



# Fairfax CONNECTION

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**HOLIDAY  
ENTERTAINMENT**

Dancing with wreaths in Encore's Christmas show are (from left) Jessy Dawson, Jenna Frisby and Claire Griesse. Musical extravaganza, 'Christmas Undercover,' takes the stage Dec. 9-18 at NOVA's Annandale campus.



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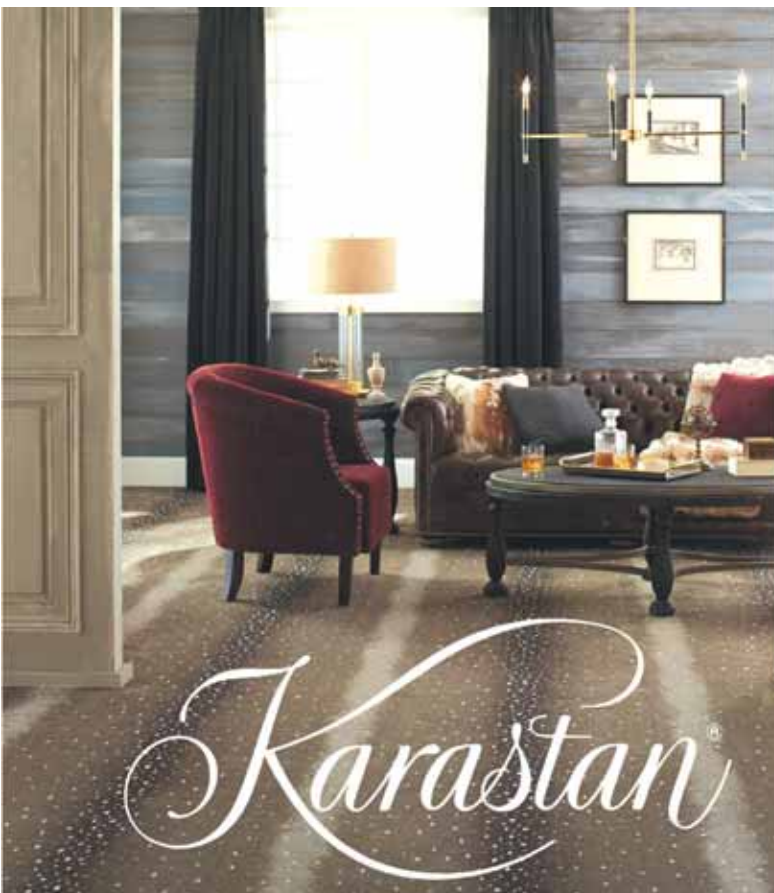
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# Concerts, Plays, Santa and S'mores

City of Fairfax ushers in the holiday season.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**C**hristmas in the City of Fairfax is always special. And a full slate of activities from Dec. 3-19 is sure to make holiday spirits bright.

## Plays and Bazaar

❖The FX Players of Fairfax High present the musical, "Avenue Q," Dec. 1-4. This PG-13 show is about a college grad and his new friends as they struggle to find jobs, dates and their purpose in life. Filled with puppets and humor, it takes the stage at the high school Thursday-Friday, Dec. 1-2, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 3, at 2 and 7 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 4, at 2 p.m. For tickets, go to [www.fxplayers.org](http://www.fxplayers.org) or email [fairfaxhstheatre@gmail.com](mailto:fairfaxhstheatre@gmail.com).

❖From Dec. 1-4, journey to the magical world of Narnia via the City of Fairfax Theatre Co.'s production of "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe." It'll be presented at Truro Anglican Church, 10520 Main St. For show times and to buy tickets, go to <http://www.fairfaxcitytheatre.org/the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe.html>.

❖A Norwegian Festival and Bazaar will be held at Christ Lutheran Church, 3810 Meredith Drive. It runs Friday, Dec. 2, from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; and Saturday, Dec. 3, from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., and features a café, cooking and craft demonstrations, Nordic sweaters, imported food, gifts, books and live music.

❖From Dec. 2 - 18, the Hub Theatre will present the love story/concert, "The MAGI," by Helen Murray Pafumi, with music by Eli Pafumi. Performances are at the New School of Northern Virginia, 9431 Silver King Court, and the story explores the sacrifices people make for those they cherish. For more information, go to [www.thehubtheatre.org](http://www.thehubtheatre.org).

## Dec. 3, Lights and Carols

The official, City of Fairfax celebration, the annual Festival of Lights and Carols, is set for Saturday, Dec. 3. There will be a visit from Santa on location, holiday music, tasty treats and the lighting of the City's official Christmas tree. This event is sponsored by the Fairfax's Department of Parks and Recreation.

❖From 8 - 11 a.m., the firefighters of Station 3 at 4081 University Drive will hold a pancake breakfast with Santa. Cost is \$5, adults; \$3, children 3 - 12; free, ages 3 and under. Proceeds benefit the Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department.

❖In addition, children ages 10 and under may enjoy lunch with Santa at Old Town



The Fairfax Choral Society Lyric Choir sings Christmas carols last December at Old Town Square.



Elf Parker Stephens, a Fairfax High student, poses with Annika Shendrikar at the 2015 lunch with Santa.

Hall, 3999 University Drive. Two seatings, 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., will be offered. Tickets (\$6/child) are available at the Parks and Recreation office at City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St.; the Green Acres Center, 4401 Sideburn Road; the Sherwood Community

Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy., or online. (Limit 10 tickets/person).

Pre-registration is required. Children 1 and under are free, but must still be registered; parents do not need to purchase tickets. Everyone's welcome – both Fairfax City

residents and non-Fairfax City residents.

Tickets for the 11:30 a.m. seating may be purchased at

[https://apm.activecommunities.com/fairfaxcityrecdept/Activity\\_Search/9853](https://apm.activecommunities.com/fairfaxcityrecdept/Activity_Search/9853).

For tickets for the 12:30 p.m. seating, go to [https://apm.activecommunities.com/fairfaxcityrecdept/Activity\\_Search/9854](https://apm.activecommunities.com/fairfaxcityrecdept/Activity_Search/9854).

❖From 3 - 5 p.m., the Lanier Middle School band, chorus and orchestra will perform in Old Town Hall.

❖Holiday festivities at Old Town Square, at the corner of University Drive and North Street, will run from noon - 7 p.m. They include live Christmas music, s'mores, hot cider, a petting zoo and a giant slide. Visits with Santa are from 3-5 p.m. Caroling and the lighting of the Christmas tree there are set for 5:30 p.m., culminating in the arrival of Santa Claus via the City of Fairfax Fire Department.

❖Old Town Square entertainment schedule: Noon, Daniels Run Elementary Singers; 1 p.m., Fairfax United Methodist Children's Choirs; 1:30 p.m., Girl Scout Service Unit 55-6; 2 p.m., Vienna-Falls Chorus; 3 p.m., Mantua Music Makers; 4 p.m., Patriot Pitches from George Mason; 5 p.m., GMU's Mason Some Noise; and 5:30 p.m., Caroling with the Jubil-Aires.

