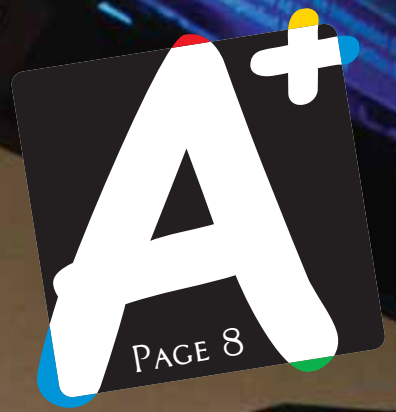




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CONNECTION

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Supervisors Approve Independent Police Auditor

NEWS, PAGE 3

With a unanimous vote on Tuesday Sept. 20, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved the creation of an independent police auditor office, following recommendations from the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission.

Feeding Mouths, Feeding Souls

NEWS, PAGE 4

Superintendent Garza Resigns Opinion

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Supervisors Approve Independent Police Auditor

Unanimous vote follows Ad Hoc Commission recommendations for more transparency and oversight of Fairfax County police.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

With a unanimous vote on Tuesday, Sept. 20, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved the creation of an independent police auditor office, following recommendations from the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission.

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock), chairman of the board's Public Safety Committee, said the proposal for auditor was true to the essence and "basic philosophical approach" of the commission in calling for an impartial civilian who would review police investigations as they're occurring and report directly to the Board of Supervisors.

"The auditor would be involved in monitoring and making recommendations in the course of the police investigations, a lot more efficient than waiting until the end," Cook said. "Police would receive real time comment back from the auditor's office to help strengthen those investigations."

Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova established the 32-member commission following public outcry over the August 2013 death of John Geer, 46. Geer was unarmed and standing in the doorway of his Springfield home when he was shot and killed by FCPD officer Adam Torres. The police and county refused to release information on the case for more than a year, and then after court orders.

Torres, who was fired in July 2015 and indicted by a grand jury for murder in August 2015, was the first Fairfax County Police officer in the history of the department to be charged in such a death. Torres entered a guilty plea to involuntary manslaughter, received credit for time served for his 12 month sentence and was released in June.

THE AD HOC COMMISSION and its five subcommittees met intensively beginning in March 2015, reporting to the Board of Supervisors in October, 2015, with 142 recommendations, including the recommendations to establish the Office of Independent Auditor.

"This has not been easy, that is an understatement," Bulova said. "It's the first time we've established a position such as this."

It is the first independent, civilian oversight of the Fairfax County Police.

The scope of the independent auditor's work will include reviewing all cases in which police use of force result in serious injury or death, Cook said. The auditor



Recent data released by Chief Roessler, front row - right, shows that 40 percent of Fairfax County Police use of force incidents involved African Americans while only 8 percent of county residents are African American. John Cook (R) offered this as an example of broader policy issues that the auditor could study.



With a unanimous vote on Tuesday Sept. 20, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved the creation of an independent police auditor office, following recommendations from the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission.

would also review any citizen complaint about police use of force even if it does not involve serious injury or death.

Cook said the auditor would issue an an-



Supervisor Pat Herrity (center) expressed concern that an independent auditor position would increase the police department's administrative workload. He proposed funding two additional positions in FCPD's internal affairs bureau immediately, but those positions will wait until 2018.

nual report, and that the auditor would also be available to engage in policy and practice analysis regarding use of force, as sug-

gested by the Board of Supervisors, County Executive or Chief of Police.

For example, the auditor could study and make recommendations concerning recent data released by Chief Edwin Roessler about demographics of police use of force, Cook said. There were 539 use-of-force incidents in 2015 and data show that 40 percent of those incidents involved African Americans while only 8 percent of county residents are African American.

Cook also pointed out that, unlike an ordinance or land use case, the board may make changes to the independent auditor position in the future.

"If we pass this," he said, "It would not be shocking at all that auditor could come back and recommend we look at a few adjustments" in the future."

Commission member and Use of Force subcommittee chair Phil Niedzielski-Eichner called today's action "a remarkable achievement for the commission's work." He acknowledged the vision of the auditor was for a position that would be independent, but not separate, from the police work.

"This gives the public a real feeling of comfort," said Randy Sayles of Oak Hill, a member of Use of Force subcommittee, looking forward to use of force investigations with the auditor on board, "of the integrity and transparency of the process."

Commission member Adrian Steel of McLean called the unanimous vote "quite affirming." He also appreciated the auditor being able to be involved in identifying trends and reviewing policy, again getting back to the disproportionate percentage of African Americans impacted by use of force incidents.

"The whole thought was for the auditor to become involved in picking up these types of things," he said.

Reston resident John Lovaas, an alternate on the commission for Nicholas Beltrante with the Virginia Citizens Coalition for Police Accountability, said he wasn't happy with the way he believed the supervisors deviated from the commission's version of the position.

"They eviscerated the independence of the independent auditor," Lovaas said, citing the auditor's dependence on cooperation from the police.

Other commission recommendations that have already been approved include the establishment of the Diversion First program providing treatment rather than jail for people in mental health crisis and more transparency in police communications.

THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE will discuss the creation of a Civilian Review Panel, a complementary oversight entity to the auditor as proposed by the Ad Hoc Commission, at its next meeting, scheduled for Oct. 25 at 1 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center.



Dozens of volunteers, both from the church and the community, manually measuring out and filling food packets of a fortified rice-soy meal to be delivered to a yet to be announced poverty-stricken city elsewhere in the world.



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

(Top right) Amy Upgren and her young son (bottom right) Max Luther of Burke measure food material into one of the Stop Hunger Now bags in the Burke Presbyterian Church sanctuary on Sept. 18.

Feeding Mouths, Feeding Souls

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

As Nancy Rosene of Fairfax screeched clear packing tape across the top of a cardboard box filled with dozens of meals worth of dried and dehydrated food, she was highly conscious of where she was and what she was doing.

On the other end of the sanctuary at Burke Presbyterian Church on Sunday, Sept. 18, dozens of volunteers, both from the church and the community, were manually measuring out and filling food packets of a fortified rice-soy meal to be delivered to a yet to be announced poverty-stricken city elsewhere in the world.

"I'm taking the effort of all of these people and putting it into this small box," Rosene said. "And thinking of where this box is going, what's waiting on the other end."

"From this little suburban place in Burke," she continued, "where sometimes life is a little too easy, maybe we can make it easier for just a small time for someone else."

Burke Presbyterian called the event "Food Truck Ruckus: Make Some Noise About World Hunger." True to the name, three food trucks were set up in the church parking lot, along with games for children and adults, a wacky photo booth, and then tents with information on some of the church's other food-related ministry.

For example, there was a collection being taken up for the church's Kibwezi partnership with an orphanage in Kenya.

Jeffrey Willard of Lorton is a member of the church's "Fun Team" committee that helped organize the event.

"It's all about supplying food to the hungry," he said. "We want to feed them, but feed ourselves too."

Carol Ann Cunningham is a community life elder with the Fun Team and coordinated the Ruckus. She said a major part of the afternoon was meant to be intergenerational.



(Top right) Amy Upgren and her young son (bottom right) Max Luther of Burke measure food material into one of the Stop Hunger Now bags in the Burke Presbyterian Church sanctuary on Sept. 18.

"We have people from ages two to 85," Cunningham said. "They're teaching and learning about service."

Amy Upgren and her young son Max Luther of Burke measured material into one of the bags together in the sanctuary.

"It feels good to make the food packets," Luther said. "I like to help hungry people so they won't starve."

The group providing all the materials is national non-profit Stop Hunger Now, which acts as an intermediary between churches,

schools and corporate groups of volunteers and then humanitarian organizations on the ground that make sure the meals get delivered and not resold or discarded.

The church pays all the costs to volunteer through Stop Hunger Now, who could just as well package all the food using an automated system in a warehouse.

"But the goal is for volunteers to do it themselves, be part of the process," said Joe Gautier, program manager with Stop Hunger Now. "Fifty percent of the job is awareness."

Volunteers pack 10,000 meals at Burke Presbyterian Church.



Burke Presbyterian Church co-pastor Jarrett McLaughlin (left) gets a wrap from Springfield resident Sabrina Maheu of Springfield and Springfield-based food truck Doug the Food Dude at the Food Truck Ruckus: Make Some Noise About World Hunger event held at the church on Sept. 18.

Every time the packaging group — which turned over with new volunteers every half hour, three times — reached another 1,000 meals, one volunteer got to take a turn banging a large gong.

On the day, the group packaged 10,000 meals.

"Church is all about doing what you can with the people you've got, when you can," Burke Presbyterian co-pastor Jarrett McLaughlin said. "It's as much about what you believe as what you do."

NEWS

Last Day at Franconia Station

Sunday, Sept. 18, was Master Technician Mike Macario's last day with Fairfax County Fire and Rescue after more than 39 years serving the residents of Fairfax County.

Many shift mates past and present stopped by Fire Station 5, Franconia, to wish Macario all the best in retirement.

Some interesting tidbits about Macario - according to Fairfax County Fire and Rescue press release:

- ❖ Years of Service: 8/1/77 - 9/18/16 (39+ years)

- ❖ 41st Recruit School
- ❖ Last assignment: Driver of Engine 5

- ❖ More time driving in reverse than most drivers have driven forward

- ❖ More time in the department than most in the department have been alive

- ❖ All around great guy

Colleagues' message: Thank you, Master Technician Mike



PHOTO COURTESY FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE

Master Technician Mike Macario retires after more than 39 years serving the residents of Fairfax County.

Macario for your many years of dedicated service to both the public we serve but also the members of this department. May your retirement be filled with great happiness and health.



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FAITH NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

The Church of the Good Shepherd, 9350 Braddock Rd., Burke, is offering day and evening English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes to serve members of the community who wish to improve their English skills. Class levels offered are based on enrollment needs. Fall 2016 registration takes place Sept. 7—8 and classes begin Sept. 20. For more information call the church office at 703-323-5400. Leave your name and contact information and someone will get back to you.

Fairfax Baptist Temple, at the corner of Fairfax County Parkway and Burke Lake Roads, holds a bible study fellowship at 9 a.m. Sundays followed by a 10 a.m. worship service. Nursery care and children's church also provided. 6401 Missionary Lane, Fairfax Station, 703-323-8100 or www.fbtministries.org.

