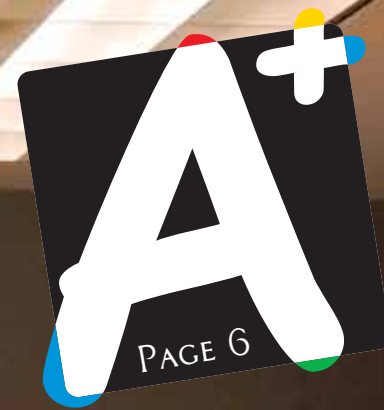




Fairfax CONNECTION

Volunteers from Excella Consulting pose with FACETS' D'Ivonne Holman (in blue shirt). On Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Excella employees helped spruce up Sojourn House, a group home in Fairfax.



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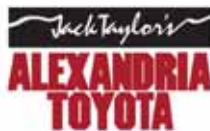
PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

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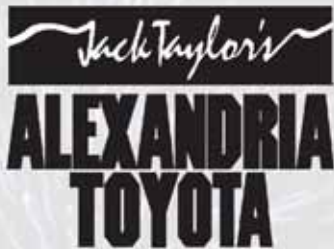
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NEWS

Giving Back to the Community

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

On a day dedicated to Martin Luther King Jr.'s memory, people throughout the country honored his legacy Monday by doing various projects to help others. Among them were employees of Excella Consulting of Arlington who helped spruce up Sojourn House, a group home in Fairfax.

It's run by nonprofit FACETS and is part of Linda's Gateway, a permanent, supportive-housing program for chronically homeless individuals and families. Sojourn House is just for single adults and currently houses five people, although up to seven can live there.

"It originally began in 2010 as an emergency housing shelter," said FACETS Volunteer Manager D'Ivonne Holman, in charge of the Jan. 16 event there. "And in October 2016, it transitioned into a group home. FACETS provides case-management services and partners with the Fairfax County Health Department to offer onsite medical services. And we staff Sojourn House 16 hours/day, seven days/week."

Looking for a community project for Martin Luther King Day, Excella came to FACETS via Volunteer Fairfax. And on Monday, from 1 - 5 p.m., 12 Excella employees volunteered their time and painted the home's conference room and staff offices – four rooms total.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Excella Consulting employees take a painting break to pose with FACETS' D'Ivonne Holman (in blue shirt).

"And that's just the beginning of the homey touches we're trying to add here at Sojourn House," said Holman. "We'll also hang artwork on the walls and put in some new furniture, including lamps, end tables, couches, chairs and throw pillows."

But, she added, "We could really use the community's help in obtaining these items. We could also use kitchen things, such as pots and pans, dishes, drinking glasses, kitchen towels and dish soap." Anyone wishing to donate anything to Sojourn House

Volunteers spruce up Fairfax group home on MLK Day.

should contact FACETS' community engagement coordinator, Josh D'Antonio at jdantonio@facetscares.org.

STANDING ON A LADDER while painting the wall above the conference room's doorway, Excella Senior Consultant Andrew Lindberg said he appreciated his company's community outreach. He was also having a good time.

"It's a great opportunity to connect with the community's efforts here," he explained. "And I'm enjoying meeting a lot of my fellow colleagues. I just started working at Excella last week, and it's a good way to get to know them."

Screwing back an electrical-outlet faceplate onto a wall was Beth Gomolka, an Excella project manager who's been with the company six years. "It's nice to be able to give back to the community and work with my co-workers on something out of the office," she said. "You learn about their painting skills and their lives outside of the work context."

Consultant/software developer Christie Goddard said the company's volunteer program is part of ExcellaVision. "We work closely with Homestretch, which works with homeless people and finds them jobs," she said. "And we do various community-service projects throughout the year."

SEE SOJOURN HOUSE. PAGE 5

Aerial view of the Fairfax City Hall Campus.



The GMU Townhouse Complex from the air.

Council Mulls Location of Community Center

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Three or more sites are under consideration.

For more than a year, a committee has been researching potential sites for a community center in the City of Fairfax. And although the Green Acres Center on Sideburn Road was originally in the mix, three other locations seem more feasible.

"It's currently well-used by the com-

munity for a wide variety of uses," said Eric Forman with Community Development and Planning. "But the 65-year-old building has never been fully renovated, has no full-size gym and has too many small rooms for a community center."

