



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Princess Fiona (Shannon Flack) talks with Shrek (Christian Menendez).

ACCT To Present 'Shrek, Jr.'

The Aldersgate Church Community Theater is bringing children's favorite ogre to the stage. Based on the Oscar-winning film, "Shrek The Musical Jr." journeys to the far-away kingdom where the green ogre Shrek finds his swamp invaded by banished fairytale misfits — runaways who've been cast off by Lord Farquaad, a tiny terror with big ambitions. When Shrek sets off with a wise-cracking donkey to confront Farquaad, he's handed a task: If he rescues feisty Princess Fiona from the Dragon-guarded tower, his swamp will be returned to him.

Tickets are on sale now at: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1071559>.

Shows are Friday and Saturday evenings, Jan. 16, 17, 23 and 24 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 18 and 25 at 2 p.m. Special matinee performances will be held on Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday on Monday, Jan. 19 at 2 p.m. and Saturday, Jan. 24 at 2 p.m.



Brendan DeBie as the donkey.



The ensemble performs.

Focus on Transparency

"Independent expertise" to advise on information disclosure policies.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE GAZETTE

Eight days after offering the public the first of any kind of official explanation for officer-involved shooting of Springfield resident John Geer, the Board of Supervisors took another step.

Though they didn't share any further information on the case, chairman Sharon Bulova and the panel returned from an extended closed session on Jan. 13 with a motion with the potential to affect government transparency.

"Until John Geer was shot on August 2[9], 2013," Bulova's motion statement reads, "the procedures adopted by the Police Chief for public disclosure regarding officer involved shootings seemed to establish a reasonable balance between the county's duty to make timely disclosure and the concerns the police chief has expressed about conducting a professional investigation and the safety of of-

ficers involved in a shooting incident."

The statement goes on to explain that the police policies don't account for the way this particular case has been passed from the Fairfax County Police Department to the Commonwealth Attorney to the Department of Justice, all over the course of the past 16 months and change.

THOSE 16 MONTHS included a \$12 million civil case filed against the county. As part of that case, a Fairfax Circuit Court judge has ordered more documents and records of the police action the day of the shooting be produced within the month.

"The board is also aware of concerns expressed by some members of the public to the effect that the police chief should not be responsible for both establishing and implementing the policies for disclosures relating to police-involved shootings," Bulova's statement

SEE FOCUS ON, PAGE 5



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova reads her statement calling for outside input on improving information disclosure policies.

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Pedestrian Killed on Route 1

Fairfax County Police Department crash reconstruction detectives are investigating a crash that took place at around 11:45 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 13.

John Henderson, a 40-year-old Alexandria area man, was reportedly sitting in the center of Route 1 northbound just prior to Southgate Drive outside of the crosswalk. The man was struck by two vehicles. According to police, it does not appear that speed nor alcohol were factors in the crash on the part of the drivers and it is unknown why the victim was in the roadway. No charges have been placed against the drivers at this time. The investigation is continuing.

Master Planning Focus on Mount Vernon Woods Park

The Fairfax County Park Authority will begin the public master planning process for Mount Vernon Woods Park, located at 4014 Fielding St. with a public information meeting slated for Wednesday, Jan. 21, at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Mount Vernon Woods Elementary School cafeteria at 4015 Fielding Street, across from the park. A snow date is set for Feb. 3.

Located between the Mount Vernon Woods Elementary School and Huntley Meadows Park, the 7.1-acre Mount Vernon Woods Park has a large open lawn, playground, picnic pavilion and large wooded area. It is classified as a local park, expected to serve the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The park was first master planned in 1965 and developed with the existing features in addition to tennis courts and a baseball diamond that have since been removed. The Park Authority is undertaking this park master plan revision to better meet local recreation needs.

Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/mount-vernon-woods.htm for more.

Listening Session Set at Fort Belvoir

Fort Belvoir's Community Listening Session on the Army Force Structure and Stationing Plan is Friday, Jan. 23 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Thurman Auditorium in Humphreys Hall, 5500 21st St., Fort Belvoir.

MG Jeffrey Buchanan, Military District of Washington Commanding General, COL Michelle Mitchell, Fort Belvoir Garrison Commander, and Headquarters, Department of the Army staff members invite the public to attend.

The Army Staff representatives will provide an overview of the Army's stationing decision process, however, the main focus is to provide community members an opportunity to provide input. The Budget Control Act of 2011 mandates the Army to reduce its force while maintaining a strong national defense strategy. Although no decisions have been made at this time, the Army anticipates all installations will be impacted to varying degrees.

Firefighters Rescue Two In Garden Apartment Fire

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department units responded to a garden apartment fire, Sunday, Jan. 4 at approximately 1:55 p.m., at 4903 Zircon Drive.

Firefighters encountered heavy fire and smoke coming from a terrace level apartment in the rear of the three-story complex. The incident brought approximately 70 firefighters to the scene where the fire was contained to the apartment of origin. However, there was significant water and smoke damage to the upper floors. Firefighters made two ladder rescues from two balconies on separate floors. Eleven adults and four children have been displaced and are being assisted by the Red Cross. Two occupants were transported to an area hospital for non-life threatening injuries. One occupant was transported to the Washington Hospital Burn Center for non-life threatening injuries. Damage is estimated at \$520,000. According to fire investigators, the fire was intentionally set and continues to be under investigation.

Protesters Demand Justice for Geer

Supervisors' responsibility highlighted.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE GAZETTE

Cars honked in acknowledgement as Centreville resident Jason McCormack stood alongside Chain Bridge Road in Fairfax, near the Fairfax County Courthouse, with a handmade sign that read "Cops Are Bound By The Law, Too."

McCormack had joined several dozen protesters from around the state, braving freezing temperatures in the late morning on Jan. 8, demanding Fairfax County police answer for the shooting death of Springfield resident John Geer.

The protest was organized through a Facebook group called "Justice for John Geer" that at the time had nearly 700 members.

"I'm here for police accountability all across the board," McCormack said, his head almost completely obscured by a Baltimore Ravens beanie and a grey and black scarf.

"I lived in the court across from the Geer's house and it could've been my kids out playing when the shot was fired. It could've been a whole other story. We need to stop letting the gun be the first thing you pull."

Following a domestic dispute with his longtime partner Maura Harrington, police had arrived at Geer's home and spoke with him for over half an hour while he stood in his doorway, unarmed, with his hands raised and resting on the frame.

As he began to lower his hands, he was shot in the chest and died in his house without receiving medical attention.

On the Monday before the demonstration, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova came forward to release an explanation from the county for the first time in nearly 17 months since the Aug. 29, 2013 shooting.

Bulova's statement came with a brief official account from the county of the events surrounding the shooting, that named the officer involved as PFC Adam Torres.

"I have been frustrated and disappointed with how long this investigation has taken," she said, citing the case's changing hands from the Commonwealth Attorney to the Department of Justice as a reason for the delay in information being released.

Protest organizer Mike Curtis of Manassas urged demonstrators and the public to demand more explanation from their public leaders.

"Don't just let her have her few minutes on the news and tell everybody she's for the same thing



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Demonstrators from around Virginia met Jan. 8 in front of the Fairfax County Courthouse and Police and Fire department headquarters to demand an independent investigation of the shooting death of John Geer.

you are," he said. "She needs to be held accountable too."

Curtis is also one of the founders of the Justice for John Geer Facebook group.

He was joined in addressing the media and demonstrators by Richmond resident Nathan Cox, who founded the public interest Virginia Cop Block that seeks police accountability and transparency.

"If we don't hold our public servants accountable, things will just continue to run on a tyrannical type of basis," Cox said. "We're out here today because of the lack of a legitimate investigation. I personally am not cool with the police investigating themselves. We're out here today to demand an independent investigation, no conflict of interest."

Geer's friends Jeff Stewart and Jerry Santos also attended the event.

"It's encouraging that some number of people are paying attention, encouraging that something organized is taking place and encouraging we got the number out with the conditions outdoors, said Santos.

"It's really discouraging that the county continues to be tone-deaf and half-blind," he continued. "They don't get it that they're on the wrong side of history, the wrong side of the law, the wrong side of decency."

Curtis said the group plans to continue its mission of seeking justice for Geer through email campaigns, attending public meetings and organizing additional events.

"This is the first step in what we're trying to do," he said. "We need to keep going, keep thinking this isn't the end, it's just the beginning."



Jason McCormack of Centreville demonstrates for increased police accountability at a Jan. 8 protest in Fairfax.



Mike Curtis of Manassas (left) and Nathan Cox of Richmond (right) spoke to media and demonstrators demanding an independent investigation of John Geer's death.

News

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PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE GAZETTE

FCPS School Board Mount Vernon Representative Dan Storck meets with parents at Sherwood Regional Library to discuss the FY 2016-2020 Capital Improvement Program.

