



Fairfax CONNECTION



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PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN O'NEAL



Up Where the Air is Rare

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Standing Together Against Hate

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City Manager Unveils Proposed FY18 Budget

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Outside City Hall, City Councilman Jon Stehle presents the letter notifying the City Fire Department about its top fire-protection rating. Also pictured are Fire Department personnel, including Chief John O'Neal (white shirt, far left) and City Manager Bob Sisson (tan jacket, on right).

SCHOOLS

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

James Andrew Smith II graduated from Basic Military Training and Airman's Week at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, San Antonio, Texas. He immediately begins technical school at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, in the Aerospace Medical/EMT program. Smith is the son of Carolyn and Michael Smith of Fairfax. He is a 2016 graduate of Robinson Secondary School.

Isabel Zimmerman of Fairfax is one of 30 Foxcroft School students to be named an AP Scholar. To achieve AP status a student must have grades of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams.

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students from 21 high schools have been named semifinalists by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) for 2017. Semifinalists from Fairfax High School: **Benjamin Krupka and Rebecca Stafford**.

Sihui Tan, of Fairfax, was named to the dean's list for fall 2016 at Georgia State University (Atlanta, Ga.).

Heather Stocking, of Fairfax, was named to the dean's list for fall 2016 at Seton Hall University (South Orange, N.J.).

Joseph Ellis, of Fairfax, was named to the dean's list for fall 2016 at University of the Sciences (Philadelphia, Pa.).

Bryan Denny, Olivia Grady and David Fritts, of Fairfax, were named to the dean's list for

fall 2016 at Grove City College (Grove City, Pa.).

Sara Kline, of Fairfax, named to the dean's list at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Lincoln, Ne.) for the fall semester of the 2016-17 academic year.

Isabella Zimmerman, of Fairfax, was recently named to Foxcroft School Cum Laude (Middleburg, Va.).

Sierra Cole of Fairfax, has been named to the 2016 fall semester dean's list at Lafayette College (Easton, Pa.).

Peter Linas Brown, of Fairfax, was named to the Clemson University (Clemson, S.C.) president's list for the fall 2016 semester.

Katherine E. Knight, of Fairfax, was named to the Clemson University (Clemson, S.C.) president's list for the fall 2016 semester.

Jenna L. Pollock, of Fairfax, was named to the Clemson University (Clemson, S.C.) president's list for the fall 2016 semester.

Kelly O. Thomas, of Fairfax, was named to the Clemson University (Clemson, S.C.) president's list for the fall 2016 semester.

Matthew James Fleck, of Fairfax, was named to the Clemson University (Clemson, S.C.) dean's list for the fall 2016 semester.

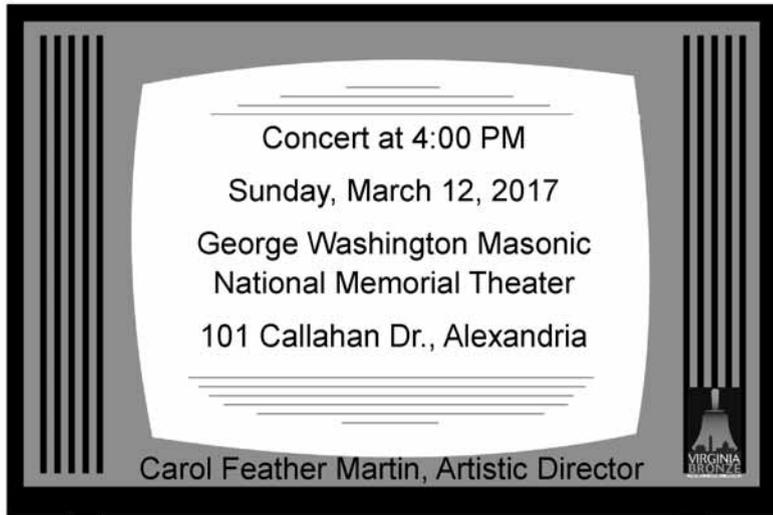
Lauren A. Higgs, of Fairfax, was named to the Clemson University (Clemson, S.C.) dean's list for the fall 2016 semester.

Brian W. Latimer, of Fairfax, was named to the Clemson University (Clemson, S.C.) dean's list for the fall 2016 semester.



Isabella Zimmerman

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Virginia Bronze is a member of Handbell Musicians of America. Our activities are supported, in part, by generous grants from the Alexandria Commission for the Arts, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Thank You for Your Patience and Support

We at Covanta Fairfax, the Energy-from-Waste facility in Lorton, VA, wish to express our sincere gratitude to Fairfax County and the Fire and Rescue Department for their help and support during the recent fire at our facility. We would also like to thank you, our neighbors, for your patience and understanding throughout this unfortunate event.

For 27 years, Covanta Fairfax has been an integral part of Fairfax County's world-class, environmentally conscious waste management system and we are working to come back better and stronger than ever. Rest assured, this includes enhancing our fire protection and suppression capabilities with the latest technologies available today to help prevent a fire incident like this from occurring again.

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Standing Together Against Hate

Lawmakers, faith leaders respond to Feb. 27 bomb threat at Gesher Jewish School.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Students at Gesher Jewish Day School in Fairfax started their week with a bomb threat. The call came in Monday morning, Feb. 27, the head of school Dan Finkel said. Nearly 100 similar threats have been received at Jewish community centers and schools nationwide, amid recent instances Jewish cemeteries being vandalized and desecrated.

Finkel said the morning was scary, but that the school received rapid response from the FBI and local law enforcement.

"The ensuing moments were filled with love and support," he said, allowing them to more quickly get back to the primary goal of providing "outstanding education for Jewish children across northern Virginia."

Finkel spoke at a news conference Friday afternoon on March 3 at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia in Fairfax. The event was organized by the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington.

Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia executive director Jeff Dannick said in response to the crimes of hate, there's a question of whether to be outwardly strong or keep a low profile.

"History has taught us always stand up against hate," he said. "There was a time when Jews did hide in fear, we'll not do that again."

Dannick and Finkel were joined by a host of elected officials, faith and community leaders standing together to condemn not just the Monday bomb threat and recent crimes against the Jewish community, but all acts of hate and intolerance.

Attorney General Mark Herring said the amount of hate crimes being committed is rising in Virginia and around the nation.

"There is something deeply wrong in our national climate, that individuals feel empowered to take action against houses of worship, against children," Herring said. No matter what you look like, where you're from, or how you pray, he continued, "You have a place in Virginia."

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) said the 2016 Presidential election represented a sliding back in the history of America. As a consequence hate groups are feeling emboldened, he said.

Support, inclusion, opportunity and acceptance are basic American values, Connolly continued, which "can only grow because of these incidents."

U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-10)



Students at Gesher Jewish Day School in Fairfax started their week with a bomb threat. The call came in Monday morning, Feb. 27, the head of school Dan Finkel (right) said.



Fairfax County Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova used her speaking opportunity to advertise a "United Response to Hate Speech, Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes" event, scheduled for Sunday, March 26. The event will take place from 3-5 p.m. at The Ernst Cultural Center of Northern Virginia Community College, located at 8333 Little River Turnpike in Annandale.



Students at Gesher Jewish Day School in Fairfax started their week with a bomb threat. The call came in Monday morning, Feb. 27, the head of school Dan Finkel (right) said.

brought up the prevalence of the Internet in helping hate groups organize and radicalize members online. She called for providing solutions to that connectivity through law enforcement, as well as parents understanding how dangerous the web can be for impressionable children.

U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8) called anti-semitism "a scourge on the human community," and encouraged people to "respect, lift up, love the Jewish friends and neighbors we have."

The politicians also used their speaking out to call out President Trump for a response.

State Senate Minority Leader Dick Saslaw (D-35) echoed Connolly saying that the

2016 campaign "emboldened virtually every bigot in this country." And that it didn't help with Trump encouraging supporters to violently remove protesters from his rallies offering to pay their legal expenses.

Responding to these hate crimes, Saslaw said, "the buck stops at the White House. The most forceful act needs to come from the White House, and it needs to come in a hurry."

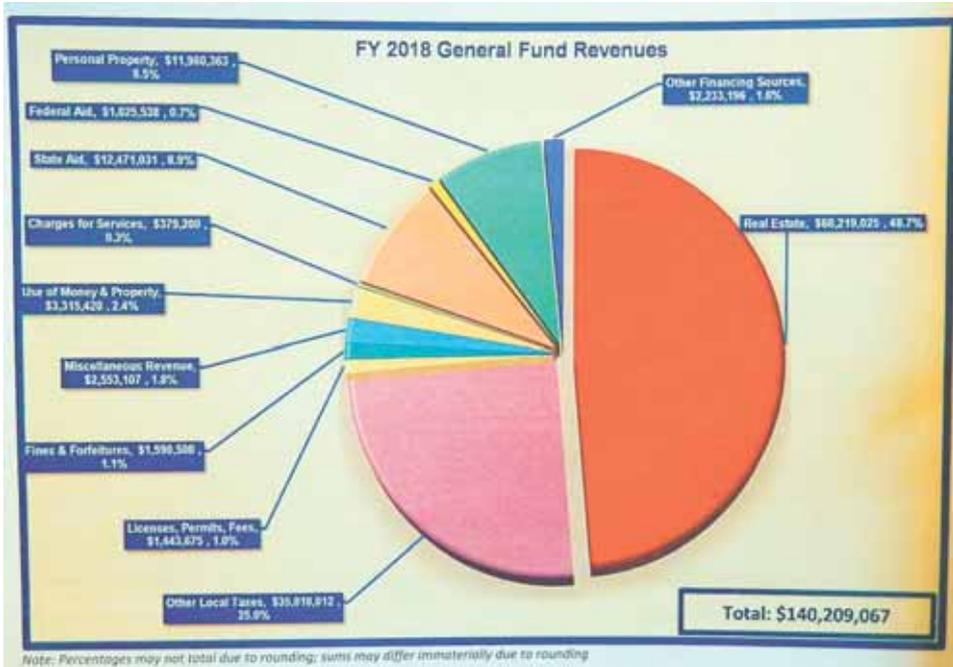
The Rev. Scott Sammler-Michael of Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church in Burke shared a message after the conference that he has been spreading in synagogues, mosques, his own congregation, and anyone else: embodied faith. "Take steps into the world," to counteract hate,

he encourages. "Take your time, your talents, your treasure."

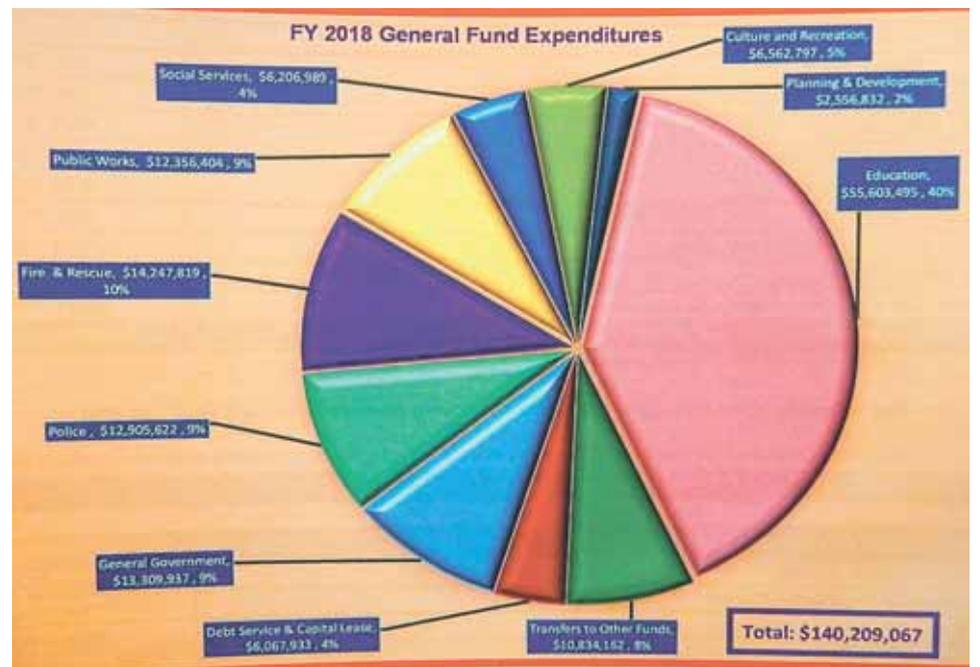
To the Jews and Muslims and others who have felt targeted, Sammler-Michael said he's told them, "we will stand where you need us," whether it's behind in support, arm-in-arm, or in front, as a "holy defense line."