Speaking at a recent, City Council work session, he said a community center should

be in a building at least 40,000 square feet, but could be larger if partners contributed to its construction, operation and maintenance. He also said it should contain a senior center, fitness facility with full-size gym, a kitchen and parking.

Green Acres is on a 10-acre site, but is inconvenient since it's at the City's edge.

And, added Forman, "It may still be used by the School Board for a future school." So a committee looked at 21 possible locations, narrowing down the choices to six and then three. They are the City Hall campus, the GMU townhouses and the old Fairfax Elementary site.

* The City Hall Campus is about 8 acres along Armstrong Street, between Chain

SEE COUNCIL. PAGE 8

OPINION

Counting on Our Reps in Congress

Sound the call to action; resist changes that are against the values and beliefs of most Virginia voters.

While most voters in the United States did not vote for Donald Trump for president, it was all the more so here in Northern Virginia. Hillary Clinton won the popular vote nationwide by 2.9 million votes.

In Virginia, Clinton won 49.75 percent to 44.43 percent over Trump; 1,981,473 votes for Clinton to 1,769,443 votes for Trump.

In the City of Alexandria, Clinton won 75.56 percent of the vote, with 17.54 percent voting for Trump; 57,242 to 13,285 votes.

In Arlington, Clinton won 75.83 percent of the vote, with 16.64 percent voting for Trump; 92,016 to 20,186 votes.

In Fairfax County, Clinton won 64.43 percent of the vote, with 28.61 percent voting for Trump; 355,133 to 157,710 votes.

Most people in this area didn't vote for the

kind of changes that might be coming with this change of administration and party. They didn't vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act. They didn't vote to give massive tax breaks to the nation's wealthiest families, in many cases millions of dollars per family. Certainly they didn't vote for broadside attacks on Medicare, or to undo progress on climate change. This list could go on for some time.

EDITORIAL

With all of this and much more under consideration, we rely on our members of Congress, including our two U.S. senators, to fight, to stand up and resist changes that are against the values and beliefs of most Virginia voters, to sound the call to action in every case it is needed.

U.S. Rep. Don Beyer says he will not attend the inauguration.

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly and U.S. Sen. Mark Warner rallied with thousands in Alexandria

last weekend to oppose the repeal of the Affordable Care Act.

Even the one Republican member of Congress from the region, U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10), spoke out against Trump during the election.

Comstock could play an important role standing up for the values of voters in her district, and will play an important role in representing the interests of the region.

Call your representatives and tell them what matters to you. Every Virginia resident is represented by Virginia's two U.S. senators and one member of Congress. Of course this pertains to those who supported Trump as well.

Beyer: 202-225-4376

Connolly: 202-225-1492

Comstock: 202-225-5136

Warner: 202-224-2023

U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine: 202-224-4024

We welcome your letters to the editor; submit at <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/>

— MARY KIMM

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

An Apology to LGBTQ Community

To the Editor:

My community involvement began in 1989 with my opposition to Family Life Education (FLE). Among the reasons I opposed FLE were that it promoted the acceptance of homosexuality and said that gays cannot change. For 25 years I have made public statements that homosexuality was a choice and that it could be "prayed away." I was very wrong.

Feelings are generally not a choice, as is recognized by my church's website, mormonandgay.org. For my past statements, I apologize to the LGBTQ community.

I wish my social conservative friends would be more understand-

ing that probably most gay and transgender persons did not choose to have the feelings they have. Often these feelings begin at a very young age. A family member should be able to acknowledge same-sex attraction or gender preference without fear of rejection, loss of employment or opportunity. When we social conservatives ask gays to live celibate or ask transgender persons to use bathrooms for their biological gender, we should understand that we are asking a lot. We have not walked in their shoes.

I do not believe that most gay and transgender persons want to undermine Christian values; they want to be able to act on powerful feelings they did not ask to have. I do believe though that some who are promoting LGBTQ rights do oppose Christian values and advocate an androgynous society. For example a lawyer for

Gavin Grimm, whose bathroom case is before the Supreme Court, is the Secular Society Women's Rights Legal Fellow at the ACLU.