Throughout the holiday season, Old Town Square will be transformed into a winter wonderland.

❖Also on Dec. 3, from 6-7 p.m., the Ratcliffe-Allison House at 10386 Main St., will offer free, candlelight tours of the 1812 and 1927 sections of this house. Call 703-385-8414.

## Sunday, Dec. 4, Events

❖On Sunday, Dec. 4, from noon - 4 p.m., is Christmas in Camp. Visitors will learn about Civil War Camp life and holiday customs with Company D, 17th Virginia Infantry, the "Fairfax Rifles." It'll be at the Civil War Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Hwy. There'll be Victorian crafts, music and camp drills. For C.S.A. group/Scout reservations, call 703-591-6728.

❖At 3 and 5 p.m., Mason Opera presents a Christmas opera for the whole family, "Amahl and the Night Visitors," at Old Town Hall. A young, crippled boy encounters the Three Kings on their way to Bethlehem. Tickets are \$12, \$8 and \$5 via [www.cfa.gmu.edu](http://www.cfa.gmu.edu).

❖At 4 p.m., Lanier Middle School, 3801 Jermentown Road, will host "Home for the Holidays," a music program of seasonal favorites presented by the Main Street Community Band. Bring a nonperishable food item for Food for Others to help Northern Virginia families in need. Visit [fairfaxband.org](http://fairfaxband.org) for more information.

Tickets are free, but reserve them early for this perennial, capacity-crowd event. Mail ticket requests to The MSCB Holiday Concert Tickets, P.O. Box 1306, Fairfax, VA  
SEE HOLIDAYS, PAGE 7



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PHOTO BY MARTHA E. POWERS

**OLLI's Chief Eyeglass Inspector, Oscar Powers, reviews the mountain of eyeglasses donated by OLLI-Mason members.**

## Changing Lives – One Pair of Eyeglasses at a Time

**R**ecently, members of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at George Mason University took advantage of the opportunity to donate unwanted eyeglasses in honor of World Vision Day (Oct. 13). Over the course of a few weeks, OLLI members collected 186 pairs of glasses, which were donated to the Lions Club of Fairfax. As a result, some 186 people – most in other countries – will be able to see the world more clearly.

The Lions Clubs' Recycle for Sight program places eyeglass collection boxes in many locations, including local libraries. Thanks to their efforts, they're changing lives, one pair of glasses at a time. [http://](http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/how-we-serve/health/sight/eyeglass-recycling.php)

[www.lionsclubs.org/EN/how-we-serve/health/sight/eyeglass-recycling.php](http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/how-we-serve/health/sight/eyeglass-recycling.php) The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at George Mason University is at 4210 Roberts Road in Fairfax. It offers intellectual, social and cultural experiences in a welcoming atmosphere to Northern Virginia residents in their retirement years. OLLI's more than 1,200 members enjoy access to unlimited courses with no homework, no exams, no required college degree and no age threshold. Classes and social events are offered at various locations. For a free catalog and more information, go to <http://olli.gmu.edu/> or call 703-503-3384.

—MARTHA E. POWERS



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[www.wlrva.org](http://www.wlrva.org)

### WEEK IN FAIRFAX

## The FX Players Puts On "Avenue Q!"

To kick off their 2016–2017 season, the FX Players at Fairfax HS will produce the winner of the 2004 Tony Award-winning Best Musical: "Avenue Q!" Filled with gut-busting humour, not to mention puppets, this laugh-out-loud musical tells the story of a recent college grad named Princeton and his newfound friends as they struggle to find jobs, dates, and their ever-elusive purpose in life. The show, which is rated PG-13 for some adult content, runs during the first weekend of December: Dec. 1, 2 and 3 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 3 and 4 at 2 p.m. You won't want to miss this coming-of-age parable, addressing and satirizing the issues and anxieties relevant in our society today. For more information and tickets, go to [www.fxplayers.org](http://www.fxplayers.org) or email [fairfaxhstheatre@gmail.com](mailto:fairfaxhstheatre@gmail.com).

## Donate Winter Coats

A Holiday coat drive is being held throughout December in the City of Fairfax. Coats of all sizes are needed. Drop them off at Cinema Arts Theatre, Dress Barn, Hobby Works, Life Time Athletic, or The Quilters Studio. Donated items will be given to Fairfax FISH, which serves the needy in the greater Fairfax City area.

## Saturday Morning Coffee with Del. Bulova

This Saturday, Dec. 3, Delegate David Bulova (D-37) will hold the last of his informal office hours before the 2017 General Assembly session. Constituents are invited to talk about issues of interest and to ask questions about legislation affecting the community.

The format is casual and no appointment is needed. The office

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## AREA ROUNDUPS

### Fairfax County Fire And Rescue Participating In Toys for Tots Campaign

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department will again be participating in the Annual National Capital Region Fire and EMS Departments' 2016 Toys for Tots Campaign. The intent of the campaign is to "bring holiday joy and deliver a message of hope to children."

Last year, thanks to the generosity of those who live and work in Fairfax County, the Fire and Rescue Department collected more than 13,000 toys.

Children who are served by this campaign include toddlers and youths through age 17. The campaign will only accept new unwrapped toys and you can drop them off at any of our Fire and Rescue Stations. Toys used as weapons or considered to be weapons (i.e., toy guns or knives of any kind) will not be accepted. Checks or money orders for donations must be made payable to Toys for Tots.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Stations will accept donations through Friday, Dec. 16, 2016.



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### Public Meetings on Draft Action Plans

Fairfax County has developed Draft Action Plans for the Chesapeake Bay, Sediment, Polychlorinated Biphenyl (PCB), and Bacteria Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) that have assigned wasteload allocations (WLAs) to the county's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4). The draft plans will be presented at two public meetings:

- Public meeting to present the County's Draft Sediment, PCB, and Bacteria TMDL Action Plans: Wednesday, Dec. 14, 6 to 8 p.m., Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Conference Rooms 1X

- Public meeting to present the County's Draft Chesapeake Bay TMDL Action Plans: Thursday, December 15, 6 to 8 p.m., Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Conference Rooms 2/3

The meetings will mark the beginning of public comment periods on all four Draft TMDL Action Plans that will run through Monday, January 23, 2017. Please contact the Stormwater Planning Division at SWPDMail@FairfaxCounty.gov or 703-324-5500, TTY 711, with any questions regarding the public meetings.



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## Expand Early Voting Now in NOVA

BY SCOTT SUROVELL  
STATE SENATOR (D-36)



### COMMENTARY

**T**he success of early voting in the 2016 Presidential Election reaffirms my conclusion from visiting 12,000 homes last year — Virginia should expand early voting.

