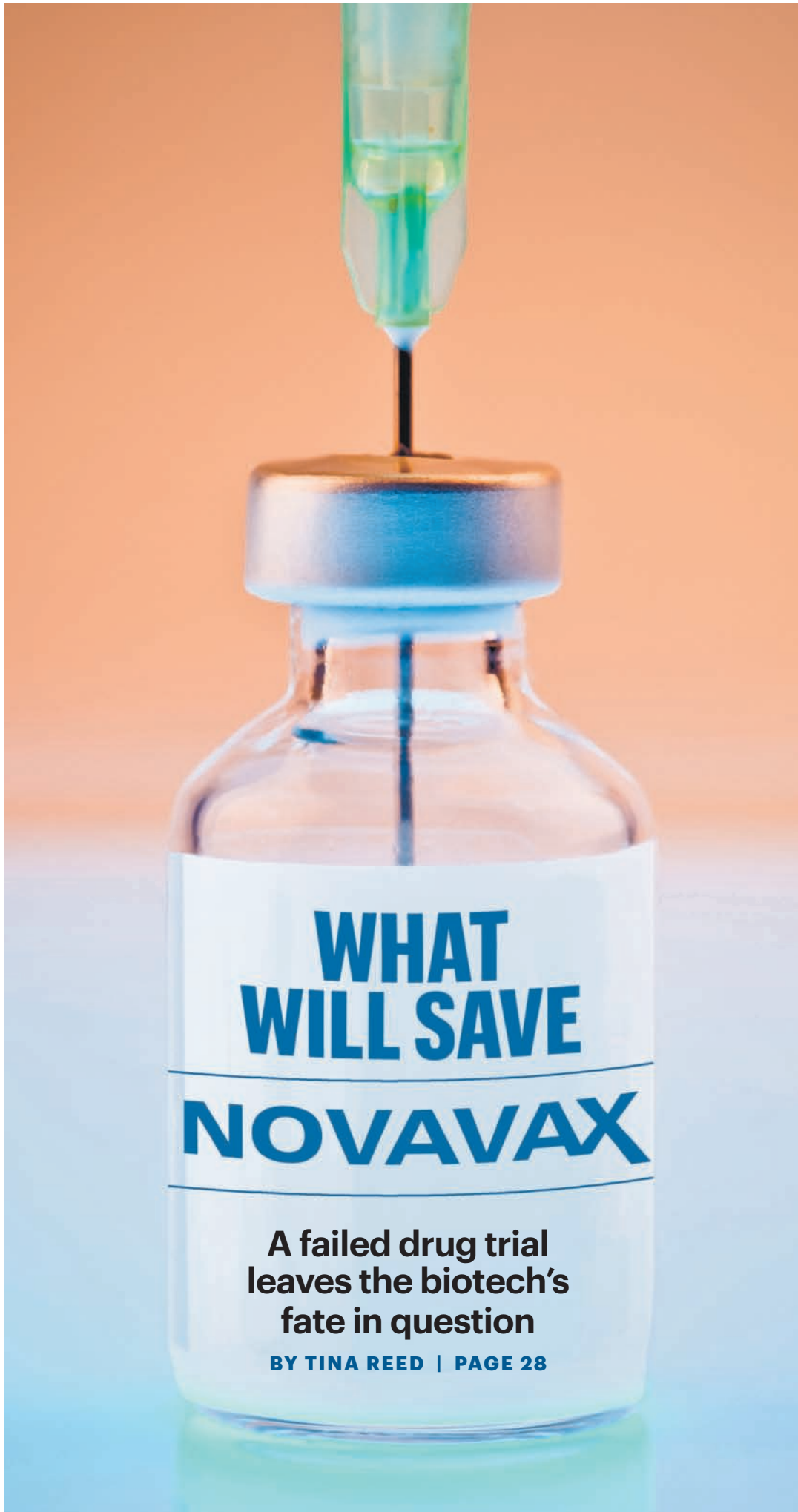
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D.C.'s own Mike Isabella opens a new place next week. It might be one of his last for a while.