Lord of Life Lutheran offers services at two locations, in Fairfax at 5114 Twinbrook Road and in Clifton at 13421 Twin Lakes Drive. Services in Fairfax are held on Saturdays at 5:30 p.m. and Sundays at 8:30 and 10 a.m. Services in Clifton are held on Sundays at 8:15 and 10:30 a.m. 703-323-9500 or www.Lordoflifeva.org.

Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton, offers Sunday worship services at 10 a.m. and Cup of Fellowship at 11 a.m. Nursery care is provided from 9:45-11:15 a.m. Christian education for all ages is at 9:45 a.m. 703-830-3175.

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OPINION

Epidemic Is Here, Recovery Is Possible

Prescription opioid and heroin epidemic awareness week is Sept. 18-24.

BY TISHA DEEGHAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FAIRFAX/FALLS CHURCH COMMUNITY SERVICES
BOARD

GUEST EDITORIAL

Opioid use disorder and addiction to heroin is a disease that is devastating families across the United States, and Fairfax County is not immune. Fairfax County police report that in 2015 there were 77 heroin overdoses in the county, 12 of which were fatal. As of May 2016, Fairfax County's Emergency Medical Services was reporting an average of 10.17 patient contacts per month that were suspected overdoses of heroin or other opioids.

In recognition of Prescription Opioid and Heroin Epidemic Awareness Week, and in collaboration with state and federal partners, the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB) joins the community in recognizing and remembering those lost due to opioid use disorder and in encouraging strength and courage for those who are seeking help.

The CSB is here to help; resources are avail-

able to treat opioid addiction, and recovery is possible. See www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/heroin-opiates/opioid-treatment-options.htm

Many people, including drug users themselves, have mistaken beliefs about drug addiction and recovery. These ideas stem in part from notions that continued drug use is voluntary and that a person's inability to overcome addiction stems solely from character flaws or a lack of willpower.

Substance abuse treatment comes in a variety of forms. For people who seek help for opioid addiction, treatment should start with a thorough assessment of their history of opioid use, prior treatment history, if any, and existence of any co-occurring mental illness. The treatment plan would be based on this assessment and could include medication-assisted treatment along with other services designed to support their recovery, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, education about addiction, engagement of family and friends, and building a recovery-based support system.

If you or someone you love needs help to

overcome drug dependence, call the CSB at 703-383-8500. CSB staff will help you find appropriate treatment and recovery resources. Anyone seeking help can also come to the Merrifield Center for a walk-in screening, with or without an appointment, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

You can help, too. Enroll in CSB's REVIVE! program, a free course that teaches non-medical personnel to administer the life-saving opioid-reversal medication naloxone. CSB staff has trained more than 640 people so far this year and classes are scheduled throughout the fall. Participants report that the training has saved lives. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/revive

Learn more about substance use prevention at these upcoming events, sponsored by CSB partners:

- ♦ Attend one of the Chris Atwood Foundation's presentations entitled "Addiction: The Taboo Subject," scheduled for Sept. 24, 9-11 a.m. and Oct. 3, 7-9 p.m. Hear personal stories of addiction and recovery and learn how to recognize and respond to substance misuse at Lord of Life Lutheran, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Clifton, VA 20124.

- ♦ Parents who want to be more involved in youth substance use prevention and education can attend Fairfax County's Unified Prevention Coalition's Sept. 26 "Taste of UPC" Fall Kick-Off event. See www.unifiedpreventioncoalition.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Opposing Meals Tax

To the Editor:

I am strongly advocating against the proposed meal tax to be on the Fairfax County ballot Nov. 8. If approved, an additional 4-percent tax would be added to every prepared-food and restaurant meal across the county, in addition to the existing 6-percent sales tax.

Proponents claim that most of the tax burden will be carried by visitors to the county. Nothing could be further from the truth. The tax will unfairly impact those who can least afford to pay it such as the most vulnerable segments of our society including low-income and fixed-income residents (senior citizens, young people, students, single moms and busy families where both parents work).

The proponents have indicated that a portion of the additional tax revenue is designated for Fairfax County Public Schools. This is just more of the usual smoke and mirror deception from the Fairfax County School Board and the Board of Supervisors as they have avoided providing any specifics as to where and how this estimated \$100 million in new tax revenue will be spent. Does anyone tracking this issue really wonder why this is the case?

Plain and simple the proposed meals tax is a regressive sales tax

that hits low- and middle-income working individuals and families the hardest, targeting a single industry. With 40,000 food workers in Fairfax County alone, this will impact the small, family restaurants much harder than the large chains.

Informed voters should oppose the meals tax and demand more accountability from those entrusted with billions in tax revenue annually.

Thomas Bognanno
Springfield

Deceptive Question

To the Editor:

I decided to study the Fairfax County Meals Tax Referendum and was shocked to see how biased the question is worded.

The ballot question begins: "For the purpose of reducing dependence on real estate taxes..." This is bound to cause confusion. Many voters will read that phrase to mean if they vote for the meals tax, real estate taxes will be reduced.

This is a crafty deception by the Board of Supervisors.