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova used her speaking opportunity to advertise a "United Response to Hate Speech, Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes" event, scheduled for Sunday, March 26. The event will take place from 3-5 p.m. at The Ernst Cultural Center of Northern Virginia Community College, located at 8333 Little River Turnpike in Annandale.

More information is available online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/cic.



General Fund revenues



General Fund expenditures

City Manager Unveils Proposed FY18 Budget

Recommends real-estate tax rate stay the same.

City Budget Review Schedule

- March 14:** Public hearing; consideration of real estate tax rate to be advertised
- March 28:** Public hearing; work session
- April 4:** Work session
- April 11:** Introduction of tax rates for commercial and industrial property, and wastewater;
- April 25:** Real-estate tax-rate public hearing; work session
- May 3:** Special public hearing (on a Wednesday) and budget adoption.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

There's good news for homeowners in the City of Fairfax: City Manager Bob Sisson's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2018 is calling for no increase in the real-estate tax rate. That means it most likely will remain at its current level of \$1.0645 per \$100 assessed valuation.

The budget is slated for adoption on May 3. But before then, Mayor David Meyer and the City Council members will scrutinize the document thoroughly and make their own changes and recommendations before giving it their seal of approval and officially setting the real-estate tax rate.

The public, too, will be able to weigh in during public hearings set for March 14 and

Meetings and work sessions are held in the City Hall Annex, 10455 Armstrong St., and are televised on Cityscreen-12; schedule is subject to change.

The budget is a detailed description of how City taxpayer money is spent. It explains the city's goals, proposed programs and activities for the coming fiscal year. It also includes year one of the five-year Capital Improvement Program. Copies of the proposed budget are available in print and via www.fairfaxva.gov/. For more information, call 703-385-7870.

28, April 25 and May 3. Meanwhile, last Tuesday, Feb. 28, Sisson gave a budget presentation to the Council.

"We have a balanced budget," he said. "We're proposing \$173,149,697 in total spending — a 4-percent increase over the current year. The proposed General Fund expenditure is \$140,209,067 or a 3.5-percent increase over FY17."

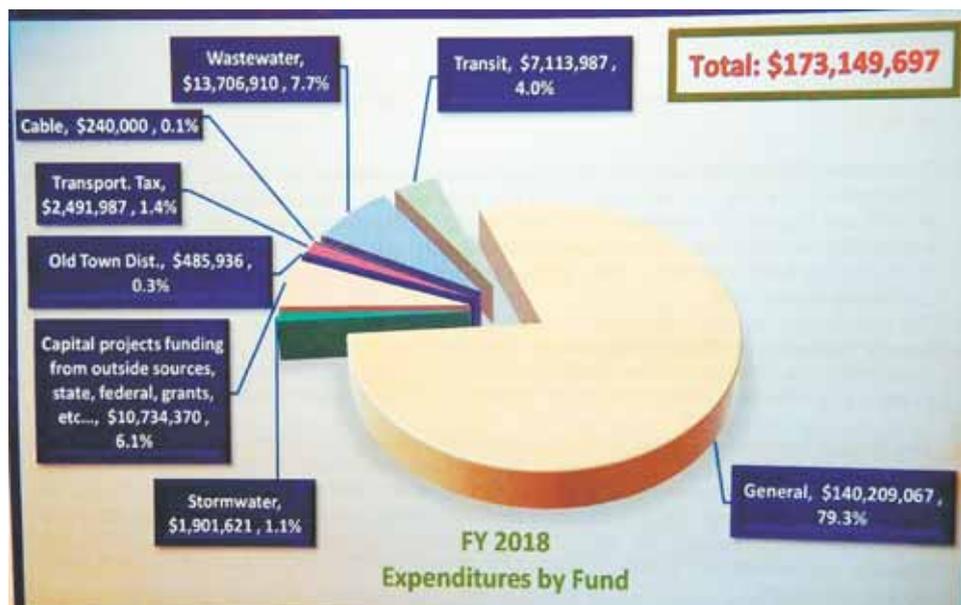
Noting some things he and his staff took into consideration as they prepared the budget, Sisson said funding the City's CIP (Capital Improvement Program) is "always a challenge." And he said the City's school-

vice on past expenditures is "significant." However, he added, "Most of it was the result of bond referendums passed and relating to the schools."

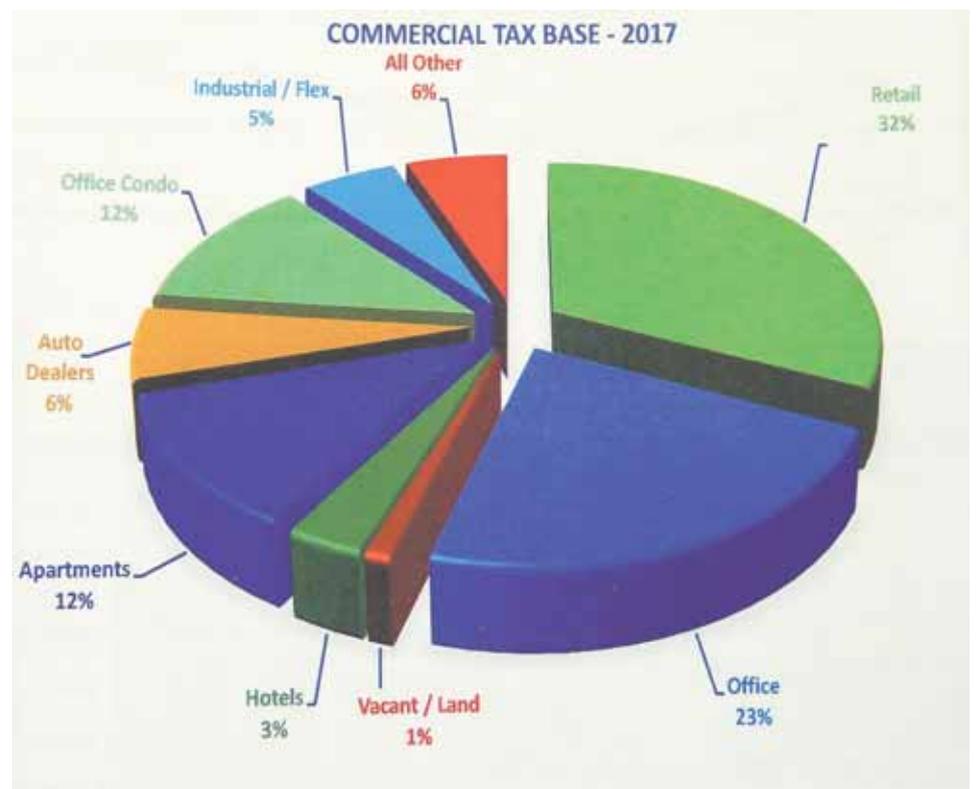
He stressed, as well, that 60 percent of the City's General Fund expenditures — some \$83 million — is for nondiscretionary expenses. These are non-negotiable items for certain services and contracts, such as the school contract with FCPS, debt obligations, pension benefits, and fixed costs including debt payments for the wastewater treatment plant.

On the positive side, even though real-estate tax revenue isn't predicted to increase by much — just \$1.9 million — Sisson said, "Any growth in our real-estate tax base is good. And we have a relatively low increase in our school contract. We'll have a snow-

SEE BUDGET, PAGE 5



FY18 expenditures by fund



The City's commercial tax base

Proposed Budget Unveiled

FROM PAGE 4

removal savings this year because of the mild winter, and FEMA will reimburse a significant sum of money to the City for last year's severe winter."

He said Fairfax is also going through a school-debt refunding to reduce its debt, will have a savings in its recycling contract and will only have "minimal" increases in its health-care expenditure. "We're seeing personal property tax revenue increases, and we've received several outside grants," said Sisson. "So this has been an unusual year, and we're not going to recommend a real-estate tax increase."

He is, however, proposing a one-

fourth of a penny increase in the stormwater tax. For the owner of a \$500,000 house, it would mean roughly a \$66 increase in the tax bill because of hikes in property assessments, as well. But the rise in the stormwater tax is anticipated to generate some \$1.4 million to help the City fund several projects dealing with aging infrastructure, plus comply with state and federal regulations regarding stormwater management.

Returning to the General Fund, Sisson said education is "by far, our biggest expenditure," receiving 40 percent of the total. Next come fire and rescue, police, public works and City government. Real-estate taxes comprise the largest portion of the General Fund revenues. But, said Sisson, "A sign of a healthy, diversified economy is that we're below 50 percent reliance on the real-estate tax."

He said the City has \$4.6 million in additional expenditures projected for FY18. "We're recommending merit raises of 2.5 percent, down from 3.5 percent in the current year, and a cost-of-living increase of 2 percent for all employees," said Sisson. "And we'd like to add four, full-time equivalent positions to City staff."

He also noted the increase in the school-tuition contract. And he said Fairfax is paying about \$1.2 million annually in debt repayment for the undergrounding of utilities, plus transportation improvements done several years ago.

For FY18, he recommended \$100,000 for the City's Economic Development Opportunity Fund and \$160,000 for other Economic Development Authority initiatives. "I'm pleased with the work of our new [Economic Development] Director [Chris Bruno] and the work he and the EDA are going to be doing," said Sisson.

"We're recommending a 6.5-percent transfer [\$8.9 million] from the General Fund to the CIP," said Sisson. The money will go toward a substantial number of needed improvements and equipment to benefit City infrastructure, programs and

services.

AT THE START of the meeting, Kirk Holley, chairman of Fairfax's Community Appearance Committee, addressed the Council. He's part of an informal group trying to improve the appearance of the downtown area. "We believe it should be an attractive place where people want to come and stay a few hours," he said. "We've made a lot of

improvements, but we also need to improve the lighting, sidewalks, pedestrian access, greenery and maintenance."

Holley said an overall plan is needed, plus a project sequence that makes sense. "We've given a list to staff, and they've

put some money for it in the proposed FY18 budget, in the Old Town Service portion," he said. "Please support this funding so we can invigorate the downtown." Sisson heeded his request and is recommending \$150,000 for it in the budget.

In addition, he said, the City pays \$5.6 million per year to the county for upgrades to the Noman Cole Water Treatment Plant. It also costs \$5.7 million per year for in-City work to maintain "our [wastewater] transmission and collection system, plus debt service," said Sisson. "So we're recommending a rate increase of 10 percent to continue to pay the bills. The average, household quarterly wastewater utility fund payment goes from \$165 to \$181."

He's also recommending a transportation tax fund rate increase from 9.5 cents to 10.5 cents for commercial and industrial properties. All residential properties are excluded from this tax. The money is used solely for transportation and transit purposes and enables the City to qualify for matching funds for various transportation projects.

Somewhere down the road, said Sisson, Fairfax will have to consider major capital expenses such as an additional fire station, school life-cycle needs and a community center. But meanwhile, he said, "Hopefully, the redevelopment of mixed-use projects will bring new revenue, new people and new vigor to the community."

"We have about \$400 million of private and public construction either happening now or in the queue," he continued. "And never in the City's history has it been on this threshold where it's so primed for economic growth."

Sisson then thanked the department directors, plus Finance Director David Hodgkins, Budget Manager Kerry Kidd and City Clerk Melanie Crowder for their help in preparing the budget. "We'll get into the details of this budget over the next two months," said Mayor David Meyer. "And we welcome robust participation by all interested persons."

"A sign of a healthy, diversified economy is that we're below 50 percent reliance on the real-estate tax."

— Bob Sisson, City Manager

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OPINION

Independent, Civilian Oversight in Place

New auditor and panel will make an excellent police force better, more transparent and accountable.

