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**CONNECTION**

# Looking for Groundhog At Frying Pan Farm Park

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Fairfax County Park Authority's Rebecca Henenlotter pulls leaves out of a groundhog den outside of the Frying Pan Farm Park Visitor Center so the crowd can get a better look at what a burrow looks like.

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PHOTO BY FALLON FORBUSH/THE CONNECTION









PHOTO COURTESY OF KENSINGTON AT FALLS CHURCH

**Denise Schossler 's 95-year-old mother will move into the newly opened Kensington Falls Church assisted living facility later this month.**

# To Move Or Not To Move

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

ne of the most heart-wrenching decisions that Denise Schossler, her two siblings and her 95-year-old mother had to make was whether or not to move her into an assisted living facility, leaving the home where she's lived since 1954. Physical limitations and a need for social interaction drove the decision to relocate to the newly opened Kensington Falls Church.

"My mother has managed to stay in her home all this time with the help of an aide who comes every day, but she realized that it just couldn't continue. One of the main things is the isolation and the loneliness," said Schossler. "She needs more social interaction than she gets alone in her home. She's someone who's

had an active social life, but now it's just television and books."

A dearth of social interaction is one of the factors that can lead seniors into assisted living facilities. In fact, a recent study published in the Journal of Gerontology shows that seniors living in assisted living facilities have fewer unmet needs such as companionship, help with cooking, bathing and doing laundry than those who live independently. However, the survey of more than 4,000 people over the age of 65 shows that even in such retirement communities, unmet needs still exist. To address this challenge, local gerontology experts say that families must determine whether a loved one's needs meet the criteria for assisted living candidacy and once placed, work to ensure that those needs are being met.

"In counseling families making this difficult decision, I focus on safety factors for the patient and other family members," said Maureen Moriarty, D.N.P., assistant professor of nursing at Marymount University in Arlington. "Often cognitive impairment is the reason for assisted living. Perhaps memory is affected so the patient can no longer safely drive or remember the steps  
SEE TO MOVE, PAGE 7

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# And So It Begins — Again



By **KENNETH B. LOURIE**

Thank God! Another three months, (13 weeks actually) of wedded-type bliss until my next scan scheduled for mid April. Save for four weeks of pre- and post-chemotherapy-infusion non-bliss in the interim when the effects of the before, during, after treatment will make me feel less like the person I will otherwise be — for the nine or so other weeks, I am indeed lucky to be “stable” and looking forward.

However, I will be off to a bit of a bumpy start as a result of the timing of my most recent chemotherapy infusion and its negative side effects coming so soon on the heels of the previous week’s positive scan news. Not that the negative overwhelms the positive in the slightest, it’s more that it slows down my progression from feeling abnormal to feeling normal; well, as much as one diagnosed and living with a “terminal” disease, non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV, can. Which, as you regular readers know, I’m generally able to do, except when there a blips, and for the next week, I’ll be “blipped.” Having considered the inevitable taste and eating issues I typically face post infusion, I spoke with a nutritionist this past week to see if I’ve been missing a boat somewhere. Unfortunately, other than remaining well-hydrated, it seems there’s very little I can do other than to endure the post-chemotherapy weak.

But of course, it’s the big picture (no tumor progression, no fluid build up) that matters most, not the small picture (the pre- and post-scan anxiety and the post-chemotherapy eating issues). And of course, it’s nothing new. I’ve been through variations of this routine going on nearly eight years now, since the diagnostic process began on Jan. 1, 2009, when I first visited the Emergency Room. Pain in my rib cage had migrated from one side to the other and simultaneously I was having difficulty catching my breath. Then, even I knew, I needed some medical attention. Two and a half months later after the usual schedule of tests, interpretations and more tests, I received my diagnosis with which you are all so familiar.

Amazingly, life has gone on and fallen into a sort of routine. The most recent one, going back approximately three and a half years, began with my first and only hospitalization followed up a month or so later with the beginning of my Alimta infusion. For the most part, the infusion/experience has been quite manageable, and according to my oncologist, “great.” So “great,” in fact, that we have been extending the interval of my infusions from three weeks originally to four weeks to four/five weeks to now infusing forward, every five weeks. This will give my body more time to recuperate between chemotherapy and give me more quality-weeks of life (always a concern of my oncologist); minimizing eating and anxiety issues.