In 2016, I personally knocked on over 12,000 doors and after July 1, using an online secure application form, I helped over 900 voters sign up to vote by mail from their home. Nearly all of them had no idea they could vote early or vote from home. The vast majority of these voters did not participate in non-presidential elections (or even some presidential elections) because of a disability, lack of transportation, long commutes or disabled family members that required 24-7 home care.

This year, early voting exploded. In 2008, a little over 99,000 Fairfax County residents voted early. That dropped to 92,000 in 2012, but exploded this year to 120,000. The same was true in Prince William County. The reason? Localities opened more early voting loca-

tions and kept them open longer.

There are two major reasons people do not vote early or by mail. They do not know they are eligible or voting early in-person is not always convenient.

There is no question that the legislature should pass what's called

"no excuse" early voting. The State Senate has passed no excuse early voting twice, but the legislation is always killed in the House of Delegates and it is unlikely to pass in the near future.

In the short term, Northern Virginia's localities need to expand early voting, and they can.

Nearly all voters who ride the Metro's Yellow, Blue and Orange Lines or the Virginia Railway Express are eligible to vote by mail or vote early because they work outside of the jurisdiction in which they live. Localities need to set up early voting stations at all Metro and major transit stations.

If you cross a county line — from Stafford into Prince William, Prince William into Fairfax, or Fairfax into the City of Alexandria — you

can vote early by mail or in-person. If your work day takes you more than 11 hours from home, you can vote early.

Seniors who have trouble standing in line are eligible to vote early. So are individuals caring for disabled family members. All first responders are eligible to vote early or by mail.

Fairfax, Prince William and Stafford County governments and public schools employ thousands of people. They need to get early voting information out to their employees. Social service providers need to ensure that qualified voters receive information.

Finally, in non-presidential elections, many voters choose not to take time from work to participate in state and local elections. Our localities should better publicize early voting stations and have longer hours to increase participation.

Facilitating more early voting will require more election officers and thus more money, but shorter lines and fewer disruptions save all of us time on Election Day and encourages more participation in our democracy.

It is an honor to serve as your state senator. Email me at [scott@scottsurovell.org](mailto:scott@scottsurovell.org) if you have any feedback.

## Opioid Epidemic in Virginia

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM  
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)



### COMMENTARY

**W**hen my friend August Wallmeyer wrote his book, "The Extremes of Virginia, Southwest, Southside and the Eastern Shore: Two Separated and Unequal Commonwealths. Rural, Poor and Largely Unknown" (Dementia Books, 2016), he included a chapter on illegal drug use for obvious reasons—In 2014 for the first time on record fatal drug overdoses became the most common cause of accidental death in the Commonwealth, according to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. As the Secretary of Health and Human Resources reported to Mr. Wallmeyer, "In 2015 we lost more than a thousand Virginians to opioid or heroin overdoses. More Virginians now die from drug overdoses than from car accidents." For another reason, the rate of fatal drug/poison overdoses in the poorest areas of the state are 47 percent higher than those in Virginia as a whole. The picture has been getting worse.

Last week the state health commissioner Dr. Marissa J. Levine declared opioid addiction to be a public health emergency in Virginia. She said the Commonwealth has seen a 77 percent increase in opioid deaths from 2012 to 2016. So great is the concern about this epidemic that Commissioner Levine issued a standing order that allows all Virginians to obtain the drug Naloxone without a specific prescription. Naloxone is used to treat narcotic overdoses in emergency situations. Persons who know someone who is struggling with opioid addiction are advised to visit a local pharmacy to obtain Naloxone and keep it on hand for possible over-

dose emergencies. For more information on Naloxone, go to <http://www.getnaloxonenow.org>. Another website of Virginia government offers resources on how to best discuss addiction with someone, <http://vaaware.com/treatment-recovery/>.

Attorney General Mark Herring is extremely active in combating drug abuse problems in Virginia. A documentary he produced on the heroin and prescription drug epidemic in Virginia is available to individuals and organizations for their use. Preview it at <http://www.hardesthitva.com>. The Attorney General has led the effort to distribute 80,000 drug disposal kits to individuals through the Department of Health and to hospitals, law enforcement and nonprofits. These kits will allow for the safe disposal of prescriptions that

could be abused by others. There is a strong link between misuse of prescription drugs, opioid addiction, and the use of heroin when prescription drugs become too expensive or are no longer available. Some studies found that half of young people who use heroin got started abusing prescription opioids. The Attorney General reported that more than 500 people went to a Virginia emergency room from a heroin overdose in the first four months of 2016, a 250 percent increase over 2015.

No longer is the problem of opioid abuse one that is primarily in the poorer, "extremes" of the state. It can be found in all areas of the state affecting people of all income levels and backgrounds. The strong response to the need by the Attorney General and the State Health Commissioner are very important. Coordination among agencies and work at the local level to end root causes are critical. Fortunately they are underway to end this epidemic.

## Children's Connection Deadline Approaches

During the last week of each year, The Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. It is a keepsake edition for many families. The annual Children's Connection is a tradition of well over a decade.

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork

should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. To be published, we must have the first and last name of the student. Please include the student's age and/or grade, school attended and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Please provide submissions by Friday, Dec. 2.

Email submissions for the Children's Connection to [north@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:north@connectionnewspapers.com).

[www.ConnectionNewspapers.com](http://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com)

@FfxConnection

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**NEWS DEPARTMENT:**  
[south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Kemal Kurspahic**  
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414  
[kemal@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:kemal@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Bonnie Hobbs**  
Community Reporter ♦ 703-778-9438  
[south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Kyle Kincaid**  
Editorial Assistant  
[south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com)

**ADVERTISING:**  
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**e-mail:**  
[sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com)  
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**Debbie Funk**  
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703-778-9444  
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[classified@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:classified@connectionnewspapers.com)

**David Griffin**  
Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
[dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Editor & Publisher**  
Mary Kimm  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
@MaryKimm

**Executive Vice President**  
Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
[jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Editor in Chief**  
Steven Mauren  
**Managing Editor**  
Kemal Kurspahic  
**Art/Design:**  
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,  
Ali Khaligh  
**Production Manager:**  
Geovani Flores

**Special Assistant to the Publisher**  
Jeanne Theismann  
[jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com)  
@TheismannMedia

**CIRCULATION: 703-778-9427**  
**Circulation Manager:**  
Ann Oliver  
[circulation@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:circulation@connectionnewspapers.com)





## NEWS

### Holidays Come to City

FROM PAGE 3

22038-1306. Include a stamped, self-addressed, return envelope. Call, 571-336-2322 or email CFBA. Ticket holders will be admitted starting at 6:15 p.m. After 6:45 p.m., non-ticket holders may take unclaimed seats.

### Music, Postcards and Puppets

❖ On Friday, Dec. 9, at 8 p.m., the Bonita Lestina Old Town Hall Performance Series presents "Cathedral Brass - A Christmas Celebration," at Old Town Hall.

Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts, it's free and open to the public, on a first-come, first-served basis. Directed by L. Thomas Vining, the Cathedral Brass performs sacred and secular music from all eras.