The truth is that if the Meals Tax passes, it will lessen the proportion of tax revenue that comes from property taxes because you have more tax revenue coming from somewhere else — the Meals Tax. That's how it allegedly less-

ens the "dependence."

If the Board wanted to be transparent, they'd write the question to say: "For the purpose of establishing a new tax on top of all the other taxes you already pay..." Further, they could disclose that they've raised property taxes by 26 percent over the last four years, and that the 4 percent Meals Tax would come on top of the state's 6 percent sales tax for a whopping 10 percent total tax. Don't fall for the deception. Vote against the Meals Tax this November.

Billy Valentine
Fairfax

Meals Tax: Vote 'No'

To the Editor:

I write today to ask for support for working families in Fairfax County by recommending against the proposed increase in the Meal Tax. This tax increase will impact the hard working parents in the Fairfax County who often eat out to spend quality time with their children and will also greatly impact the low income residents in our county.

Please let your readers across the county know to vote against this additional tax on Nov. 8.

Renate Eschmann
Fairfax

Veterans ID Card: Long Overdue

To the Editor:

Our veterans have sacrificed much to protect us. It is only fitting that we help protect them as best we can on the home front. That is why I write today about a bill that was signed into law and was co-sponsored in the House by Congresswoman Barbara Comstock: the Veterans ID Card Act. This legislation allows for a universal ID card that proves military service, allowing veterans easier access to the services and resources they need after leaving the military. We owe them that much.

One of the most important goals of the bill is a reduction in identity theft for veterans. Our vets will no longer have to carry around multiple documents and forms of identification to verify their veteran status which can often subject those documents to duplication, misplacement or theft. Identity theft is a problem all too many of us face these days, but before this legislation our veterans were placed unnecessarily at higher risk.

My father was a veteran, of World War II and of Korea. His

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 15

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News

Roadside Protest for McKenna and Martinez

The Northern Virginia chapter of the group Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) organized a demonstration at 4 p.m. on Sept. 14 along Lee Highway in Fairfax, calling for justice for Natasha McKenna and Giovanni, or Jovany, Martinez.

McKenna died after being tasered several times while in custody of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office in Feb. 2015.

Martinez, whose first name Fairfax County Police write as "Jovany," died after being shot by MDS Patrick McPartlin the Sheriff's Deputy last month.

McPartlin was one member of the five-man SERT team that attempted to transport and ended up forcefully restraining McKenna before she experienced a health crisis.

He was assigned to duty at the hospital and responded to a call for backup from Inova security. Martinez had already attacked guards and, FCPD said, was advancing on McPartlin with a sign post raised in the air when the deputy shot him several times.

The protest, which occurred during rush



PHOTO COURTESY OF SURJ NORTHERN VIRGINIA
The Northern Virginia chapter of the group Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) organized a demonstration at 4 p.m. on Sept. 14 along Lee Highway in Fairfax.

hour at where Highways 29 and 50 meet in Fairfax, also called for the resignation of Sheriff Stacey Kincaid.

—TIM PETERSON

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Homework Overload

Some educators say less can be more, stress balance when it comes to homework.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Paula DeMarco dreads one time of day the most: weekday evenings at 5:30. It's the time she has set aside for her children begin their homework. That means no screen time, music or other distractions.

"When my son entered fifth grade last year it was like running into a brick wall," she said. "We were in shock by how much more homework he had than when he was in the lower grades. It was stressful and there were a lot of tears shed — both mine and his."

For many parents and students, homework can be anxiety inducing, especially when there's a lot of it, when it's intense, when there's pressure to succeed and when it's used as a measure of accomplishment.

In fact, a study published in the Journal of Experimental Education in 2014 found that students in high-achieving communities who spend excessive amounts of time on homework are more prone to more stress, physical health problems and a lack of balance than students who have moderate amounts of homework. Researchers found that students felt obligated to choose homework over other interests. As a result, they didn't know how to find balance in their lives.

Homework in a competitive environment that doesn't leave time for hobbies or sports can also put a strain on family relationships.

"Homework becomes stressful because parents take on the role of homework police," said Ann Dolin, president, Educational Connections Tutoring in Fairfax and Bethesda. "It's a role they never envisioned and they don't want, but before they know it, their relationships with their children become defined by academics."

Dolin points to the "Ten-Minute Homework Rule," guidelines approved by the National Education Association, which recommend 10 minutes of homework per grade level. A first grade student, for example, would have 10 minutes of homework each night, while a fourth grade student would have 40. Any more than this would be counterproductive.

"I have known first graders who've had an hour or and hour-and-a-half of homework," said Dolin. "That is unrealistic."

Locally, Margaret Andreadis, lower school principal at Bullis



PHOTO COURTESY OF BULLIS SCHOOL

Faculty and staff at the Bullis School have restructured the way they assign homework to foster a feeling of success, confidence and independence.

School in Potomac, Md., says administrators and teachers at her school have restructured the way they assign homework to focus on quality over quantity.

"We've scaled back to emphasize our purpose for homework: teaching students goal setting and time management," she said. "We're not using homework as busy work. Our philosophy has been to create a balance between academics, life at home with family and activities like sports."

Students at Bullis often have choices over their homework assignments, and their tasks are designed to foster a feeling of success, confidence and independence.