Storck Addresses Concerns Over CIP

Adding schools and shifting boundaries.

It was standing room only at one point in the Sherwood Regional Library. Parents concerned over the significant boundary changes outlined in Fairfax County Public Schools proposed Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for FY 2016-2020 had gathered on Jan. 10 to hear from Mount Vernon School Board representative Dan Storck.

The plan cites the U.S. Route 1 corridor as an area of major concern in the county, with respect to overcrowding and achievement gaps. It proposes constructing two new elementary schools in the Mount Vernon and Fort Belvoir areas, and lays out specific plans for reassigning students among various schools.

Storck wanted to remind parents that the plan, however detailed, is still just a plan.

"How it was done this year, it's too specific," he said, comparing the five-bullet-point overview for Stratford Landing Elementary School in this year's CIP to the much shorter and more general entry from last year.

"It implies a decision when absolutely no decision has been made. It implies these will be done, but it's what could be done."

Though Storck and the School Board had been involved with FCPS Superintendent Karen Garza and the creation of the CIP, he said the release of the plan got ahead of their communication on it.

"It was a huge surprise," he said. "We know more than staff, how it's going to be used."

"It implies a decision when absolutely no decision has been made. It implies these will be done, but it's what could be done."

— Dan Storck, Mount Vernon School Board representative

The School Board will vote on the plan next week, Jan. 22, in chambers at Luther Jackson Middle School.

But, Storck said, what will really drive the future of how the plan plays out is a four-to-six month bound-

ary study that should begin in March. Communication and community engagement for the study should kick off in February, he said.

Storck will be holding his own meeting for education leaders including PTA presidents later this month, to help them "understand and navigate" the dates and procedures of the study.

More information on the FY 2016-2020 CIP can be found at www.fcps.edu/fts/planning/cip.shtml.

— TIM PETERSON

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— Helena Scott



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Focus on Transparency

FROM PAGE 1
reads.

There are no more admissions or revelations on the Geer case itself. Instead, Bulova claims to have “reached out to Attorney General Mark Herring for his suggestions for a process for us to identify professional organizations and/or resources that can work with us to review our policies and recommend appropriate changes.”

The idea would be to prevent such a delay from happening again, given a case with similar circumstances.

In addition to her attempt to connect with Herring, Bulova moved to direct the County Executive to locate “independent expertise in the field of Police Department operations and, specifically, in the area of policies and procedures with respect to information disclosures in the case of police involved shootings.”

The County Executive would also be charged with figuring out funding source and procedure for the board to retain such a resource.

Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) was the first of all the supervisors to weigh in on the motion.

“I reluctantly support the motion,” he said. “I think it’s too little too late. The actual motion gives no policy direction on transparency, though I believe that’s the intent.”

“There’s no provision to engage our citizens in the process,” he continued. “This to me smells of outsourcing policy-making. I hope that’s not the intent. I believe we need to engage our citizens, engage our staff and have a transparency conversa-

tion on this topic.”

Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) didn’t read the motion as an attempt to exclude the public, nor as too little too late. But, he conceded, “there is a perception in the public that police should not be advising us on police disclosure procedures. I think that’s legitimate.”

Supervisor Michael Frey (R-Sully) voiced his lack of support for the motion, saying: “Our role in the investigation was completed promptly. ‘It’s not any of our actions, or a result of anything we did that the U.S. Department of Justice has not completed their investigation over the course of a year. That’s not anything we did, there’s no lack of transparency on our part or any fault of our process.’”

SUPERVISORS Cook (R-Braddock), Hyland (D-Mount Vernon), Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill), McKay (D-Lee) and Smyth (D-Providence) all signed on with the motion, acknowledging the benefit of looking at policy changes to speed up the information disclosure process.

“The community needs to know where does the buck stop?” said Hudgins. “It actually does stop with us. This gives us more than the opportunity to maintain the due diligence to the case that it needs. It gives us also an opportunity to work with the community, I hope.” Bulova’s motion calls for contracting with whatever organization the County Executive, in consultation with the Attorney General’s office, comes up with by February or March.

The motion passed with only supervisors Frey and Hyland dissenting.

BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

SATURDAY/JAN. 17

Winter Waterfowl Identification. 9 a.m.-noon at Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge and State Park. Join an introduction to winter waterfowl identification, in preparation for the annual ASNV Waterfowl Count. Dress for an outdoor field trip/bird walk. Bring binoculars and a scope if available; leader will have a scope and waterfowl identification guides. Meet at the Woodmarsh Trail parking lot on High Point Road. Directions: from Route 1 in Lorton, take Gunston Rd east. Turn right on High Point

Road (toward Mason Neck State Park) to parking lot for the Woodmarsh Trail on the left. Free; advance registration required. Visit www.audubonva.org to register.

SATURDAYS/JAN. 17, 24 & 31

Garden Design Workshops at Green Spring Gardens, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Participants will learn do-it yourself garden design. This three-session workshop includes morning lectures on landscape design basics, followed by an afternoon of individualized help on planning and putting ideas on paper. \$185 for Fairfax County residents, \$200 for out-of-county. The two-hour morning lectures are available separately for \$36/\$38, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/

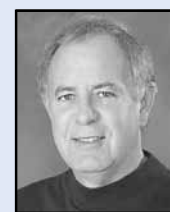
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SUNDAY/JAN. 18

Winter Lecture. 1:30-2:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Papyrus is used for food, fuel, paper, and pollution control, among other uses. John Gaudet will discuss this versatile plant and demonstrate how it is made into paper. \$10 for Fairfax County residents, \$12 for out-of-county. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/ greenspring.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 21

Antiques Club. 9:30-11 a.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. The Alexandria/Mount Vernon Antiques SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 16



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1/21/2015 A+ Camps & Schools
1/28/2015 Neighborhood Outlook
1/28/2015 Winter Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment;
Valentine's Preview

FEBRUARY

2/4/2015 Valentine's Dining & Gifts I
2/4/2015 Wellbeing – National Children's Dental Health Month
2/11/2015 HomeLifeStyle
2/11/2015 Valentine's Dining & Gifts II
Valentine's Day is Feb. 14 • Presidents Day is Feb. 16
2/18/2015 A+ Camps & Schools
2/25/2015 Pet Connection Pullout

MARCH

3/4/2015 Wellbeing
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PEOPLE

Open Door, Open Hearts at Rising Hope

Homeless and needy come in from the cold for a Merry Christmas.

BY ED SIMMONS, JR.
THE GAZETTE

“We had a spectacular Christmas!” declared the Rev. Keary Kincannon of Rising Hope United Methodist Church, which serves the homeless and needy along the Route 1 corridor.

With help from numerous area churches and many volunteers, 2,000 gifts were given to the needy along with 375 Christmas baskets.

Then on Christmas Day, thanks to the Barbosa Family who prepared the meal, 70 hungry and homeless people were served a traditional Christmas dinner.

“The Barbosa family wanted to show their gratitude by giving to



Originally from Ecuador and Nicaragua, the Barbosa family bought, prepared and served the Christmas Day dinner at Rising Hope, then washed dishes afterwards. Emma Barbosa, second from right, organized the family’s Christmas deed.

others. They bought, prepared, served, and cleaned up after the meal,” said Kincannon, who added that many more homeless individuals received gifts Christmas Day.

The Sunday before Christmas, Rising Hope members had their own Christmas party, which Kincannon described as “joyous.”

In addition to celebrating the

birth of Christ, said Kincannon, “They celebrated the love and support that comes from each other and the community.”

Rising Hope is located at 8220 Russell Road, just off Route 1 between Hybla Valley and Woodlawn. With the support of area churches and individuals, it serves the homeless and needy throughout the year with its free

clothing closet, food pantry, emergency help, employment help, hypothermia shelter and noon chapel services followed by a hot lunch.

Throughout the year, on Sunday mornings the Rising Hope van stops at the Eleanor Kennedy Homeless Shelter where many climb aboard for Sunday school, Rising Hope’s 11 a.m. service and a hot meal.



Rising Hope member Mike Hogan shows off his Christmas gift: “This is What Awesome Looks Like.”



Mary Baker, Christopher Steward and Garde Johnson with his guitar lead the guests in Christmas carols.

PHOTOS
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(en Español); 6:30 pm
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Thursday & First Friday of the Month: 7:30 pm Mass (Español) preceded by 7:00 pm Eucharistic Adoration

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OPINION

Steps To Prevent Gun Violence

BY MARTINA LEINZ
PRESIDENT, NORTHERN VIRGINIA CHAPTER
OF THE BRADY CAMPAIGN
TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE

Legislators convening for the 2015 Virginia General Assembly session this month have a great opportunity to make the Commonwealth a safer place for us all by voting in favor of the modest and responsible recommendations recently put forth by Governor Terry McAuliffe regarding gun violence prevention.