In February, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors followed through in establishing two forms of independent oversight of law enforcement for the first time in county history.

Richard Schott will begin as independent auditor on April 17, reporting directly to the Board of Supervisors.

Nine members have been named to the county's inaugural Civilian Review Panel, chaired by Adrian Steel. More than 140 Fairfax County residents applied to be considered to serve on the panel, and those named appear to have a remarkable set of qualifications.

Independent, civilian oversight of law enforcement is a national best practice.

Schott is a 27-year veteran of the FBI where he specialized in training on officer use of force, civil rights and color of law issues. He worked on the Henry Glover and Danziger Bridge civil rights cases, prosecutions of New Orleans Police Department officers for civil rights violations after Hurricane Katrina.

The Office of the Auditor will handle cases of police use of force that result in serious injury and death and the Civilian Review Panel will handle complaints about Fairfax County Police abuse of authority or misconduct.

These methods of oversight were adopted

by the board following recommendations of the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, established by Chairman Sharon Bulova in the wake of the police shooting death of John Geer and public reaction to 17 months when FCPD released no information about the case until forced to by court order.

Leadership of FCPD, especially Chief Edwin C. Roessler Jr., have embraced the almost all of the 202 recommendations of the commission, which acknowledged the overall excellence of Fairfax County Police.

Nevertheless, the county's first independent auditor will come on board with work to do.

In his mandate to monitor and review internal investigations of Police Department officer-involved shootings, in-custody deaths and use-of-force cases in which an individual is killed or seriously injured, Schott will begin with the investigation of the officer-involved shooting death of Herndon resident Mohammad Azim Doudzai in progress.

Among the questions for Schott will be why it took 45 days, rather than the recommended 10 days, to release the name of the officer involved in the shooting. The chief needed the additional time to fully investigate and mitigate any possible threats to the officer and his family, and respond to legal action by the officer seeking to stop the release of his name, a delay permitted by the new policy. The officer

was involved in two other uses of deadly force, one in 2005 and one in 2010, with the suspect wounded but not killed in those two incidents. (The officer received valor awards for the 2005 incident for rescuing the store manager during an armed robbery with shots fired.)

Other questions that we hope the auditor can answer for the public:

According to the chief's statement at the scene on the day of the incident, two officers used less lethal force (taser and foam bullet) while one officer fired his service weapon. Was a supervisor coordinating the plan? What was the sequence of events and uses of force? Was there an attempt to subdue the suspect without deadly force?

Why is so little additional information forthcoming about the incident? Subsequent releases have contained fewer details than were release on the day of the incident. What video exists and when will it be released?

The policy states: "It is important to note the 10 day period is primarily related to the release of officer names and is only designed as a limit to not be exceeded without cause, not a recommended standard, and the board and the public expect the Police Department to release other appropriate preliminary factual information and updates to the public as soon as possible."

Another area of inquiry is analysis of data released last year that indicates 40 percent of the subjects of use of force by FCPD are African American, while only 8 percent of the county population is African American.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Eight Pieces of Legislation with Positive Impact

BY DAVE MARSDEN
STATE SENATOR (D-37)

COMMENTARY

The 2017 General Assembly Session has officially adjourned Sine Die, concluding our legislative session. Over the next few weeks Governor McAuliffe and his staff will review the legislation passed and approve, veto, or amend the bills. Included this year are eight bills that I passed.

The most significant bill I had passed this year was SB1027, legislation to allow for the growing, processing, and dispensing of Medical Marijuana Oils. Three years ago, I met with Fairfax County residents who had members of their family who suffered from intractable epilepsy. Intractable epilepsy is a neurological disorder that produces serious, debilitating, and many times life threatening seizures. Many people, especially children, can suffer from hundreds of seizures a day. The severity of this ailment can't be downplayed. These fami-

lies have spent countless hours in emergency rooms trying to stabilize their loved ones and many hours seeking better treatment. The FDA approved drugs come with some of the worst imaginable side effects.

But these families, like thousands across the nation, had found a medication that helped and no side effects. CBD and THC-A Oils are non-hallucinogenic oils derived from marijuana plants. These families saw drastic reductions in seizures and emergency room visits. We are not only helping people with this legislation, but will save hundreds of thousands of dollars by not having patients rely on expensive FDA approved drugs paid for by Medicaid.

In 2015 we passed a law that made it possible for these families to possess this medication without fear of criminal prosecution. However, we did not provide them with

a way to legally procure the medication. SB1027 created Board of Pharmacy regulations that allow for the lawful growing, manufacturing, and dispensing of this medication to qualified patients. The oils will be available sometime in 2018 and I am optimistic that other disorders will be added to the list of qualifying illnesses such as Crohn's Disease, cancer, glaucoma, multiple sclerosis, ALS, and perhaps others.

Another bill, SB1467, will allow election officers to start counting overseas ballots early on Election Day. Currently registrars cannot start counting these ballots until after the polls close and because of their format they must be counted by hand. In Fairfax County it takes 80 people over six hours to count these ballots, delaying the final vote tally. If you ever wondered why Fairfax County is one of the last localities to report their election results, look no further than this culprit. SB1467 will allow the elections board to begin counting these bal-

lots at 3 p.m. on Election Day.

Two hot button issues during our general assembly session included mental health reforms and our continued battle with the Commonwealth's opioid problem. I passed SB1031 that would allow access by laboratory staff to Naloxone, a pharmaceutical that helps save lives when someone overdoses on an opioid. This was an important safety measure as our state labs perform dangerous yet important tests and studies on opioids. In Virginia, more than 1,000 people died from opioid overdoses in 2016. I joined Senator Louise Lucas in passing SB 895/SB935, in response to the tragic deaths of folks who were being held in our jails instead of receiving the mental health treatment they needed. This legislation streamlines the process to allow an inmate to receive mental health treatment in a hospital while awaiting trial.

My final four pieces of legisla-

SEE MARSDEN, PAGE 7

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CONNECTION

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LETTERS

Hate Crimes Have No Place in Our Communities

To the Editor:

In recent weeks there has been an alarming increase in acts of anti-Semitism at Jewish Community Centers, cemeteries, and schools, and at Muslim Community Centers and mosques. Well over 100 incidents have been reported just since the beginning of 2017, including recent bomb threats at a Jewish Community Center in Fairfax and at two mosques and a Muslim Community Center in Montgomery County. Government leaders, faith-based organizations, and our entire community should condemn these incidents and call upon law enforcement to work with the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security to seek out the perpetrators of these hate crimes and prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law.

Desecration of Jewish cemeteries and bomb threats at Jewish and Muslim schools and community centers are intended to cause fear and intimidation, and have no place on our communities. Coordinated government involvement at all levels is needed to identify and prosecute those who

are responsible for these hate crimes. Congress must ensure that funding for the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice is maintained to ensure that adequate resources are available to make prosecution of hate crimes a priority. The President, Members of Congress, and our Governors should continue to speak out against the hate crimes which have escalated alarmingly. All of this will require leadership, but each of these steps is required to ensure that all Americans regardless of their religion, are free from hate crimes such as desecration of cemeteries and bomb threats at religious schools and community centers. Lastly, during the Easter season, Christian churches should take the opportunity to condemn the recent acts of hate crimes directed at Jewish and Muslim communities because of their religion, and include in the Easter liturgy a reaffirmation of the bonds of humanity shared by the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian religions.

Brad Penney
Springfield

Marsden

FROM PAGE 6

tion on the Governor's desk include SB812, an important consumer protection bill that would require home inspectors to report the presence of yellow shaded corrugated steel tubing that can cause a fire when the building that contains it is struck by lightning; SB 840, extends the life of the Commission on Civic Education; SB873, authorizes a fire chief to ban or restrict privately owned drones at the scene of fires, acci-

dents, etc.; and SB1488, which I co-sponsored with Senator Scott Surovell that would require a judge to seek reimbursement of fees from a family when a Guardian ad litem has been appointed for a child, an exemption is available for families who are unable to pay.

As you can see it was a busy legislative session. I look forward to the Governor signing these bills and seeing the positive impact they will have on our community and Commonwealth.

FAITH NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

Fairfax Baptist Temple, at the corner of Fairfax County Parkway and Burke Lake Roads, holds a bible study fellowship at 9 a.m. Sundays followed by a 10 a.m. worship service. Nursery care and children's church also provided. 6401 Missionary Lane, Fairfax Station, 703-323-8100 or www.fbtministries.org.

The Guhyasamaja Buddhist Center, 10875 Main St., Fairfax City provides free classes to both newcomers and advanced practitioners of

Tibetan Buddhism. The center emphasizes working with the mind and learning how to understand the workings of the mind, overcoming inner causes of suffering, while cultivating causes of happiness. Under the direction of Lama Zopa Rinpoche, the center is a place of study, contemplation and meditation. Visit <http://www.guhyasamaja.org> for more.

Lord of Life Lutheran offers services at two locations, in Fairfax at 5114 Twinbrook Road and in Clifton at 13421 Twin Lakes Drive. Services in Fairfax are held on Saturdays at 5:30 p.m. and Sundays at 8:30 and 10 a.m. Services in Clifton are held on Sundays at 8:50 and 10:50 a.m. 703-323-9500 or www.Lordoflifeva.org.

City Councilman Jon Stehle presents the notification letter to Fire Department personnel. (Front row, from left) are Stehle, ISO regional rep Philip Leitma, ISO Hazard Mitigation Manager Skip Gibson and City Manager Bob Sisson.

PHOTO COURTESY OF
JOHN O'NEAL



Up Where the Air is Rare

City's fire-protection rating is among the nation's highest.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

When John O'Neal came to the City of Fairfax a year ago to become its new fire chief, one of his objectives was to improve the City's Insurance Services Office (ISO) fire-protection rating. And true to his word, he's not only bettered it, but turned the City's Fire Department into one of the highest-ranked departments in the nation.

On a 1-10 scale, with 1 the best and 10 the worst, the City had an ISO rating of 3, and O'Neal wanted to reduce it to 1. And the department did so via training recommendations, having the proper apparatus, demonstrating compliance with ISO standards through better administrative record-keeping, and doing equipment and apparatus tests.

The ISO notified City Manager Bob Sisson last Tuesday, Feb. 28, and the news was shared and celebrated during that night's City Council meeting. "Our department is now in the top 1 percent of the 48,000 fire departments across the country," O'Neal told the Council. "And it's one of just seven in the state and approximately 250 in the U.S. with this rating."

The ISO collects information on municipal fire-protection efforts in communities throughout the U.S. By classifying communities' ability to suppress fires, ISO helps them evaluate their public fire-protection services.

"It examines the fire department's training program, amount of equipment and distances emergency vehicles travel to answer calls," explained O'Neal. "It also looks at the type and size of buildings the department protects in the community and evaluates its ability to do so."

To arrive at its ranking, the ISO evaluates a city's dispatch center, water supply and fire department, with the quality of the fire department accounting for 50 percent of the score. The City of Fairfax earned 93.07 points out of a possible total of 105.5, earning a nearly perfect score in dispatch capabilities and scores in the highest percentile for water supply and fire/emergency services.

RANKINGS are reviewed every five years, and this one will go into effect June 1. And according

to the ISO, the City's public-protection classification of 1 represents "an exemplary fire-suppression program."

At last week's Council meeting, O'Neal thanked the past and present City mayors and Council members, plus Sisson, for their continued support of public safety here. He also expressed his appreciation to all the staff members who worked on this project.

"I think the importance of this is that it's absolutely critical because the Insurance Services Office rates communities on how well they are able to respond to fire emergencies," said Mayor David Meyer. "And the insurance companies use that rating to determine the premiums for both commercial property and residential property. The City has received the highest rating possible, and we would hope the insurance industry will make adjustments to premiums [accordingly]."

As O'Neal noted, said Meyer, "We're one of only seven municipalities in Virginia to receive this level of rating — [and] that's out of 133 jurisdictions — so that's quite a distinction. And we need to give credit to the Fire Department, as well as to Fairfax Water and the Fairfax County dispatch 911 system, working together to create this level of safety within our community."