"The emphasis is on small successes. We want students to feel good about themselves," said Andreadis. "If a parent is having to interact with their child over homework, it's not an independent assignment."

This homework structure can actually create balance in the lives of students, she said. "I think the stress comes from kids wanting to get things perfect and parents wanting their children to be successful," said Andreadis. "Kids need time that is unscheduled so that they can be creative, find new passions and be kids."

Researchers say unstructured play, reading, and other child-initiated activities have as many benefits for children as academics. "Children learn conflict management skills, develop imagination and creativity, self-regulation of time and interest, and independence," said Shannon N. Davis, associate professor of sociology at George Mason University in Fairfax. "Research has shown that children who are given time to play

in an unstructured manner, read or otherwise determine how they spend their time are much less likely to say, 'I'm bored' when they have free time. They know how to entertain themselves rather than needing an adult to structure their time for them."

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and then allow them to experience the consequences."

Parents' roles should be setting students up for success, recommends Andreadis: "Giving them a quiet place to study, checking in with them, asking, 'What's your plan for homework tonight?'"

Helping the child make the decision but letting the child actually make it. Be hands off as much as possible."

Some educators acknowledge that a relaxed approach might push parents, particularly those in high-achieving communities, outside their comfort

zones. "This involves some risk taking on the part of us as parents and educators, but I think the benefits are worth it," said Aiken. "We need to pair that with a lot of support and discussion about why academic achievement matters, specifically that we are learning things in order to make connections and ask questions about the world around us."



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CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ or call 703-778-9416. The deadline is the Friday prior to the next paper's publication at noon. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

ONGOING

Batting Cage Occoquan Regional Park 9751 Ox Road Lorton. Open through Oct. 30 Occoquan offers a baseball/softball batting cage, for hitters of all levels. Pitching machines offer other pitches like curveballs. Cost: 14 balls \$1.50 Team Rentals Per Cage: 30 min. \$18 60 min. \$34 <https://www.novaparks.com/parks/occoquan-regional-park/things-to-do/batting-cage>

Kayak Rental Occoquan Regional Park 9 - 6 p.m. daily through Sept. 30 This park offers hourly and daily kayak rentals for those interested in exploring the river. Kayaks are launched from shore and are available in one or two seat configurations.

Farmers Market & Food Trucks: 3-7 p.m. Thursdays through Oct. 27 at the Fairfax County Government Center front parking lot.

Rock the Block! 6:30 p.m. Every fourth Friday through Oct. 28. Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Concert series. Food is available for sale. Bring chairs and or blankets to sit on. Kids - wear swim suits and bring towels. Enjoy the new spray pad. No Pets allowed except service animals. fairfaxva.gov.

The Farmer's Market at Springfield Town Center. May 7-Nov. 19, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Through November. Corner of Spring Mall and Loisdale roads, Springfield. Enjoy fresh baked goods, produce, vegetables & fruits, meats & cheeses, and a host of other vendors. springfieldtowncenter.com.

Fairfax Rotary Club Meeting. 12:15-1:30 p.m. Mondays. American Legion, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. Meetings with luncheon and program. fairfaxrotary.org.

Plant Clinic. 9 a.m.-noon. Sundays Sept. 30 Lorton Farmers Market, 8990 Lorton Station Blvd., Lorton. Conducted by Master Gardeners. Answer gardening question, identify plants and insects, soil tests, etc. fairfaxgardening.org.

Carolina Shag. Wednesdays. 6:30-10 p.m. Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m. No partners needed. Dinner menu. \$8. Under 21 free. nvshag.org.

FUN-Exercise. Thursdays, noon-12:50 p.m. Grace Presbyterian Church Family Room, 7434 Bath St., Springfield. Inova certified exercise instructor leads a moderate level exercise class with music and current events conversation. Muscle, Balance, Strength Training using stretch bands and weights both standing and seated exercises. Instructor donation is \$5. moorefitt@yahoo.com or 703-499-6133.

EXERCISE PROGRAM Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 am year-round at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Rd. Fairfax. The exercises are for strength, balance and maintaining limberness. Contact SCFB office at 703-426-2824 for more information.

Cafe Ivrit (Hebrew Cafe). Wednesdays. 8:15-9:15 a.m. Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Shalom (hello) Did you always want to converse in Hebrew? Join Na'ama each week for conversational Hebrew. You will learn and practice Hebrew in a fun and interactive way while learning more about Israel. Free, however we



Laura Ellen Scott, author of "The Juliet"



J.K. Daniels, author of "The Wedding Pulls"

'Fall for the Book' Returns to Mason, Area

"Fall for the Book" annual festival will be held at George Mason University's Fairfax Campus, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, and venues throughout the region Sept. 25-30, 2016. Tickets are free except for several special events. For detailed information about the schedule and various venues visit www.fallforthebook.org/ or call 703-993-3986. Note: there is a "Fall for the Book" app at: <http://fallforthebook.org/2014/08/04/festival-launches-smartphone-app/>



Art Taylor, moderator, "Fall for the Book"



Garrett Peck author of "Walt Whitman in Washington, D.C. The Civil War and America's Great Poet"

ask that you try to attend regularly. RSVP Naama.Gold@jccnv.org.