For the moment, we’re keeping the scan schedule to every three months. As to our concern about trying to limit the exposure to radiation — per scan; as my oncologist sort of joked, it’s the toxins from the chemotherapy that are more harmful (it’s akin to the line from the movie “Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid” when Paul Newman snickered at Robert Redford’s concern about not being able to swim — should they in fact jump off the cliff into the raging river below, to escape Joe Lefors and the Indian tracker, Lord Baltimore: “Swim? Are you crazy? The fall will probably kill you.”)

So by the time you all are reading this column, Thursday-ish, I’ll be mostly back to eating normally — well, normal for me. It’s a routine I’ve become accustomed to and one with which I can live, live being the operable word. Certainly not a life without some hardships and difficulties, but still a life worth living; with some weeks harder than others; this week certainly being one of them. It won’t be pretty but soon enough it will have passed with clear sailing ahead for the next four weeks until you-know-what.

*Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.*

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## 21 Announcements

**LEGAL NOTICE**  
The Virginia Department of Historic Resources will conduct a public information hearing of the Lake Anne Village Center Historic District on February 6, 2017. The meeting begins at 7pm, at the JoAnn Rose Gallery, Reston Community Center 1609-A Washington Plaza Reston, VA 20190. Public comment regarding the proposal will be taken at the time of the hearing or can be sent to: Director Julie Langan, VA Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221. This proposal has been recommended eligible for the Virginia Landmarks and National Registers. This proposal will be presented to the State Review Board and the Board of Historic Resources on March 16, 2017 in Fredericksburg, VA. For a copy of the proposal and/or a boundary map, contact Aubrey VonLindern at 540.868.7029 or aubrey.vonlindern@dhr.virginia.gov.

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## WELLBEING

# To Move Or Not To Move

FROM PAGE 5

in carrying out activities of daily living such as cooking, bathing or management of finances.”

In making this decision, an evaluation by an objective gerontology expert can be necessary, says Patrice Winter, DPT, assistant professor at George Mason University in the Department of Global and Community Health. “They come out and evaluate the house and the person as well,” she said. “You have an objective, unemotional person instead of an adult child going, ‘Mom you can’t live here anymore.’ and the mom saying, ‘Stay out of my business.’”

Such an evaluation will show that there are times when a lifestyle adjustment is all that is needed. “Sometimes they can offer simple solutions that can make huge changes,” said Winter. “Could it be that they need their eyesight and hearing checked? Or the washing machine moved upstairs?”

When seeking an evaluation, Winter recommends local social service agencies such as the Fairfax County Area Agency on Aging. “The issue may not be cognitive, but the need for a living environment with more support may be triggered by physical limitations,” added Moriarty. “Perhaps a chronic degenerative illness such as Parkinson’s Disease has left the patient with physical care needs beyond the scope of family members.”

Safety can become an issue when family members’ physical limitations restrict the quality of care they are able to offer. “This opens issues not only to patient safety but also the family member may be frail or have their own physical limitations that limit their capacity to assist someone who, for instance, has balance loss,” said Moriarty. “The key assessment as a clinician for me is that the family no longer has the resources to care safely for this individual in a home environment.”

“If there is any question at all, the person should have a medical evaluation,” added Winter. “There could be an imbalance in the system that could cause changes so a really good physical by a geriatric internist would be paramount before any drastic actions are taken.”

## Local Resources

- ♦ Alexandria Area Agency on Aging  
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/Aging>
- ♦ Fairfax County Area Agency on Aging  
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/>
- ♦ Arlington Aging and Disability Services Division  
<https://aging-disability.arlingtonva.us/>
- ♦ Kensington Falls Church Open House  
Feb. 1, 5 and 22, 4:30 to 7 p.m.  
700 West Broad St., Falls Church

Once a senior has moved into an assisted living facility, they often need someone to advocate on their behalf. Regular visits and telephone calls to both the family member and the staff are necessary. “You need to make sure you know what’s going on,” said Thompson, who recently moved her own mother into an assisted living facility. “It’s OK to be a pest. I communicate with the staff at my mother’s facility. She complains to me about things that she won’t complain to the staff about so I have to complain on her behalf.”

