



2016 VIRGINIA PRESS Association
Oak Hill
Herndon
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.

WEEK IN HERNDON

Father Daughter Dance Set for Feb. 4

A father daughter dance, the semi-formal dance for girls ages 3-12, will be held at the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon on Saturday, Feb. 4, 6:30-9 p.m. Event attendees will enjoy a catered buffet of appetizers and sweets, dancing with a DJ, a photo booth with props and complimentary photo strips, and a keepsake gift for each daughter. Daughters may be accompanied by a father, uncle, grandfather, or male guardian. \$50 per couple and \$25 each additional daughter. Sign-up at the Herndon Community Center or visit <https://herndonwebtrac.com>.

Contact: Herndon Parks and Recreation Department, 703-787-7300 or visit herndon-va.gov/recreation.

Herndon Over-40 Softball League Needs One More Team

The Herndon Masters Over-40 Softball League will be starting its 27th year this season and is looking to add one more 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 - 6 p.m. The season runs from late April to early October and usually guarantees 26-30 games.

Interested teams can contact the commissioner via email at skeduman@aol.com. Individuals may also reply. If no full teams apply and enough individuals

do, it may be possible to create a new team from them. Existing teams might be looking to add more players as well and those names will be made available to them.

Nysmith Team Wins Highest Honors in WordMasters Challenge

A fourth grade team from The Nysmith School in Herndon achieved Highest Honors in the recent WordMasters Challenge—a national vocabulary competition involving nearly 150,000 students annually—scoring an impressive 185 points out of a possible 200 to place third in the nation.

Rishabh Kumaran (of Herndon) and Nicholas Toskey (South Riding) each earned a perfect score, making them two of only 22 fourth graders in the country to do so. Nysmith's Ananya Kakayadi (Reston) also recorded an outstanding score competing in the event's highly competitive Gold division.

The WordMasters Challenge is an exercise in critical thinking that first encourages students to become familiar with a set of interesting new words (considerably harder than grade level) and then challenges them to use those words to complete analogies expressing various kinds of logical relationships. Working to solve the analogies helps students learn to think both analytically and metaphorically. Although most vocabulary enrichment and analogy-solving programs are designed for high school students, WordMasters Challenge materials have been specifically created for students in Grades 3-8.



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Neighbors Rehash Shooting Death

Herndon neighborhood recovers from shooting incident.

By FALLON FORBUSH
THE CONNECTION

Monique Tran spent her morning running errands. She thought it was going to be a typical day. This was Monday, Jan. 16, the day the Fairfax County police shot and killed her neighbor Mohammad Azim Doudzai, 32, just outside his home, according to police.

That morning, she went to the gym, got a haircut and did some grocery shopping at Costco. When she got home around 2 p.m. her husband helped her bring the groceries inside.

This was when she noticed her neighbor Doudzai talking with two people outside. She greeted him, but did not get the usual response.

"When I see him, I say hello and he's very nice," she says. "But nobody answered me."

Doudzai routinely has customers in his driveway because he fixes cars, according to Tran. This observation is as much as she and other neighbors living on the other street knew about him.

The unusual silence was a small sign that things were not normal. By 3:30 p.m., her home would be surrounded by police officers, responding to a double shooting, fire and hostage situation next door, according to police. "Police knocked on the door and said, 'Get out, get out of the house,'" she says. In her panic, she left her coat and her cellphone. Her husband also ran out of the house without a coat and shoes.

"No purse, no phone, no nothing," she says. "I could not contact my daughter to come and pick me up. I could not call my son ... It was very scary," she says. "I've never seen anything like this before."

Tran has lived on Covered Wagon Lane for 17 years. She and her neighbors living in the 10 townhomes on the street are used to a quiet neighborhood, she says.

THE SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD is



The suburban neighborhood where the scene of the crime occurred is directly off Fox Mill Road in Herndon, outside of town limits. Parking on the streets within the neighborhood is by permit only. Less than 80 steps from the street of the shooting sits the neighborhood's basketball court, where children often play.

directly off Fox Mill Road in Herndon, outside of town limits. Parking on the streets within the neighborhood is by permit only.