❖ On Sunday, Dec. 11, at 2 p.m. will be a book talk and signing with GMU's Daniel Gifford who'll discuss the uses and meanings of holiday cards in the early 20th century. Come to the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St.

❖ On Sunday, Dec. 11, at 3 p.m., the Northern Virginia Youth Winds and Junior Winds will give their season-opening concert at Robinson Secondary School, 5035 Sideburn Road. It's free; no tickets are needed.

❖ On Saturday, Dec. 17, at 7 p.m., the City of Fairfax Band and The Fairfax Choral Society Adult Chorus present "Christmas, Candles and a Chorus at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run. This annual concert of sacred and secular music traditionally receives capacity crowds. So although it's free, tickets are required – and they go quickly.

Reserve them early by mailing ticket requests to: The CFB Holiday Concert Tickets, P.O. Box 1306, Fairfax, VA 22038-1306. Include a stamped, self-addressed, return envelope.

Ticket holders will be admitted starting at 6:15 p.m. After 6:45 p.m., non-ticket holders may take unclaimed seats.

Before the concert, children may give Santa Claus their last-minute Christmas lists. Visit [fairfaxband.org](http://fairfaxband.org) for more information.

❖ On Monday, Dec. 19, at 10:30 a.m. is the Bob Brown Puppets Holiday Show at Old Town Hall.

For more information, call 703-385-7858 or go to [www.fairfaxva.gov/specialevents](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/specialevents).

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—John Wooden



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## Meet the Team Reception at The Kensington Falls Church

Thursday, December 8, 2016 from 5:00-7:30pm

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and taking care of them, with respect, enthusiasm and skill.

Join us at our Information Center at 1212 West Broad Street in Falls Church. Enjoy festive beverages and hors d'oeuvres while you meet and mingle with our Team, who can't wait to hear about the senior you love.



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# Fairfax Water

## PUBLIC HEARING ON WATER RATES AND PROPOSED 2017 BUDGET

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 15, 2016, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges and the 2017 Annual Budget. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2017, include the following:

1. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$10,240 to \$16,020.
2. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,150 to \$1,240†.
3. An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$10.10 to \$12.20†.
4. An increase in the Base Commodity Charge from \$2.68 to \$2.81 per 1,000 gallons of water.
5. A decrease in the Turn-Off / Turn-On Charge from \$52 to \$44.
6. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge.
7. An increase in the Overhead Charge for Labor from 104% to 105%.
8. A decrease in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$46 to \$35.

Revenues are expected to be \$171.3 million in 2017. Water sales are expected to provide \$149.2 million. Approximately \$22.1 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	— \$1,000s —	
	2016	2017
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 53,877	\$ 55,808
Power and Utilities	10,417	10,572
Chemicals	6,342	7,566
Purchased Water	4,512	5,576
Supplies and Materials	5,173	5,248
Insurance	1,176	1,201
Fuel	567	625
Postage	632	654
Contractual Services	10,473	10,671
Professional Services	748	910
Other	2,305	2,484
Subtotal	96,222	101,315
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,616)	(9,305)
Total	\$ 86,606	\$ 92,010

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$41,129,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$25,733,000

A copy of the proposed changes can be viewed on our website at [www.fairfaxwater.org/rates](http://www.fairfaxwater.org/rates). Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Eva Catlin at 703-289-6017.

Interested parties may submit written comments to [PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org](mailto:PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org) or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water  
Public Hearing Comments  
8570 Executive Park Avenue  
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 14, 2016, to be included in the record of the public hearing.

†Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

## NEWS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Founders of the Giving Circle of HOPE celebrating Million Dollar Milestone.

## The Giving Circle of HOPE Celebrates Million Dollar Milestone

BY FALLON FORBUSH  
THE CONNECTION

The Giving Circle of HOPE celebrated a major milestone this year – more than \$1 million raised and granted to support small nonprofit organizations in Northern Virginia.

GCH's members voted for the fund's 2016 grantees at a special event at Refraction in Reston Town Center on Thursday, Nov. 17.

"This milestone proves the power of collective giving because we reached it with many individuals giving as little as one dollar a day or volunteering for one event a year," says founding member Linda Strup. "Reaching this \$1 million milestone is exciting, but I am even prouder of the lives we have changed, both within the Giving Circle of HOPE and in the greater community."

Eight grants were funded for a total of \$56,000. The 2016 grant award winners are:

- ❖ Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Advocating for Abused/Neglected Youth
- ❖ Friends of Guest House for Workforce Development Project Pilot
- ❖ Josh Anderson Foundation for Our Minds Matter: Website Development
- ❖ La Cocina for Free Bilingual Culinary Job Training, Placement & Food Assistance
- ❖ NAMI Nova for Peer Support of Youth

and Adults Living with Mental Health Conditions

- ❖ OAR Arlington for Employment Assistance for Individuals Returning Home After Incarceration
- ❖ Women Giving Back for Women Giving Back Transportation Project
- ❖ The Reading Connection for Child, Youth Development & Education

A giving circle is a form of participatory philanthropy where groups of individuals donate their own money to a pooled fund, decide together which charities to give to and, in doing so, increase awareness of and engagement in issues in their community.

Prior to this year's vote, GCH awarded 125 grants to 52 local nonprofits. Funds have been awarded in the areas of Child, Youth Development and Education; Health, Mental Health and Aging; Poverty Relief; Immigration; and Poverty Escape. Organizations throughout Northern Virginia have received funding including: Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fauquier, Loudoun, Manassas and Prince William.

"Reaching the \$1 million means we got to a landing in a long staircase," says founding member Diana Katz. "We can take a breath, look back to see what we have done, and we can look upward to see how much more we can do. It's a step that gives us perspective." GCH is a component fund of the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia and was created in 2004.

### WEEK IN FAIRFAX

FROM PAGE 4

hours will take place from 9 to 11 a.m. at Main Street Bagel, 10268 Main Street, City of Fairfax.

Del. Bulova is also happy to arrange individual appointments on specific issues or concerns.

Del. Bulova serves on the General

Laws, Education, and Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources committees. He is also a member of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, the State Water Commission, the Joint Commission on Health Care, and the Housing Commission. For more information about Del. Bulova visit [www.davidbulova.com](http://www.davidbulova.com).



## WEDDINGS

### Brynn Rollo and Stephen Lieske Married in March

**M**iss Brynn Rollo and Mr. Stephen Lieske were united in marriage on March 12, at Leesburg Presbyterian Church in Old Town Leesburg. The ceremony was officiated by Reverend James Cubie. Readings were done by the couple's grandfathers, Robert Gallagher, Carroll Franklin, and John Lieske III. The wedding reception was celebrated at Riverside on the Potomac in Leesburg.