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WASHINGTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

March 17, 2017  
Vol. 35, No. 47, \$5.00

1555 Wilson Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Arlington, VA 22209



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## RESTAURANT WATCH

## More fast-casual Mediterranean headed for D.C.



COURTESY VERTS

Verts Mediterranean is coming to Connecticut Avenue and K Street NW.

Another competitor to Cava Grill and Roti is making its way into the D.C. market. Verts Mediterranean, an Austin, Texas-based fast-casual chain, has signed a lease at 1001 Connecticut Ave. NW.

Verts Mediterranean will occupy 2,063 square feet on the hyper-busy corner of Connecticut Avenue and K Street NW. The restaurant aims to open this summer or fall.

Bradley Buslik and Lisa Ridgeway with H&R Retail represented the tenant in the transaction.

Verts comes from two Universi-

ty of Texas business school graduates and follows the Chipotle model. Guests pick pita, rice, quinoa or salad as a base, and then add protein – a variety of meats or falafel – vegetables and sauces. They advertise most dishes at fewer than 600 calories.

Verts has more than 20 restaurants in Texas and is expanding on the East Coast with new or planned locations in Boston, New York and Philadelphia.

The chain is looking for two to five stores in Greater Washington in its first phase.



COURTESY SHAUNA ALEXANDER

## SHAKE SHACK

The latest D.C. location for Shake Shack is now open, bringing the chain's signature patties and crinkle fries to Logan Circle. The restaurant is located in a mixed-use building at 1400 14th St. NW. Shake Shack joins a pool hall from bar impresarios Eric and Ian Hilton in the retail space in the building. D.C.'s next Shake Shack, near Nationals Park on M Street SE, is also opening in March.

## CREATIVE GROUNDS

Two Bloomingdale residents are aiming to bring a combined coffee shop and community art space to their neighborhood with Creative Grounds, planned for 1822 N. Capitol

St. NW. The 2,000-square-foot venue will feature arts education programs for kids, studio rental, arts exhibition space and a coffee bar serving ethically sourced products. The founders, Asmara Sium and Kenn Blagburn, are trying to raise \$20,000 on crowdsourcing website indiegogo to supplement opening costs.

## HILL PRINCE

Neighborhood bar Hill Prince is now open at 1337 H St. NE. The bar, from DGS Delicatessen owners Nick and David Wiseman, offers classic cocktails, punches and boilermakers – a beer and a shot ordered together – along with beer, wine and some light bar food. All cocktails are under \$10.

## STABLE

H Street NE is getting a Swiss restaurant called Stable. The restaurant, to be located at 1324 H St. NE, aims to open later in March. The 3,200-square-foot restaurant will feature exposed brick and rustic touches.

The restaurant comes from David Fritsche and Silvan Kraemer, Switzerland-born chefs who are opening their first venture together and most recently worked at the Dupont Circle Hotel.

## ▶ QUOTABLE: CHERRY BLOSSOM EDITION



JOANNE S. LAWTON / STAFF

*“We checked on the cherry blossoms yesterday during the storm. It doesn't look good.”*

**THE WASHINGTON POST'S CAPITAL WEATHER GANG**, on Twitter March 15. The blog reported that the Tidal Basin's iconic cherry tree blossoms were in danger after a bout of ice, snow and subfreezing temperatures hit the region. Most of the trees were starting to bloom when the winter weather hit, and could face major damage in temperatures of 22 degrees or lower, the Gang wrote.

## ▶ QUOTABLE: LAWSUIT EDITION

*“We strictly view this as a simple business lawsuit. We're challenging the actions that he's taken as a business owner. We're not challenging his politics as president or anything of that nature.”*

**DIANE GROSS**, co-owner of Cork Wine Bar and Cork Market & Tasting Room. Gross, along with her husband, is suing President Donald Trump for unfair competition from the Trump International Hotel, arguing that it unfairly takes business away from their establishment because of Trump's affiliation and ownership interest.



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