Less than 80 steps from Covered Wagon Lane sits the neighborhood's basketball court, where children often play.

Sleem Bhatti, who lives a few doors down, moved onto the street with his family less than a month ago.

"I drove my son home from school and arrived to police everywhere," he says. "There was yellow tape from Fox Mill [Road] to Rolling Plains [Drive]."

While he and his son couldn't get in, those on the street who were spending the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday indoors were also evacuated.

"A cop called us to get out of the house," says Amishaben Patel, who also lives on the street. "We were scared."

Though she did not know what was going on at the time of the evacuation, Patel says the police gathered the neighborhood

in a community hall at a location on the other side of Fox Mill Road and were given an update on the investigation.

"They didn't allow us back to our homes until 7:30 p.m." she says.

Nearby residents on adjacent Rolling Plains Drive and Covered Wagon Court were also caught up in the violence.

Haritha Govindu lives with her family less than 40 steps from the crime scene on Rolling Plains Drive. Her street was not evacuated. "We were asked to stay inside," she says. She and her husband heard shots while they were looking out their window, which views out onto both her street and Covered Wagon Lane, she says. They did not see the fatal shooting.

"It's a quiet neighborhood," she says. "This kind of thing is not expected. I've never seen that before. It's usually friendly."

During the chaos, she was very concerned for her 8-year-old daughter and was glad that her younger daughter was away at a

daycare at the time.

Barbara Smith, who moved to her home in 1998, recalled trying to drive home after the violence began. When she pulled up and tried to get into Covered Wagon Court, she saw the emergency vehicles. She thought it was just a routine response, perhaps a false fire alarm, she says.

It wasn't until she saw a police officer standing with a rifle blocking entry into the barricaded area that she realized this was not a typical house call. "I don't know what [Doudzai] burned, but it smelled like rubber," she says. "It stunk."

Doudzai set the townhome on fire while he and a roommate were both inside, according to police.

She left the area and didn't return until later that night until she knew it was safe. It was while she was away that she learned the situation ended with the death of the suspect.

"Since it was an officer-involved shooting, they have to cross every T and dot every I," she says of the investigation.

TEN DAYS AFTER the event on Thursday, Jan. 26, Police Chief Edwin Roessler released a statement telling the public that he would not release the officer's name who used a lethal firearm that killed Doudzai. This was despite the department's policy of doing so within 10 days.

"I informed the Board of Supervisors this afternoon that a thorough threat assessment is still being conducted regarding the officer involved in this incident," he said in his statement. "County policy is to release an officer's name within 10 days, unless I can articulate a risk to that officer."

The involved officer, who was not injured, remains on routine administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation, according to police.

Meanwhile, neighbors are adjusting back to normalcy. On Tuesday evening, Jan. 24, a group of kids were playing on the basketball court once again.

Herndon Family Receives Good Neighbor Award

Barbara Glakas, who is a member of Herndon's Cultivating Community Initiative, presented the town's Good Neighbor award to the Lamber-Turgeon family on Tuesday, Jan. 24, during the town council meeting. Neighbors who nominated the family say they always help with upkeep of the street's yards and sidewalks. During the presentation, Glakas said the neighbors were especially thankful to the family during the winter because they take on the responsibility of snow blowing all the sidewalks. Colette Lamber-Turgeon, to the right of Mayor Lisa Merkel, accepted the award on behalf of her family.