The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Rollo of Springfield. She is the granddaughter of Mr. and the late Mrs. Robert Gallagher of Braintree, Mass. and the late Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Rollo of Braintree. The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Lieske of Fairfax. He is the grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Franklin of Leesburg and the late Mrs. John Lieske III of Libertyville, Illinois.

Given in marriage by her parents and escorted by her father, the bride wore an Austen-esque inspired gown of Silk Duchesse Satin designed and made by her mother. The bride's gown featured lace that was hand-beaded by her great grandmother and wore a shawl of Clan Rollo tartan.

Miss Elizabeth Gallagher, cousin of the bride, served as Maid of Honor. Bridesmaids included Miss Abigail Gallagher, Mrs. Lindsey Lieske, Miss Courtney Connors, Miss Elizabeth Milstead, and Miss Caitlin Crawford. Mr. Matthew Lieske, brother of




**Brynn Rollo and Stephen Lieske smile for a portrait.**

the groom, served as Best Man. Grooms-men included Mr. Andrew Rollo, Mr. Andrew Kondracki, Mr. James Brewer, and Mr. Casey Scoville.


The bride is a graduate of George Mason University and is currently pursuing her Masters degree at the University of Massachusetts Boston. The groom is a graduate of James Madison University. He is employed as an Account Executive at mHelpDesk located in Fairfax.


Following a honeymoon in Ireland, Brynn and Stephen reside in Fairfax.



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SELECT NIGHTS | 5PM - 9PM

## NOV. 16 - JAN. 1

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## CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at [connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://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

**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>

### THURSDAY/DEC. 1

**Russell Theater at Robinson Secondary School** 7 p.m. 5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. Robinson High School Holiday Concert - Enjoy holiday tunes and the music of Bach, Mozart, and Bartok, as well as Dvorak's New World Symphony. Admission: Free. 703-426-2143

### THURSDAY/DEC. 1 - SATURDAY DEC. 3

**Richard Byrd Library Holiday Used Book Sale** 3 - 5 p.m. 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Friends of Richard Byrd Library holiday used book sale is a semi-annual fundraising event. Funds support adult and children's programming and subscriptions at the Richard Byrd Library. [rbfriends@gmail.com](mailto:rbfriends@gmail.com)

### FRIDAY/DEC. 2

**The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis** 6:30 p.m. Dinner with 7:30 p.m. performance. Truro Anglican Church 10520 Main Street, Fairfax. Come see the play for a Holiday celebration of the classic C.S. Lewis novel - take a trip to Narnia. <http://www.fairfaxcitytheatre.org>

**My Gym Community Event** 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library 5935 Freds Oak Rd, Burke, VA 22015. Develop your child's large motor skills with physical exercise and games. Funded by the Friends of Burke Centre Library. Age 1-3 years with adult. Visit: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

### SATURDAY/DEC. 3

**City of Fairfax Festival of Lights and Carols** noon - 7:30 p.m. Old Town Square 10415 North Street, Fairfax. Come enjoy live holiday music, hot cider, s'mores by the Yule log, petting farm, ferris wheel, caroling and lighting of the Christmas tree in the winter wonderland. Visit [http://www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/special-](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/special-events/festival-of-lights-and-carols)



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HUB THEATRE

**Rex Dougherty and Daven Ralston in Hub Theatre's production of "The Magi." Performances will take place from Dec. 2-18 at The New School, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. Show times: Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets: \$20-\$30. Call 1-800-494-8497 or visit [www.thehubtheatre.org](http://www.thehubtheatre.org)**

events/festival-of-lights-and-carols for times and locations.

**Lunch with Santa** 11:30 - 12:30 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive. Children ages 10 and under can enjoy lunch with Santa at Old Town Hall. Two lunch seatings will be offered one at 11:30 a.m. and another at 12:30 p.m. Tickets: \$6 per child on sale at the Parks & Recreation office at City Hall, Sherwood Center, and Green Acres Center. Limit of 10 tickets per person.

Pre-Registration is required for this event - children 1 years of age and younger may attend at no cost but still must be registered. Parents do not need to purchase tickets. All are welcome - both Fairfax City residents and non Fairfax City residents. Tickets can be purchased online at: [https://apm.activecommunities.com/fairfaxcityrecdept/Activity\\_Search/9853](https://apm.activecommunities.com/fairfaxcityrecdept/Activity_Search/9853)

**Holiday Book Sale** 10 - 4 p.m. Burke Centre Library 5935 Freds Oak Rd, Burke, VA 22015. Peruse and shop a selection of gently used holiday-themed books collected by the Friends of the Burke Centre Library. Visit: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

**City of Fairfax Festival of Lights and Carols** Time TBA Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Come enjoy live holiday music, hot cider, s'mores by the Yule log, petting farm, ferris wheel, caroling and lighting of the Christmas tree in the winter wonderland. Visit [http://www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/special-](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/special-events/festival-of-lights-and-carols)

for times and locations.

**The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis** 2 p.m. performance. Truro Anglican Church 10520 Main Street, Fairfax. Come see the play for a Holiday celebration of the classic C.S. Lewis novel - take a trip to Narnia. <http://www.fairfaxcitytheatre.org>

**Creative Writers Group** 2 p.m. Burke Centre Library 5935 Freds Oak Rd, Burke, VA 22015. Do you enjoy writing fiction, poetry, non-fiction and/or memoirs? Join us for sharing, discussion and feedback of works in progress. Teen volunteer facilitates. Ages 13-18. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

**Holiday Book Sale** 10 - 4 p.m. Burke Centre Library 5935 Freds Oak Rd, Burke, VA 22015. Peruse and shop a selection of gently used holiday-themed books collected by the Friends of the Burke Centre Library. Visit: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

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**27<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Train Show** 10 - 5 p.m. 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum will host a train

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

# THE CONNECTION

Newspapers & Online

## Holiday Happenings 2016



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# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

show with droves of model trains including models: Z, N, HO, LEGO, O, Standard, and G scales. Bring your broken locomotive to the "Train Doctor" for the good doctor to fix or advise you of your other options. Stop and admire the antique cars visiting for this event, weather permitting. Admission: Adults 16 and over - \$5; children 5 to 15- \$2; 4 and under - free; museum members - free. www.fairfax-station.org 703-425-9225.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 3

**Friends of Burke Centre Library Holiday & Gift Book Sale** 10 - 5 p.m. 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Featuring holiday themed books for adults and kids along with books suitable for gift giving.

## SUNDAY/DEC. 4

**National Men's Chorus Presents Yeletide Carols with Debi Smith** 4 p.m. Providence Presbyterian Church 9019 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Debi Smith of The Birchmere will be singing with the chorus, and Tom Pandolfi will also be our featured pianist. Admission: \$20 at the door. Students and children free. Parking is Free. nationalmenschorus.org

**Fair Oaks Mall Hosts Pet Parties with Santa** 6:30 - 8 p.m. Santa's Flight Academy in Grand Court 11750 Fair Oaks. FairfaxFair Oaks Mall will offer pet parents a chance to celebrate the holiday season and visit with Santa. Pet photos will take place at the interactive Santa's Flight Academy holiday set located in Grand Court West. Please note that pets must be up-to-date on their vaccinations and must either be on a leash or carried in a lightweight, portable pet carrier with harness. www.shopfairoaksmall.com/events.