Eroding the standards of modesty between male and female makes society more dangerous for women. What may now seem to be a casual act for a man may be regarded as rape by a woman. The casualness we have introduced over recent decades I think is responsible for the well-publicized statistic that 20 percent of college coeds are sexually assaulted.

While I therefore believe bathroom use should be based on biological gender, I understand that this imposes a great hardship on transgender persons. I would hope that other social conservatives would understand this too.

Arthur Purves
Vienna

Stopping Gerrymandering in Virginia

To the Editor:

As the new legislative year begins in Richmond, I hope more voters will join the effort to stop gerrymandering in Virginia. An overwhelming majority of us (as well as Presidents Reagan and Kennedy in the past and Clinton, G.H.W. Bush, G. Bush, and Obama now) favor this cause.

To stop gerrymandering, we must change Virginia's constitution. And as long as our legislators can make law in back rooms and with voice votes (that record yea or nay but not individual legislator's votes), that won't happen. We'll all have to step up. To learn how, visit OneVirginia2021.org and look up "Delegate Jerry Mandering" on Facebook.

Dianne Thomas
Fairfax

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Send to:

Letters to the Editor
The Connection
1606 King St.
Alexandria VA 22314
Call: 703-917-6444.
By e-mail:
south@connectionnewspapers.com

Bicycle Advocacy Workshop Feb. 4

Are you interested in making Fairfax County more bike-friendly? On Feb. 4, 2017, Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling (FABB) is hosting a free workshop that will provide attendees the basic tools and strategies needed to help make bicycling conditions better in Fairfax County. The workshop will be held on Saturday, Feb. 4, 2017, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 8304 Old Keene Mill Rd in Springfield (across the street from the Springfield Golf and Country Club).

There is no charge for the workshop; however, participants are asked to pre-register before Jan. 29, 2017 (www.fabb-bikes.org). Lunch will be provided. Topics include: components of a successful advocacy campaign, developing an advo-

cacy plan, online advocacy tools, and why citizen advocates make a difference. Attendees will have time to develop their own campaigns. Presenters are local citizens with a proven record of leading advocacy campaigns: FABB members Sonya Breehey, Bruce Wright, and Alan Young, and Fionnuala Quinn of The Bureau of Good Roads.

FABB is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization dedicated to improving conditions for bicyclists of all ages, nationalities, and walks of life. Over the past decade FABB has played a key role in advancing bicycling in Fairfax County. More information about the organization and workshop can be found at www.fabb-bikes.org or by contacting Bruce Wright at info@fabb-bikes.org or 703-328-9619.

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NEWS

Sojourn House

FROM PAGE 3

Sean DuGuay is a principal consultant who does business development for Excella. He said 212 technology employees who could have made money for their company on Monday instead contributed their time to work on community projects throughout the Washington Metropolitan area.

The best part about helping out Sojourn House, said DuGuay, is "Giving people a chance to have something that's going to make them feel better about themselves. I also like working for a company willing to invest in supplying their employees' time to benefit others."

"We've been doing things like this for several years," added Zak Mahshie, general counsel and partner with Excella. "It's our belief that there's a corporate responsibility to not just use community resources, but to give back, as well, and make the community stronger."

A FAIRFAX HIGH grad whose parents still live in the City of Fairfax, he helped paint the walls and trim at Sojourn House. "This went pretty smoothly," he said. "This was my eighth time painting, and I'm now mildly proficient at it. But it's important because we're making an impact. These rooms were a sickly yellow before and now they're a blue-gray. We met some of the residents here, and they said that, because of us, they won't have to wait for someone else to do it."

Mahshie also noted that Excella is a growing consulting company, with most of its employees dispersed geographically at their clients' sites. So, he said, the community-service project in Fairfax gave them "an opportunity to come together, get to know our co-workers a little bit better and meet the new ones."

As for Holman, she was delighted with the way things turned out Monday. "I'm extremely grateful that Excella came to Sojourn House," she said. "The volunteers added warmth to this space to kick-start beautifying the home and making it an inviting place for our residents. We couldn't have done it without them."

Holman said volunteers are always needed there to be case managers, lead a game night, cook a meal or provide transportation to and from residents' medical appointments and job interviews. Contact her at dholman@facetscares.org.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF KIDS4PEACE

The Kids4Peace Interfaith Summer Camp is aimed at helping to break down religious stereotypes.