Meyer called the new ranking "a fine example of the quality of the professional staff and municipal services that [City taxpayers] receive for [their] tax dollars and how that quality results in savings, both to our business community and to our residents. So I want to thank the Fire Department for all their work on this [achievement]; this is outstanding."

HAPPY TO HAVE accomplished this goal, O'Neal said doing so also demonstrates the City Fire Department's compliance with national standards and quantifies its performance levels for the citizens and elected officials. "Within my first two months here, we took steps to address the ISO standards for training, apparatus equipment and apparatus testing, and to improve our documentation of response data," he said. O'Neal also stressed that he didn't do it alone.

"The lowering of the ISO rate was truly a team effort with our internal personnel, including Assistant Chief Andrew Wilson, Battalion Chief Peter Rhoads, Capt. Shawn Dunstan and Lt. Ryan Hilt, and our external partners at Fairfax County 911 and Fairfax Water," said O'Neal. "I am very pleased with the results of our evaluation by the ISO. And we are already developing a plan to improve in a few areas where we scored lower points than desired, for our next evaluation in five years."



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Left, Rising Hope's pastor Rev. Dr. Keary Kincannon said the hypothermia shelter is an important lifeline to a lot of people in the community, providing up to 170 bed-nights per week. Left, U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8).

Left, Sen. Tim Kaine (D) described a letter he'd received from a girl in fourth grade — in it she wrote she was sorry he had lost the presidential election with running mate Hillary Clinton, but that he still had important work to do.

Leaders Gather in Opposition to Trump Immigration Policies

Condemning ICE activity at Rising Hope Church in search of criminals in the country illegally.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

In response to executive orders from President Donald Trump that expand Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents' criteria for detaining and deporting people in the United States illegally, elected officials are speaking out against the action, as well as condemning recent activity by ICE officials to round up known immigrant criminals. "These new policies of the Trump administration exist to incite fear," U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8) said at a press conference held March 2 at Rising Hope Mission Church in the Mount Vernon area of Alexandria. "They exist to make immigrants feel unwelcome, to make them flee. We are here to make sure that we do not destroy the remarkable, inimitable fabric of our nation of immigrants with scorched earth immigration policies."

Early in the morning on Feb. 8, multiple witnesses say ICE agents quickly surrounded guests leaving the hypothermia shelter being offered at Rising Hope. They said Latino men in particular were singled out from the group, questioned and had their fingers scanned. Six or seven of them were allegedly shackled, loaded into vans and driven away.

When asked about this account, an ICE official would only confirm that two men were arrested from that location on that date and time, and that ICE's sensitive locations policy says operations aren't to be carried out at places of worship.

RISING HOPE'S PASTOR Rev. Dr. Keary



Congressional Hispanic Caucus Chairwoman from New Mexico U.S. Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-1) said reformed policies should "recognize the economic and social contributions of immigrants and uphold the protections in our Constitution."

Kincannon said the hypothermia shelter is an important lifeline to a lot of people in the community, providing up to 170 bed-nights per week.

"When ICE swooped in, it was an attack on the practicing of our faith, our religion," Kincannon said at the press conference. "This kind of activity has to stop, this needs to be the last time."

Kincannon said they're called to serve humanity, regardless of their status.

Sen. Tim Kaine (D) described a letter he'd received from a girl in fourth grade — in it she wrote she was sorry he had lost the presidential election with running mate Hillary Clinton, but that he had still had important work to do.

"Stop my classmates from being deported," Kaine said she wrote. "Be the hero."

"The letter was about fear," Kaine continued, making statements in both English and Spanish. "The policies of this administration are policies that divide and create fear. If you do things that make our immigrant communities afraid of law enforcement, our entire communities become less safe."



Left, Alexandria Mayor Allison Silberberg joined Rising Hope Pastor Keary Kincannon.

Kaine said he was there to stand together against the new immigration policies and in support of comprehensive immigration reform.

Congressional Hispanic Caucus Chairwoman from New Mexico U.S. Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-1) said reformed policies should "recognize the economic and social contributions of immigrants and uphold the protections in our Constitution."

ICE detaining people without due process, Grisham said, is an affront to the values of the United States and "should scare every American."

"We do not support immigration policies that make all undocumented people priorities for enforcement," she said. "I just can't believe this, this is where we are headed."

Democratic Caucus Vice-Chairwoman from California U.S. Rep. Linda Sánchez (D-38) said she had recently met with both President Donald Trump and the acting director of ICE. She told Trump what happened at Rising Hope was not an isolated issue and was "appalling, wrong."

"ICE has been using heavy-handed tactics to intentionally incite fear in immigrant communities," Sánchez said. "However, raids do not make our neighborhoods safer or fix our broken immigration system."

Immigration lawyer Nicholas Marritz from the Legal Aid Justice Center in Falls

Church said there is a lot of fear in the immigrant community following Trump's orders and ICE's activity — real or perceived.

He said he and others have tried numerous times to get ICE to respond with their own account of the events of Feb. 8 at Rising Hope, as well as the names of the men who were detained there. Without them, Marritz said, it's difficult to build a case. So far ICE has refused to give them a substantial response.

AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE, Marritz translated a statement from a woman in the United States illegally but with children born here. Through Marritz, she said she doesn't feel like she can leave her home freely in this climate.

"Mr. President," Marritz translated for her, "you cannot make us criminals in our country. Give us an opportunity to come out of the shadows, into the light, to show what we can do. ¡Basta ya! Enough is enough!"

"I would ask the President that he govern with wisdom," the woman continued as Marritz translated, "because all of us who live in this country and under this flag have rights. May he respect the dignity of all human beings who live in the United States."

"We The People' make America great," she concluded, in English.

Standing in solidarity with the speakers were state Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36), state Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31), state Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-30), Del. Paul Krizek (D-44), Arlington County Board Vice-Chair Katie Cristol, Alexandria Mayor Allison Silberberg and Fairfax County School Board Member Karen Corbett Sanders.

The elected officials were joined by leaders from other non-governmental organizations working on behalf of undocumented individuals and families, including representatives from ACLU of Virginia, Lenka Mendoza of Dreamers Moms in Action, and Michelle LaRue of CASA attended to endorse the rights of Virginia's undocumented population.

NEWS

Chief Releases Name of Officer in Shooting Death

Officer used deadly force in two prior cases, both determined to be lawfully justified.

By TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE

In a press conference from the scene of the Jan. 16 officer-involved shooting-barricade incident, Chief of Police Edwin Roessler said the less-lethal force deployed included a taser and 40mm foam bullet. The deadly force was MPO Lance Guckenberger's service firearm.

Fairfax County Chief of Police Edwin Roessler has named 16-year veteran Master Police Officer Lance Guckenberger as the officer who used deadly force, killing Mohammad Azim Doudzai at his home in Herndon, the scene of a double shooting and barricade incident on Jan. 16.

Roessler released the name of the officer March 2, after a protracted risk assessment and court action by the officer seeking a restraining order to stop the release of his name. This is the first FCPD officer-involved shooting since the Board of Supervisors adopted recommendations from the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, including releasing the name of the officer within 10 days of an officer-involved deployment of deadly force unless the chief determines that more time is needed to investigate or mitigate a credible threat to the officer and/or family.

Police say two men were shot inside Doudzai's house, in the 13300 block of Covered Wagon Lane in Herndon. Officers from the Reston District station responded around 2.40 p.m. on Jan. 16, after the shooting victims had already gone to the hospital. A third man was trapped inside the home with Doudzai, who police said was armed with both a gun and at least one knife. Adding to the danger of the scene were flames and smoke coming from the residence, police said.

In an attempt to de-escalate the situation, members of the Crisis Negotiations team and Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team were called in to negotiate with Doudzai. Guckenberger is assigned to the Special Operations Division responsible for both those teams.

Doudzai eventually came to the front door, where Roessler said both less-lethal and deadly force were used to bring him down.

In a press conference from the scene of the incident, Roessler said the less-lethal force deployed included a taser and 40mm foam bullet. The deadly force was Guckenberger's service firearm.

The exact sequence of those uses isn't known, but should be determined at the conclusion of the ongoing FCPD investigation, medical examiner's findings and decision from the Commonwealth's Attorney.

A March 2 release from FCPD announcing the officer's name failed to mention the less-lethal force used. FCPD spokesperson MPO Don Gotthardt said in an email that detail was probably not considered due to focus being on the release of the name and taking care of the officer.

Guckenberger has been involved with two prior cases involving use of deadly force, Roessler said the March 2 release, one in 2005 and one in 2010; in both cases the suspect survived.

The first involved a business holdup on Jan. 14, 2005 in Falls Church and an exchange of gunfire with the suspect in Bailey's Crossroads. Guckenberger received both the Fairfax County Police Silver Medal of Valor and the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police's Award for Valor for his actions in 2005 incident for rescuing the store manager, according to press accounts from the time.

The second involved a man with a history of mental illness who was reportedly using narcotics.

He fired at officers multiple times, police said, with what turned out to be a BB gun powered by a CO2 cartridge.

"Both of those matters were determined to be lawfully justified uses of force," Roessler said, "in which the officer used great restraint while being exposed to suspects who were using weapons against the involved officer while the officer was attempting to preserve the sanctity of human life for others."

Both criminal and administrative investigations by FCPD into the Jan. 16 incident are ongoing, police said.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF BURKE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Family photo of Jacob and sons (who eventually become the 12 tribes of Israel). From left: Maya Ray (Bilhah), Elizabeth Wickham (Dinah), Katie Ross (Leah), Sarah Dickson (Zilpah); Second row: Karis Kiss (Zebulun), Becca Diggs (Narrator, Gad), Garrett Gass (Benjamin), Nick Yoon (Joseph), Laura Berlin (production team), Andrew Giddings (Asher); Third row: Zach Niles (Naphtali), Carol Bryan (production team), Stephen Rosene (Jacob), Jordan Koontz (Narrator, Dan), Will Peters (Issachar); Fourth row: Colin Diggs (Reuben), Brady Wickham (Levi).

Musical at Burke Presbyterian

'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' performances March 9-12.

BY RANDY LEE

What do the Bible, the Torah, the Koran, the Book of Mormon, and the West End/Broadway writing team of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice have in common? A young dreamer named Joseph, and his coat that served as the object of affection, jealousy, and redemption.

On March 9-12, Burke Presbyterian Church continues its 21st consecutive year of presenting a free musical to the community, as "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" returns to the BPC "stage" after making its last appearance in 2009. A cast of 35 talented BPC youth (7th-12th grades), a live band, and a hard-working behind-the-scenes crew will present the famous (and very child-friendly) show, based on the life of Jacob's favorite son.

With music by Webber (the composer of Cats, The Phantom of the Opera, and Sunset Boulevard), and lyrics by Rice (the lyricist of The Lion King, Aida, Aladdin, Beauty and the Beast, and Chess), Joseph was the first of their three renowned musicals (in addition to "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "Evita").

Nick Yoon (a senior at Thomas Jefferson HS) portrays Joseph, a 17-year-old blessed with prophetic dreams. Sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, he is taken to Egypt, and endures a series of adventures in which his spirit and humanity are continually challenged. Set to a cornucopia of musical styles, from country-western and calypso to rock 'n' roll, this Old Testament tale emerges both timely and timeless.

Yoon, who also serves as one of the student choreographers, encourages all ages to attend: "This musical is a great, family-friendly show with lots of fun

music and characters! If you want to have a good time and learn a valuable lesson about forgiveness, then come on over and see the show."

The cast has worked collaboratively with BPC adult leaders, and added unique slapstick and vaudeville touches to the show.

The show is "sold out," but there are always people who turn in tickets the day of the performances, so if you send a request to Musical-Tickets@BurkePresChurch.org to get on the wait list, and show up at least 15 minutes before show time, there has historically been a 99 percent chance you can get a seat. March 9 (opening night) is the best chance for that. There is no charge for tickets, but free-will donations will be happily accepted at the end of each of the performances. Any donations support BPC Youth Mission Programs.