**27th Annual Holiday Train Show** noon - 4 p.m. 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum will host a train show with droves of model trains including models: Z, N, HO, LEGO, O, Standard, and G scales. Bring your broken locomotive to the "Train Doctor" for the good doctor to fix or advise you of your other options. Stop and admire the antique cars visiting for this event, weather permitting. Admission: Adults 16 and over - \$5; children 5 to 15- \$2; 4 and under - free; museum members - free. www.fairfax-station.org 703-425-9225.

**Friends of Burke Centre Library Holiday & Gift Book Sale** 1- 4 p.m. 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Featuring holiday themed books for adults and kids along with books suitable for gift giving.



PHOTO BY CHIP GERTZOG/COURTESY OF PROVIDENCE PLAYERS

**The Herdman kids in Providence Players production of 'The Best Christmas Pageant Ever.'** From left — front: Jack Wright who plays Ralph, Aerial Indrisano as Ollie, Nora Rice who plays Imogene; back - Gavin Friel as Claude, Erika Friel who plays, Gladys, Kashvi Ramani as Loretta. Shows will take place from Dec. 9 to Dec. 18 at James Lee Community Center Theater, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 2 p.m. matinees on Dec. 10, 11, 17 and 18, 2016. Tickets on-line at www.providenceplayers.org or call 703-425-6782.

## MONDAY/DEC. 5

**Friends of Burke Centre Library Holiday & Gift Book Sale** 10 - 8 p.m. 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Featuring holiday themed books for adults and kids along with books suitable for gift giving.

## TUESDAY/DEC. 6

**Hayfield Secondary High School Orchestra** 6 p.m. Springfield Town Center 6500 Springfield Mall, Springfield. https://springfieldtowncenter.com/calendar/view/626

**BHS Research Seminar** 7 - 9 p.m. Burke Centre Library 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Expand your research with harder-to-find sources, through interlibrary loan, digitized book archives, and articles in various periodicals and scholarly journals. Presenter: Sharon Hodges. Register on the library website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/ Admission: Free. slawski\_brian@yahoo.com

3

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## Holiday Hooplah!!!

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## HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT



Colorful elves strike a pose.



Rockin' reindeer take the stage.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LINDA HELMS

# Getting into Holiday Spirit with Encore

**Musical extravaganza, 'Christmas Undercover,' takes the stage.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**J**ust the thing to put people into the holiday spirit is "Christmas Undercover." Encore Theatrical Arts Project's song-and-dance extravaganza bursts upon the stage Dec. 9-18 at NOVA's Annandale campus.

"It's a really cute plot with a detective feel to it, plus Santa Claus," said Director Raynor van der Merwe. "There's a strong storyline that sets up beautiful vocal and dance numbers that further tell the story. It's a very entertaining show for the whole family. For two hours, the youngest to the oldest will be transported to a different world."

**IN NEW YORK CITY,** Northern Postal Service workers are actually undercover elves. While delivering packages throughout the city, they check on all the children and scan them to measure their level of Christmas spirit. Then they can determine whether to put them on Santa's naughty or nice list.

Marzipan, a young female elf, is on her first assignment and measures a girl named Noel with 0 percent Christmas spirit. And when Marzipan and the other elves return to the North Pole, they inadvertently bring Noel with them. But her presence causes havoc with the energy there. So the North Pole historian, played by Jack Stein, must figure out how to make things right.

"We have a beautiful, new, North Pole set that's gorgeous and breathtaking – including a revolving library," said van der Merwe. "Tabitha Dees has done an amazing job designing it. We have a 32-person cast, including three guest adults, and I'm so excited



Encore performers do a high-kicking dance number.

about the wonderful progress I've seen in my dancers this year. They've stepped it up to a whole, new level and inspire, challenge and reward me as a teacher."

Maya Tischler plays Marzipan. "She's an eccentric character who can get dejected when things aren't looking up," said Tischler. "But when someone says they can help her, she immediately perks up and becomes excited. And she has an easy time making friends."

Tischler's enjoying her role because "I can sometimes relate to Marzipan in real life, and I like her personality and how she enjoys talking to new people." Her favorite song is "Be a Santa" because "It's fun to dance and, in the storyline, Marzipan is trying out to become an undercover Santa and do new things."

She said the audience will love everything about this show. "The creativity, set, props, character development, colors and costumes all bring the story to life," said Tischler. "And people will especially like all the dance numbers."

Claire Griesse portrays Cookie, an undercover elf who "couldn't keep a job if her life depended on it," said Griesse. "But she also

keeps quitting jobs because she thinks her co-workers might be on to her. She's very anxious, but also super peppy and what you'd imagine an elf to be like – happy, kid-like and friendly."

Griesse's having a good time playing her because, in previous years, she played characters that weren't as uplifting. "But now I have humor in my part and get to be goofy, have fun onstage and make children laugh," she said.

She's also pleased about Encore's new, reindeer Rockette number to the song, "Here Comes Santa Claus." She said the reindeer costume is "really cute; and this year, we've added bells to it. And we really go for it and dance."

Aside from the great characters, this show has constant action and will surprise the audience. There's always something interesting happening onstage, and we have a great set and script. I'm excited, and I hope people will laugh – it's definitely a funny show."

Playing Holly, an undercover elf in New York, is Jenna Frisby. "She's the leader of the group; she's more mature and sarcastic and tries to keep order," said Frisby. "She's

## To Go

Show times are:

Friday, Dec. 9, at 7:30 p.m.;  
Saturday, Dec. 10, at noon, 3:30 and 7:30 p.m.;  
Sunday, Dec. 11, at noon and 3:30 p.m.;  
Friday, Dec. 16, at 7:30 p.m.;  
Saturday, Dec. 17, at noon, 3:30 and 7:30 p.m.;  
Sunday, Dec. 18, at noon and 3:30 p.m.

Performances are in NOVA's Richard Ernst Theater, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Tickets are \$19-26 at the door or via [www.Encore-tap.org](http://www.Encore-tap.org). For more information, call 703-222-5511.

very take-charge and tries to solve problems and help the other elves get out of tricky situations. They're optimistic, but she's more realistic."

"She's different than the typical elf character because she's so witty, so I really enjoy playing her," continued Frisby. "And I like being the leader; it's fun bossing the other elves around."

**HER FAVORITE NUMBER** is "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" because it's like a waltz and she gets to show her ballet technique – "which is one of my strengths," said Frisby. "And the costumes are pretty and flowy. I wear a red-mesh, halter dress that flares out when I turn, and the other elves are in long gowns."