Planning for Summer Camp

Local camp fairs help families navigate the maze of summer camp offerings.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

In an effort to confront religious intolerance, a group of local middle school students will attend a camp aimed at bringing together children from different religions and giving them the chance to come together, make new friendships, visit houses of worship, learn about other traditions and practice dialogue to confront Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism.

“Campers will get experiences in synagogues, mosques and churches,” said Shoshana Abrams of Kids4Peace. “They’ll see how others pray, how they celebrate and what they believe. It’s helping to break down stereotypes. A lot of interfaith action is needed to combat Islamophobia and bring together people of different faiths.”

Kids4Peace’s Interfaith Day Camp is one of a diverse variety of summer camps available to local children. From performing arts, wilderness adventures and sports to language immersion, standardized test prep and community service, the summer offerings in the Washington region are plentiful. Though warm weather is months away, this is the time to start planning for camp and finding the best fit, say child development experts. “You want to include your child from the beginning of the process,” said Carolyn Lorente, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria. “Explore options by following their interests. I like to ask kids ‘What problem would you like to solve?’ For instance, would they like to learn how to play basketball, how to make a rocket, how to see other galaxies, how to paint with acrylics, how to star in a play? These [questions] will point you in a direc-

tion that is good for both you and your child.”

Local camps fairs such as the Northern Virginia Camp & Summer Fun Expo, offer access to a variety of both day and overnight options in one location. “We want parents to know that there are many different options out there, and they’re going to find out all the specifics about many camps,” said Jacky Dooly, of Northern Virginia Camp & Summer Fun Expo and Washington Parent in Bethesda, Maryland. “There will be specific sports camps like swimming and martial arts. Maybe child has academic issues and they need to get caught up. If so, there are academic programs.”

Before attending a camp fair, Dooly suggests that families prepare themselves, and there are questions that she recommends parents ask prospective camp officials. “Does the camp offer early morning care as well as later evening care?” she asks. “Find out information about the food that is offered at the camp. How much activity will your child get during the day? If you’re in-

terested in a particular camp, find out if it fits within your budget.”

“I’d also want to know how they are going to keep your child safe, how they encourage participation, and the percentage of returning camp counselors and campers,” added Lorente. “If you have a camp with high return rates that indicates that it is a place where people want to be.”

Mandarin immersion, public speaking and science exploration are among the choices that will be available this summer at BASIS Independent Summer McLean. Noting that this will be the camp’s inaugural summer, Asha Bruot, spokeswoman for McLean BASIS, says that there will also be “a traditional day camp for students in first

“We want parents to know that there are many different camp options out there.”

— Jacky Dooly, Northern Virginia Camp & Summer Fun Expo



PHOTO COURTESY OF WASHINGTON PARENT

Camp fairs, such as the Northern Virginia Camp & Summer Fun Expo, give families an opportunity to see the variety of summer camps available.

through fifth [grades] with thematically-linked activities, classroom projects, outdoor games, drama, music, and art.”

“Summer camp should be a place for your child to explore, play [and] become,” said Lorente. “The school year has become so structured. I would want a camp that has embedded in it time for child-directed exploration [and] free-time.”

For More Information

2017 Camp & Summer Fun Expos
Sunday, Jan. 29: The Montgomery County Camp & Summer Fun Expo/Hilton Hotel & Executive Meeting Center/Rockville, Md.
Saturday & Sunday, Feb. 25-26: The Northern Virginia Camp & Summer Fun Expo/Dulles Town Center Mall, Dulles, VA.
www.washingtonparent.com/

Kids4Peace Camp: <http://www.k4p.org/chapters/washington-dc/>

Tips on Trips and Camps: (Feb. 12, 1-3:30 p.m.) Walt Whitman High School, 7100 Whittier Blvd. Bethesda, Md., 301-881-0547 or <http://tipsontripsandcamps.com/dc/>

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Council Considers Community Center Locations

FROM PAGE 3

Bridge Road and George Mason Boulevard. It's City-owned land in a central location near downtown. It's easily accessible and is served by public transportation. There's room for an additional building, but it's a fairly small footprint and structured parking would be necessary to accommodate all uses.

