

Centreville United Methodist Church pastors Bert Sikkelee (left) and Will Montgomery inside the church sanctuary.

A photograph of two men, Bert Sikkelee and Will Montgomery, standing in a church sanctuary. They are both wearing black clerical robes. Bert Sikkelee, on the left, is wearing a green stole with a gold emblem. Will Montgomery, on the right, is wearing a colorful, patterned stole and a gold cross necklace. They are both smiling. The background shows a church interior with wooden pews and a cross on the wall.

'This Church Is Family'

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'This Church Is Family' Centreville United Methodist Church celebrates 25 years in current building.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

For the members of Centreville United Methodist Church, their Sunday, Feb. 19, services and fellowship were particularly joyful. On that date, they celebrated being in their building on Old Centreville Road for 25 years.

And although this church is now guided by three, new pastors, it was fitting that long-time CUMC pastor, the Rev. Bert Sikkelee, now 80, led that day's special 11 a.m. service. The theme was "I Love My Church."

"This anniversary is a time not just for celebrating, but for remembering," he said. "It was almost 25 years to the day that we moved into this building. Feb. 16, 1992 was the opening service, and one of the first weddings I performed here was for the stonemason who worked on this church."

Ten years earlier, Sikkelee was among those who voted to make CUMC a regional

church, meaning no other United Methodist churches could be built nearby. "Milt Peterson — who later built National Harbor — gave us the land and influenced the bank to give us the loan," said Sikkelee. "He told us to think big, and this church is the result of that."

But it wasn't easy. In July 1992, CUMC had a \$5 million mortgage to pay off. Still, it later decided to devote one-third of its funds to mission work.

"We were struggling to pay \$480,000/year on the mortgage," said Sikkelee. "But by the end of 1999, we'd also paid over \$480,000 to mission outreach locally, nationally and internationally. Barb Shaiko left a high-paying job to become our missions director for a pittance — and she told us it was her best job ever."

The anniversary celebration's theme was "I Love My Church," and Sikkelee gave an example of why that's true for him. "I'll always remember a homeless man who came here and received a large bag of groceries," he said. "We told him to spread the word to



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

Members of CUMC's Chancel Choir and Voices in Praise perform, "Upon this Rock."

others like him, and he said he didn't have to because 'Everyone knows, if you need something, you go to CUMC.'"

Over the years, said Sikkelee, people from all stations in life have worshipped at this

church — average residents and dignitaries alike. One of them was former Washington Redskin Joe Jacoby. "He sat in the third row

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A Church with Roots and Wings

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

Like any place of worship, Centreville United Methodist Church is a blend of the old and new. Longtime members attend alongside those who've only worshipped there a few years.

The church's roots in the community run deep, yet change is a part of its life. Last summer, for example, CUMC welcomed three new pastors — the Rev. Will Montgomery, lead pastor, plus associate pastors Ellen LaCroix-Fillette and Michelle Holmes Chaney.

"We've been a team since then, and we've thoroughly enjoyed coming together, meeting everyone in the church and getting to know them," said Montgomery. "We're excited learning about what God has been doing in the life of the church for many years."

He said they're also encouraged by "what we're hearing and sensing in the midst of this transition about what God will be up to in this church for years to come. And we seek to be what God is calling us to be."

Montgomery has been a pastor for 20 years in the Lynchburg, Smithfield and Charlottesville areas, so this is his first time heading a church in Northern Virginia. And he's enjoyed serving in small towns and large cities, alike.

For eight years, he also served on the Board of Ordained Ministry, credentialing people aspiring to become pastors. And because of that experience, he got to know many of the former associate pastors at CUMC.

Montgomery said he and LaCroix-Fillette



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

From left are CUMC's pastors Michelle Holmes Chaney, Will Montgomery and Ellen LaCroix-Fillette.

and Chaney work as a team here. "Pastor Michelle leads the Congregational Care Ministry and Pastor Ellen oversees the Spiritual Formation classes, working with our children and youth directors," he said.

LaCroix-Fillette is a recent graduate of Wesley Seminary in Washington, D.C., and this is her first church appointment. Chaney has had several years' experience in the United Methodist Church's Baltimore-Washington conference. "They're both a delight to work with and offer so much insight, and it's great to bounce ideas off each other," said Montgomery. "And the members here have been warm and welcoming."

Noting that CUMC is known for its missions and music ministry, he said the pastors hope to build upon these strengths. "Every day, something is going on in the

church — either a church ministry or groups using our building," said Montgomery. "For example, a Korean United Methodist Church, Koinonia United Methodist Church, also meets here, and we hope to do more shared ministry with them."

He said 500 youth play on Saturdays in CUMC's Upward Basketball program, now celebrating 12 years of community outreach. "We also offer ESOL classes and are home to a Boy Scout troop," said Montgomery. "So there are several doors open to [area residents] to participate, and I'm excited about the many ways we can make a difference in the lives of our community."

At CUMC, he said, people are able to find pathways to connect to one another and to God. Each Sunday, an average of 500 members come to the church at 6400 Old

Lead pastor reflects while looking ahead.



The entrance to Centreville United Methodist Church in Centreville.

Centreville Road to attend one of the four services offered. The 8:15 a.m. service is informal, whereas the 9:30 and 11 a.m. services are more traditional. These three are held in the sanctuary, and a contemporary service at 11:02 a.m. is held in CUMC's adjacent Recreation and Outreach Center.

"Our members are open and ready to respond to the love of Christ in worship, service and in discerning who we are," said Montgomery. He's also pleased about "who we are as a congregation" and said CUMC will find ways to continue to deepen its spirit and grow as a church.

"I listen to people telling me what programs and experiences within the church have been meaningful to them, so we don't lose that while we move forward," he said. "But at the same time, we also want to be a church for those who have yet to come."

Comstock Skips Constituent-Organized Town Hall

Representative uses tele-town halls to discuss issues with voters.