Besides Yoon, there are several seniors in their final BPC show – from Lake Braddock Secondary School: Jordan Koontz (Narrator), Josh Lee (Pharaoh), and Garrett Niles (Potiphar, Goat); from Robinson Secondary School: Colin Diggs (Judah), Maddie Dozier (Simeon), Christian Ham (Ishmaelite), Elizabeth Wickham (Dinah), and Sophia Zmorzenski (Tech Crew); and from West Springfield High School: Meagan Espinoza (Narrator, Baker, choreographer) and Andrew Giddings (Asher).

BPC has two married co-pastors, and one of them, Rev. Jarrett McLaughlin, summed up the show as "a fun and faith-filled interpretation of an important Biblical story."

From March 9-15, Hopsfrog Grille and Panisa Thai Dining in Burke, TaeJi Sushi in Fairfax Station, and Asian Grill in West Springfield are also partnering with BPC for "dinner and a show," in which the four restaurants give back 10-20 percent of their proceeds to BPC youth during the four show days, plus three days after the show ends.

Learn more at www.burkepreschurch.org/node/453.

Send notes to the Connection at connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ or call 703-778-9416. The deadline is the Friday prior to the next paper's publication at noon. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

ONGOING

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

Fairfax Pets on Wheels New Volunteer Orientation First Wednesday of each month. 7:30-9 p.m. 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax. An orientation for new volunteers interested in visiting residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities with their approved pets through the Fairfax Pets On Wheels program is held the first Wednesday of every month starting at 7:30 p.m. Visit www.fpow.org for each month's location. Prior to attending, please complete the online application found at www.fpow.org/volunteer. Please do NOT bring pets to this orientation. Also, see weather policy for possible cancellations. www.fpow.org, 703-324-5424 or dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Carolina Shag. Wednesdays. 6:30-10 p.m. Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m. No partners needed. Dinner menu. \$8. Under 21 free. nvshag.org.

FUN-Exercise Thursdays, noon-12:50 p.m. Grace Presbyterian Church Family Room, 7434 Bath St., Springfield. Inova certified exercise instructor leads a moderate level exercise class with music and current events conversation. Muscle, Balance, Strength Training using stretch bands and weights both standing and seated exercises. Instructor donation is \$5. moorefitt@yahoo.com or 703-499-6133.

Exercise Program Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 a.m. year-round at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Rd. Fairfax. The exercises are for strength, balance and maintaining limberness. Contact SCFB office at 703-426-2824 for more information.

Cafe Ivrit (Hebrew Cafe). Wednesdays. 8:15-9:15 a.m. Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Shalom (hello) Did you always want to converse in Hebrew? Join Na'ama each week for conversational Hebrew. You will learn and practice Hebrew in a fun and interactive way while learning more about Israel. Free, however we ask that you try to attend regularly. RSVP Naama.Gold@jccnv.org.

Smoke Free Bingo. 7 p.m. Every Friday. Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Free coffee, entertaining callers, \$1,000 jackpot (with breaks for smoking friends). www.fairfaxvd.com. 703-273-3638.

English Conversation Groups weekly at George Mason, Burke Centre, and Lorton Libraries Practice and improve your English. Day and start times vary. Visit: va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/eventcalendar.asp

Stories From Strawberry Park 10-11 a.m. Tuesdays in Mosaic, Strawberry Park, 2910 District Ave., Fairfax. Enjoy a live interactive performance each week. For ages 10 and under. Held outside in Strawberry Park. In inclement weather and October through April, storytime will be held in Angelika Film Center. Visit www.fxva.com/

listing/mosaic-district/2326/.

Funday Monday 10:30 a.m., every Monday at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. There will be music, movement, storytelling, performances, crafts, and more. It is open to children of all ages, however especially for those who haven't yet started school. Programs are free and open to the public, donations are gratefully appreciated. There is ample free parking in the downtown area, and stroller access at the rear of Old Town Hall on Main St. 703-385-7858 www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts

MARCH 8-APRIL 2

"Her Story" Art Exhibition. Gallery hours are Mon.-Fri: 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun: 12-5 p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Show focuses on how women have a role in inspiring and shaping our society. The artists will be on hand to talk about their work and the processes they use at the opening reception 6-9 p.m. on March 11. Visit www.workhousearts.org/ for more.

MARCH 9-12

"Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat."

Various times at Burke Presbyterian Church, 5690 Oak Leather Drive. A cast of 35 7-12 graders, a live band, and a hard-working behind-the-scenes crew will present the famous and family-friendly show. Visit www.burkepreschurch.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 11

Culinary Challenge and Wellness Expo.

9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. at Lake Braddock Secondary School, 9200 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Rodney Taylor, director of FCPS Food and Nutrition Services, will be a keynote speaker, and the event will feature celebrity chef demonstrations, a student culinary challenge to create dishes for school meals, public food tastings, workshops led by food experts, and prize drawings. Visit www.realfoodforkids.org for more.

Frisbee Golf Challenge. 10 a.m. at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Professional Disc Golf Association tournament. Call 703-371-4873 or email at novadiscgolf@gmail.com for more.

Polaris Piano Trio. 3 p.m. at Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, 8336 Carrleigh Parkway, West Springfield. Featuring the works of both familiar and less-heard composers. Email concerts@kirkwoodpres.com, visit www.kirkwoodpres.com, or call the church office at 703-451-5320.

Scholarship Gala. 6 p.m. at the Springfield Hilton, 6550 Loisdale Road, Springfield. Second Annual Fort Belvoir Scholarship Gala hosted by the Belvoir Enlisted Spouses' Club a nonprofit organization operating out of Fort Belvoir. Email President@belvoiresc.org or call 703-372-5574 for more.

SUNDAY/MARCH 12

Pop-Up Shopping Fair. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Key Center School Cafeteria, 6404 Franconia Road, Springfield. Vendors such as LulaRoe, Beach Body, Norwex, Stella & Dot and many others will be on hand. 15 percent of proceeds will go to benefit the MOD POD – a multi sensory environment initiative for the school. Contact Kelly Zukosky, kmzukosky@fpcs.edu or call 703-313-4000 for more.

Purim Carnival and Silent Auction. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Congregation Adat Reyim, 6500 Westbury Oaks Court, Springfield. There are costumes, games and prizes, lunch, and silent auction. Email publicity@adatreyim.org for more.

ENTERTAINMENT

Girl's Day Hinamatsuri Festival. 12:30-2 p.m. The Ekoji Buddhist Temple, 6500 Lakehaven Lane, Fairfax Station. Celebration includes a traditional Japanese doll display, friendship doll story as told by Girl Scout Troop 6252, Japanese calligraphy, yukata-style kimono try-on, origami dolls and a special souvenir memento. Call 703-239-0500, e-mail ekojiinfo@gmail.com or visit www.ekoji.org for more.

County Spelling Bee. 1:10-5:30 p.m. at Lanier Middle School, 3801 Jermantown Road, Fairfax. 2017 Fairfax County Spelling Bee. Free. Call 703-295-9257 for more.

Tap Ensemble. 6:30-8 p.m. at Metropolitan School of Arts, 5775 Barclay Drive, Kingstowne. The Arts Youth Tap Ensemble is performing a preview to its 10-year anniversary show, scheduled in May, called 2x2. Call 703-339-0444 or visit www.metropolitanarts.org for more.

MARCH 17-18

Transit Driver Appreciation Day. Thank transit drivers on Transit Driver Appreciation Day when the region observes it, March 17 (or on the actual day, March 18). In the City of Fairfax, 34 drivers keep CUE Bus on the road — and two of them, Steve Shillingburg and Lisa DePuy, have been with CUE for 25-plus years. On Transit Driver Appreciation Day, make sure the CUE Bus drivers know how valued they are. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/ for more.

SATURDAY/MARCH 18

Book Sale. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Fairfax City Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Sponsored by the Friends

of the Library. Thousands of gently read books and non-book media organized into categories including picture books, early readers, nonfiction, holiday, chapter books, young adult, etc. \$0.25-\$2.00. Some specials \$3 and \$4. Call 703-644-4870 or email friendsoffairfaxcitylibrary@gmail.com for more.

AAUW 2017 Spring Fling. 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. The American Association of University Women provides advocacy for women through education, philanthropy and research. Molly Smith will be the guest speaker. \$40. Email SpringFlingAAUW@gmail.com or call 703-973-3783 for more.

St. Patrick's Day Dinner. 6-8 p.m. at Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. This is a fundraising event to support the many Christian outreach programs sponsored by the Brotherhood of St. Andrew Men's Group of Pohick Episcopal Church. \$15 for adults, \$40 for a family, and children under 12 are free. www.pohick.org or call 703-680-1664 for more.

MARCH 18-19

SPRINGPEX 2017. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Saturday, and 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. on Sunday at Springfield Stamp Club Show, Robert E. Lee High School cafeteria, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. Local collectors are invited to attend the show, and to display competitive and non-competitive philatelic exhibits. Free. Visit www.springfieldstampclub.org, or contact G. Frazier at frazierg@cox.net for more.

Dentist Corner

— Evelyn Samuel, DMD

Q. What is Gingivitis?

A. Gingivitis is a form of gum disease. It occurs when bacteria build up between the teeth and gums. Symptoms include gums that are swollen/puffy, red, inflamed, and/or bleeding. Pain is not always associated with Gingivitis therefore; the disease can be present and not known. If not treated, it can progress to a more aggressive disease, periodontal disease, which causes destruction of bone and eventual loss of teeth. Periodontal disease has also been linked to heart attacks, preterm delivery in expecting mothers, strokes and other systematic disease such as diabetes. There are several causes of Gingivitis. Among them are certain medications, poor nutrition, hormonal changes, other diseases, and viral/fungal conditions. However, the most common etiology is poor oral hygiene. Gingivitis is treatable and reversible. Practicing good oral hygiene in the form of brushing after each meal and flossing, will aid in preventing this condition. If the disease is present, a professional dental cleaning will remove plaque and hardened calculus that cannot be removed at home thus reversing damage.

Have a dental question? Email your question to info@drevlynteaguesamuel.com

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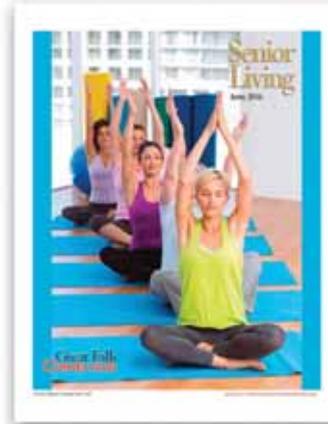
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Coalition Calls on County to Recommit

Faith communities coalition wants dedicated Energy Office.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

As Fairfax County prepares to update its formal Environmental Vision, the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions (FACS) is calling on local elected officials to recommit to the environmental protection pledge they adopted under then-Chairman Gerry Connolly. The non-profit coalition of about 50 interfaith communities sent a red-clad contingent to support the FACS members registered to speak at the Feb. 28 meeting of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. One after another, the speakers praised the supervisors for the county's environmental stance, but urged them to renew their dedication to the goals outlined in the pledge.

Coming from different walks of life and offering different perspectives, those who testified were united in asking the board to establish an office to oversee the transition to clean energy in the county. Peter Clifford, representing FACS member Unity Church of Fairfax, called for a department with the "authority and responsibility to address what you established" in the initial pledge. "Establishing firm goals and regular measurement," Clifford said, was the key to success in this endeavour.

In her testimony, pediatrician Dr. Samantha Adhoot of Alexandria acknowledged that the county is in a tight budget climate, but, echoing the request for an office for environmental advocacy, she warned that environmental issues were also "public health issues," with more cases of Lyme disease, asthma and other respiratory conditions occurring with the longer seasons of unusual warmth.

THE COOL COUNTIES Climate Stabilization Declaration, as the pledge is officially named, established the goal of reducing the D.C. region's overall greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 2005 levels by 2050. It was signed on July 16, 2007. In the 10 years since, it's difficult to tell if progress is being made by Fairfax County, according to Eric Goplerud, chairman and co-founder of FACS.