* The GMU Townhouse Complex is also near downtown and served by public transportation. It's owned by the GMU Foundation and consists of two parcels on Chain Bridge Road between West Drive and Canfield Street. Its use would require the foundation possibly swapping it to the City for land elsewhere or selling it outright. But it's only 3.1 acres and its irregular shape might pose a development challenge.

* The Old Fairfax Elementary site is on 2 acres at the corner of Main and Locust streets. It's centrally located and easily accessible, and nearby Ratcliffe Park and the Fairfax Museum could complement community-center functions. But this property is privately owned and isn't currently for sale. It's also small in size, the City would have to purchase it, and it would then no longer provide tax income for the City.

Forman sought the Council's guidance and permission to proceed with the investigation, plus discussions of partnering. He also suggested engaging a consultant to analyze each of the six, finalist sites – the other three were Providence Park, Paul VI High and the Willard Health Center property – and make recommendations about the uses and how they'd fit on each site.

He said the next steps would be determining the location and doing a funding and operational analysis. Then a consultant could do the community-center design and layout, estimate the architectural and engineering costs, and then determine the costs of operation and maintenance.

"We could prepare the issue for a bond referendum, potentially by November 2018," said Forman. "And throughout the process, we'd have continuous public involvement and input, including from the Green Acres [Feasibility Study] Committee."



The Old Fairfax Elementary site, aerial view.

THE CITY'S SCHOOL BOARD holds a Deed of Covenant on the Green Acres property, in case it's again needed for a school someday. So Councilwoman Ellie Schmidt asked, "How far out will we be able to predict the need for a new elementary school?" She said demographics, new development, school-boundary changes and special programs could all influence enrollment in the future.

"Enrollment is expected to increase in the Providence Elementary area by 2020," she said. "So the School Board may need a new school in 15-20 years – or maybe never – so they want to retain the covenant on the property. Although, school boundaries can be redrawn to deal with increased enrollment."

City Schools Superintendent Peter Noonan said the school population on opening day in September was down some in three out of the four schools. However, he noted that Daniels Run Elementary is now exceeding its 735-student capacity and "over 99 percent of its students live in the

City of Fairfax." In September 2015, it started the year with 713 students, but it opened in 2016 with 755 students.

"Our population of students in poverty at Providence and Daniels Run continues to increase each year," said Noonan. "But there are state caps on the number of K through second-grade students in poverty that can be in a school. So it creates a need for space. As more and more children need free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch, we may hit those state caps."

Schmidt asked the potential cost to renovate the Green Acres building, and Parks and Recreation Director Cathy Salgado said it would be "at least \$10 million."

Councilman Jeff Greenfield asked if any consideration was given to the pine-tree area at the end of Van Dyke Park. Councilman Michael DeMarco – who was on the Green Acres committee along with Councilwoman Janice Miller – said it was one of the 21 sites evaluated, but the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board "had resistance to it since it's one of our premier, open spaces in the City."

"But we could still consider this site," added Miller. "It would create a synergy with the Sherwood Center and create a campus."

Greenfield noted the existing traffic already on Old Lee Highway, with schools, the police station and the Sherwood Center along it, but said it could be considered for a community-center site. Mayor Steve Stombres then asked if the City should move forward with this project.

"The committee told us we have a significant need for a community center, Green Acres would be too expensive to renovate and we could find a more suitable location," said DeMarco. "So I think we should proceed. My preference is to find a site we already own."

Miller listed Green Acres's drawbacks, including inadequate parking and no lighting, and said the GMU site also has parking issues. "But the School Board is willing to look at another 10-acre site for its Deed of Covenant," she said. "I'd like us to get more information on the locations and then have public outreach."

Schmidt asked for a cost estimate, and Salgado said they could provide it. But, she added, "The more detailed the information we get and the larger the number of sites we consider, the higher the cost."

GREEN ACRES currently houses Main Street Child Development Center and the City's Young at Heart Senior Center, and Councilman David Meyer asked what would happen to Green Acres if it's no longer used for these purposes. "Finding tenants for it could be problematic, so it could be costly," he said.

"The committee asked ourselves that question," replied Miller. "We could possibly use it for senior housing if it were abandoned by both the School Board and the City. Or another school or preschool might want to co-locate there."