BY FALLON FORBUSH
CENTRE VIEW

A microphone reserved for U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) remained silent during a town hall meeting on Friday, Feb. 24, where 150 of her constituents gathered to question her.

Members of the Indivisible Virginia District 10 group knew that Comstock declined their invitation, but they chose to set up a mic and a paper name plate for their Congressional lawmaker just in case she changed her mind. After all, the event was scheduled during Congress's week-long recess from Feb. 19 to Feb. 25 when federal lawmakers typically spend time meeting with constituents in their home districts.

Instead, the congresswoman chose to attend a Catholic Charities Ball for the Diocese of Arlington at the Ritz-Carlton in Tysons, leaving organizers to fact check her public record and attempt to answer questions on her behalf.

An official invitation was given to Comstock on Tuesday, Feb. 7, according to Jan Hyland, a member of the Lovettsville Indivisible group who helped organize the in-person town hall with other members of Indivisible groups throughout northern Virginia.

Indivisible groups have been forming across the country after the publication of an "Indivisible Guide" that was created in December to help people resist the Trump administration's agenda, according to the grassroots group's website.

Virginia Indivisible members living in the 10th Congressional District, like Hyland, were surprised to see that Comstock announced a telephone town hall the very same day they invited her to their in-person town hall.

Individuals subscribed to Comstock's email list received a last-minute invitation to register to participate in the call that would be taking place the following day, Wednesday, Feb. 8.

The short notice, indirect answers from Comstock and the participant's inability to ask follow-up questions left Hyland and her Indivisible peers determined that their in-person town hall was still necessary.

"People left that [telephone] town hall feeling all the more frustrated," said Hyland.

While the gymnasium met its small capacity that evening without Comstock, many more people saw her absence by tuning into the event over the Web. There have been more than 1,000 views of the town hall's live and archived Facebook Live feeds that streamed the event.

"The congresswoman hosts telephone



Alane Dashner of Great Falls asked how the Republican administration planned to pay for the replacement of the Affordable Care Act.



Sue Reilly and her husband Steve Duggas of Ashburn stand and show their support when someone said U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) should support a pathway to citizenship for people living in the country without legal permission instead of deporting them.



Lindsey Davis Stover of McLean voiced concern over the demise of the Affordable Care Act and how U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) would keep birth control accessible and affordable if the law was repealed.



The seat at the table for U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10) at the Sterling Community Center remained empty during the town hall.

town halls where she can talk to thousands of her constituents in a civil and conversational manner," said Jeffrey Marschner, Comstock's spokesperson, told the Connection in an email. "She has been doing telephone town halls since she was a delegate in 2010."

Marschner said Comstock's constituents appreciate the opportunity to call in from home or wherever they are and listen in at their convenience.

"There is a lot of hunger for engagement with representatives," said Nathan Williams, one of the primary organizers of the Town Hall Project.

His new grassroots project has sprung up to help satisfy the demand for lawmaker's attention and is attempting to publicize all congressional town hall and constituent events.

"This resource should exist, in fact we were surprised it didn't exist, that nobody had a single source of every member of Congress' public events," he said.

Since the project is a "labor of passion," Williams relies on small donations and volunteer researchers from across the country who contribute to and update calendars, which can be a difficult task.

"You can't find all of these events by going to their website or going to their Facebook page," he said. "Some members of Congress seem to be going to great lengths to avoid making the events known."

ACCORDING TO MARSCHNER, Comstock spent time in the district on Wednesday, Feb. 22, speaking at a rotary club in Manassas, visiting a rehab health care facility in Gainesville and stopping into a local pharmacy to discuss health care issues. She finished the day in Great Falls by attending a law enforcement fundraiser at the Brix American Bistro.

Two telephone town halls that Comstock held this month were publicized in two emails that were only sent to subscribers on her opt-in email list. There was no information about the events on her website

or social media channels prior to the event.

"It was emailed to the congresswoman's e-newsletter list, put on her website and Facebook page," Marschner said. "It was taken down from the Facebook page when registration closed."

This behavior isn't unusual, especially for reluctant Republicans who have noticed other rowdy town halls by colleagues across the country.

"We don't have years and years of data, but we do get a sense that there are members of Congress that in the past have held in-person town halls who are now holding tele-town halls or Facebook Live events where frankly questions are typically screened," said Williams.

While Williams cannot confirm whether Comstock screened her questions, he said that it is a typical process for members of Congress, which is why his group does not think virtual events are sufficient substitutes for in-person town halls.

"There are cases to be made to having a tele-town hall in addition to having an in-person town hall," he said. "Unless they can demonstrate that they are taking all questions [in a] totally open format, there is no reason to believe as a constituent that they have the same level of openness and accountability that an in-person town hall has where someone raises their hand and takes the microphone to ask their question."

Comstock's office emailed a second invitation for another telephone town hall on Feb. 18. This time, constituents were given more advanced notice, as the tele-town hall was scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 21.

Last week, in-person meetings were also given to constituents who had pressed staff members for face time with Comstock, according to Hyland. However, these meetings were brief and limited to one or two at a time. The meetings were also at her office on Capitol Hill and the invitations were given out with very short notice, according to Hyland.

"Basically, people have a day's notice or less to take off time from work and they're

being asked to travel into Washington to her office in D.C., not here in the actual district," Hyland said. "There's no reason that people who live as far away as Winchester, Clarke County or those of us out here in Lovettsville, etcetera, to have to drive out of district on a week where she's being paid to be out here with us."

While there was a noticeable effort to quell in-person meetings last week, her constituents have been complaining about it all month.

"A friend just came back from a Comstock event in Oakton — Barbara was supposed to meet constituents there to talk about the repeal of Obamacare and she never showed up," wrote Fairfax resident James McCeney on the public Facebook page of Our Revolution Northern Virginia, a liberal activist group.