Governor McAuliffe has proposed six key pieces of legislation intended to keep firearms away from dangerous individuals. Three of the initiatives are regarding criminal background checks at gun shows. Currently, only Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers are required to run criminal background checks prior to selling or transferring firearms. Private sellers are exempt from this requirement leaving the door wide open for criminals to easily gain access to guns.

One of McAuliffe's proposals would make unlawful purchases more difficult by prevent-

ing gun shows from advertising that they are not required to conduct background checks. Another proposal would give the State Police statutory authority to process voluntary background check requests of private sellers. The most substantive of the three proposals would close the existing loophole and require background checks for all purchases at gun shows.

None of these three proposals goes far enough. Ideally, criminal background checks would be universal; required on all firearms transactions including online sales. They are, however, a step in the right direction and would do much to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous individuals.

Another proposal is to return the limit of handgun purchases to one a month so the Commonwealth won't hold the dubious distinction of being one of the most prolific gun-running states in the nation. Other initiatives include a bill to keep guns from people subject to protective orders and one to revoke concealed handgun permits for parents delinquent on child support payments. This later proposal would affect the roughly 9,000 parents with

such permits who are delinquent collectively on child support payments of over \$15 million.

These six modest proposals would be very effective in reducing violent crime by keeping guns out of the hands of people who should not have them.

None of the proposals would prevent law-abiding citizens from owning weapons and none would infringe upon Second Amendment rights of responsible adults.

With the Republicans controlling both the House of Delegates and the Senate, there are bound to be disagreements with any legislation proposed by Democratic Governor McAuliffe. However, everyone should agree to these modest proposals to keep Virginians safe. It is not a partisan issue; it is a simple matter of public health and safety.

With great opportunity comes great responsibility. I sincerely hope the General Assembly embraces that responsibility and votes accordingly. If you agree, please contact your elected officials and tell them you are counting on them to vote in support of all proposals to curb gun violence in the Commonwealth.

COMMENTARY

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pay Raise for Supervisors?

To the Editor:

Most of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors don't believe \$75,000 annual salary is enough so they are gathering information to consider a pay raise. According to a 2014 Virginia Association of Counties salary survey of 55 counties throughout Virginia, Fairfax County supervisors salary of \$75,000 annually tops them all by a substantial amount. The following salary data is for the top five counties that includes Fairfax County:

In addition, supervisors receive office budgets for staff and office expenses. Again, Fairfax County tops the list with each supervisors receiving \$453,741 and the chairman receiving \$505,090 for a grand total including salaries of \$5.3 plus million. This does not include free office space, designated free parking space at the Government Center and other perks they may receive.

On Dec. 2, 2014, Chairman Bulova stated prior to making a motion to have the County Executive gather information for consideration of a supervisor pay raise that "The State law is very specific regarding the legal requirements and process to adjust the board members' compensation. It is not permitted for a board to increase its own compensation. Any action to adjust board compensation may only be considered every four

County Board	Member Salary	Chairman Salary
Fairfax	\$75,000	\$75,000
Arlington	50,127	55,140
Prince William	49,826	50,127
Loudoun	41,200	50,000
Henrico	49,926	57,300

years and action must be taken prior to adoption of the budget during an election year. An adjustment voted on by the board would only apply to members of the Board of Supervisors elected as a result of the upcoming election."

If the board votes for a pay raise as required by law, it may be technically legal but it doesn't pass the smell test. The current supervisors who vote for the pay raise that are reelected will not deny the raise because they voted for it. In effect, all reelected supervisors voted to raise their pay.

Chairman Bulova's (D) (at-large) motion requires the County Executive to present data to the board for consideration in January. Her motion was seconded by Supervisor McKay (D) Lee District. Supervisor Frey (R) Sully District amended the motion to include data to raise the School Board members salary also. The amended motion carried by an 8 to 2 vote. Voting Yes, Chairman Bulova (D) (at large), Gross (D) Mason District, Cook (R) Braddock District, Foust (D) Drainsville district, Huggins (D) Hunter Mill district, MCKay (D) Lee District, Hyland (D) Mt. Vernon District and Frey (R) Sully District. Supervisors Herrity (R) Springfield District and Smyth (D) Providence

District voted No.

Keep in mind that no one forces any person to run for political office. So if any supervisor believes that their salary is too low, he/she can resign now and seek other employment, or they can serve out their term and not seek reelection. I am sure that there are many civic minded persons who willingly would run for supervisor, perform services for the people and be very happy with \$75,000 annual salary and over \$400,000 for office and staff expenses.

Call 703-324-3151 Clerk to the Board and let your supervisor hear from you. Remember you will be asked to pay in taxes any added expense for salary increase. Make the call and make a difference.

Frank Medico
Mount Vernon

Out of Touch Supervisors

To the Editor:

I am glad that [Board of Supervisors Chairman] Sharon Bulova is finally acknowledging the possibility of a civilian police review board, even if she is clearly doing it reluctantly and as a result of a \$12 million lawsuit and the federal investigation of the John Geer

killings. Our own supervisor, Gerry Hyland, has done many wonderful things for this community, but his refusal to consider a citizen board is unfortunately making him seem increasingly out of touch with many of his constituents.

Louis Meyers
Alexandria

County Shouldn't Spray for Fall Cankerworm

To the Editor:

This letter is in response to a recent letter to the editor [Mount Vernon Gazette, Jan. 8] about Fairfax County's Fall Cankerworm Insecticide Spraying Program.

I am a professional entomologist and I have been in charge of the U. S. National Insect Collection at the Smithsonian Institution, a Fairfax County resident for 21 years, as well as a biologist experienced in conservation. I have been following the issues regarding the program in Fairfax County to spray *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Btk), a kind of biological insecticide, to control a native moth, the Fall Cankerworm (scientifically, *Lepidoptera*: *Geometridae* or *Inchworms*).

It was first used to control *Lepidoptera* (moth) pests of agricultural crops; however, this naturally-occurring bacterium was found to be deadly to all moths and butterflies (*Lepidoptera*).

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 9

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 8

Since this discovery there have been many types of Bt developed, but those used against moths are still deadly to non-target species, including native species. However, the areas in Fairfax County being sprayed are not crops or timberlands for harvest, but rather forests, parklands, neighborhood gardens. These are places to preserve wildlife and nature, and to protect them for the benefit of not only Fairfax County residents, but also for all Virginians and visitors. Without scientific monitoring or surveys, we do not know how many or even which native species live in any particular area being sprayed. Therefore, to inadvertently spray this deadly microbe, even if the intention is to target certain areas, is not prudent.

The letter writer does acknowledge that spraying Btk can kill other kinds of caterpillars, "... but only if they are up and eating the first baby leaves." However, it is well known that plant chemicals that often prevent insects eating certain plants only are present in older leaves (for example, tannins in Oak leaves); therefore, many species of caterpillars are only able to eat, and even prefer, what he calls "baby leaves." He also claims that research shows that spraying increases the diversity of other species of butterflies and moths. However this research is apparently about the Gypsy Moth, a non-native (invasive) species from Asia. Reducing Gypsy Moth numbers could indirectly benefit other, native insect species. However, spraying to kill the native Fall Cankerworm is likely to severely harm

many (as yet undetermined) native species of butterflies and moths and may even increase diversity of other non-native pest species potentially harming the fauna and flora of Fairfax County. Getting rid of the Fall Cankerworm will eliminate a potentially vital food source for many migratory and resident birds, as well as reptiles, amphibians, predatory insects, and other wildlife that rely on caterpillars for their survival. His assertion that "birds can safely eat the dead caterpillars" is misleading because in spring (when the spraying actually takes place), many insectivorous birds need to find enough live caterpillars to feed their nestlings or fuel their northward migration and it is not clear if they would even eat dead caterpillars.

Episodic population outbreaks ("infestations") of native species such as the Fall Cankerworm are part of the natural ecological rhythm of our forests and woodlands, so why disrupt it? Based on previous research I have done (for example with Elms) and observations of the natural history in the forests of the northeastern USA, I do not believe that occasional and/or partial or even complete defoliation of most native eastern forest tree species will cause tree death. The severe defoliation from by Gypsy Moth in the 1970s demonstrated that only very severe and repeated defoliation over many years truly killed native trees; our local Fall Cankerworm outbreaks are natural and nowhere as severe and will not become so.

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 12

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BY SCOTT A. SUROVELL
DELEGATE (D-44)



The 2015 General Assembly session starts this week. Last week, I previewed the overall session. This week, I will outline my legislative agenda.

First, I invite you to complete my constituent survey online at www.scottsurovell.org/survey. The online version is more comprehensive than the mail version.