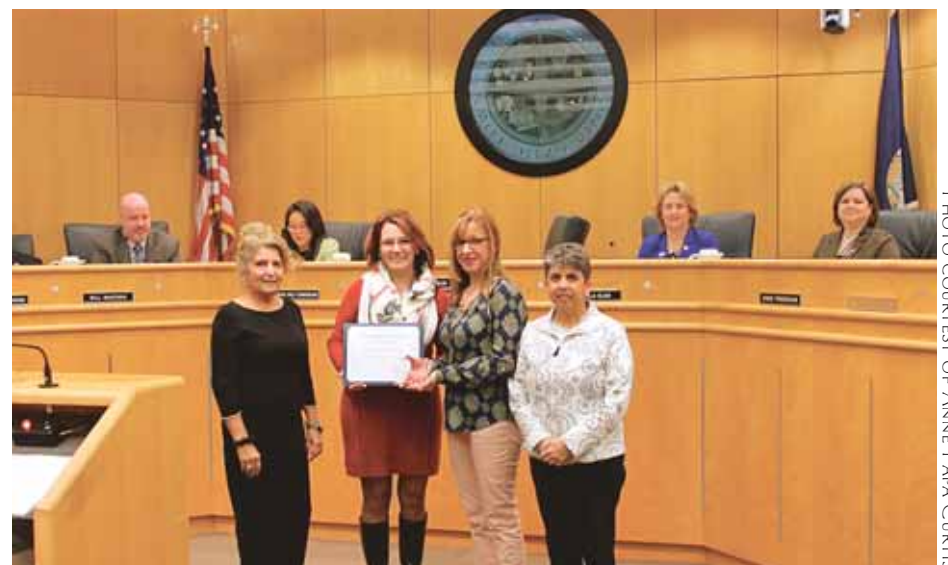


PHOTO COURTESY OF ANNE PARA CURTIS

OPINION

So Much Happening, Don't Blink

Demonstrations at Dulles in reaction to travel ban; fast moving General Assembly lacks transparency; other key issues.

There is so much going on this week: Locally, the effects of a travel ban at odds with American values played out at Dulles International Airport, but stimulated a heartening response, with volunteer attorneys offering help, local, state and federal elected officials demanding accountability and peaceful demonstrators protesting the un-American assault on travel from particular Muslim-majority countries.

"I was just amazed at the number of people, the energy, the spirit, the spontaneity," said Del. Marcus Simon, who used FaceBook Live to share the scene over several days. "In some ways, it was heartening, to see so many Northern Virginians reacting."

See reporter Tim Peterson's story in this paper.

CROSSOVER is Feb. 7; that's when only bills that have passed either the House of Delegates or the Virginia Senate can move forward.

As this date approaches, the General Assembly has a serious transparency issue, as it continues to kill most proposed legislation with unrecorded voice votes in subcommittee, with no accountability or record of how members voted.

This was raised to new heights earlier this week, when a House of Delegates subcommittee killed proposed constitutional amendments including non-partisan redistricting and restoring voting rights of felons, along with more than 20 proposed amendments, in a single vote.

John Horejsi of Vienna, who heads the organization Social Action Linking Together, notes that his organization is unable to track what

happens to legislation they support. This headline, which ran last week on www.roanoke.com, says it all: "Bill to require recorded votes dies on an unrecorded vote, again."

State Sen. Creigh Deeds continues important work on mental health reform, citing three priorities this year, requiring most of Community Services Boards around the state to provide same-day service and certain outpatient services; to assess and provide care for inmates who have mental health needs; and long-term supportive housing to help avoid repeated mental health crises.

About 200,000 people in Virginia have had their motor vehicle licenses suspended for a legal infraction that has nothing to do with a driving offense. And 650,000 people in Virginia have a suspended license for failing to pay court costs. This is an obstacle to holding a job and being able to meet other obligations, and legislation to stop this counter-productive practice is still alive in the Virginia Senate.

The sale of high-proof grain alcohol in Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control stores passed the House of Delegates earlier in the session, and is just foolish.

EFFORTS by state Sen. Adam P. Ebbin and others, supporting repeal of the Virginia constitutional amendment approved by voters in 2006 forbidding gay marriage should move forward. The 2006 amendment is no longer valid because the U.S. Supreme Court in 2015 legalized same-sex marriage.

State Sen. Chap Petersen introduced a doomed bill to ban contributions from public utilities. "Monopolies like Dominion or Appa-

lachian Power have an undue influence on the political process. That leads to legislation which has a direct cost to Virginia consumers, both residents and small businesses," Petersen said.

It looks like the felony threshold will increase to \$500 from \$200, an important distinction championed by Petersen and state Sen. Scott Surovell.