Comstock sent staff members to the event instead.

"There's a difference between listening to someone on the phone or reading a Facebook text question versus having a person look you in the eye and say, 'I'm very concerned about losing my health insurance and I'm a real person, I'm standing here in front of you, I'm not a paid protester, I'm not a made-up Internet troll, I'm real and my concerns are real and you represent me, so what are you going to do about it,'" said Williams. "Regardless of where they are in the political spectrum, I think every member of Congress needs that face-to-face interaction with their constituents," Williams said.

Comstock's office is currently polling constituents over email about their stances on issues.

On Feb. 15, subscribers to her email list received a short online "Issues Survey."

"I would like to know which issues are most important to you and what issues you feel should be addressed?" her email read.

She asked recipients to react to policy statements by checking one of three options by each statement: "Agree," "Disagree" or "No Opinion."

PHOTOS BY FALLON FORBUSH/CENTRE VIEW

BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to centreview@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Children who will be 5 years old on or before Sept. 30, 2017, are eligible to attend kindergarten. Find the correct neighborhood school by entering your address at <http://boundary.fcps.edu/boundary/>. Complete a packet of registration forms found at www.fcps.edu/it/forms/enroll.pdf or in the school office. Gather supporting documents: proof of residence in the school boundary, a certified copy of the child's birth certificate, parent/guardian photo ID, and any custody orders. Certificate of physical exam and immunization will be required before the student may start school, but is not required for registration. Parents who choose to delay enrollment in kindergarten by one year are required to notify the school in writing.

Greenbriar West Elementary School is now accepting information for next year's Kindergarten classes. Call the school office at 703-633-6700 as soon as possible.

VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTORS NEEDED

The **Sully Senior Center** in Centreville is looking for the following instructors: Zumba gold, basic art, Tai Chi/Qigong, and a personal trainer. Meals on Wheels drivers, substitute drivers, and co-coordinators are needed for routes throughout the county. Much of the coordination can be completed via phone and computer. Call 703-324-5406, email VolunteerSolutions@fairfaxcounty.gov or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/volunteer-solutions.htm

MULCH ORDERS

Westfield Mulch Delivery. Have your mulch delivered right to your driveway. Your order will raise the funds needed to provide a safe and sober All Night Grad Party for Westfield Seniors

and support other vital PTSA programs. Order early, there is a limit on the total number of bags that can be delivered. \$5 per bag. \$2 per bag, for students to spread mulch, also limited number of slots. Order today at bit.ly/2kAh4fb.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Umpires Needed for Youth Leagues. Northern Virginia Baseball Umpires Association is in need of umpires for youth leagues, high schools, and collegiate-level baseball and volleyball games. Experience is helpful, but not required. Call 703-978-3601 or email assignor@umpires.org.

ADULT SOFTBALL

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 a.m. and 6 p.m. The season runs from late April to early October and usually guarantees 26-30 games. Email at skeduman@aol.com for more.

2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR

Preschool Registration. Clifton Presbyterian Church Preschool, 12748 Richards Lane. Offers classes for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds (9 a.m.-noon). "Extended care" until 3:30 p.m. is also available. Visit www.cliftonpc.org or call 703-830-3175.

MONDAY/MARCH 6

Emergency Response Team Training. 7-11 p.m. at Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Academy 4600 West Ox Road. For the Community Emergency Response Team to help families and neighbors in the event of a disaster in their community. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/cert/ or call 703-246-3926.

Supervisor Herrity and Connection Newspapers' 2017 Fairfax County Teen Job Fairs and Resume Building Workshops



- Full time employment
- After-school employment
- Seasonal positions

- Internship opportunities
- Volunteer experiences
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Chantilly High School
Saturday, March 18
10 am to 12 pm

Co-sponsored by Supervisor Kathy Smith, Chantilly HS STEM Academy, and Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce

Oakton High School
Saturday, March 18
1 pm to 3 pm

Co-sponsored by Supervisor Linda Smyth and Oakton HS Marketing Department

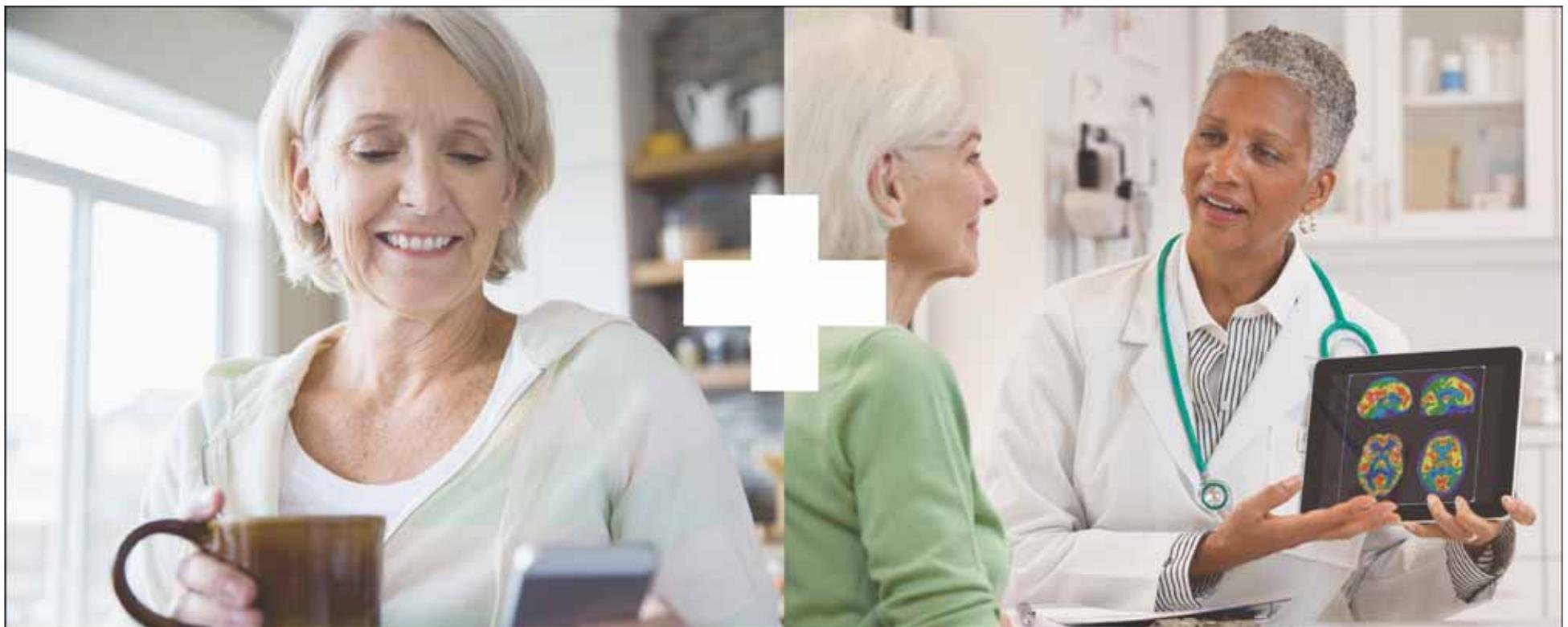
West Springfield High School
Saturday, April 1
12 pm to 2 pm