The Council then gave City staff the go-ahead to proceed with the community-center project, pending cost estimates, possibly adding back another site and discussing what to do with Green Acres.

Route 123 Road Closure, Detour Set to Begin Jan. 24

As part of the ongoing Northfax project, northbound Route 123/Chain Bridge Road is scheduled to be closed between Fairfax Boulevard (Route 29/50) and Eaton Place beginning Jan. 24.

Traffic on northbound Chain Bridge Road will be directed to turn right onto Fairfax Boulevard, then left on Eaton Place, before returning to Chain Bridge Road. Northbound Chain Bridge Road traffic will have access to I-66.

This detour is scheduled to continue through mid-December. (Dates are subject to last-minute change.)

Southbound Chain Bridge road will remain open.

However, beginning in late July, a lane shift will be in place on southbound Chain Bridge Road between Orchard Street to Fairfax Boulevard. This lane shift is scheduled to continue through late December.

This will affect CUE Bus riders who use the Green 1 Route.

The city has posted signage on Chain Bridge Road and Fairfax Boulevard announcing this detour. Drivers are encouraged to subscribe to Fairfax City Alert to receive road construction alerts via text and email.

Additionally, notices have been posted on the city website, and on Cityscreen-12, the city television station.

The Northfax project will provide road improvements and pedestrian accommodations, as well as eliminate roadway flooding, at the intersection of Route 123/Chain Bridge Road and Fairfax Boulevard. Construction will be completed in summer 2018.

Information: www.northfax.com, 703-385-7810.



Detour plan.

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.

THURSDAY/JAN. 19

Classical Concert noon - 1 p.m. Old Town Hall 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Enjoy a classical music performance by the Friday Morning Music Club featuring works by various composers. Cost: Free fmmc@fmmc.org 703-352-2787 <http://www.fmmc.org/event/old-town-hall-concert-series-12/>

SUNDAY/JAN. 22

Nutrition Workshop 12:30 - 3 p.m. Fairfax Presbyterian Church 10723 Main Street, Fairfax. "Nutrition WS "Recovery, Restoration & Food." Presented by Deb Fitzgerald O'Connell BS in Human Nutrition and Food and an MS in Human Nutrition and Public Health. Tickets include lunch and childcare up to age 8. Multi Purpose Room, Fairfax Presbyterian Church, 10723 Main Street, Fairfax. Take Presbyterian Way off of Main Street. Cost: \$10.00 includes lunch. nutrition@fairfaxpresby.com 703-766-5657. For online registration through January 15: fairfaxpresbyterian.org.

TUESDAY/JAN. 24

Documentary Film, "Thank You For Your Service" 7:30 p.m. at the Angelika Film Center Mosaic District, 2911 District Ave, Fairfax. Dealing with the mental health issues



PHOTO BY RICHARD TERMEINE/COURTESY OF CENTER FOR THE ARTS

'Murder on the Nile' on GMU Stage

Aquila Theatre presents Agatha Christie's "Murder on the Nile" at George Mason University, Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performance Sunday, Jan. 22, 2017 at 4 p.m. Tickets: \$26, \$37 and \$44. Call 888-945-2468 or visit www.cfa.gmu.edu Note: There will be a pre-performance discussion 45 minutes before the show.

confronting many recently returning veterans, this is described as one of the best films of the year. It won best film at the 2016 G.I. Film Festival. Tickets are on sale at: <http://gathr.us/screening/18521>. There are no box office sales. Access the movie trailer at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNJrXxHCGDU.

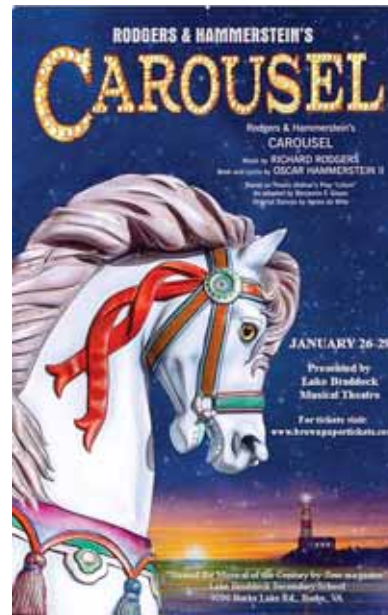
Hammerstein was once named "the musical of the century" by Time magazine. Opening night is January 26 and the cast will have a dress rehearsal on Jan. 21st if you would like to get some photos of students in costumes. Cost: Tickets start at \$12 and are available from www.brownpapertickets.com.