One of my top priorities since being elected in 2009 has been the improvement of U.S. 1. In 2012, Sena-

COMMENTARY tor Puller and I secured \$2 million for the U.S. 1 Multimodal Transit Alternative Analysis Study. That study concluded in October when officials signed a resolution recommending a six-lane road, multi-use paths, a median-dedicated bus rapid transit system to Woodbridge and a two-stop Yellow Line Metro extension to Hybla Valley.

The next phase requires \$4 million for environmental reviews and preliminary engineering.

My number one priority this session will be securing funds for those studies to keep this project moving along.

Next, the proliferation of predatory lend-

ing on U.S. 1 is out of control. Recently, I discovered that car title lenders have begun evading consumer protections by setting up "consumer finance companies," which have virtually no restrictions. These lenders

are offering unregulated, even higher-interest products out of the same storefronts. I have introduced legislation to make this illegal.

I have also introduced legislation to make it illegal to require someone to install a device on their vehicle to allow a lender to disable the vehicle and prevent it from starting remotely. These lenders are charging outrageous interest on these loans and preying on vulnerable people.

Fairfax County Public Schools requires all students to use electronic textbooks and access Blackboard online for assignments, although a substantial number of children in the Mount Vernon-Lee community do not have either computing devices or broadband at home. Between 2013-2014, I was able to secure the endorsement of the Joint

Commission of Science and Technology for my legislation prohibiting any school system from using electronic textbooks without providing each student computing devices. I have modified last year's legislation and hope to gain passage this year.

I am considering legislation suggested by one of my Amundson Institute Fellows to create a uniform statewide high school grading scale. Right now, a 72 percent is an "F" in some jurisdictions.

Last year, I introduced legislation to make the transmission of sexually explicit photographs between minors or "sexting" a misdemeanor under most circumstances. After I served on a national panel this summer and heard testimony from expert child psychologists, I decided to introduce legislation requiring children to be taught about online safety and the consequences of sending sexually-explicit pictures and communications as part of their sex education classes.

I have introduced legislation to repeal Virginia's constitutional and statutory prohibitions on marriage equality.

Now that the courts have declared marriage equality the law of the land, we should purge these discriminatory statutes from Virginia's laws. I have also introduced legislation to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment for my third session. I have also

drafted legislation to prohibit employers from discriminating against women who are pregnant.

I will propose bills to allow Virginia governors to serve two terms and remove the state Constitutional requirement that voters submit a social security number when registering to vote.

Bankruptcy trustees have begun seizing child and spousal support arrearages as assets in bankruptcy proceedings. I think this practice is wrong and punishes the wrong people who are bankrupt due to the behavior of guilty ex-spouses or parents. I've introduced legislation to ban it.

This summer, a drone-house collision and dispute in Fort Hunt motivated me to introduce legislation to allow local governments to regulate the use of drones.

I am also introducing legislation to decriminalize adultery so that guilty spouses cannot hide behind the Fifth Amendment in divorce proceedings. Adultery is rarely prosecuted in Virginia today, and fights about Fifth Amendment privilege in divorce proceedings unnecessarily cost litigants thousands of dollars and unnecessarily wastes of time in our courts.

As always, if you have any feedback or want to communicate with me you can reach me at scott@scottsurovell.org. It is an honor to serve as your state delegate.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 8

The far wiser approach to this problem would be for Fairfax County to sponsor some scientific surveys, to determine which species of butterflies and moths are present in the intended treatment areas, i.e. the biological diversity. Also advice to homeowners about how to monitor and/or treat their gardens would be helpful.

I have discussed this Fall Cankerworm issue with several experts on butterflies and moths at the Smithsonian and the USDA and they all agree with my statements above.

In conclusion I feel strongly that Fairfax County should cease spraying against Fall Cankerworm, because such spraying does more harm than good to the ecosystems and neighborhoods of Fairfax County.

David G. Furth, Ph.D.

Department of Entomology
Smithsonian Institution

Squandered Opportunity

To the Editor:

The last several editions of the Gazette have featured articles by Martin Tillett concerning the history of Mount Vernon watersheds. Mr. Tillett is the president of the Spring Bank Community Association (SBCA). Last week, Mr. Tillett engaged in revisionist history regarding the now defunct Kings Crossing Town Center project. I've had letters published in the Gazette concerning this subject, one, for example, on Aug. 13, 2009, so no need for a com-

plete re-hash. A few points:

Mr. Tillett states in his letter that on June 12, 2006, the SBCA voted "overwhelmingly to support the latest plans for the Kings Crossing Development that included a community park surrounding Quander Brook." Looking at the June 26, 2006 edition of the Gazette where this vote was reported, the vote was 15-2, hardly overwhelming for a community of about 200 homes. Moreover, Mr. Tillett fails to point out that the vote was taken after the SBCA, under the leadership of its then President David Dale (now an MVCCA co-chair) and Mr. Tillett as its vice president, had participated with others in an almost 2 year attempted shake-down of the proposed developer for all manner of proffers.

The Sept. 15, 2004 Gazette first reported on the proposed development. For the following almost 2 years, the SBCA under the leadership of Dale and Tillett participated with the others in treating the proposed developers like a candy store dispensing free candy. The proposed developer had determined that to make the development profitable (a requirement in the real world), a majority of the square footage would have to be residential, including by the way, a significant percentage of affordable housing (at least 50 residences). This fully comported with the Comprehensive Plan. SBCA and others demanded that the residential component be reduced, with commercial space occupying at least 50 percent. Supervisor Hyland demanded that the developers pay each trailer park resident \$50,000 to facilitate their relocation.

As the negotiations went on, seemingly

ad infinitum, the proposed developers made significant concessions, including agreeing to:

1. Widen Richmond Highway at the Kings Crossing location, eliminate the frontage road, replace traffic signals and install a biking/walking trail.
2. Spend almost \$3 million to replace all overhead wires from Fairview Drive to Shields Avenue with underground wiring.
3. Include in the development a complete stormwater management system.
4. Spend up to \$500,000 to restore Quander Brook.
5. Acquire the 8+ acre Fairchild property, restore it and dedicate it to the county.

The proposed developer warned the community that its agreement with the property owner would soon expire and if that occurred it was unlikely to be able to proceed with the project. As negotiations dragged on, the community failed to heed this warning and the combination of expiration of the agreement, expiration of a Revitalization Tax Abatement and a downturn of the economy killed the project along with all the amenities listed above that would have been enacted at the expense of the developer.

Shortly after the announcement was made by the proposed developer that the project was dead, Mr. Tillett brought a proposed resolution to the MVCCA in which they would urge the county to pay for the Fairchild property restoration and stormwater controls (at taxpayer expense) that the proposed developer had agreed to fund. The resolution was approved as number E&R 2008-4. What chutzpah!

The property owner began exploring what could be built by right on the property. In an attempt to thwart development of a big box store, the Board of Supervisors amended the county ordinances so that a big box store subtending greater than 80,000 square feet required Board of Supervisors approval. That is why the Wal-Mart store now on the property subtends 79,000 square feet. Since it was built by right, there are no stormwater controls on the property. Thus whenever it rains, all the rainwater on the property flows down the huge parking lot and into the Fairchild property and Quander Brook. Moreover, since Wal-Mart is now also a part owner of the property, the dream of a community town center there has been killed forever.

The Fairchild property is now owned by the Board of Supervisors; the Fairfax County Park Authority has not acquired ownership of it. I surmise there are several reasons why, including:

1. The Wal-Mart property has no stormwater controls, and they couldn't be adequately installed on the Fairchild property.
2. The FCRA would have to spend a lot of money (the developer estimated \$500,000) (that they don't have) to restore Quander Brook. With no upstream stormwater controls, any restoration work would quickly be washed out.
3. As the property now sits, there would be considerable risk of litigation from visitors, given its unsafe current condition.
4. While there is an easement to the property from Richmond Highway through the

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 18

2015 New Year Remodeling Resolutions

Improving long-term living needs and future home value.

BY JOSHUA BAKER
BOWA

After all the holiday festivities have passed and the ball has dropped to ring in the New Year, many homeowners are inspired to tackle resolutions that relate to their living space. 2015 may be the year you want to remodel your home to allow for the changes occurring in your life. Perhaps you want to build out an office which will allow you to work from home? Maybe 2015 is the year you want to avoid climbing stairs, so moving the master suite to the first floor may be on your resolution list?

One thing is certain in life — family needs are always evolving. As kids come and go, aging parents move in, greener technology becomes available, and we look for more creature comforts in our homes, individuals and families need and want to update

living spaces.

So, if you're thinking 2015 is the year to make changes to your home to better suit your changing lifestyle needs, I would encourage you to review some of the following top home remodeling resolutions.