Co-sponsored by West Springfield HS Student Government and Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce

South County Secondary School
Saturday, April 29
11 am to 1 pm

Co-sponsored by Supervisor Dan Starck, South Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, South County Federation, and South County Secondary School

To register as an employer or student, or for more information, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/springfield/teenjobfair.htm



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Good, Bad and Missed Opportunities

Results of the 2017 session of the General Assembly.

GOOD THINGS

Progress in funding mental health and addressing the opioid epidemic on multiple levels were among the successes of the 2017 General Assembly session.

❖ In addressing the opioid crisis, the General Assembly passed important steps, including Del. Tim Hugo's bill to limit opioid prescriptions to a seven-day supply in most cases; increased access to naloxone, a drug that instantly reverses an overdose; needle exchange programs (to reduce the spread of HIV, viral hepatitis, and other blood-borne diseases); focus on infants born with opioid exposure.

❖ Increased funding for mental health included \$7.5 million to facilitate providing same-day access to mental health screening services by July 1, 2019. (The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board began offering same day, in-person screening for mental health/and or substance use concerns to adults in July 2015 and extended same day access service to youth. The official launch date for youth walk-in service was Feb. 1, 2017.) Also supports for discharge planning and services for people with serious mental illness being released from jail.

❖ The budget included 3 percent raises state employees, increase for teachers and a larger increase for state police.

❖ The Virginia Board of Corrections was given added authority and resources to review deaths in local and regional jails.

❖ Negotiation and legislation will accelerate the City of Alexandria's massive undertaking to fix its sewer system that dumps raw sew-

age into the Potomac River whenever it rains. Wendell Berry's version of the golden rule: "Do unto those downstream as you would have those upstream do unto you."

❖ Scott Surovell's bill requiring Dominion to provide better information on coal ash pollution, disaster preparedness, and recycling.

❖ Eileen Filler-Corn's bill requiring that insurance cover up to a 12-month supply of hormonal contraceptives when dispensed or furnished at one time.

❖ School boards are required to have anti-bullying policies that includes notifying parents that their student was involved in a bullying incident.

❖ Use of FaceBook Live allowed members to stream floor discussion, and report to constituents and answer questions directly.

BAD BILLS

Gov. Terry McAuliffe has already vetoed some of these, and is expected to veto some others.

❖ Expanded access to concealed weapons; vetoed by Governor. SB1362 would allow anyone with a military ID card to carry concealed weapon; HB2077 would allow guns in emergency shelters and prevents state police or others from prohibiting them for any reason

❖ End funding of Planned Parenthood, vetoed by Governor.

❖ Anti-Sanctuary City Law HB 2000 says no locality shall adopt any ordinance, procedure, or policy that restricts the enforcement of federal immigration laws.

❖ As a reality check on the Virginia General Assembly, HB2025 would allow discrimination against LGBT community under guise of religious freedom, and passed 21-19 in the Senate and 57-37 in the House of Delegates.

❖ HJ 545 would allow special committees of the General Assembly to overturn regulations, upsetting separation of powers. Constitutional amendment (first resolution): "Provides that the General Assembly may suspend

or nullify any or all portions of any administrative rule or regulation."

❖ Photo identification required for absentee ballots.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

❖ The biggest missed opportunity of the 2017 General Assembly session was the failure to advance any redistricting legislation, which passed in the Senate and died in the House of Delegates. It's clear that Virginia voters want an end to gerrymandering, but hopes for reform before the next census in 2020 are diminished.

❖ Mental Health in Jails: \$4.5 million was removed from the Governor's proposed budget that would have paid for desperately needed mental health screening in jails.

❖ Legislation to raise Virginia's threshold between misdemeanors and felonies from \$200 to \$500 failed. Virginia's threshold has not changed since 1981, unnecessarily focusing "police and prosecutors on minor crimes instead of violent crime while tainting thousands of Virginia's suffering from depression or drug addiction with felony charges for life," says Surovell.

❖ Ken Plum's bill to increase and index the minimum wage never made it out of committee.

❖ Bills to address student debt also died during the session, as did bills aimed at reducing student suspensions and expulsions.

❖ Republicans stripped language that would have brought \$6 million in federal funds to provide Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) to those at risk for unintended pregnancy at no cost to Virginia voters.