Smoke Free Bingo (with breaks for smoking friends). 7 p.m. Every Friday. Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Free coffee, entertaining callers, \$1,000 jackpot. www.fairfaxvd.com. 703-273-3638.

English Conversation Groups weekly at George Mason, Burke Centre, and Lorton Libraries Practice and improve your English. Day and start times vary. Visit: <https://va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/eventcalendar.asp>

First Sunday Jazz Brunch 11 - 2 p.m. Recurring monthly on the 1st Sunday at **Bazin's on Church** 111 Church St N.W., Vienna. Enjoy brunch accompanied by the soft jazz sounds of Virginia Music Adventure. Visit: <http://www.fxva.com/listing/bazins-on-church/1686/>

Stories From Strawberry Park 10 - 11 a.m. Tuesdays in **Mosaic - Strawberry Park** 2910 District Avenue, Fairfax. Enjoy a live interactive performance each week taught by a group of unique storytellers. For ages 10 and under. Held outside in Strawberry Park. In inclement weather and October through April, storytime will be held in Angelika Film Center. Recurring weekly on Tuesday. Visit: <http://www.fxva.com/listing/mosaic-district/2326/>

Singers wanted for the Celebration Singers. A women's show choir performing at various community sites in Northern Virginia. Do you love to sing? Make new friends? Bring joy to others through music? Come join us. Practice is held 10:30 am - 2:30 pm, starting again in September on Wednesdays in Burke. Contact: Barb Male, 703-250-5294, email barbmale@yahoo.com or Gayle Parsons, 703-644-4485, email gparsons3@cox.net.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 23

Fall Used Book Sale 10 - 5 p.m. Fairfax Regional Library 10360 North St. Thousands of gently read books in all categories. Big selection of DVDs, CDs, and audiobooks. 703-644-4870

Motivation Meltdown Family Workshop 10 - 11:30 a.m. 2334 Gallows Road Dunn Loring, VA Entrance 1 - Room 100. Start the school year off right with great strategies to help prevent motivation meltdowns at home and in school! Join Ann Dolin, M.Ed., education expert and award winning author for this insightful workshop. Cost: Free. www.fcps.edu/dss/osp/prc/index.shtml or 703-204-3941.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 24

Junior/Parent Tournament. 8 a.m. Burke Lake Golf Course, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Teams of 2 players compete in an 18-hole scramble format. \$65. Roberta.Korzen@fairfaxcounty.gov.

BIKES FOR THE WORLD 9 - 12 p.m. Saint Mary of Sorrows Church, 5222 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. Bring your usable/repairable bikes and spare parts to the Farrell Hall parking lot for shipment to poverty stricken areas of the world. Donations to offset shipping costs gratefully accepted. Make checks payable to Saint Mary of Sorrows Church. Contact: Cathy at 703- 307-5512, cat.gaiser@gmail.com

The Kids Ultimate Fitness Challenge 10 - 6 p.m. George Mason University - 4400 University Dr. Fairfax. Kids Ultimate Fitness Challenge is the nation's largest mobile fitness event travelling from coast-to-coast dedicated to helping keep kids healthy and active. Kids of all ages will get the opportunity to participate in a time-based obstacle course. Visit: <http://allstaractive.com/video.html>

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR 2016

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

SEPTEMBER

9/28/2016.....Connection Families: Fall Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment

OCTOBER

10/5/2016.....Wellbeing Senior Living Pullout

10/12/2016.....HomeLifeStyle

10/19/2016.....A+ Camps & Schools

10/26/2016.....Connection Families

10/26/2016.....Election Preview

Halloween is October 31

NOVEMBER

11/2/2016.....Wellbeing

11/9/2016.....HomeLifeStyle

11/16/2016.....A+ Camps & Schools

11/16/2016.....Holiday Entertainment & Gift Guide I

11/23/2016.....Connection Families: Celebrations & Gratitude

Thanksgiving is November 24

11/30/2016.....Holiday Gift Ideas

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NEWS

Springfield Boy Scout Builds Trail on Quantico Base

Springfield Boy Scout Aeris Taylor, a 17-year-old senior at DeMatha High School in Hyattsville, Md. built a new walking/running trail on Marine Corps Base Quantico, which was named the "Semper Progredi" (translating to "Always Forward"). It was his Eagle Scout project. The Trail Naming Ceremony was held outside the Marine Corps Marathon (MCM) headquarters building at Fowler Hall on Wednesday, Sept. 14.

Taylor belongs to Springfield Troop 1145.

The Semper Progredi Trail is located behind Fowler Hall.

The trail is a loop that is .35 of a mile in distance with fresh wood chips and a pedestrian bridge made of repurposed materials. Benches have also been placed along the trail within its serene setting.

Aeris also enlisted about 14 Boy Scouts, ages 12-17, from his Springfield Troop to assist him in the project. All together, they spent about 20 hours building the new trail.

The trail will serve the Marines and civilians who work on Quantico and also visitors and the staff of the MCM. It was a community service project that includes environmental awareness and historical significance as many of the trees have been identified and



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

From left, in the ribbon cutting ceremony: Marine Corps Marathon (MCM) staff member Amy Sullivan; Col. Joseph M. Murray, Commander MCINCR-MCB Quantico; Boy Scout Aeris Taylor; Sgt. Maj. Charles R. Williams, Marine Corps Base Quantico and Rick Nealis, Marine Corps Marathon Director.

labeled throughout the new trail (by Quantico's Forestry Branch), and also lends permanence to the Marine Corps Base.