TIP #1: Planning For Your Long-Term Home Needs

Given the fact that a home remodeling project can be a significant investment of both time and money, I would strongly recommend that your family has thought through all elements of the remodeling job to make sure it will work for family's long-term living needs. You want the work done on your home to both improve your day-to-day life and add to the future value of your home, so ensuring the decision makers in your family are all on the same page is critical.

Also, as your family plans to remodel your home, we recommend considering the best times for your home to be under construction. We find that since families tend to travel more during the summer months, that is a good time for a remodeling project as the process may be less disruptive and the work can move quicker.

TIP #2: Research What You Like

One of the best things you can do to prepare for sitting down with a professional remodeler is to find pictures of aspects of homes that you like. Being able to show examples of your preferences is extremely helpful to ensure your tastes are understood and incorporated into the design, and often, the materials selected for your remodeling project.

Websites like Houzz.com or Pinterest.com offer thousands of ideas that you can explore and print out to help you define the look and feel you desire to achieve with your new finished space. You can also save them in an online account that can be viewed by your potential remodel company.

TIP #3: Do Your Homework on the Best Remodeling Company

As with any significant investment, make sure you do due diligence before signing on with a design-build firm. Remodeling remains one of the most reported industries, so be sure to talk with the firm's client references and visit recent projects they have completed to get a sense for their craftsmanship. You may also want to ask about employee tenure and which professionals will be working with you through the re-

modeling process. It is important to know who will be your single point of accountability.

With a single point of accountability for the entire design and construction process, you can work alongside your architectural team and other specialists to ensure reliable materials are specified, drawings are clear, and challenges are addressed to lay the groundwork for a smooth production process. Most importantly, this team approach ensures that the project that is being designed aligns with your budget goals, and finds areas of efficiencies and appropriate cost savings wherever possible.

These three tips will help you to achieve the best approach and find a design-build team that will take accountability and manage the entire process while looking after your best interests. Remodeling professionals become part of your family during the process, so it's important to be extremely comfortable with the firm you choose.

Josh Baker is the founder and co-chairman of BOWA, an award-winning design and construction company specializing in luxury renovations, remodels and additions in the greater Washington, D.C. area. BOWA has more than 25 years of experience and has been honored with 170 local and national awards. Visit www.bowa.com or call 703-734-9050.

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Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our **A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun** pages, the third week of every month.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Port City Presents 'Smellin' Up the Den'

To include a bawdy collection of comic sketches similar to "Saturday Night Live."

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE GAZETTE

Port City Playhouse of Alexandria, in its second co-production with Red Knight Productions, will present "Smellin' Up the Den," a bawdy collection of comic sketches similar to "Saturday Night Live," on Jan. 16-17, Jan. 23-24, and Jan. 31.

Director Scott Courlander said "Smellin' Up the Den" is more akin to an episode of "Saturday Night Live" than it is a play. It was originally produced at Amy Poehler's Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre in New York, and while the sketch comedy scene is blossoming in New York, audiences in D.C. have few options short of the Capital Steps.

"We thought it was important to bring this kind of show to D.C. area audiences," Courlander said. "We'll be serving beer and wine and hope to create a comedy club feel at the Playhouse. Our main goal is just to make people laugh."

He said there were several challenges for him as a director. "Having produced the show in New York with different actors, it was important to me to find comedic performers here in D.C. that would 'get' the humor, and at the same time I had to avoid the trap of trying to recreate the exact performances from the original cast. I was very lucky to find a group of actors with tremendous comedic chops who are finding their own interpretations and nuances and are cracking me up every day."

He added, "We deal with some 'edgy' material, but we are not in the business of trying to shock anyone or be offensive. We're just being silly, and in the process we'll be dropping some 'F-bombs,' making fun of

Hitler, and touching some hot-button topics, but it's all in the spirit of fun and we desperately hope the audience will come along for the ride."

He said part of the reason they've worked with Port City to get a liquor license for this show is to loosen the audience up, so they've added 10 p.m. shows to really provide that comedy club feel.

"If the audience winds up thinking about some big issues as a result of some of the subject matter, that would be great, but our main endeavor is to entertain," he said.

Justus Hammond plays multiple characters throughout the show.

"It's a sketch show, so my character changes with each sketch I'm in," he said. He starts out playing a straight-laced roommate who's concerned about the health of another roommate. Then he shifts to playing a die-hard "skins" fan who's desperately trying to balance his love of football, the skins and his girlfriend. He has another role playing Thomas Jefferson's disapproving father, and one playing a one-percenter who finds himself under interrogation in a police station.

He said the challenge was differentiating the characters in each of the scenes, especially those who were similar to each other. In the third sketch, he plays an every-day guy but he has to stretch himself emotionally. "I have to bounce back and forth between a range of emotions all while I maintain just the right amount of heightening, so as not to leave myself with nowhere to go," he said.

In the fourth sketch, he has to keep himself from breaking. "And I have to deliver my lines sincerely without being caught up in the joke of the scene," he said.



Katie Courlander, Justus Hammond and Michael Carwright will star in Port City Playhouse's "Smellin' Up the Den."

He added, "In the next sketch, the challenge of playing a swordsman is really all in the fight choreography. Despite hours of rehearsal, I am still holding a real sword that could do real damage. The challenge in this sketch is remembering all of the choreography and doing it cleanly and safely."

Nick Hitchens plays relatively normal characters who wind up getting in some sort of funny conversation or predicament — everything from a simple man who gets stranded without a cell phone on a rainy night, to a regular nice-guy friend, and even to Charlie Brown's father.

He said he hasn't acted on a stage in quite some time, so getting back into the swing of things was a bit of a challenge.

"It is so much fun to come out of my shell and really play around on stage," he said. "It all winds up feeling like playing make-believe back when I was a kid."

Katie Courlander plays 13 different characters, including two little boys.

"It's a lot of fun to get to play with a wide variety of characters," she said. "I jump from being a mom, to a disgruntled girlfriend, to a little boy, to a lawyer, to Juliet — all within the course of an hour."

She said that one might think the biggest challenge was coming up with 13 distinct characters, or even being the only female in the production. "But for me, the biggest challenge is not laughing on stage," she said. "This show is hilarious, and my castmates are a riot."

She said, "I hope that audiences will let loose and get into the spirit of the show. It's a lot of fun, and I guarantee you will laugh out loud."

Actor Jonas David Grey plays a variety of characters, including Charlie Brown, Hitler, a hunchback, a gay man, a silent killer and a child prodigy. He said working on this piece was easy, except for not cracking up in the middle of a sketch because his fellow actors were so hilarious.

He said, "I suppose the hardest part of any type of comedy, especially this kind of sketch, is the timing. Not only are there the practical demands of quick changes and entrances, but so much of the success of pieces like this relies on getting the lines and looks out in exactly the right way."

He said that after the crowds and chaos of the holiday season, he hopes the audiences simply walk away in a better mood. "This is funny stuff, and laughter is a great antidote to stress. Seeing 'Smellin' Up the Den' is a great way to start the New Year in a good mood."

"Smellin' Up the Den" runs Friday-Saturday, Jan. 16-17 and Jan. 23-24, and Saturday, Jan. 31, at Port City Playhouse, 1819 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Fridays, 8 p.m., Saturdays 8 and 10 p.m. \$18; \$22 tickets are available for patrons age 21 (valid ID required) and include one serving of beer or wine. Visit www.portcityplayhouse.org.

CALENDAR

Email announcements to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

ONGOING

Tavern Toddlers. Weekly open playtime continues every Monday. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Gadsby's Tavern Museum, North Royal Street, Alexandria. Caregivers, toddlers (walkers through 3 years) and visiting relatives are welcome to play, read, dance and color in the historic ballroom. No reservations required. Each week costs \$7 for a group of three, which must include one adult, and additional people are \$3. A three-visit pass costs \$18. On Monday, Feb. 16 Tavern Toddlers will be closed due to President's Day. www.gadsbystavern.org or 703-746-4242.

"The Space Between." Through Feb. 2 at the Multiple Exposures Gallery, The Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105

N Union St., Studio 312. Photographer Janet Matthews presents a portfolio of new work in this solo exhibit at the Multiple Exposures Gallery, looking beyond the literal representation of objects to explore their edges and the space that surrounds them. Visit www.multipleexposuresgallery.com or call 703-683-2205 for more.

Signature Tour. 2 p.m. or various other availability. Through Thursday, Feb. 12 at Mount Vernon Mansion, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. During a guided exploration tour of the Mansion, visit areas not normally open to guests, including the basement and the third floor where Martha Washington retired after the death of her husband in 1799. \$5/per person in addition to general admission. Hours vary. Visit mountvernon.org for more.

"Beyond the Board" Art Exhibit. Through Feb. 22. Prudential PenFed Realty, 4900 Seminary Road, Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans' presents "Beyond the Board." A portion of artists' sales go to the

PenFed Foundation, supporting active military families, veterans and their families. Visit www.thedelrayartisans.org/shows/gww/ for more.