Thanks to Ken Plum, Scott Surovell, Marcus Simon, Jennifer Boysko, Adam Ebbin and others whose columns and responses helped inform this editorial. We welcome opinions and additions to this list.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

ROUNDUPS

Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will perform free, child safety carseat inspections Thursday, March 2, from 5-8:30 p.m., at the station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. But residents should install the child safety seats themselves so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed.

Because of time constraints, only the first 35 vehicles arriving on each date will be inspected. That way, inspectors may have enough time to properly instruct the caregiver on the correct use of the child seat. Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140, to confirm dates and times.

Blood Drive at Fire Academy

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, in partnership with INOVA Blood Donor Services, will be hosting a blood drive at the

Fire and Rescue Academy on Friday, March 3 from 12 p.m. until 5 p.m. 4600 West Ox Road, Fairfax, Call 1-866-256-6372

Dulles Suburban Center Meetings

As the Dulles Suburban Center Study enters into its second phase, the Advisory Group has set its schedule for the next several months. Residents are invited to attend the meetings and hear what the group is discussing regarding land use in the Dulles Suburban Center. The upcoming meetings will be held at 7 p.m. at the Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly, on March 6, and March 21.

Specific meeting topics will be posted on the Dulles Suburban Study website <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/dullessuburbancenter/meetings.htm> closer to the date of each meeting.

Sully District Town Hall

Supervisor Kathy Smith, School Board Representative Tom Wilson, County Executive Ed Long, The Sully District Council, and Budget Staff from Fairfax County and FCPS will discuss the FY 2018 budgets for FCPS and Fairfax County on Wednesday, March 8, 7-9 p.m., in the Little Theatre in Rocky Run Middle School at 4400 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly.

Attend Family Summit

The Thriving Family Summit vision began with a drug overdose of a local teenager and a local church offering to host her memorial service. In response, church and Fairfax County leaders gathered to identify specific actions to deepen awareness of the growing teen trends of broken families, drug addiction, anxiety, depression, and suicide, and how to make resources known and accessible. Free, Saturday, March 11 at 15451 Lee Highway, Centreville. thrivingfamilysummit.com

'This Church Is Family'

FROM PAGE 3

because his legs stretched to the first row," recalled Sikkelee.

He retired as CUMC's pastor in June 2003, after 11 years at the helm, but still attends services there with his wife Libby, who sings in the choir. "This place is vital and fulfilling, and I enjoy and appreciate my church," he said. "I need my church. How we love our neighbor is how we love God, and I need to keep renewing these vital connections through this church. I have hope in my heart and prayers for the church I love."

Illustrating CUMC's commitment to helping those in need, three-year member Jim Bailey said it's very active in the community. "It does the You Feed Others program, putting together thousands of meals a month for local school children who don't have enough to eat," he said. "It delivers meals to the homeless and its service projects include rebuilding and repairing homes in Appalachia. We also support various missions around the world, include the Ukraine and the Sudan. This is a good church and a good anchor for the community."

Gai Gaitonde has attended CUMC almost 16 years and loves it because "We share the love of Christ with the community through various ministry projects. Grace Ministries provides food, clothing, diapers, household items, toys and children's books to local, low-income, immigrant families. Teens Opposing Poverty feeds the homeless in [Washington], D.C., we run a hypothermia shelter in the winter and we partner with other churches, Fairfax County Public Schools and the county Police Department to help bring hope to Centreville teenagers with drug and bullying issues."

For 23-year member Julie Thompson, it's mainly the people who make her church special. "There are so many opportunities, not just for fellowship, but to serve others," she said. "And in our many small groups, we support each other and hold each other accountable in our faith walk. There's also great preaching and great music, and it's always been a thriving church."

Mell Cunningham and his wife Frankie have attended church at CUMC for 30 years. "So many people help out here," he said. "We put out the word and things happen. And so many have helped to keep this church going. Besides our building, we even have an outdoor prayer path and worship area and a covered pavilion across the street. Boy Scouts' Eagle Scout projects have built them."

Basically, said Cunningham, "This church is family and has helped me through the transitions of my life when jobs ended and my Air Force career ended. It's been here when I've needed it. And the strongest component of our church is our music director, Becky Jackson."

Agreeing, Frankie Cunningham said, "She's been the staying force through all our ministry changes."

Jackson, a CUMC member for 28 years, grew up in a small country church, so she found it "inspiring" to work in this church with its large membership in the thousands and multiple choirs. "This was like 'Field of Dreams' — 'If you build it, they will come,'" she said. "We opened the doors and people flooded in. And it allowed for so many opportunities in the



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

Former CUMC pastor Bert Sikkelee and current pastor Will Montgomery share a laugh together.

church; there are lots of activities for children, youth and adults."

And because of all its members, CUMC was able to establish more choirs. It now has 13 choirs and/or musical ensembles, including handbells, vocal choirs and the praise band. "It's been a place for me to express my faith and my love of music," said Jackson. "And it's been a support for me, especially when I recently lost both my parents."

In a large church, she said, "You encourage people to find a place in smaller groups where they have a sense of belonging and feel they're cared for. And we do the same thing within the choirs — everyone supports each other."

Since Jackson was there for this building's opening service, she said its anniversary celebration brought back many memories for her about "the hopefulness and excitement of moving into a new church [home]. This area is so transient; but by being here over a long period of time, I've seen the church grow and change over the past 25 years."

"We've been here for the community in times of grief," she said. "But also, I've seen children grow up here, and I've played organ for the weddings of children who were in my choir. So I've enjoyed the opportunity to be here all these years. We have a beautiful pipe organ, a lovely sanctuary and choir members excited about singing and worshipping."

Jackson still enjoys introducing a new hymn to a child and challenging adults with new music and musical styles. "And the pastors and our terrific staff have been so supportive," she said. "It's been a pleasure and a blessing to be in ministry among others who express their faith in the church."