THURSDAY/JAN. 26

Lake Braddock Secondary School's production of **Carousel** 7:30 p.m. 9200 Burke Lake Rd, Burke. This classic musical by Rodgers and

FRIDAY/JAN. 27

Lake Braddock Secondary School's production of **Carousel** 7:30 p.m. 9200 Burke Lake Rd, Burke.



Lake Braddock Secondary School's production of **Carousel** kicks off Thursday Jan. 26 and will have showings through Sunday Jan. 29. This classic musical by Rodgers and Hammerstein was once named "the musical of the century" by Time magazine. Tickets start at \$12 and are available from www.brownpapertickets.com.

SATURDAY/JAN. 28

Lake Braddock Secondary School's production of **Carousel** shows at 2 p.m. & 8 p.m. 9200 Burke Lake Rd, Burke.

History Lecture on Parson Mason Locke Weems 1 - 2 p.m. at Pohick Episcopal Church 9301 Richmond Highway in Lorton, on U.S. Route 1 between Telegraph Road and Pohick Road. The staff of the Weems-Botts Museum in Dumfries will be giving a lecture on the colorful and controversial figure of Parson Mason Locke Weems. Weems served as temporary Minister at Pohick Church from about 1800 to 1817. He was the writer of the biography of George Washington that contains the famous "Cherry Tree Story." 703-928-8184 or dickhamly@aol.com www.pohick.org.

SUNDAY/JAN. 29

Lake Braddock Secondary School's production of **Carousel** 3 p.m. 9200 Burke Lake Rd, Burke. **Virginia Dance Coalition Dance Festival** 10 - 8 p.m. Ernst Cultural Center on the Northern Virginia Community College's Annandale Campus 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. The program includes three Master Classes (Ballet, Modern, and African) along with dancer wellness and career seminars. There are two performances - an Informal Showcase for emerging companies and artists, and a Gala Evening Performance for the professional and pre-professional groups. Registration info at www.VirginiaDanceCoalition.org 703-409-7988.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11



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BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Great Falls resident Kim Karanik navigated a three-and-a-half-year obstacle course to make riding activities and equestrian lessons more accessible and available to county children.

"I stand by the strength children gain from riding," she testified before the Planning Commission on Thursday, Jan. 12.

Dranesville Supervisor John Foust served as a course judge of sorts, Karanik said, helping her navigate county policy along the way. The county created an Equestrian Task Force which published a report in March 2012 that claimed "zoning regulations act as obstacles in providing equestrian opportunities for private horse owners as well as commercial equestrian-related providers."

The Planning Commission held a public hearing Thursday, Jan. 12, to discuss a change to zoning ordinance that will allow "small scale horseback riding lessons as a home occupation subject to specific limitations designed to minimize the impact of the lessons on surrounding properties," according to Planning Commission documents.

THE BOARD of Supervisors will hold its public hearing on Feb. 14.

Specifically, the proposed ordinance would allow residents to conduct riding lessons at home like piano lessons, tutoring, or other private instruction activities.

According to Planning Commission documents, hours of operation would be limited from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. to minimize impact on surrounding neighbors; and all horses for riding must be kept on the property and can't be transported or ridden to the property for lessons. On lots between two and five acres, the maximum amount of instruction is eight students in one day and no more than two students can be given lessons at any given time. On lots five acres or more, a maximum of four students can be taught at any given time.

"This has garnered so much support from the riding and equestrian community," said at-large Planning Commissioner Janyce Hedetniemi. "It has been encouraging to those of us who love horses here in Fairfax County."

About six equestrian supporters testified in support after another Great Falls resident highlighted impacts that the proposed ordinance could have on surrounding neighbors.

"This type of applicant needs to be given public scrutiny. There's a huge difference between indoor piano lessons and outdoor horseback riding instruction," she said, asking who will monitor care of the horses and

the amount of activity that takes place.