Springfield's Zeponic Farms to Receive National Recognition for Outstanding Green Business

Zeponic Farms has been chosen as a recipient for national recognition from The SCORE Foundation. SCORE, mentors to America's small business, serves over 350,000 clients annually. They honored their most successful clients at The SCORE Foundation's annual award ceremony celebrating excellence on Thursday, Sept. 15 in Washington, D.C. This Springfield business will be honored for demonstrating "unique vision, innovation and achievement."

Outstanding Green Business-Zeponic Farms LLC, Springfield (sponsor - Kimco Realty) provides local, fresh, highly nutritious produce using the latest in hydroponic technology

SCORE CEO Ken Yancey said, "SCORE is proud to celebrate the accomplishments of its outstanding small business clients, as well as the individuals and organizations that support entrepreneurship nationwide. Through their courage and determination to make their dreams a reality, these small business owners are investing in their own bright futures, and profoundly impacting our nation and its economy."

David R. Bobbitt, President of the SCORE Founda-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Zeponic Farms Founder Zach Zepf (right) with SCORE mentor Len Johnson.

tion, said, "This year's SCORE Award winners and American Small Business Championship finalists epitomize the positive impact of the 55,000 new businesses that SCORE mentors help to create each year."

You can read more at: <https://www.score.org/content/celebrating-best-small-business>

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FCPS Superintendent Garza Resigns

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Public Schools superintendent Dr. Karen Garza is resigning, just months after the FCPS board renewed her contract through June 30, 2020.

Garza informed the board in the afternoon on Sept. 19 that her resignation would take effect on or before Dec. 16.

The first woman superintendent of FCPS said she's accepted the position of president and chief executive officer of Columbus, Ohio-based Battelle for Kids, a not-for-profit education organization.

"I am so grateful for the opportunity to have served this world class school system since June 2013," Garza said in a letter to the school system. "It has been an honor and privilege to have worked with the dedicated and professional staff who make FCPS the finest school system in the country."

"I extend to you my deepest gratitude for your tremendous support," Garza continued. "I am so proud to have been a part of this outstanding system and this great community. I wish Fairfax County Public Schools much continued success in the coming years."

GARZA INFORMED the full board in a closed session following their work session on Monday. Providence District representative Dalia Palchik said there was shock, gasping and crying among the members.

"We feared she would be taken away, but hoped it wouldn't be so soon," Palchik said.

From parents and teachers she's talked to and seen react on her Facebook feed, Palchik summarized "people are devastated."

"This is the best time for us to have stability," she continued. "Teachers are just concerned. She's fought so much for the budget, their salaries. We want to make sure we continue on the track."

Karen Corbett Sanders, Mount Vernon District representative to the School Board, said, "I am appreciative of the focus that Dr. Garza has brought to the needs of the schools in Mt. Vernon and her commitment to ensuring that FCPS attracts and retains educational leaders that inspire all of our teachers to create learning environments



FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF FCPS

Karen Garza

enabling each of our students to achieve their potential. I wish her well and am confident she will continue to inspire educational leaders in her new role at Battelle."

Kevin Hickerson is president of the Fairfax Education Association, representing teachers, custodians, bus drivers and support staff. He said of the teachers he's talked with and seen react on Facebook, reaction to her resignation has been "overwhelming positive" and that she's definitely going to be missed.

"She put a lot of chips into the middle," Hickerson said, "with a lot of help from the community and organizations like ourselves we got it done. It will be really tough to replace her and her leadership."

Precious Crabtree teaches K-12 art at Deer

"We feared she would be taken away, but hoped it wouldn't be so soon."

— Providence District representative
Dalia Palchik

Park Elementary School in Centreville. She's been a teacher for 21 years and with Fairfax County for 16.

"I couldn't wrap my brain around this was going to happen," she said, on hearing her phone ring with the news while she was shopping for groceries.

"I've had several superintendents in the systems that I've worked. Dr. Garza was different. She was an educator. You could tell from the moment you met her, she was very personable, you could tell she cared deeply. This is really a big loss for our school system."

Crabtree also said she was grateful for the way Garza tackled the budget with the Board of Supervisors.

"[Former superintendent] Dr. Dale had very good intentions but never stood up for us when it came to the supervisors," she said. "I never saw him fight for us the way Dr. Garza did. That's courage."

School Board chair Sandy Evans sent out a letter in reaction praising Garza as "a transformational leader who has had a tremendous impact on our schools, families and most importantly the children of Fairfax County."

Evans highlighted Garza's "vision, candor and grace" in successfully implementing later high school start times, full-day Mondays for elementary schools and reducing elementary school class sizes during her tenure.

"A tireless advocate for teachers, she navigated one of the most challenging budget environments in recent memory, and achieved the largest investment in FCPS teacher compensation in a decade," Evans said.

"Under her leadership, FCPS has embarked on a path that will transform our schools in positive ways that benefit all children, our employees, and our community. The School Board is committed to maintaining this path as we find new leadership."