New Exhibit. Mount Vernon invites visitors to explore George Washington's design for the grounds of his estate, through a new exhibition, "Gardens & Groves: George Washington's Landscape" at Mount Vernon through Jan. 12, 2016. Gardens & Groves is the first museum exhibition to focus specifically on Washington's landmark achievements as a landscape designer combining rarely-seen original documents, artwork, and books. Included in admission \$18/adult; \$17/senior citizen; \$9/child age 6-11; children under 5 are free. Visit www.mountvernon.org.

Alexandria Cars & Coffee invites car enthusiasts to meet for coffee at Hollin Hall Shopping Center in front of Roseina's, 1307 Shenandoah Road. Owners of classic cars, hot rods, exotic cars, motorcycles and more meet to share car stories and drink

coffee. Group meets the first Sunday of every month. 8:30-11 a.m.

George Washington's Mount Vernon has joined Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and James Madison's Montpelier to expand the "Presidents Passport," Virginia's premier presidential trail. As an added bonus to this year's program, visitors to the Alexandria Visitors Center at 221 King St. showing or purchasing a ticket to any of the three presidential estates will, upon request, receive for free Alexandria's "Key to the City" pass, which grants access into nine historic sites and museums in Alexandria—a \$26 added value. Visit www.PresPassport.Monticello.org.

Fifty Years of Collecting. Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sundays noon to 5 p.m. Fort Ward Museum 4301 West Braddock Road. An anniversary exhibit of objects from the Fort Ward collection. Free. Visit www.fortward.org or call 703-746-4848.

Dinner for the Washingtons. Noon at George Washington's Mount

Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. A walking tour that goes behind the scenes to find out how food was prepared and served before the era of microwaves and TV dinners. \$5 in addition to estate admission. Visit www.mountvernon.org/ for more.

The Monday Morning Birdwalk has been a weekly event at Huntley Meadows since 1985. It takes place every week, rain or shine (except during electrical storms, strong winds, or icy trails), at 7 a.m. (8 a.m. November through March), is free of charge, requires no reservation, and is open to all. Birders meet in the parking lot at the park's entrance at 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Direct questions to Park staff during normal business hours at 703-768-2525.

CAMPS, CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

Tavern Toddlers. Every Monday (except Federal Holidays) 10:30-11:30 a.m. Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal Street, Alexandria. Join other families with toddlers

ENTERTAINMENT

(walkers through 36 months) to have fun in Gadsby's historic ballroom. Playtime features a craft table, book corner, toys and group dancing. \$7 for a group of three. Visit www.alexandria.gov/gadsbystavern or call 703-746-4242.

Photography Workshop. 10:30 a.m.-noon at Multiple Exposures Gallery on 105 N. Union St. Photographers and enthusiasts of all skill levels are invited to share work, ideas, and questions at this free workshop held on the last Sunday of each month, except December. No reservations. Call 703-683-2205.

Life Drawing. Del Ray Artisans offers a range of open life drawing sessions for anyone to develop life-drawing skills further. Drop-in for the session and bring supplies to draw or paint our live models. Fee ranges from \$8-\$12. All skill levels are welcome. Del Ray Artisans is located at 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

THROUGH FRIDAY/JAN. 16

Exhibit of the Alexandria Library Sit-in of 1939. 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. at City Hall in the Vola Lawson Lobby, 301 King Street, Alexandria. For more see www.alexandria.lib.va.us.

THURSDAY/JAN. 8

Ford Evening Book Talk. 7 p.m. at the Rubenstein Leadership Hall at the Fred W. Smith National Library, 3600 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon. Author Turk McCleskey will discuss his book, "The Road to Black Ned's Forge: A Story of Race, Sex, and Trade on the Colonial American Frontier." Free, registration is required. Visit mountvernon.org.

THURSDAY/JAN. 8-FEB. 22

Exhibition "Unearthed | Unleashed." In the Athenaeum Gallery 201 Prince St., Alexandria. An exhibition of the works of Michael Gessner and Joanne Kent. Gessner's mixed media sculptures reference a variety of natural forms. Kent's minimal works with thickly applied paint and wax appear to be a reflection on organic elements and artifacts. Free. Visit www.nvfaa.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 17

Tea with Martha Washington. 2-3 p.m. at Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. Listen to Martha Washington's stories about life at Mount Vernon while enjoying a selection of lite fare prepared by the Mount Vernon Inn. Following tea, enjoy a self-guided exploration of the estate and decorative arts found in the Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center. \$30 for adults, \$20 for youth (12 and under), includes tea, lite fare, and general estate admission. Visit www.mountvernon.org.

FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS/JAN. 16-30

"Smellin' Up the Den." At Port City Playhouse, 1819 Quaker Lane, Alexandria. The classiest potty humor in the DMV. Audiences will be treated to an hour-long whirlwind of hysterical vignettes. \$18-\$24. Visit www.redknightproductions.com or www.portcityplayhouse.com.

THURSDAY/JAN. 22

"When the United States Spoke French." 7 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Ave., Alexandria. The Alexandria-Caen Sister City Committee presents François Furstenberg, Professor of History, Johns Hopkins University, who will speak about his book. Book Signing with wine and dessert reception to

follow. RSVP online at <http://whentheunitedstatesspokefrench.eventbrite.com>. Free admission. Contact Julia Sylla at julia.sylla@georgetown.edu or 202-203-0177.

The Noctonals Concert. 8 p.m. at the Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. Contemporary a cappella music performed by recent graduates from the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, and Wheaton College. \$15 admission. Call 703-548-0035 or visit www.nvfaa.org for more.

FRIDAY/JAN. 23

Junior Brown. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Tickets \$25. Call 703-549-7500 or visit www.birchmere.com.

Beer Dinner at the Mount Vernon Inn. 6:30-9:30 p.m. Learn how beer was brewed and enjoyed in early America at this event co-hosted by Old Ox Brewing Company. Guests will enjoy a reception, beer tasting and a four-course menu paired with specialty beers by the Mount Vernon Inn with commentary by staff. Old Ox Brewing Company is a family owned and operated commercial brewery located in Loudoun County. \$100 per person (includes tax & gratuity). Visit www.mountvernon.org/inn for more.

SATURDAY/JAN. 24

Tea with Martha Washington. 2-3 p.m. at Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. Listen to Martha Washington's stories about life at Mount Vernon while enjoying a selection of lite fare prepared by the Mount Vernon Inn. Following tea, enjoy a self-guided exploration of the estate and decorative arts found in the Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center. \$30 for adults, \$20 for youth (12 and under), includes tea, lite fare, and general estate admission. Visit www.mountvernon.org.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JAN. 24-25

The Taste & Style of George Washington. 2 p.m. Mount Vernon's first fine arts tour offers guests the chance to appreciate a lesser known quality of George Washington – his keen eye. This tour, which includes the mansion as well as the museum, explores Washington's tastes and his selection of decorative fine arts for his home. This tour is included in admission, visitors must register for a tour ticket online or at the ticket window. Limited capacity. Visit www.mountvernon.org for more.

SUNDAY/JAN. 25

Presidential Salon. 3-4:30 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal St. Join President James Madison, as presented by John Douglas Hall, to discuss the recent Battle of New Orleans and the arrival of the Treaty of Ghent in the context of his own time, and be a witness to the events of the year of 1815. Reservations are recommended and tickets are \$15 per person and \$10 for high school/college students. Madeira, Port and other libations will be available for purchase. To purchase tickets, visit shop.alexandriava.gov or call 703-746-4242.

Jeffrey Osborne. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Tickets \$69.50. Call 703-549-7500 or visit www.birchmere.com.

TUESDAY/JAN. 27

New Exhibit. 12:35 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Meet the curator of The Lyceum's new

exhibit, Explore the Attic, and learn how an exhibit goes from concept to script to objects on display. Call 703-746-4242 or visit shop.alexandriava.gov for more.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 28

Swing Dance. 9-11pm, at Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett Street, Alexandria. \$10. Since forming in 2009, the Andy Poxon Band has played at various venues and festivals up and down the east coast. The band plays a variety of originals and covers, mixing elements of blues, soul and country. For more information on swing dance classes, dances, and special events, call 703-359-9882 or visit www.gottaswing.com.

SATURDAY/JAN. 31

Tea with Martha Washington. 2-3 p.m. at Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. Listen to Martha Washington's stories about life at Mount Vernon while enjoying a selection of lite fare prepared by the Mount Vernon Inn. Following tea, enjoy a self-guided exploration of the estate and decorative arts found in the Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center. \$30 for adults, \$20 for youth (12 and under), includes tea, lite fare, and general estate admission. Visit www.mountvernon.org for more.