CUMC's current lead pastor, the Rev. Will Montgomery, also noted that — although it was celebrating a quarter century in its building — the church "has had a presence here in Centreville since before the Civil War. And we continue to seek to be a church meeting the changes in our community."

"I'm truly energized by what's going on in the life of the church," he added. "I believe we're poised and ready to embrace the next 25 years, and I'm hoping to enjoy as many of those years here as possible, sharing effective ministry. This church has been in existence for 167 years in three locations. And it's a joy that we've been able to grow through the love of Christ and each other, through the years."

"How we love our neighbor is how we love God."

— The Rev. Bert Sikkelee

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ENTERTAINMENT

Email announcements to centreview@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

ONGOING

Black History Month Events.

Through Feb. 28, 2-4 p.m. at Terminal on the ticketing level at Dulles International Airport, 1 Saarinen Circle. A month-long event series for airport employees and passengers in celebration of Black History Month. Visit www.metwashairports.com for more.

Art Guild of Clifton Exhibit.

10 a.m.-8 p.m. at Clifton Wine Shop, 7145 Main St., Clifton. Includes oil paintings of European settings; doors, windows, and flower shops. Free. Call 703-409-0919 for more.

Carolina Shag Dance.

Wednesdays, 6:30-10 p.m. at Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m.; no partners needed; dinner menu at 6:45 p.m. Tickets are \$8. Visit www.nvshag.org for more.

Open Rehearsal.

Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. at Lord of Life church, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Centreville. The Fairfax Jubil-Aires barbershop chorus invites men of all ages who enjoy singing. Free. Visit www.fairfaxjubilaire.org for more.

Toddlin' Twos.

Tuesdays, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Early literacy storytime with songs and activities included. Age 2 with caregiver, free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Storytime for Three to Fives.

Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Stories and activities for children age 3-5 with caregiver. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

English Conversation Group.

Thursdays, 7 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Practice English with a group of students and adults. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a space.

English Conversation Group.

Selected Saturdays, 3 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Practice English with a group of students and adults. Free. Call 703-830-2223 for a list of dates.

English Conversation Group.

Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Practice English with a group of students and adults. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a space.

Plant Clinic.

Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. A neighborhood plant clinic with horticultural tips, information, techniques, and advice. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a space.

ESL Book Club.

Mondays, 7 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Meet and discuss a book chosen by group. Free. Call 703-830-2223 with questions and to reserve a spot.

ESL Book Club.

Every other Saturday, 11 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Adults learning English are welcome to meet and discuss a book chosen by the group. To find out book title, call 703-502-3883.

Lego Block Party.

Every other Tuesday, 3 p.m. at the Chantilly

Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road.

Legos will be provided for an afternoon of building. Grades 3-6. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Duplo Storytime.

Every other Wednesday, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Develop and reinforce early literacy skills for reading success. Ages 1-3 with adult. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Live After Five.

Fridays at 5:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway. Every Friday night a band plays on the patio of the winery. Free to attend. Visit www.wineryatbullrun.com for a full schedule.

Mondays are Family Night.

5-7 p.m. at Villagio, 7145 Main St. \$45 for a family of four. Call 703-543-2030 for more.

Legos Kids Club.

Every other Tuesday, 10:30 a.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Thousands of Legos for children to play with. Ages 6-12. Free. Call 703-830-2223 to reserve a space.

Starlight Storytime.

Every other Wednesday, 7 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Stories under the stars for ages 4-8. Wear pajamas and bring stuffed friends. Free. Call 703-830-2223 to reserve a space.

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.

PET ADOPTIONS

Adopt a Cat or Dog. Fridays, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at PetSmart, 12971 Fair Lakes Center, Fairfax. Visit www.lostdogrescue.org for more.

Adopt a Dog. Saturdays, 12-3 p.m. at Petco, 13053 Lee Jackson Highway. Visit hart90.org for more.

Adopt a Dog. Sundays, 1-4 p.m. at Petco, 13053 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy. Adopt a puppy or dog. Visit foreverhome.org for more.

Adopt a Dog. Saturdays, 1-4 p.m. at PetSmart, 12971 Fair Lakes Center, Fairfax. Adopt a puppy or dog. Visit www.lostdogrescue.org for more.

THROUGH MARCH 31

Slave Life Exhibit. Various times at the Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. \$7 adults, \$6 students, and \$5 seniors and children age 5-15. Artifacts excavated from around Sully's 18th-century slave cabins. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site/ or call 703-437-1794 for more.

SATURDAY/MARCH 4

Garden Preparations. 10 a.m. at Fair Oaks Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway. With Kathy Jentz, Editor of Washington Gardener Magazine shares tips on getting the garden ready for spring. Call 703-560-6222 for more.

Film Screening. 2 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. The screening of the film "Matt Shepard is a Friend of Mine," a documentary explores the life and tragic death of Matthew Shepard, a gay student murdered in 1998, in Laramie, WY. The story of Matt

Shepard's struggles is told through the personal lens of his friends, family and those who were close to him throughout the years. Visit mattshepard.eventbrite.com for more.

SUNDAY/MARCH 5

Dr. Suess Readings. 2:30-3:30 p.m. at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Join in the annual celebration of the birthday of Dr. Seuss with a reading of "The Lorax," who favored trees. \$8. Call 703-631-0013 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence for more.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 8

Trump Administration Insights Luncheon. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Holiday Inn Washington Dulles, 45425 Holiday Drive, Sterling. Three experts will discuss what businesses may expect from the Trump administration. Pre-registered member pricing is \$50; at-the door, \$65. Visit www.dulleschamber.org for more.

SATURDAY/MARCH 11

Thriving Family Summit. 12:30-6 p.m. at Korean Central Presbyterian Church, 15451 Lee Highway, Centreville. A first step in bringing awareness, resources, and real hope to engage challenging issues plaguing the community. Free. Visit thrivingfamilysummit.com/

Women of Walney. 2 p.m. at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Learn how the women of Walney both lived within and challenged the gender roles of their time periods. \$6. Call 703-631-0013 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence for more.