She said the audience will enjoy seeing "the journey these elves go on. There are a lot of funny moments, and the audience will recognize the traditional Christmas songs."

Portraying Noel is 11-year-old Ella Abramovich. Describing Noel as "energetic, talkative, happy and joyful," Ella said her character is upbeat and smiley, all the time. "She's like my personality, so she's easy to play," she said. And Ella especially likes the song, "He's Got a List," because "It's all about children giving their letters to Santa, and everybody's singing and happy."

Overall, she said audience members "will like seeing how everything works out in the end, and the happiness and the switch in scenes from New York to the North Pole. They'll actually feel as if they're there. People should definitely come see this show."



12

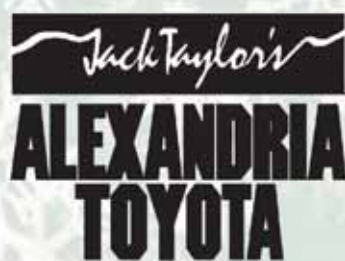
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778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated  
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weeks prior to the event.

**Katherine Hough**, Fairfax Station, has been  
awarded the Boeing Scholarship for outstanding  
academic achievement in the Volgenau School of  
Engineering at George Mason University.

**Vocal musicians from 12 Fairfax County  
public schools** have been named to the Virginia  
Honors Choir for 2016. This select choir is open  
only to the top 125 singers from around the Com-  
monwealth of Virginia, and is the highest honor a  
choir student can attain during his or her high  
school career. Thirty-one Fairfax County Public  
Schools (FCPS) students were selected for the  
choir, and five students were named as alternates.  
The choir will perform at the Virginia Music Edu-  
cators Association (VMEA) convention to be held  
at the Omni Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Nov.  
17-19. FCPS students named to the 2016 Virginia  
Honors Choir include the following students from  
our area schools: **Woodson High School:**  
Megan Humes, Caroline Grass, Jacob Lamb, Lucas  
Valdes, and Marc Manaloto and **Hayfield Sec-  
ondary School:** Jessica Pressley.

**Jonathan Whittington**, Kathryn Herring,  
**Emma Zettlemoyer**, of Springfield; **Bridget  
Ray and Kirsten Chase**, of Burke; received  
\$2,000 scholarships from the Scholarship for Mili-  
tary Children Program in July 2016.

**Jane Gibbins-Harding**, of Springfield, was  
named to the dean's list at Bethany College for  
spring 2016.

U.S. Air Force Airman **Brian A. Zamfino**  
graduated from basic military training at Joint Base  
San Antonio-Lackland, San Antonio, Texas.  
Zamfino is the son of Joanne and Joseph Zamfino  
of Springfield. He is a 2015 graduate of West  
Springfield High School.

**Thomas Miskimins**, of Fairfax, graduated  
with a master of arts, in Spring 2016 from the  
University of New Haven.

**Jordan Ecker**, of Fairfax, is on the spring 2016  
dean's list at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cit-  
ies.

**Caroline Dickson**, of Fairfax, is on the spring  
2016 dean's list at the University of Maine-Orono.

Allison Righter Moore, and Sarah Ann Hughes  
Cushing-Spiller, of Springfield, is on the dean's list  
at Hollins University, for the 2016 spring semester.

**James Butler**, a Lake Braddock Secondary  
School graduate, was inducted into the Naval  
Academy Class of 2020 on June 30, 2016.

**Kyle Austin Walsh**, of Fairfax, and **Abigail  
Lynn Lackey**, of Springfield, were named to the  
honors list for the 2016 spring 2016 semester at  
Averett University in Danville.

**Katherine Marie Hough**, of Fairfax Station,  
is on the dean's list at George Mason University for  
spring 2016.

**Anna Kormis**, of Springfield, graduated from  
Emory and Henry College in spring 2016.

**Kyle Austin Walsh**, of Fairfax, graduated from  
Averett University in June 2016. was among the  
261 students to receive diplomas during Averett  
University's May 7 Commencement,

**Megan R. Seymour**, **Megan F. Cummins**,  
**Thomas S. Cohen**, of Fairfax, **Joshua D.  
Harlowe**, **Samantha E. Kinde**, **Melissa A.  
Schwartz**, of Springfield; **Sean C. Baird**, of  
Fairfax Station; graduated from Boston University  
in spring 2016.

**Helene J. Decosse**, **Alexis J. Fahrney**, **Jes-  
sica M. Ochoa**, of Fairfax, are on the dean's list  
at Boston University for spring 2016.

**Seth Lehman**, **Thet San**, of Fairfax, graduated  
from Furman University in spring 2016.

**Luke Hartman**, **Natalie Heinitz**, of Spring-  
field, graduated from Manhattan College in spring  
2016.

**Maria Larrazabal Carrillo**, of Fairfax is on  
the dean's list for May 2016 at Iowa State.

**Kayse McGough** of Fairfax is on the dean's list  
for May 2016 at St. Mary's College.

**Jared Rondeau** of Clifton, graduated May  
2016 Triple Major in Physics, Mathematics, and  
Chemistry from Emory and Henry College.

**Moriah Dreisbach**, of Fairfax, is on Union  
University's president's list for spring 2016.

**Irene Martinko**, of Springfield, is on the  
spring 2016 dean's list at Muhlenberg College in  
Allentown, Pennsylvania.

**James F. Agnew**, **Kyle T. Deivert** and  
**Nathaniel Oliver**, of Fairfax, are on the dean's  
list at Hampden-Sydney College.



## SPORTS

# Bumped, Bruised, Better

BY TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

**B**ill Vitaletti of Springfield had fractured his jaw in three places, broken a bone in his eye socket, chipped a tooth and cracked two other teeth that would eventually have to be pulled.

But he didn't know any of that at the time. What he knew was he still had at least 20 miles left to bike and 26.2 miles to run before completing his first Ironman triathlon.

"I didn't want to let myself down," Vitaletti said. "I'd been working for so long. To stop, felt like admitting defeat. I didn't want that. I have family, different people going through hard times. I wanted to show them, you can take bumps and bruises along the way."

That was in Cambridge, Md. in October this year. More than three years ago, at age 57, Vitaletti left his job at CACI. A workaholic, 35 pounds overweight, he said he wanted to do something different, "something for me this time."



**Coming up to the "gauntlet" home stretch, Bill Vitaletti of Springfield grabbed a pair of Maryland state flags and unfurled them as he ran across the finish of his first Ironman triathlon.**

**VITALETTI** was once an All-American backstroker for the State University of New York at Oneonta. He got back in the pool at South Run RECenter. His neighbor convinced him to take up running. When he went too hard too fast and injured himself, the neighbor encouraged him to get on the stationary bike to recover.

While on the bike at South Run,

Vitaletti began meeting and talking with people. He was motivated to sign up for road races, including the George Washington Parkway Classic and Cherry Blossom ten-milers. He built up to the Marine Corps Marathon, which he ran four times.