Even in the best of facilities, a person’s needs can be inadvertently overlooked, says Thompson, so a family member’s presence is necessary. “Walk around, pay attention to how other residents seem,” she said. “Are they happy and engaged or are there signs of neglect?”

“Establish a relationship with those providers who will be involved in the care of your family member,” added Moriarty. “Become part of the team by attending regular team meetings. Make them aware of your loved one’s special needs. For example, if your family member always had tea in the morning, request that this continues.”

Schossler says that her proximity to the Kensington Falls Church will allow her to be in regular contact with both her mother and the staff.

“My mother has grandchildren and great-grandchildren and we can visit her because the Kensington is just a few minutes away from where I live,” she said. “My mother has already made connections with three people who will be there, so she’s looking forward to moving. We happened to find the right fit at the right time.”

**We didn’t inherit the earth from our parents. We’re borrowing it from our children.**

—Chief Seattle  
(1788-1866)  
Suquamish/  
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# CALENDAR

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## SUNDAY/FEB. 5

**Super Bowl Showdown at American Tap Room** 10 - 3 p.m. 1811 Library Street, Reston Town Center. All You Can Eat Brunch, pre-game tailgate party with drink features and charity raffle for a prize from 4 - 7 p.m. Take-out Wing Platter specials also available. 703-834-0400 [americantaproom.com](http://americantaproom.com)

## SATURDAY/FEB. 6

**Father Daughter Dance.** 6:30-9 p.m. at Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave, Herndon. A moment father's will treasure for the rest of their lives and a special night for daughters. This semi-formal event will include an evening of dancing, appetizers, drinks, a photo of the couple, and a keepsake. Daughter may be accompanied by an uncle, grandfather, or a male guardian. \$50 per couple/\$25 for each additional daughter. [www.herndon-va.gov](http://www.herndon-va.gov).

## TUESDAY/FEB. 7

**IIIT Lecture "Islam and the Problem of Slavery"** 6:30 - 8 p.m. 500 Grove St., Suite 200, Herndon.

**Reston Lions Bland Competition.** 7:30 p.m. Reston Community Center at Hunter Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Sixteen students with a variety of voice, piano and instrumental talents compete for awards on the local club level and for opportunities to advance to Regional, District and State finals. Participation and concert admissions are free. [restonlions.org](http://restonlions.org)

## WEDNESDAY/FEB. 8

**Fracking "What's the Fuss?"** 7:15-9:00 p.m. Reston Community Center in Hunters Woods, Room 3, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Where is it taking place in Virginia, and what should we do about it? Join Reston LWV members as they continue a two-month study of this environmental issue currently being examined both nationally and in Virginia. Learn the facts about what is happening in Virginia, whether we should be concerned, and what we should do about it. Cost: Free. 703-471-6364 [www.lwv-fairfax.org](http://www.lwv-fairfax.org)

## SATURDAY/FEB. 11

**2017 Virginia Polar Dip** Registration at noon Plunge at 2 p.m. Reston Community Center, Lake Anne Village Center, Reston. With the strength of an event such as the 2017 Virginia Polar Dip and the resources of Camp Sunshine, the goal is to raise in excess of \$100,000 in 2017. That is enough to send 40 families from the Mid-Atlantic area (including VA/MD/DC/DE/PA/WV/NC) to attend Camp Sunshine. All participants who raise at least \$100 will receive a highly coveted "I DID IT" event tshirt. [csun.convio.net](http://csun.convio.net)

**Pre-Valentine Cooking Class at Il Fornaio** 11 - 1 p.m. Il Fornaio, 11990 Market Street, Reston Town Center. Join us for our first men-only cooking class. Our chef will instruct you in an easy-to-prepare gourmet Valentine's Day dinner for your special someone at home. Recipes, shopping list, wine pairing and handy tips will be provided. \$75. [Facebook.com/IlFornaioReston](http://Facebook.com/IlFornaioReston) Reservations: [banquets.reston@ilfo.com](mailto:banquets.reston@ilfo.com) or 703-437-5544