In an opinion piece recently published in the Washington Post, Goplerud argues that statements about the county's efforts, made by Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova, may confuse residents. In her post of Feb. 6, Bulova cited a 10 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions per capita for the county. Goplerud says the chairman was referencing a report by the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (WMCOG) published in April of 2016 and covering the years between 2005-2012. Not a timely piece of evidence



The Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions brought a red-clad contingent of supporters for their speakers at the Fairfax County Feb. 28 Board of Supervisors meeting.



John Clewett, Cindy Speas, and Ray Martin were among the supporters from The Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions who attended the Feb. 28 Board of Supervisors meeting. The group wants an Energy Office for the county.

in Goplerud's view.

Goplerud also points out that the Cool Counties commitment is for a "total reduction," in emissions, versus per capita. When the data is reviewed from that perspective, given the population growth in the county, carbon pollution may actually have risen, as the county's own 2013 "Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory" indicates. That report shows yearly greenhouse gas emissions in the county as having risen by 3 percent between 2006 and 2010, somewhat at odds with the WMCOG that credited the county with a 2 percent overall decrease in emissions during its last study period.

Kambiz Agazi, the county's environmental coordinator, has said that the lag in providing emissions data is due to the time it takes to compile the complex information, but that the county is committed to publishing the data every three years.

Goplerud and other speakers from FACS aren't willing to accept that delay. While they admit that there is an enormous amount of information to be recorded and analysed, the FACS says that Fairfax need only look at their immediate neighbors to see that measuring energy activity can be done with much more expediency.

The FACS cites Arlington County, Montgomery County in Maryland, and the District as examples of jurisdictions with more current data. Arlington reports a 21 percent reduction, Montgomery County a 10 percent decrease, and the District more than a 20 percent improvement. Fairfax provides a number of bar graphs on their "Energy Data" website to display usage of electricity and natural gas and their "equivalent

carbon emissions in metric tons" in government buildings sorted by category, but there are notations cautioning that "the data is limited by the way the facilities are metered." There are no measurements for private buildings or emission outputs related to transportation for comparison sake at this web location, but the 2013 Greenhouse Gas Inventory does include detailed measurements of emissions by source, as of 2010.

While it's difficult to make an apples-to-apples comparison on the actual results among the localities because of the types of buildings that each includes in their reporting and the dates studied, the data that the others provide is more up-to-date than what is published for Fairfax County. Goplerud and other local environmental activists believe that the difference is due in great part to those jurisdictions having dedicated energy efficiency offices to tackle the issues versus the "lone coordinator" the county employs, despite being the largest jurisdiction in the region.

The county and the activists agree that the county itself is only responsible for about 3 percent of the emissions produced in the area. The speakers all praised the county's efforts to improve their own performance, but pointed again to the goals of the Cool Counties pledge — significant emissions reductions for the region, not just the public sector which comprises such a small percentage of the emissions problem. Some, like Clifford, and FACS executive director Reba Elliott, also reminded the supervisors that much of the improvement in recent years can be attributed to the local utility companies change from coal to natu-

ral gas as the generators for their power.

"I don't think we will see such a change" from the utility companies again, said Clifford. Instead, it's "up to public-private partnerships" like the work being done in Arlington County with LEAP (The Local Energy Alliance Program).

Before the meeting, Elliott added that citizens rely on the county to use their knowledge and resources and their power to educate businesses and the public, guiding them on working toward the energy goals that "are in the best health and economic interests of us all."

AT THE CONCLUSION of the Public Comment period, Bulova expressed the board's thanks to the FACS speakers "for their advocacy." She spoke briefly about the county's "Energy Dashboard" which launched Phase I in March 2016 to provide an overview of the energy usage between 2006 through 2014 in four key service areas: county Government Buildings, Public Works, Parks and Housing and Human Services. The information was updated in August of 2016 to add data for usage in 2015.

Phase 2 of the Dashboard, completed in November of last year, added additional detail and in January, graphics and tables were included to show the reduction in equivalent carbon emissions.

"Thank you for pushing us for [the dashboard]," Bulova said to the FACS members. She made note of the Environmental Vision update underway, and announced that later in the year she would be reconvening her "Private Sector Energy Taskforce" for study and recommendations on how to more forward.

"It's sounds very positive," said Ray Martin after the meeting. Martin was one of the FACS supporters in attendance and belongs to the Lewinsville Presbyterian Church. "But we really need that dedicated office [of Energy]. We're here to help and do what we can. I hope they will try harder."

The Energy Dashboard can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/energy/energydata. A description of the county's efforts, with links to other resources, is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environmental/sustainability/. The Cool Counties Pledge is also on the county's website.

3

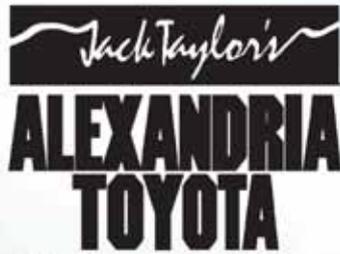
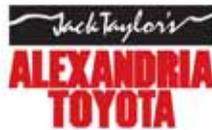
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www.fairfaxcounty.gov/springfield for more.

Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

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Social Action Linking Together (SALT). 9-11:15 a.m. at the Virginia International University (VIU), in Conference Room (VD-102), 4401 Village Drive, Fairfax. Legislators will discuss safety net issues in the 2015 General Assembly session. visit www.S-A-L-T.org or contact John Horejsi at jhorejsi@cox.net or Dr. Bilgin at kbilgin@viu.edu for more.

Immigration Discussion Panel. 10:30 a.m.-noon at the Kings Park Community Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Chairman Sharon Bulova and state Sen. Scott Surovell will be leading a discussion on immigration and its impact on our Fairfax County residents. Free. Email politicalaction@fairfaxnaacp.org for more.

Camp Fair 2017. Noon-4 p.m. at Audrey Moore REC Center, 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale. Get details about Park Authority camps. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/camps or call 703-324-9201 for more.

MONDAY/MARCH 20

Budget Town Hall. 7 p.m. at the West Springfield Government Center, 6140 Rolling Road, Springfield. Supervisor Pat Herry will be hosting, with Fairfax County Executive Ed Long. Visit

SUNDAY/MARCH 26

A United Response to Hate Speech and Crime. 3-5:30 p.m. in the Ernst Room at Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale, 8333 Little River Turnpike. Brief presentations by experts who specialize in preventing hate rhetoric and hate crimes, followed by a discussion between the audience and a panel comprised of diverse religious leaders. Email ncsinterfaith@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-324-3453.

TUESDAY/MARCH 29

Domestic Violence Workshop. 11:30 a.m. at Kings Lutheran Church, 4025 Kings Way, Fairfax. This workshop is presented by Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood & Community Services and The FCIA Interfaith Domestic Violence Prevention Committee. Registration deadline is Monday, March 27. tinyurl.com/fairfaxcountycic, ncsinterfaith@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-3453.

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21 Announcements

LEGAL NOTICE
According to the Lease by and between Joseph Strauss (of unit 1131) and TKG-StorageMart and its related parties, assigns and affiliates in order to perfect the Lien on the goods contained in their storage unit, the manager has cut the lock on their unit and upon cursory inspection the unit was found to contain: trunk, clothes, boxes, ect. Items will be sold or otherwise disposed of on Friday March 24, 2017 @ 12:00pm at 11325 Lee Hwy Fairfax VA 22030 to satisfy owner's lien in accordance with state statutes.

According to the Lease by and between Michael Jordan (of unit 2069) and TKG-StorageMart and its related parties, assigns and affiliates in order to perfect the Lien on the goods contained in their storage unit, the manager has cut the lock on their unit and upon cursory inspection the unit was found to contain: beds, furniture, books, clothes, ect. Items will be sold or otherwise disposed of on Friday March 24, 2017 @ 12:00pm at 11325 Lee Hwy Fairfax VA 22030 to satisfy owner's lien in accordance with state statutes.

According to the Lease by and between James D Williams (of unit 4043) and TKG-StorageMart and its related parties, assigns and affiliates in order to perfect the Lien on the goods contained in their storage unit, the manager has cut the lock on their unit and upon cursory inspection the unit was found to contain: bike, TV, bedding, ect. Items will be sold or otherwise disposed of on Friday March 24, 2017 @ 12:00pm at 11325 Lee Hwy Fairfax VA 22030 to satisfy owner's lien in accordance with state statutes.

According to the Lease by and between James D Williams (of unit 4048) and TKG-StorageMart and its related parties, assigns and affiliates in order to perfect the Lien on the goods contained in their storage unit, the manager has cut the lock on their unit and upon cursory inspection the unit was found to contain: ladders, exercise equipment, boxes, lamps, ect. Items will be sold or otherwise disposed of on Friday March 24, 2017 @ 12:00pm at 11325 Lee Hwy Fairfax VA 22030 to satisfy owner's lien in accordance with state statutes.

According to the Lease by and between Lina Chovil (of unit 4075) and TKG-StorageMart and its related parties, assigns and affiliates in order to perfect the Lien on the goods contained in their storage unit, the manager has cut the lock on their unit and upon cursory inspection the unit was found to contain: luggage, boxes, tubs, ect. Items will be sold or otherwise disposed of on Friday March 24, 2017 @ 12:00pm at 11325 Lee Hwy Fairfax VA 22030 to satisfy owner's lien in accordance with state statutes.

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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 Storck, 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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Where Dreams Never End! Wake up to the stunning interior of this classic 5 bed/3.5 bath colonial sitting on a lovely cul-de-sac lot. Alluring interior includes 2-story foyer; gleaming hardwoods; family room with gas fireplace & custom built-ins; remodeled kitchen with stainless appliances; main level study; walkout Rec Room & a romantic master suite with luxurious bath. Impressive Plus!



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Spring 2017
HomeLifeStyle

Local homes and gardens will be part of Virginia's Historic Garden week on Tuesday, April 25. Featured here, a home on Lake Newport. See www.vagardenweek.org

PHOTO BY DONNA MOULTON/FAIRFAX GARDEN CLUB

Fairfax
CONNECTION

Alexandria Prepares for Historic Garden Week

Five Old Town Alexandria homes and gardens will open to the public on April 22 as part of the 84th Historic Garden Week. The homes will feature flower arrangements created by the members of the Garden Club of Alexandria and The Hunting Creek Garden Club, which are sponsoring the tour, open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Reston homes and gardens are open April 25 (See COVER and page 6).

See www.vagardenweek.org for more.

Houses with History

❖ Four of the tour houses were built over 150 years ago, in 1794, 1802, 1820 and 1859

❖ George Washington dined in one of the tour houses in 1797

❖ A young Robert E. Lee was tutored in mathematics in one tour house

❖ Founding Father George Mason's grandson owned another of the houses

❖ Thomas, the ninth Lord Fairfax, lived in one of the tour houses.

Gardens with Distinctive Design and Spring Flowers

❖ A garden designed by landscape designer, Jane MacLeish

❖ A spacious walled garden built on two

levels

❖ A garden elevated from the street and screened from view

❖ The gardens of Mount Vernon, the American Horticultural Society, Green Spring Gardens, Gunston Hall, Carlyle House, and Lee-Fendall House are all included with the tour ticket.

Historic Architectural Styles

❖ What is considered to be the finest Federal house in Alexandria will be open to the public for the tour

❖ The Georgian architecture with an Italianate facade and unusual floating main staircase in one tour house

❖ Original woodwork by the prominent Alexandria craftsman who built the house in 1859.

Alexandria Tour Details

Tickets may be purchased in advance for \$45 at www.vagardenweek.org and at the Alexandria Visitors Center (221 King Street). On the date of the tour, they may be purchased for \$55 at any house on the tour or at the Alexandria Visitor's Center. Group tours of 20 people or more, \$40 per person. Single site tickets are \$25 per person. The Alexandria tour will be held on its scheduled day, rain or shine.



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BEFORE: Above, owners Jack and Marie Torre wanted square footage for a larger kitchen and dining room, but “set-back” rules prohibited building in the rear, and the front-facing roof overhang limited options for re-designing the facade.

AFTER: Best Whole House Makeover in 10 states, left: Sun Design Remodeling’s conversion of a circa 1960s split-level into a neoclassical style residence has been named a regional “Contractor of the Year” (COTY) winner by the National Association of the Remodeling Industry.