SUNDAY/MARCH 12

Chantilly Egg Hunt. 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. 26469 Ticonderoga Road, Chantilly. Join the Easter Bunny and search for candy and toy-filled eggs. Visit www.ticonderoga.com/about.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 15

"Fire & Ice" Trip. 5:30-7 p.m. at Wingate by Wyndham Chantilly, 3940 Centerview Drive. Join Anoop Mittra, Cruise Planners and Andrea Savitch, Unique Travel Events as they reveal the wonders of extreme climate travel, from Antarctica to Africa. Visit www.dulleschamber.org for more.

SATURDAY/MARCH 18

Girls Inspired & Ready to Lead. 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Educational and social enrichment opportunities and positive role models so girls can feel confident in themselves and supported in achieving their dreams. Visit www.girlsinspiredinc.org for more.

St. Patrick's Day party. 6-9 p.m. at St. Veronica's Church Parish Hall, 3460 Centreville Road, Chantilly. This is a family event that includes food, drink, sing-alongs, and Irish dancers. Adults \$7, children \$5, drinks extra. Visit www.stveronica.net/ or call 703-773-2000 for more.

SUNDAY/MARCH 19

Women of Walney. 11 a.m. at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Learn how the women of Walney both lived within and challenged the gender roles of their time periods. \$6. Call 703-631-0013 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence for more.

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Beware Early Allergy Season

Experts offer suggestions for preventing and treating allergy symptoms.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Those experiencing itchy, watery eyes and seemingly endless sneezing know that spring allergy season is getting an early start this year thanks to this season's mild winter weather.

"Everything is blooming early because of the warm weather," said Dr. Barbara Mackie, M.D., allergist, of Privia Medical Group in Vienna. "People are spending more time outside because the weather is lovely, but they're experiencing allergy symptoms."



PHOTO COURTESY OF BARBARA MACKIE

Allergist Dr. Barbara Mackie, M.D. advises patients who normally have seasonal allergies to begin taking medication early.

One of the keys to surviving allergy season is staying ahead of it. When thermometers are rising above 60 degrees for more than three consecutive days, pollen from plants begins to move through the air. The tree pollen count has reached high concentration levels in the Washington, D.C. region, according to The American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology's National Allergy Bureau Pollen and Mold Report.

"Most of the time seasonal allergies, whether it is spring or fall, are caused by pollens that are associated with grass, trees and weeds," said Dr. Victoria A Garrison, M.D. a Student Health Services physician and a professor in the School of Nursing at George Mason University in Fairfax, "In areas that are damp or humid, mold spores can also be a factor. When people have allergies to these substances, the immune system will react and cause symptoms like sneezing, watery, itchy eyes, runny nose, sore or itchy throat, congestion and fatigue."

"Mild winter temperatures cause plants to pollinate early," added Maureen Moriarty, DNP, assistant professor of Nursing at Marymount University in Arlington. "This problem may be compounded by a rainy spring season, leading to increased mold levels that can drive allergy symptoms in sufferers through fall months."

Instead of waiting for full-blown symptoms, Mackie recommends beginning medications early. "What I usually tell patients who normally have seasonal allergies is to take their maintenance medications early so they're covered when allergy season hits," she said.

"Being prepared can often help slow down symptoms of allergies," added Kathy Grilliot, director of Clinical Education Respiratory Therapy Program at



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

A mild winter has led to early plant blooming and an early allergy season.

Northern Virginia Community College's Medical Education Campus in Springfield.

"Before the season starts, it is a good idea to start taking a nasal steroid. This medication takes a few weeks to gain full effect so starting before the allergens are everywhere can really help to control symptoms. Eyes can also have allergic reactions, so see a specialist to have a good eye drop for allergen control."

For those who might be perplexed by the distinction between allergies and a common cold: "If it's lasting more than three days with no fever, it's probably not a cold," said Mackie.

Some precautions that allergy sufferers can take to decrease their exposure to allergens include wearing a face mask when outside during times when the pollen count is high and resisting the urge to open car and house windows when the weather is warm, especially if the wind is blowing. "Take off your shoes when you enter your house so that allergens don't get spread around the house," said Grilliot. "Be aware where you place clothing that has been outside when you enter your house to prevent allergens from entering your home."

"I advise patients to rinse their hair and take a shower to get the pollen off before going to bed at night," added Mackie. "Otherwise you're getting pollen on your pillowcase and sheets and breathing it in all night."

There are certain times of day when allergy sufferers should avoid being outside. "Mid-morning, afternoon and early evening are peak times for pollen," continued Mackie. "When it's windy, don't go out because of the pollen."

Pets can spread pollen as well. "Dogs get spring fever too and want to be outside, but they can bring pollen into the house," said Mackie. "Wipe off their coats and paws when they come inside."

"Everything is blooming early because of the warm weather. People are spending more time outside because the weather is lovely, but they're experiencing allergy symptoms."

— Dr. Barbara Mackie, M.D., Allergist, Privia Medical Group

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Still "Dating"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

It's not as if I haven't written about this date: 2/27, before (try last week, Ken), but as I sit at my desk and stare at the calendar hanging on the wall to my front right, the date jumps out at me. Not that I approach it with any fear or trepidation, but I do approach it for days, weeks and even months, calculating my past and contemplating my future. Cancer has a way of marking time, and leaving marks — figuratively and literally.

Mostly I have weathered the cancer storm, eight years and counting/hoping. And as much as I don't want to define myself as a cancer patient/survivor and live my life waiting for the other shoe to drop, it's difficult not to when your feet are so swollen from years of chemotherapy that you're now forced to wear your sneakers without laces. What I lose in support, I gain in comfort. Shoes I can't wear any more. The leather soles don't cushion my feet enough to not fatigue my legs. The shoe can't drop if I'm not wearing it, right? Hardly. It can drop at any time. Certainly it can drop after my quarterly scans, hearing that tumor and/or fluid growth has recurred or anytime in between when new symptoms appear and persist (for two to three weeks, my oncologist has advised). The trick is; heck, there is no trick.