**Handmade Valentine Card Workshop at GRACE** 9:30 - 11 a.m. Greater Reston Arts Center,



**On Saturday, Feb. 4, from 6:30 - 9 p.m. the Herndon Community Center will host a Father Daughter Dance. A moment father's will treasure for the rest of their lives and a special night for daughters. This semi-formal event will include an evening of dancing, appetizers, drinks, a photo of the couple, and a keepsake. Daughter may be accompanied by an uncle, grandfather, or a male guardian. \$50 per couple. The Herndon Community Center is located at 814 Ferndale Ave, Herndon. [www.herndon-va.gov](http://www.herndon-va.gov).**

**A lecture on "Islam and the Problem of Slavery" will be held at IIIT 500 Grove St. Suite 200, Herndon. on Tuesday Feb 7 from 6:30 - 8 p.m.**

12001 Market Street, #103, Reston Town Center. Using punches, origami, and stamping techniques, create a one-of-a-kind Valentine for someone special! Sign up the whole family for this fun workshop led by GRACE staff. Note: Parents will need to assist children with the creation of cards, and children must be accompanied by a participating adult. Adults may come on their own and do not need to be accompanied by a child. [Facebook.com/GreaterRestonArtsCenter](http://Facebook.com/GreaterRestonArtsCenter) Registration required. 703-471-9242 [restonarts.org](http://restonarts.org)

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**Over-40 Softball League.** A Fairfax-based league is looking for enough players to form another team. Players must be at least 40 years of age to be eligible. All games are doubleheaders - played on Sundays at Bready Park in Herndon between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. If interested, email [skeduman@aol.com](mailto:skeduman@aol.com) for more information.

**NextStop's Shakespeare "Much Ado About Nothing"** Jan. 19 - Feb. 12 NextStop Theatre 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Tickets at: [www.NextStopTheatre.org](http://www.NextStopTheatre.org) 866-811-4111

**"A Bird in the Hand"** through spring 2017 Reston Town Square Park, 11990 Market Street, Reston Town Center. See and explore Patrick Dougherty's monumental public art sculpture made from tree saplings. Presented by GRACE in collaboration with IPAR. 703-471-9242 [restonarts.org](http://restonarts.org)



**AnuRa Worden of Centerville and her daughter Stella, 4, listen to Rebecca Henenlotter, who works for the Fairfax County Park Authority, as she shows people the groundhog den outside the Frying Pan Farm Park Visitor Center.**

## Looking for Groundhog At Frying Pan Farm Park

BY FALLON FORBUSH  
THE CONNECTION

The groundhog that lives on the grounds of Frying Pan Farm Park did not come out of its den for visitors on Sunday, Jan. 29. The next day, all Fairfax County public schools had a two-hour delay due to inclement weather.

Whether this is a foreshadowing of what Punxsutawney Phil will see on Groundhog Day later this week is yet to be seen. Nearly 60 parents and children visited the park's visitor center to learn about the weather-predicting rodent and the holiday that celebrates them every Feb. 2.

The groundhog, also known as a woodchuck, whistle pig or land beaver is a rodent of the family Sciuridae, John McNair, who works for the Park Authority, explained to the gathering. In fact, the animal belongs to the group of large ground squirrels known as marmots. The whistlepig nickname comes from the sound that it makes.

"Groundhogs make a high-pitched, squeaking bird chirp sound," he said.

The animal eats a diet of grasses and vegetables, including dandelions, berries and garden vegetables. They are also

known to eat grubs, he said. McNair said he was certain that groundhogs at the park eat healthy amounts of blackberries off the bushes that can be found on the property.

But what the animal is best known for is digging. He told the gathering that the holes they dig are much more than what they seem.

"Groundhogs have rooms just like our homes do," he said.

In these burrows are where they hibernate for three to seven months out of the year, he said. According to folklore, if a groundhog emerges from its burrow on Groundhog Day and does not see its shadow, then the spring season will come early. If the groundhog sees its shadow and retreats back into its den, then winter weather will persist for six more weeks.

Visitors did not see the groundhog that made the den at the park, but it tends to hang out in the cow field when it is not hibernating, says Fairfax County Park Authority's Rebecca Henenlotter.

She took groups out to see the opening to the animal's den and explained how groundhogs can burrow many rooms for its den as far down as five feet and as wide as 50 feet.

The "R" is capitalized

PHOTO BY FALLON FORBUSH/THE CONNECTION