FRIDAY/JAN. 31-SATURDAY/FEB. 1

The Taste & Style of George Washington. 2 p.m. Mount Vernon's first fine arts tour offers guests the chance to appreciate a lesser known quality of George Washington – his keen eye. This tour, which includes the mansion as well as the museum, explores Washington's tastes and his selection of decorative fine arts for his home. This tour is included in admission, visitors must register for a tour ticket online or at the ticket window. Limited capacity. Visit www.mountvernon.org for more.

FRIDAY/FEB. 6

"Elements" Art Exhibit Opening Reception. 7-9 p.m. at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. John Bordner, Kathryn Brown, Michele Reday Cook, Linda Elliff, Kim S. Joy, Marlin Lord and Tamara Wilkerson present artworks which incorporate elements of earth, water, air and fire in materials, media and subject matter. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m.; Fridays-Saturdays 12-9 p.m.; Sundays 12-6 p.m. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 7

Tea with Martha Washington. 2-3 p.m. at Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. Listen to Martha Washington's stories about life at Mount Vernon while enjoying a selection of lite fare prepared by the Mount Vernon Inn. Following tea, enjoy a self-guided exploration of the estate and decorative arts found in the Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center. \$30 for adults, \$20 for youth (12 and under), includes tea, lite fare, and general estate admission. Visit www.mountvernon.org.
The Beverly Hillbillies. 7:30 p.m. at MVCCT, Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. After accidentally striking it rich with oil, watch the whole Clampett family find their way in this new land inhabited by movie stars and the fabulously wealthy. \$12. Tickets at www.mvcc.org.

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SPORTS

Mount Vernon Girls Snap Losing Streak

The Mount Vernon girls' basketball team snapped a four-game losing streak with a 39-33 win over Falls Church on Jan. 13.

The Majors had won six in a row before dropping their final two games of the Title IX holiday tournament. Mount Vernon then suffered a pair of lopsided losses against two of the top teams in the area, falling to Oakton 67-23 on Jan. 7 and Edison 74-29 on Jan. 9.

Mount Vernon (7-5) will host Hayfield at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 16.

West Potomac Wrestling Wins Tournament

The West Potomac wrestling team won the Covenant Life School tournament on Jan. 10. Marco Colon (113 pounds), Jeremiah Carter (126), Zachary Stevens (132), Joshua Carter (160) and John Holzworth (220) won individual championships for the Wolverines.

Joshua Carter was named tournament MVP. The Wolverines are led by first-year head coach James Hargrove. West Potomac is scheduled to compete in the Winter Blitz Tournament on Jan. 16-17 at C.H. Flowers High School in Springdale, Md.

West Potomac To Host Alumni Night, Youth Night

The West Potomac boys' basketball team will host alumni night at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 16 when the Wolverines take on Annandale. West Potomac will honor alumni at halftime as West Potomac cel-



Susannah Anderson, seen during a Jan. 9 game against Edison, and the Mount Vernon girls' basketball team lost four straight before beating Falls Church on Jan. 13.



Jason Banks and the Mount Vernon boys' basketball team lost to Edison 64-63 on Jan. 9. The Majors will travel to face Hayfield at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 16. Mount Vernon's next home game is Jan. 20 against Washington-Lee.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

brates its 30th year of existence. On Jan. 29, West Potomac will host youth night when the Wolverines take on Centreville.

West Potomac Softball Clinic

West Potomac will host a winter softball

clinic Jan. 18, Jan. 25 and Feb. 1 in the main gym at West Potomac High School.

Session 1, for grades 2-6, will be held from 1-3 p.m. Session 2, for grades 7 and up, will be held from 4-6:30 p.m.

The clinic is designed to prepare softball players for upcoming seasons, with an emphasis on fielding, hitting, base-running, pitching and catching.

Cost is \$100 in advance or \$125 at the door. Single sessions can be attended for \$40.

Each camper receives a clinic T-shirt. Contact West Potomac head coach Craig Maniglia at 703-360-3545 or 703-283-7608, or assistant coach Lee Harrington at 703-765-2080.



Mount Vernon Lee Chamber of Commerce collected and donated winter coats, sweaters, hats, scarves, and gloves to local non-profits that help the homeless. The "Warmer Winter" initiative was headed by Jane Gandee, owner of ServiceMaster Restore and a member of the Chamber Board of Directors. Local businesses donated the winter clothing which was then sorted and delivered. Sonja Caison, owner of The Cleaning Authority, solicited donations from her clients. Above, Caison and Gandee, bring outerwear donations to Herb Lea at UCM.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Timely Donations

Donations collected by Sonja Caison, The Cleaning Authority, and Jane Gandee, ServiceMaster Restore, to Rising Hope were accepted by Thurman Brewster, Matthew Samuels, and Sarah Hughes.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

Club will feature Joe Pallone speaking about his personal collection of old American trains, particularly the Lionel models, some of which he will bring to the meeting. Bring antique trains for "Show and Tell." Free, open to the public. Call Ann Connell at 703-360-4970 for more.

Public Information Meeting. 7 p.m. at the Mount Vernon Woods Elementary School cafeteria, 4015 Fielding St., Alexandria. Snow date is Feb. 3. Located between the Mount Vernon Woods Elementary School and Huntley Meadows Park, the 7.1-acre Mount Vernon Woods Park is classified as a local park,

expected to serve the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The Park Authority is undertaking this park master plan revision to work with the surrounding community to consider how the park can better meet local recreation needs. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/mount-vernon-woods.htm.

Annual Public Comment Meeting. 7 p.m. in Room 106 of the Herry Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Information outlining all proposed fee changes is now available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/feemeeting.htm or call 703-324-8662.

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21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
Blazin Wings, Inc trading as Buffalo Wild Wings, 7732F Richmond Hwy, Alexandria, VA 22306-2803. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Mixed Beverage Restaurants, Beer & Wine on-premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Emily C. Decker, Vice President of Blazin Wings, Inc.
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

21 Announcements

LEGAL NOTICE
Pursuant to the provision of section 4-1-16 of the code of the City of Alexandria, the Alexandria Police Department located at 3600 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304 is now in possession of unclaimed bicycles, mopeds, lawn equipment, money, scooters, and other items. All persons having valid claim to the property should file a claim to the property with reasonable proof of ownership or the items will be sold, destroyed, converted or donated. For a complete listing go to <http://alexandriava.gov/police/> and contact the Police Property Section at (703) 746-6709.

21 Announcements

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wide variety of music and songs. Need guitarist, rhythm, lead, bass, keyboards, horn section, male & female vocalist, call Lee 703-400-5005.

10 Storage

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Garage to rent for storage of an Antique/Classic car.
Contact David 703-765-8983 or speedwilson@cox.net

21 Announcements

Public Notice – Environmental Permit
PURPOSE OF NOTICE: To seek public comment on a draft permit from the Department of Environmental Quality that will allow the release of treated wastewater into a water body and allow the reuse of reclaimed wastewater in the City of Alexandria, Virginia.

Public comment period: January 16, 2015 to February 16, 2015

Permit name: Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit – Wastewater issued by DEQ, under the authority of the State Water Control Board

APPLICANT Name, address and permit number:
City of Alexandria, Virginia Sanitation Authority
d/b/a Alexandria Renew Enterprises
1500 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314
VA0025160

This facility is an Extraordinary Environmental Enterprise participant in Virginia's Environmental Excellence Program. Project description: City of Alexandria, Virginia Sanitation Authority d/b/a Alexandria Renew Enterprises has applied for a reissuance of a permit for the public Alexandria Renew Enterprises Water Resources Recovery Facility. The applicant proposes to release treated sewage wastewaters from residential areas at a rate of 54 million gallons per day into a water body and reuse reclaimed wastewater for landscape water features and non-bulk irrigation. Biosolids from the treatment process will be land applied and/or blended in the production of a soil amendment. The facility proposes to release the treated sewage in the Hunting Creek in City of Alexandria in the Potomac River watershed. A watershed is the land area drained by a river and its incoming streams. The permit will limit the following pollutants to amounts that protect water quality: pH, carbonaceous-biochemical oxygen demand, total suspended solids, dissolved oxygen, ammonia, E. coli, nitrate+nitrite, total nitrogen, total phosphorus and total residual chlorine. The facility will be required to monitor for total Kjeldahl nitrogen and whole effluent toxicity.

Additionally, the facility maintains a pretreatment program in accordance with Part VII of 9VAC25-31. The Industrial Pretreatment Plan for Continuous Industrial Waste Survey and the significant industrial user permit boilerplate have been updated.

This facility is subject to the requirements of 9VAC25-820 and has registered for coverage under the General VPDES Watershed Permit Regulation for Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus Discharges and Nutrient Trading in the Chesapeake Watershed in Virginia.