AN INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT will be named soon by the School Board, Evans said. They'll also go over details of a search process for Garza's replacement in the next several weeks.

"For a county this size, it's going to attract very strong candidates," said Hickerson. "I don't have any worries in a sense we'll find someone good, I just don't know how they'll compare to Dr. Garza."

Palchik likened Dr. Garza to Mary Poppins. "She's come in and moved us in the right direction," Palchik said. "Around the table, all of us, we're just in awe of who she is, how high she's raised the bar for our system."

Meals Tax Forum to Be Held Sept. 29

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA) will sponsor a Meals Tax Forum at the auditorium of Luther Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Road, Falls Church, on Sept. 29 at 7 p.m. The moderated forum will feature panelists on both sides of the issue. The panel will also take written questions from the audience. Questions may also be submitted in advance by writing to league@lwv-fairfax.org.

"Our League's mission is to educate

voters on critical issues in our county, such as the Meals Tax, and to get out the vote," says Wendy Fox-Grage, the League co-president. During this year's election season, LWVFA is sponsoring many voter drives throughout the county to register voters and inform them about what's on the ballot.

On the ballot, Fairfax County voters will choose whether to levy a meals' tax. State law authorizes counties, cities, and towns to levy a tax on prepared food

and beverages, commonly called a "meals tax," subject to certain restrictions. Most counties, including Fairfax County, may levy a meals tax only if the voters approve the tax by referendum.

If approved, the revenues generated will be dedicated to the following purposes:

- ❖ 70 percent of the net revenues to Fairfax County Public Schools.

- ❖ 30 percent of the net revenues to County services, capital improvements and property tax relief.

What is a Meals Tax? A meals tax is a tax on all ready-to-eat prepared food and bev-

erages at restaurants, as well as grocery stores, convenience stores and delicatessens. It would not apply to groceries nor to vending machines. It does, however, include ready-to-eat foods, such as food from the deli counter or salad bar at a supermarket/grocery store. It does include alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages served with a meal. It does apply to prepared foods served at food trucks.

For more about what's on the ballot, visit <http://www.lwv-fairfax.org/Ballot2016.html>.

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AREA ROUNDUPS

Police Investigating Graffiti at Robinson

On Friday, Sept. 16, Robinson Secondary School staff reported graffiti on the side of a trailer to Fairfax County Police.

The report came the same day Robinson had an evening varsity football game scheduled against Lake Braddock Secondary School.

"The graffiti was generally vulgar and racist in nature and has been eradicated," police spokesperson Don Gotthardt said in an email.

Gotthardt said one juvenile suspect was identified by patrol from the West Springfield District station and "counseled," but not technically arrested. He didn't comment on whether or where the individual is a student.

Police continue to investigate the incident and no charges have been filed.

—TIM PETERSON

BULLETIN BOARD

Send notes to the Connection at connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ or call 703-778-9416. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 29

Domestic Violence Response Workshop 8 - 1 p.m. 9301 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Topic: "First Steps for Clergy & Faith Leaders." Please join us to learn how to recognize domestic violence, understand challenges, and identify and access victim resources. This workshop will be presented by Fairfax County's Department of Neighborhood and Community Services and the FCIA Interfaith Domestic Violence Prevention Committee. Register at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hocode/ereg/registration.aspx?groupid=26 or call 703-324-3453

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

veterans' benefits were important to him and to my mother. And I have to report, there were on occasion problems with arranging for the benefits. The problems eventually were resolved, but through a lot of trouble and hassle. This ID Card can help make access to earned benefits easier. This ID Card is especially important to veterans because they are sometimes denied benefits because carrying around complete military records and paperwork is no simple task. This law streamlines the process of receiving what our honorable veterans have earned.

This veteran ID card is long overdue. The benefits rightfully provided to veterans are numerous, but unfortunately many have a difficult time getting access to them. This card streamlines these processes, reducing the hassle and difficulties many veterans face in their daily lives. Congresswoman Comstock's co-sponsorship of this legislation is yet another example of our results oriented Congresswoman doing her job, as was her support of the National Defense Authorization Act. These common sense solutions are proof that Barbara Comstock works for us.

Wayne Abernathy
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21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 55-33, 50-35 and 50-36 of the Code of the City of Fairfax, the City of Fairfax Police Department will be disposing of the below listed unclaimed property, by public auction conducted by an independent auction service, converted to department use or generally disposed of. Any person who feels they have a legal claim, with reasonable proof of ownership, should contact MPO Lynn Coulter of the City of Fairfax Police Department at 703-385-7829 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. weekdays until close of business Friday, October 21, 2016.

Below is a summary list of all items. For a complete list, please go to the City of Fairfax website:
<http://www.fairfaxva.gov/unclaimedproperty>

36 - Assorted Cell Phones

8 - Assorted Electronics

23 - Miscellaneous items

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21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

TAX NOTICE CITY OF FAIRFAX

PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS ARE DUE

Real Estate tax bills have been mailed and are due
October 5, 2016

LATE PAYMENT PENALTY

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October 5, 2016

Taxes may be paid in person Monday – Friday
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Treasurer's Office, Room 234, City Hall

IMPORTANT

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