Then someone suggested Vitaletti try out triathlon, as he was working on all three disci-

## Springfield man recovers from mid-race Ironman accident.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

**Left, Bill Vitaletti and his Ironman "sherpa" and training partner Susan Calhoun (center) pose with the race director of the October Ironman Maryland.**

plines anyway. A friend from South Run and triathlon veteran Frank Castro helped him work out a plan for working up to triathlon's toughest race: the Ironman.

Starting from the shortest distance, the sprint, moving up to Olympic, then half-Ironman and on to full Ironman (a consecutive 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike and 26.2-mile run), "It all clicked," Vitaletti said.

In 2015, Vitaletti participated in his first half-Ironman. He wasn't out to beat anyone, just finish. This year at a half-Ironman in May, he wanted to go faster.

Helping him get faster was an informal training group that formed at South Run, novices of various ages. Susan Calhoun of Fairfax Station is one of them.

"Bill is very determined," she said, "it's very inspirational to watch him put so much effort into something."

"He just has so much knowledge, he's very good at giving some advice, a lot of people come up to him," Calhoun added.

Together, the group signed up to do triathlons at Quantico and in Washington, D.C.

"It's definitely not a single-person initiative," Vitaletti said.

For his Ironman, Calhoun and Castro were his "sherpas," helping sort out gear and eating logistics for him.

Vitaletti was going strong until around the 80-mile mark on the bike ride: He glanced over his shoulder to let some riders pass him and didn't see the pothole coming up in front. The front tire blew completely and Vitaletti was thrown from the bike, face first down to the pavement.

A support vehicle saw the accident and came to render aid immediately. They called an ambulance and began doing repairs on

his bicycle as well.

Vitaletti said he remembers being "stunned" by the crash, but then asking the paramedics who strapped him to a gurney "What are we doing here?"

**THE MEDICS** recommended Vitaletti go to a hospital for full diagnostics, and it occurred to him that meant not finishing the race. Not getting to see Castro, Calhoun, or his brother- and sister-in-law who had driving up to Cambridge from the Washington, D.C. area to cheer for him at the finish line.

"What do I have? What are my vitals?" Vitaletti asked the medics. Upon hearing that those were surprisingly stable, he asked, "How's my bike?"

The repair team had gotten Vitaletti's bike rideable again, and with a makeshift chin-sling holding his jaw in place, he took off to finish the race.

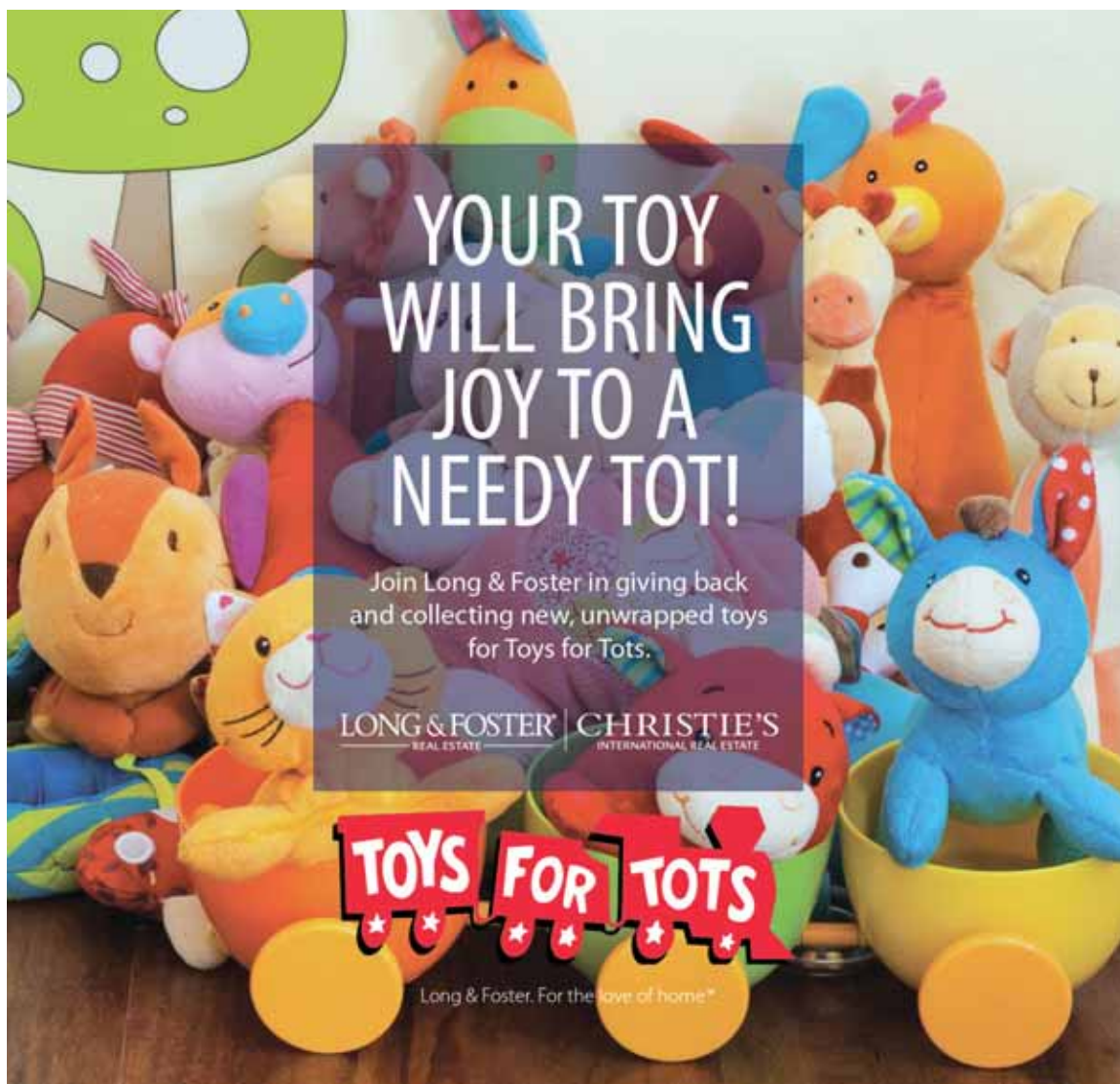
Fighting off considerable pain the rest of the way, Vitaletti drew strength and motivation from his sherpas at checkpoints and other racers, including a man who asked to pray with him for at least 15 minutes of running.

Coming up to the "gauntlet" home stretch, Vitaletti grabbed a pair of Maryland state flags and unfurled them as he ran across the finish.

"I wanted to finish with joy," he said. "I was overcome with joy, not just that I finished, but it was a climax of all that work. I was so hyped up to do this."

Calhoun is now signed up for her first half-marathon. She'll be training with Vitaletti and the group as he prepares for his second Ironman next year in Lake Placid, N. Y.

"With a lot of determination, and a little bit of crazy," Calhoun said, "anything's possible."



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