And as much as I'd like to live this date as any other, the date on which one is diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV and given a "13-month to two-year" prognosis by an oncologist, is a date that cannot be lived normally. February 27, 2009 is a date, to invoke Franklin Delano Roosevelt, that will live in my infamy. February 27, 2009 was a Friday. We had scheduled a mid-morning appointment. My brother, Richard (my one surviving immediate family member), met my wife, Dina and I (Team Lourie as I've become accustomed to calling us) in the lobby of the HMO and together we took the elevator up to the third floor (can you say somber?) where we were to meet an oncologist — a man whom I had never met or heard of before, to learn exactly what the previous week's biopsy being malignant, meant.

After the awkward introductions, the oncologist spent the next 10 minutes or so examining me in an adjacent room. Upon completing the examination, we all reassembled in the doctor's office where he proceeded to review/read the results/assessments from the previous seven weeks of tests/examinations from the pulmonologist, the radiologist, the thoracic surgeon and the associated diagnostic procedures completed: X-Rays, CT Scan, P.E.T. Scan, and of course, the biopsy. The medical opinions started off bad and got worse: stage IV, non small cell lung cancer, a "terminal" disease. In listening to the reports, there seemed to be little doubt as to the diagnosis. And so it was clear to my oncologist how to proceed: chemotherapy infusions to begin as soon as possible; to occur every three weeks for six cycles with face-to-face appointments and CT Scans to follow. And though it wasn't, and it hasn't been pretty, generally it has — presumably, kept me alive and in reasonably good spirits, all things considered, and some of those things considered have included some non-Western alternatives.

So here I am, nearly eight years to the date when my old life (pre-diagnosis) ended and my new life — as a cancer patient, began. I wouldn't call it a metamorphosis, more like an upheaval. Somehow though, as the time, treatment and routine passed, I began to assimilate and integrate my new reality into my age 54 and a half head and figure a way forward. I can't say it's been fun, but the more I can laugh and find humor in my less-than-ideal circumstances, the more positive I can be about the negative. A negative which has already done enough damage on its own.

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

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21 Announcements 21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
CRS Oil, Inc trading as Centreville Shell, 13401 Lee Highway, Centreville, VA 20121. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Beer and Wine off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Raj Gupta, President
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

ABC LICENSE
Super Gaoline Inc. trading as Centre Ridge Exxon, 6330 Multiplex Drive, Centreville, VA 20121. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Beer and Wine off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Raj Gupta, President
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

21 Announcements 21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
Daily Cellars, LLC trading as Honor Brewing Company, 14004 Willard Rd., Ste A, B, C, D, E, Chantilly, Fairfax County, VA 20151. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Brewery under 500 barrels, Keg permit to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Allen Cage Jr, Member.
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

ABC LICENSE
El Tenampa Bar & Grill, Inc. trading as El Tenampa Bar & Grill, 9015 Centreville Rd, Ste B, Manassas, VA 20110. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine & Beer On Premises; Mixed Beverage Restaurant license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Lesbia Mencia, President
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/CENTRE VIEW

A Record Year

**Alzheimer’s Association of the National
Capital Region honors its supporters.**

BY EDEN BROWN
CENTRE VIEW

Megan Newman told her story at the Alzheimer’s Association “Wall of Hope” reception at Tyson’s Corner on Feb. 9. She was only 18, a senior in high school, when her mother started to ask the same question more than once. They both attributed it to stress. They laughed about it. A few months later, it became clear to Meghan that what was wrong with her mother was more than stress. She convinced her to see a doctor, but it took many tests and many neurologists later before she was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s.

It came at a difficult time for Megan, as she was headed off to college. She was supposed to be at the “best years of your life” stage. She laughs about it now, but switching roles with her parent at that point in her life was anything but funny. When she went to college, her mother went with her. When she moved off campus, she moved with her mother. The long days of caregiving, studying and managing the lives of two people took a toll on Megan. Her mother didn’t really appreciate being told she had to brush her teeth or that she wasn’t going to be able to drive her car any longer. Alzheimer’s patients don’t always exhibit a good-natured response to having children tell them what to do. Megan wasn’t always patient and forbearing. And that bothered her. When it became time for her to hold down a job, Megan couldn’t manage both

tasks anymore. That is why she was so grateful to find the Alzheimer’s Association, and why she will always give back to this organization: they helped her manage her mother and supported her, she said. The reception on Feb. 9 recognized event participants and supporters who distinguished themselves through leadership and exemplary fundraising during the year. Supporters were able to see the unveiling of new plaques on the Wall of Hope, which honors those who suffered from the disease and their friends and family who gave in their name. Attendees at the event made up 2 percent of the fundraisers and sponsors who raised over 45 percent of total funds from events. In 2016, 7,700 participants raised a record \$1.78 million. And they had a good time doing it. Chris Boullire, the CEO of the National Capital Area Alzheimer’s Association chapter, honored the 29 cyclists who created the “Ride to Remember,” riding 100 miles and raising more than \$20,000; the 260 Longest Day participants who raised over \$118,000 participating in creative activities; the “Blondes v. Brunettes” (a flag football game for women,) which had 80 participants and raised over \$85,173; and the biggest event for 2016 in this area: the Walk to End Alzheimer’s had 7,300 participants at seven walks throughout the region who raised \$1.53 million.

The Alzheimer’s Association in the area is always looking for additional Walk volunteers and teams for 2017. Interested people can visit www.alznca.org/walk.

**Megan
Newman told
the story of
being a
senior in high
school when
her mother
was diag-
nosed.**



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