While the constitutional amendment to address voting rights for felons who have served their sentences died in the above action, Gov. Terry McAuliffe should be commended for restoring the civic rights of more than 128,000 Virginians, and his plans to restore rights for any remaining Virginia citizens who lost their rights. This has been a laborious and worthy process, adapted as needed to meet legal challenges and court rulings.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Submit Photos to Pet Connection

The Pet Connection, a twice-yearly special edition, will publish the last week of February, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by Feb. 15.

Please tell us a little bit about your creature, identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description what is happening in the photo, and include address and phone number (we will not publish your address or phone number, just your town name).

Email editors@connectionnewspapers.com or submit online at www.connectionnewspapers.com/pets.

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Evil and Selfish

To the Editor:

Re: "Protesting Vote Suppression", Letter to the Editor, Jan. 25-31. Congratulations to Nancy Blethen, for her accurate description, concerning the fallacies, of Gerrymandering. The process is evil and selfish, primarily for personal gain, and should be illegal. Thank you Nancy.

Arnold Goldsmith
McLean

Gerry Rosenthal
Great Falls

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

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WELLBEING



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

Local family moves mother into newly opened Kensington Falls Church.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

One 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

"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."

— Denise Schossler

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@dhhr.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.”

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

—Chief Seattle
(1788-1866)
Suquamish/
Duwamish chief

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.”

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 - 10:25 a.m. Sunday School Grades 3 to 6
Music 4 years to 2nd grade
 - 11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
 - 5:00 p.m. Come Just as You Are Contemporary Service
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CALENDAR

Send announcements to www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

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

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.

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

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

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

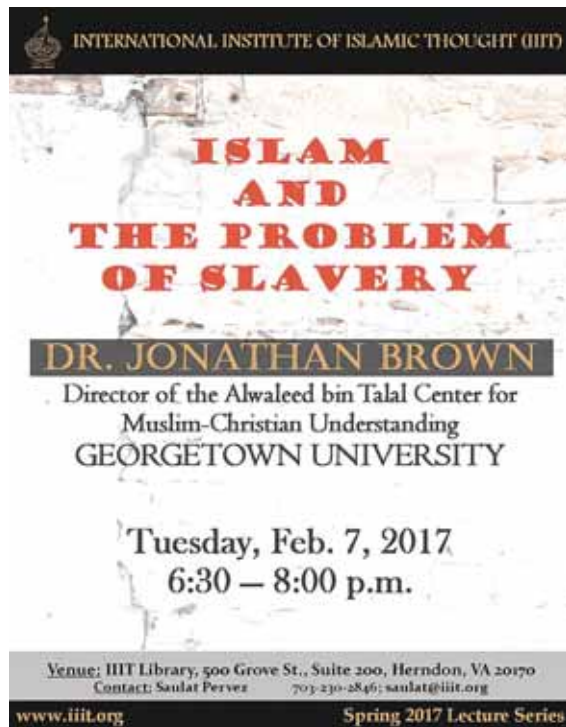
Pre-Valentine Cooking Class at Il Fornaio 11 - 1 p.m. Il Fornaio, 11990 Market Street, Reston Town Center. Join us for our first men-only cooking class. Our chef will instruct you in an easy-to-prepare gourmet Valentine's Day dinner for your special someone at home. Recipes, shopping list, wine pairing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

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 Registration required. 703-471-9242 restonarts.org

Parthenon Huxley at ARTSSPACE HERNDON 7 - 9 p.m. Alternate Rock Singer and Songwriter. Huxley has released nine albums of critically acclaimed, award-winning music. Huxley will be accompanied by the prodigiously talented violinist Ben Hoyt of Baltimore's Peabody School of Music. Come out for this Valentines themed performance. <http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oid=a07edp4z66d17e09d76<=uhpdxpab>

ONGOING All-comers' Group Fun Run at

Potomac River Running. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. For beginners or competitive runners, come out for a fun, low-key run that is safe and social. For more information, call 703-689-0999 <https://potomacriverrunning.com>.

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 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 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



PHOTO BY FALLON FORBUSH/THE CONNECTION

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