From Split-Level to Neoclassical

Conversion wins regional “Contractor of the Year” award.

BY JOHN BYRD

Converting a circa 1960’s split-level into a spacious neoclassical-style residence has won Sun Design Remodeling a regional “Contractor of the Year” award from the National Association of the Remodeling Industry. The Fairfax residential makeover was named the best whole house remodeling in the “\$250,000 to \$500,000” range in a 10-state area that extends from Maryland and Florida to as far west as Tennessee. Owners Jack and Marie Torre have been so pleased with the outcome that they’ve held an several open houses just to show the changes to curious neighbors. Another open house will be held in the annual Parade of Home, April 22-23.

To accommodate the owner’s requirements, Sun Design added a 300-square-foot addition, introduced a front veranda with a foyer, and elaborated the exterior in a wholly new architectural language.

The Torres had purchased the 3,000-square-foot brick and siding structure in 1984, and found a perfect spot for raising children. As the children moved on, however, the couple recognized that the changes they wanted to make to the house were apparently infeasible.

“We couldn’t add on to the rear because of set-back restrictions,” Jack Torre said. “The bigger problem, though, was a six-foot roof overhang in front, and the seven steps

required to walk from the ground level foyer to the primary living area.”

The couple were actively looking at relocating when a chance visit to a Sun Design remodeled split-level nearby convinced Marie Torre to make an appointment with Bob Gallagher, the company’s president.

In the first meeting, a “wish list” emerged that included a larger kitchen, a formal dining room with a tray ceiling, a family room with a view of the tree-lined back yard, and a spacious first-level powder room.

With these goals in mind, the design team focused on how best to configure the essential components within a well-inte-

grated whole.

Since new space couldn’t be added on the rear, the east side of the house was designated for the new dining room/sitting room wing.

Still more problematic: under the existing plan, one entered the house from a narrow front foyer — ascending to a main level hall that segued in three directions.

What was missing, Gallagher observed, was a “procession” in which rooms unfold in an inviting orderly sequence.

“The structural challenge was finding an optimal way to raise the front door to the main level of the house,” Gallagher said.



The split-level’s former bow window was converted to a set of French doors which overlook the new veranda. Though the execution makes the addition hard to detect, the dining room beyond the fireplace is actually in the home’s new wing.

“This would require extending the front foyer eight feet to get past the existing roof overhang. We also needed to redesign the front elevation to better rationalize the difference between the grade at ground-level and the home’s main living area — a distance of about seven feet.”

What evolved was not merely a larger foyer, but an improved and more appropriate architectural context that allows for a front veranda that surrounds and presents the front entrance to the home.

The resulting interior meanwhile revolves around two comparatively modest additions: a 44-square-foot foyer aligned with the front door; 300-square-foot west wing that houses a formal dining room and an adjacent rear-of-the house sitting area.

The new addition includes a two-sided fireplace visible in the living room. The enlarged kitchen now accommodates a custom-designed banquette, and storage pantries.

The gourmet kitchen, according to Marie Torre, provides spaces for all cooking utensils, even items formerly stored in the basement.

Replacing the roof over and raising the ceiling from eight feet to nine feet has made the living room feel substantially larger.

Better yet, the remade rear elevation — which includes a “bump-out” with divided light windows and French doors — invites abundant natural light.

“This is a completely different house,” said Marie Torre, “One much more satisfying to occupy.”

Sun Design Remodeling frequently sponsors design and remodeling seminars as well as tours of recently remodeled homes. Headquartered in Burke, Sun Design also maintains an office in McLean. Visit www.SunDesignInc.com.

Sow Now, Reap this Spring

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

One of the most anticipated sights of spring is a garden in bloom. While the project of tackling a yard or garden after a dormant winter can seem daunting, horticulturalist Misty Kuceris of Burke Nursery & Garden Centre says an organized plan will make the task manageable.

“First walk around your yard and look at what’s happened over the winter months,” she said. “Look at your trees and shrubs. Do they need pruning before things really start growing?”

Flower and garden beds should be surveyed as well, says Kuceris. “If you didn’t clean out the flower beds and vegetable beds at the end of fall, you need to do that,” she said. “Take a look at whether you need to add more compost to make the soil better.”

Even after flowerbeds are clean, David Watkins, general manager of Merrifield Garden Center says that homeowners should wait before planting warm season flowers like impatiens and begonias. “You want to hold off until the last frost is gone, he said. “Some nurseries however have tulips and daffodils that are already potted. Those can be planted now. There is also a



PHOTO BY MISTY KUCERIS

March is a great time to plant trees, like these Dogwoods.

Lenten Rose which blooms from February until June and you can add color to your yard that way.”

Kuceris also suggests reestablishing the weathered edging of a garden bed and add-

ing new mulch when necessary. “The other thing that is good to do every two years is a soil test,” she said. “Find out the pH is of your lawn and garden.” Soil pH is a measure of the acidity and alkalinity in soils.

Getting a garden and yard ready for warm weather.

One source that Kuceris recommends is the Virginia Tech Soil Testing Laboratory. Researchers analyze soil samples submitted by the public and perform tests to evaluate the soil’s nutrient potential. The tests also help researchers determine the most beneficial application rates of fertilizer and lime for optimum plant growth.

After the garden is tidy and the soil is prepared, vegetables can be planted. “If you have a vegetable garden, March is the best time to plant potatoes, scallions, onions, asparagus, lettuce, kale, cauliflower, broccoli, and even horseradish because those plants love spring,” said Kuceris. “We call them cool season plants.”

If weeds are an issue, you can apply a weed and crabgrass preventer and fertilizer,” says Kuceris. “For a natural alternative, you can use corn gluten meal as a natural weed suppressant and fertilizer for grass lawns.”

“With anything you plant now, the roots are going to start growing and you’ll have a much better established plant by summer,” added Watkins.

Most trees or shrubs can also be planted now, says Watkins. “Now is a great time to mulch and fertilize your trees, shrubs and lawn,” he said. “That alone makes it look a lot better, even without planting.”

Educating Customers Is Key to Success

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

It’s been 18 years since Ken Nies co-founded Two Poor Teachers, LLC, but the kitchen and bath remodeling company isn’t resting on its laurels. “We always want to earn an ‘A+’ from our customers,” said Nies. “That hasn’t changed since Day One.”

Nies started the company in 1999 with then-partner Tom Pennell. Both were Fairfax County physical education teachers at the time, and their collaboration was originally meant to be a sideline to their “day jobs,

but before too long, Nies retired from teaching in order to focus fully on the rapidly growing company in Chantilly.

He may have left teaching behind, but his background and devotion to education still comes through when Nies speaks about the importance of educating homeowners on the ins and out of remodeling work, and the “dangers of dealing with unlicensed contractors.” He has produced numerous “whiteboards” and videos available on YouTube that explain the local and state laws governing the business and the importance of compliance for the homeowner. Two Poor Teachers is fully licensed, employs

master plumbers, electricians and HVAC experts, is LEED certified and the highest liability insurance license offered in the state.

According to Nies, Two Poor Teachers handles between 200-300 bathroom projects and 25 kitchen remodels per year in their Northern Virginia service area, with much of their business coming from repeat customers and referrals from satisfied clients, but Nies insists that the key to their continued success really isn’t a secret.

“Education. Making sure homeowners have all the facts they need to make good decisions,” is the foundation for success in Nies’ opinion. “Guaranteed start and completion times are really attractive to potential clients,” he added. Anyone who has ever undertaken one of these home remodeling projects, only to see the finish deadline move further and further away from the original date promised during the bid proposal, will no doubt agree.

Another attraction for the homeowner when choosing a contractor is the fact that Two Poor Teachers only requires 10 percent down to start the work, and generally “don’t ask for another penny until the job is completed.” Many contractors require the down payment, and then ask for ongoing “draw” funds periodically throughout the length of the project.

New manager joining Two Poor Teachers after 18 years in business.

Nies also says that the company gives their customers all the discounts they receive at the speciality stores where they have established strong vendor relationships.

It was because of just those kinds of relationships that Nies was able to recruit Jeremiah Klein to take over the reins as Two Poor Teachers’ next general manager, when he felt it was time to become “just a little less hands-on.” Klein had been associated with the contractor for some five years, when he worked as an agent for a wholesale plumbing supplier and kitchen and bath showroom, after years working in the field.

“I feel great about handing the reputation of our company to Jeremiah,” said Nies.

Klein feels just as good about his decision to join Nies and company. Saying he had a choice of outfits when considering his next career move, Klein calls the Two Poor Teachers gang “a different bracket of contractor. It’s great working with all of our own employees, professionals who have been with the company no less than 10 years, and some even longer.”

Since the arrival of Klein, Two Poor Teachers has expanded the options it can offer customers, including more flexibility on where to procure the project materials. See www.twopoorteachers.com or call Klein at 703-999-2928.

Perennial of the Year

BY CAROLE FUNGER
THE CONNECTION

The designation Perennial Plant of the Year is awarded each year by the Perennial Plant Association to the perennial that outshines its competitors not only in appearance, but also in its noteworthy characteristics. To be considered, a plant must be able to grow in a wide range of climates, require little maintenance and have multiple seasons of in



The butterfly weed

SEE PERENNIAL, NEXT PAGE

HomeLifeStyle Perennial of the Year

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

terest. And, it should be relatively pest and disease free.

That's a tall order for many plants, but late last year, orange-flowering butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) more than rose to the occasion. In November it was voted 2017 Perennial Plant of the Year, becoming the 27th in a distinguished line of perennials to receive such an honor.

What makes butterfly weed so special?

Native to much of the continental United States as well as Ontario and Quebec, butterfly weed grows wild in a variety of climatic conditions including dry forests, along roadsides and in prairies and open fields. A member of the milkweed family, it tops out at about 1 to 2 feet. Its natural preference for average to dry soil makes it an excellent drought-resistant plant.

Butterfly weed's large clusters of flowers are a brilliant orange-yellow, a beacon among other subtler-toned plants. Happily blooming from June through August, they produce copious amounts of

nectar that attracts hordes of butterflies, birds and a wide assortment of insects. The distinctive flowers are composed of five petals that stand up (called hoods) and five petals that hang down. The hoods enclose a single orange horn that when cross-pollinated, forms a follicle. Later in the season, the follicle opens up along one side to disperse silky-tailed seeds.

Not to be outdone, butterfly weed's foliage has its own attractions. Long and pointed, the 4" leaves provide food for the larvae of native Monarch butterflies, while also lending a deep green backdrop to the brilliant flowers.

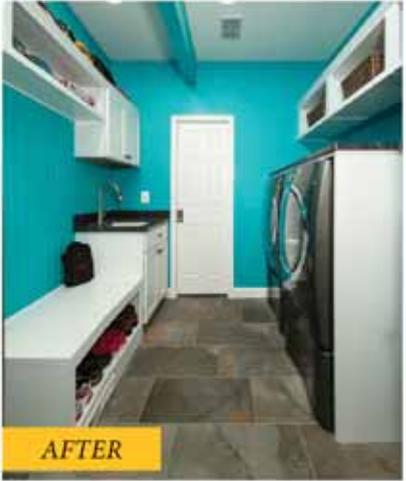
Plant butterfly weed in full sun in well-drained, moderately dry soil. For an eye-catching composition, pair it with other strong-hued perennials like *Liatris spicata*, *Echinacea* 'Double Scoop Raspberry' and *Hemerocallis* 'Stella D'Oro.' Or, let its orange flowers shine amidst subtler toned flowers like lemon-yellow *Hemerocallis* 'Happy Returns', white *Phlox* 'David' and apricot *Cosmos*.

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HomeLifeStyle Tour Area Gardens

Garden Club of Virginia hosts
84th Annual Historic Garden Week.

During the last eight days of April every year nearly 26,000 visitors tour homes and gardens across Virginia.