HOW TO COMMENT AND/OR REQUEST A PUBLIC HEARING: DEQ accepts comments and requests for public hearing by hand-delivery, email, fax or postal mail. All comments and requests must be in writing and be received by DEQ during the comment period. Submittals must include the names, mailing addresses and telephone numbers of the commenter/requester and of all persons represented by the commenter/requester. A request for public hearing must also include: 1) The reason why a public hearing is requested. 2) A brief, informal statement regarding the nature and extent of the interest of the requester or of those represented by the requester, including how and to what extent such interest would be directly and adversely affected by the permit. 3) Specific references, where possible, to terms and conditions of the permit with suggested revisions. A public hearing may be held, including another comment period, if public response is significant, based on individual requests for a public hearing, and there are substantial, disputed issues relevant to the permit.

Contact for public comments, document requests and additional information: The public may review the draft permit and application at the DEQ-Northern Regional Office by appointment or may request electronic copies of the draft permit and fact sheet.

Name: Douglas Frasier
Address: DEQ-Northern Regional Office, 13901 Crown Court, Woodbridge, VA 22193
Phone: (703) 583-3873 Email: Douglas.Frasier@deq.virginia.gov
Fax: (703) 583-3821

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21 Announcements

21 Announcements

OBITUARY



Hanni Milton

Hanni Milton, a retired US Civil Service employee died peacefully in an Alexandria, Virginia, hospital on January 9, 2015. She was 92.

Known to her family as Tante (aunt) Hanni, she was born Hanni Kroschwitz in Wuppertal, Germany, on December 12, 1922. Mrs. Milton was a hard worker all of her life. She grew up during turbulent times in post-WWI Germany, and she was forced to leave school early in order to help support her family. During the Second World War she and her family lived in Berlin which suffered heavily from allied bombing attacks, in which they lost almost everything. In March of 1945, they barely escaped the attacking Soviet Army and moved to western Germany, Limburg, in Hessen, where they eventually settled. It is here that she met her future husband, Donald Milton, who worked for the US Government.

Mrs. Milton eventually moved to the US with her parents and her entire family was finally reunited in Alexandria in 1956. A naturalized American citizen, she worked for the US Civil Service at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, until her retirement. She and her older sister, Trude, took turns caring for their elderly parents.

Hanni was a loving and caring person who kept in touch not only with her extended American family, but also with her German cousins and friends, and she loved to entertain guests at her apartment. She will be greatly missed.

Mrs. Milton was preceded in death by her parents, Friedrich and Berta Kroschwitz, her husband Donald Milton, her sisters Trude and Erika and their husbands, and her niece Annette.

She is survived by her nephew Arnim Gerstenmeier and his wife Linda of Ft. Worth, Texas and her niece Kristina Ratches and her husband Jim, of Alexandria, Virginia and their families, as well as her German cousin, Rosi. Last November she was very excited about becoming a great-great-great-aunt.

A memorial service will be held on Tuesday, January 20, 2015 at 2 p.m. at Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home, 1500 W. Braddock Rd., Alexandria, VA 22302. Interment will be held at a later date in Ivy Hill Cemetery, Alexandria, VA. A guest register may be found at www.everlywheatley.com

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 12

northern edge of the Wal-Mart property, the easement is only for ingress and egress with no proviso for parking. Providing parking on the Fairchild property would be expensive and access at that location of the Fairchild property involves negotiating difficult terrain.

Given the SBCA's role in the demise of Kings Crossing town center, they should not be rewarded with a taxpayer-funded community park. Adverse actions must result in adverse consequences.

H. Jay Spiegel, Mount Vernon

Flexibility and Federal Budget

To the Editor:

Once again, I emerge from my comfortable lethargy to recommend to my fellow citizens that they not support a balanced budget amendment (BBA) to be adopted by the federal government as encouraged by Frank Medico ("Curb Federal Spending," Jan. 8, The Mount Vernon Gazette). Let me explain the reality. A BBA amendment assumes ideal economic conditions where there are no recessions, no hard times, no shortage of money. However, the capitalistic economy we glorify, has ups and downs. When that happens on the down side, revenue drops, employment declines, while poverty increases, along with increases in stabilizing programs like unemployment insurance, food stamps and Medicaid. These "automatic" stabilizers put money in the hands of consumers, which they then spend, production increases, and the economy begins to recover. A BBA would eliminate these stabilizers through spending cuts and tax increases (maybe), which would only worsen the economic situation. What helped pull us out the great depression we older folks may remember is putting money in the hands of people by providing employment through programs like the WPA, CCC, TVA, etc. which hired hundreds of thousands of people.

Let's also be clear. Generally, states only balance their operating budgets, and borrow to finance their capital budgets which pay for roads, schools, etc. It is also a false analysis to equate a family balancing its budget with that of the federal government. Most families can borrow money for a house or education for their children. Under the BBA, the federal government would not be allowed to make such worthwhile investments.

As far as children inheriting debt? Depends how the money has been spent that caused the debt in the first place. In the last administration, the debt increases were largely due to paying for tax cuts for the wealthy and two wars. If more money were spent in making higher education more affordable, roads and bridges safer and enough schools, such measures would go far in raising the quality of life for the next generation. Finally, when Congress considered a BBA in 1997, more than 1,000 economists, including 11 Nobel Prize winners, issued a joint statement: "We condemn the proposed 'balanced budget amendment' to the federal constitution..." Need I say more?

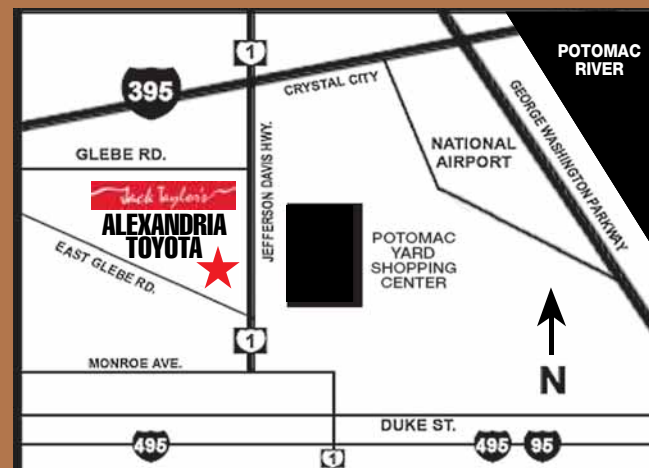
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LIFETIME GUARANTEE**

Mufflers • Exhaust Pipes • Shocks • Struts
Toyota mufflers, exhaust pipes, shocks, struts
and strut cartridges are guaranteed to the
original purchaser for the life of the vehicle
when installed by an authorized Toyota dealer.
See us for full details.



TOYOTA
Let's Go Places



TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE
BUY 3 TIRES AND GET 4TH FOR



\$1.00



& GET A 4 WHEEL ALIGNMENT FOR \$39.95

GOT TIRES? NO CHARGE ROAD HAZARD PROTECTION, TIRE WARRANTY, AND FREE COURTESY
MULTI-POINT INSPECTION. SEE SERVICE ADVISOR FOR DETAILS.
NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. OFFER EXPIRES 1/31/15. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL.

**PRICE
MATCH
GUARANTEE**
ON ANY
OEM TIRES

TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE
4 WHEEL ALIGNMENT



\$89.95

Your car's alignment suffers, and can cause uneven tire wear, steering problems and decreased fuel economy.

INCLUDES: Inspect suspension, ball joints, struts & shocks, tire condition and set tire pressure.

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**TRUE START
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INCLUDES BATTERY INSTALLATION

Includes: 64 month warranty, 24 month FREE replacement, 24 month FREE roadside assistance, 60 month prorated, PLUS we'll check all battery cables & connections.

Does not apply to hybrid batteries.

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\$119.95

Prepare your car's paint for the harsh winter road conditions. A full exterior buffing, paint sealant and wax, along with a vacuuming of the interior. Vans & SUVs add \$20.00.

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MILE MINOR FACTORY
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TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE
BRAKE SPECIAL

\$79.95

PADS

Includes: Install Genuine Toyota front brake pads, inspect front & rear rotors & drums, check tire condition and inspect all hardware. TCMC pads only.

MACHINE ROTORS AN ADDITIONAL \$199.95.

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TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE
DETAIL SPECIALS

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Wash & Vacuum

\$139.95

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Full premium detail

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& WIPER BLADES**

SOME MODELS HIGHER.
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TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE
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**WE WILL
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ANY LOCAL TOYOTA DEALERSHIP'S
CURRENT ADVERTISED SERVICE
SPECIALS**

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We will purge the tires of air and refill them with nitrogen.

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**EXTEND THE LIFE OF YOUR VEHICLE!
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POWER STEERING FLUSH

\$139.95

BRAKE FLUSH

\$139.95

FUEL INDUCTION FLUSH

\$139.95

FOR TRANSMISSION FLUSH, TYPE T OR WS FLUID ADD \$50.00

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