No special events will be permitted. "Good luck enforcing that," said the Great Falls resident.

The zoning ordinance passed unanimously, but Mount Vernon Planning Commissioner Earl Flanagan urged all to stay involved so the county can monitor the effectiveness of the ordinance, if passed by the supervisors, as well as "fine-tune" necessary specifications.

CURRENTLY, A SPECIAL PERMIT to teach riding lessons requires a \$8,180 application fee, just to start the process.

"While evidence is anecdotal, the equestrian community has seen a long-term decline in the number of riding programs available in Fairfax County, as property owners and horse trainers are concerned about the consequences of potential zoning violations associated with the board of more than three horses or with offering any riding lessons," according to the staff reports.

Before last week's zoning ordinance hearing, Karanik said zoning regulations go "against one group of children that don't always fit into the soccer group or the basketball group.

"Every other sport, you're allowed to do at your home," said Karanik.

Vietnam Veterans Host Award Winning Documentary in Fairfax

On Tuesday, January 24, at 7:30 p.m., Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 227 will host the award winning documentary film, "Thank You For Your Service," at the Angelika Film Center, Mosaic District, in Fairfax. Dealing with the mental health issues confronting many recently returning veterans, this is described as one of the best films of the year. It won best film at the 2016 G.I. Film Festival. Tickets are on sale at: <http://gathr.us/screening/18521>. There are no box office sales.

The film takes aim at the failed men-

tal health policies within the U.S. military and their tragic consequences. It tells the stories of four struggling Iraq War veterans, along with interviews of top military and civilian leaders. Observing the systemic neglect, the film argues for significant internal change and offers a roadmap of hope.

Interviews include Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Admiral Mike Mullen, Generals David Petraeus and Loree Sutton, Sebastian Junger, Nicholas Kristof, Dexter Filkins, Senator Patty Murray, Mayor Rudy Giuliani and Colonels Lawrence Wilkerson and Dave Sutherland.

There will be a short panel discussion after the film featuring Carrie Ann Alford, Policy Director, Virginia Department of Veterans Services, Dr. Joseph Tarantolo, a psychiatrist in Washington, D.C. (who appears in the film) and Maura Levesque, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in Vienna.

Counselors will be available in the audience in case anyone finds the film too disturbing.

Access the movie trailer at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNJrXxHCGDU>.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 9

1898 Looting of Burke 4:30 - 6 Abiding Presence Lutheran Church 6304 Lee Chapel Rd, Burke. Cindy Bennett, BHS Treasurer, will speak on the 1898 looting of Burke by troops from Camp Alger during the Spanish-American War. Cost: Free. slawski_brian@yahoo.com www.burkehistoricalsociety.org
Concert by the Havenwood Trio 6 p.m. Calvary Hill Baptist Church, 9301 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. 703-323-1347.

TUESDAY/JAN.31

Writer Liane Kupferberg Carter at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia 7 p.m. 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. The insightful author will speak about her memoir, Ketchup is My Favorite Vegetable: A Family Grows Up with Autism, an unflinching portrait of family life, and a look at what has really gone on in the two decades after her son's diagnosis. Tickets: \$11 General Admission, \$8 for JCCNV members, persons 65+ and under 30.

Tickets are available at <http://bpt.me/2740223>. 703-323-0880 jccnv.org.

ONGOING

Senior Line Dancing 1 - 2 p.m. Little River Glen Senior Center 4001 Barker Ct, Fairfax. Line Dancing is a gentle, social form of aerobic activity. Studies have shown it aids in warding off Alzheimer's disease. No previous experience needed. Cost: \$5 per 8 week session. barbriba@hotmail.com 703-524-3739

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

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EXERCISE PROGRAM Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 a.m. 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 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.



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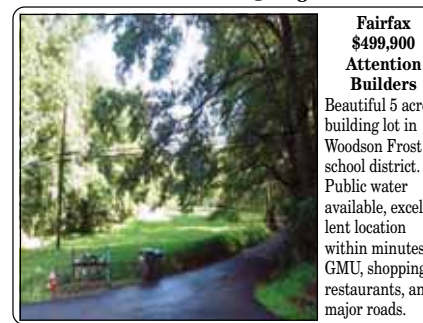
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