This year, Historic Garden Week features 30 tours organized and hosted by 47 Garden Club of Virginia member clubs. Nearly 250 private homes, gardens and historic sites will be open. For nearly a century the Garden Club of Virginia has been committed to preserving the beauty of Virginia for all to enjoy. Garden Club of Virginia members were early leaders in conservation and environmental concerns. Tour proceeds fund the restoration and preservation of more than 40 of Virginia's historic public gardens and landscapes, a research fellowship program and a centennial project with Virginia State Parks.

RESTON TOUR Tuesday, April 25

Reston was once a summer playground for fashionable Washingtonians during the 1800s. This Fairfax County locality became the first modern post-war planned residential community in America when it was developed in the 1960s, sparking renewed interest in planned communities. Brainchild of Robert E. Simon, Reston was imagined as an urban landscape in a rural setting — a place to live, work, and play, both vibrant and peaceful. Neighborhoods nestled around lakes and intertwined with lush gardens, green spaces, and walking paths are just minutes away from the effervescent hub of Reston Town Center's art galleries, shops, restaurants, and year-round outdoor entertainment. This walking and driving tour features a transitional house and garden, three modern homes with gardens on Lake Newport, and a garden-only site.

Hosted by Garden Club of Fairfax, the tour headquarters and facilities are at The Lake House, 11450 Baron Cameron Ave., Reston.

Tickets, maps and restrooms are available on tour day, April 25.

Tickets: \$40 per person available on tour day, and at homes open for tours.

Advance tickets are \$30. See www.vagardenweek.org. By mail before April 10, send a self-addressed stamped envelope and check made out to "The Garden Club of Fairfax" to Marty Whipple, 11508 Yates Ford Road, Fairfax Station, VA 22093. 703-978-4130. Fairfax@vagardenweek.org.

Google Garden Club of Fairfax for detailed information and a list of local retailers selling tickets.

Complimentary refreshments will be served 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Lake House. Reston Town Center, Lake Anne, and North Point Village Center are minutes away and offer a variety of eateries and lunch options for visitors.

The hospitality center and tour headquarters is located in the Lake House, a newly renovated building. There are two rooms for public use, the Lakeside Room that offers access to the deck overlooking Lake Newport (50 person capacity) and The Lake View Room (100 person capacity) that has



PHOTO BY DONNA MOULTON/FAIRFAX GARDEN CLUB

Reston homes and gardens will be part of Virginia's Historic Garden week on Tuesday, April 25. Featured here, a home on Lake Newport Road. See <http://www.vagardenweek.org>

a natural light-filled setting with a fireplace. For more information visit www.reston.org.

The Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston, will be open to visitors from noon to 3 p.m. on Tuesday. Resident naturalist will be on hand to answer questions. Tours are self-guided. See www.facebook.com/walkernaturecenter. It features: LEED Gold education building known as Nature House, 72 acres of woodlands, one mile of loop trails, picnic tables and pavilion, pond, trailside benches, interpretive signs, memorial sundial, demonstration naturoscaping gardens, the Glade Stream Valley, and Snakeden Branch stream's entrance to 44-acre Lake Audubon.

Reston Town Center opened in 1990 with the opening of the block between Library

Street and Presidents Street, including the center's hub which features the 20-foot Mercury Fountain designed by the sculptor Saint Clair Cemin. With the open air glass Pavilion added in 1993, this is a community destination for shopping, dining, special events, and ice skating in winter. It has expanded to become an outdoor venue offering more than 50 retailers, more than 35 restaurants, luxury residences, hotel, multi-screen cinema, as well as, host to several festivals throughout the year.

Lake Anne Village Center is home to independently owned retail, dining, and service establishments. Dine in restaurants featuring both ethnic and traditional American menus. Take a picture sitting beside the bronze statue of Robert E. Simon, take a

nature walk around the lake, select a hand-crafted chocolate, pick up a special treat or toy for your pet, or find the perfect gift for your favorite bibliophile. Free wi-fi is available throughout the plaza. North Point Village Center is situated in the heart of this year's tour, offering an appealing variety of dining establishments and specialty stores.

HOMES AND GARDENS ON RESTON TOUR April 25

Round Pebble Lane Garden only: This 20-year-old garden completely surrounds the home and provides the owners with the space for both sun-loving and shade-loving plants, shrubs and trees. An experienced master gardener at a local garden center, Kate Buschelman inherited her mother's love of gardening. Solely planted and maintained by the owners, this property expresses their love of color, foliage and their vision of serenity among relaxed wandering paths. The walkway to the front explodes with a myriad of color and texture from numerous spring annuals and bulbs, many in blues and whites, and sun-loving flowering plants. On the corner lies a bank of showy seven-foot-tall budding "Lime-light" hydrangeas. The tranquil back garden beckons a meandering walk through a sun-dappled, woodland setting in which foliage predominates. Kate and Gary Buschelman are the owners.

Stones Throw Drive: The stone and brick path to the house features an English cottage garden with colorful annuals and perennials planted to provide interest year round. This 1998 home incorporates traditional elements with an open floor plan and lofty ceilings that allow for an abundance of natural light. The first floor includes an array of furnishings, from 18th century English antiques to 20th century American Impressionist art. The landscaped backyard is a private retreat, highlighted by a waterfall and pond, multiple patios, a stone bar area, fireplace complete with pizza oven, and a hot tub surrounded by a trellis.

Lake Newport Road: This updated 1989 modern home welcomes visitors with a light-filled foyer. Neutral faux-painted walls, vaulted ceilings, skylights, and a wall of glass across the rear of the home offering a view of Lake Newport and the home's landscaped gardens create a contemporary and airy interior. The outdoor patio and garden include an array of colorful annuals and perennials, a gas fire pit, recirculating waterfall, and a dock shaded by a willow tree. Cindy and Richard Beyer are the owners.

The Deck House, Lake Newport Road: Built in 1988, this three-level, mid-century modern home is reminiscent of the Frank Lloyd Wright style. Construction is post-and-beam with high ceilings of solid cedar and fir beams. The wall of windows

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Tour Area Gardens

FROM PAGE 6

with expansive lake views and rich, natural wood floors, walls and ceilings, bring the outdoors in. Taking advantage of the dramatic south-facing waterfront setting, natural energy sources are used for cooling and heating with a thermal reservoir in the limestone floor of the conservatory providing heated air released into the heating system. The deep roof overhang and energy efficient windows promote cooling in summer. The solarium houses the owners' bonsai and orchid collections. The garden's two ponds, waterfall and fountain attract many varieties of birds. A brick patio framed by two large willows leads to three lakeside flower beds providing habitat for birds and butterflies. Lezley McIlveen and Donald Wright are the owners.

Windchimes, Lake Newport Road: Indoors and out, this multi-level contemporary home with views of Lake Newport from almost every room reflects the homeowners' love of waterfront living, art and the Southwest. Built in 1986 with an open floor plan and soaring ceilings, light streams in through large windows and skylights; the two large round windows are the signature feature of the 1980s Reston CP1 architectural style.

Mature trees shade the deck, providing a perfect setting for outdoor dining, entertaining and enjoying sightings of bald eagles, hawks, herons, native songbirds, ducks, geese and large turtles. Colorful blown-glass spikes are found throughout the garden, along with blown-glass balls in the courtyard pond. The woodland garden has Japanese maples, redbud, mature oaks, grasses, hostas and rhododendrons, with native water plants along the lake. Robin and Steven Greenstreet are the owners.

Leesburg and Oatlands Sunday & Monday, April 23-24

Oatlands is one of the last of the great houses built by the descendants of Robert ("King") Carter. Construction began in 1804.

Conveyed to the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1965, the Garden Club of Virginia completed its first restoration project there, of the north forcing wall, in 1992. Two years later, English boxwood that had fallen prey to "boxwood decline" were replaced on the affected terraces using proceeds from past Historic Garden Week tours.

Old Town Alexandria, Saturday April 22

See www.vagardenweek.org



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Kitchen Design Trends to Expect in 2017

Local designer share popular design ideas.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Those looking for kitchen design ideas have a new source of inspiration: the National Kitchen & Bath Association's (NKBA) list of trends for 2017. Local designers reveal which trends are most popular in the Washington, D.C. region.

NKBA predicts that contemporary-styled kitchens will overtake traditional to become the second most popular design after transitional. Locally, Michael Winn, president of Winn Design + Build expects to see "a strong move towards transitional and contemporary styles, with no fussy designs."

Homeowners are looking for "kitchen spaces that look comfortable, calming and clutter-free," said Shannon Kadwell of Anthony Wilder Design/Build, Inc.

Clean lines, built-in shelving and simple door styles dominate kitchen designs. Megan Padilla, senior designer for Aidan Design reports an interest in custom storage ideas. "We're inspired by our work with clients who often have collections of table



PHOTO BY STACY ZARIN-GOLDBERG

White and gray painted cabinets like those in this kitchen by Winn Design + Build will dominate kitchen color schemes in 2017.

décor — everything from antique trays to vintage oyster plates," she said. "By creating custom storage these cherished items can be readily accessible."

When it comes to painted cabinetry, gray is the new white and the popularity of both colors shows no signs of slowing down, ac-

ording to the NKBA survey. However, blue painted and high gloss kitchen cabinets are emerging, especially in the Washington area, says Winn. "Blues and grays are very popular [and] "White continues to be popular."

For overall color schemes, two-toned kitchens are gaining popularity while blue and black are emerging as sought after colors. "We're seeing a rise in product offer-

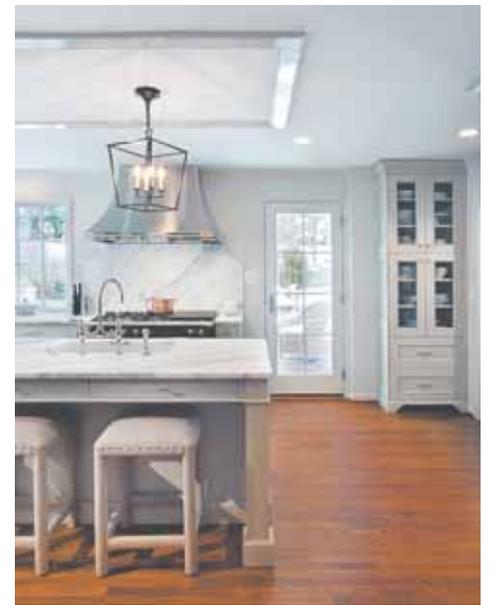


PHOTO BY JOHN COLE

Clean lines, built-ins and neutral colors, such as those in the kitchen of this Potomac, Md. home by Anthony Wilder Design/Build, Inc., are expected to be popular in 2017.

ings available in matte black — from appliances to plumbing fixtures to cabinet hardware," said Padilla. "We love it paired with white in a classic black and white kitchen, but also as an accent piece. Matte black also pairs beautifully with brass, which has been trending for the past couple of years."

Quartz is the most sought-after kitchen countertop material, followed by granite. "Most of our clients aren't really interested in a kitchen that [is] too trendy since they plan to have it in place for 15-20 years," said Padilla. "We've seen an uptick in interest in incorporating color by way of alternate neutrals. Navy blue is probably the top choice, but taupes and lighter blues are also on the list."

An interest among homeowners in incorporating technology in kitchen design is increasing as well. About one third of the NKBA professionals surveyed reported recent projects that included wiring and pathways for future tech integration. "I would also expect the technology side to be a focus in D.C.," said Samantha Klickna, project developer with Case Design/Remodeling, Inc. "The ease and comfort of controlling your home while at the office or on travel is very appealing and convenient for the city dweller."

Induction cooktops and convection ovens are trending higher, and microwave drawers are surpassing free-standing or built-in microwaves in popularity. "People have been purchasing appliances like steam ovens and induction ovens now more than ever before," said Kadwell. "People have less time, but still want to cook. They want to be able to cook quickly, so they're looking for appliances that can accomplish that."



PHOTO BY STACY ZARIN-GOLDBERG

"I would also expect the technology side to be a focus in D.C.," said Samantha Klickna, project developer with Case Design/Remodeling, Inc.



PHOTO BY ANGELA SECKINGER

Design trends for 2017 include kitchens with rustic and reclaimed woods, such as this one by Aidan Design.