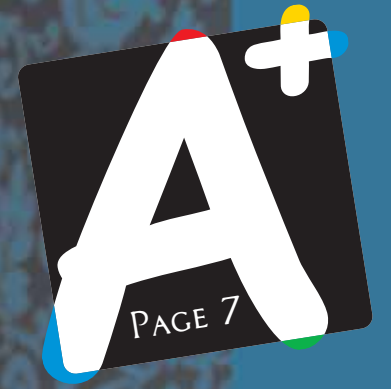
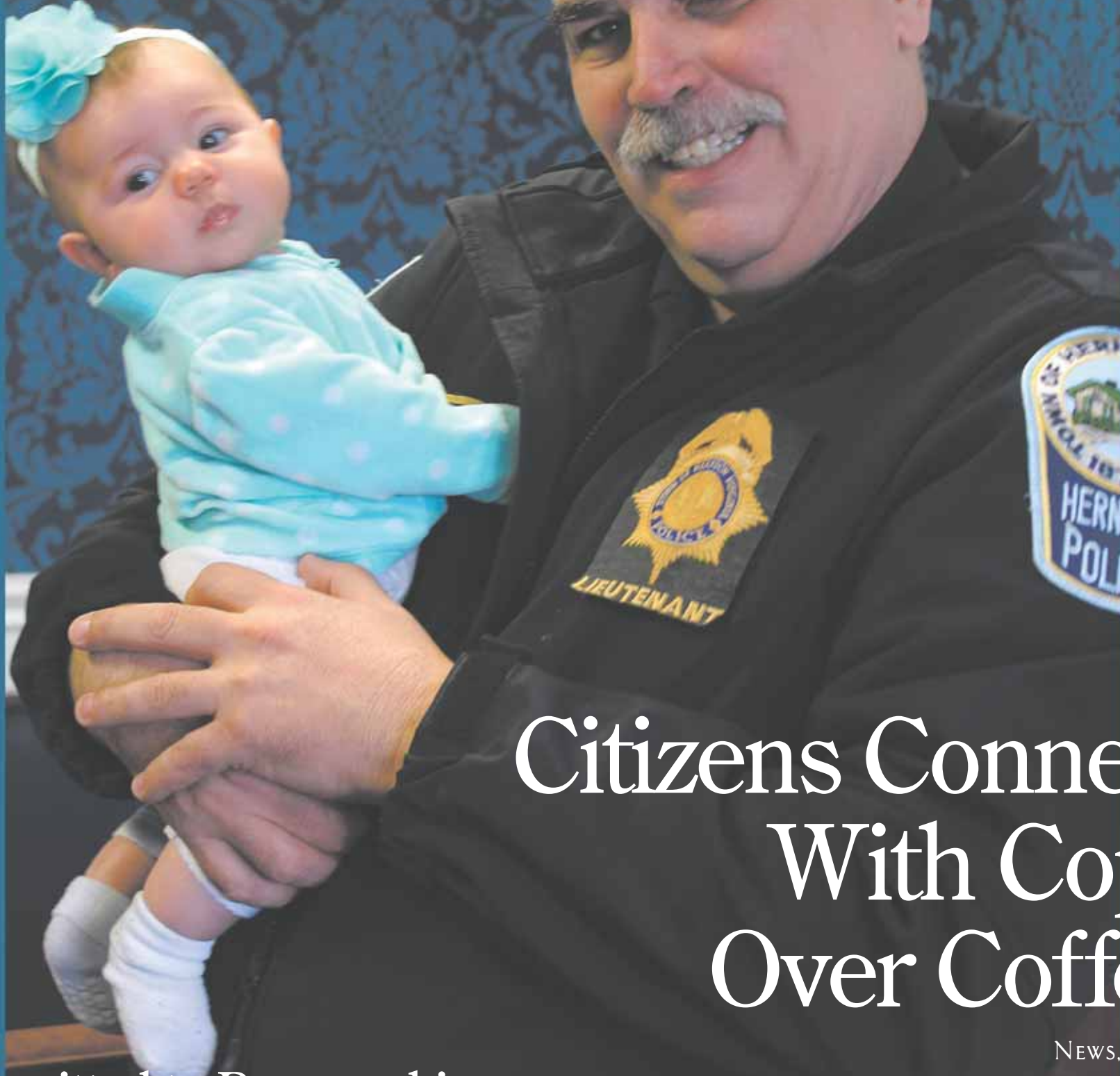


2017 VIRGINIA PRESS ASSOCIATION Award-Winning Newspaper

# Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION



Herndon Police Department Lt. Michael Berg scoops up 4-month-old Lila Cannell while he speaks with her mom, Shannon Cannell, during the “Coffee with a Cop” event at the Virginia Kitchen restaurant on Monday, March 13.



## Citizens Connect With Cops Over Coffee

NEWS, PAGE 3

### Committed to Peacemaking

NEWS, PAGE 3

### Thumbs-Up for Hospitality Outlook

NEWS, PAGE 9

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MARCH 15-21, 2017

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## Stop Bullying Federal Workers

BY U.S. REP. DON BEYER (D-8) AND  
U.S. REP. GERRY CONNOLLY (D-11)



Beyer



Connolly

Republicans hold control of all three branches of government, and therefore have a responsibility to lead the civil service that employs millions of Americans, and every American relies upon for myriad services. The overwhelming majority of federal workers are hardworking people who devote themselves to public service. They secure borders, keep food safe, advance scientific and medical research, deliver our mail, and provide care to many of us, including our veterans.

Republican leaders have repaid this service with repeated attacks.

In 2013, they shut down the government as a political stunt, and came hours away from doing it again in 2015 at the Department of Homeland Security. They enacted the Budget Control Act, which ultimately led to Sequestration, cutting the budget of every federal agency with the surgical precision of a meat-ax.

But since Republicans acquired total control over government, their treatment of federal workers has been beyond the pale.

On the first day of the new Congress, House Republicans passed a rules package over our loud objections containing a reinstatement of the Holman Rule, which would potentially allow Congress to engage in political retribution against federal workers by reducing any given employee's salary to \$1. Only three Republicans opposed the measure on the floor, none from Virginia or Maryland.

The Holman Rule was especially troubling in light of the new administration's so-called "enemies list" of employees who had worked

on specific policy areas for the Obama Administration, such as climate policy.

As one of his first actions, President Trump announced a hiring freeze for federal workers. This is terrible policy and a mindless approach to management that dodges hard decisions.

The Government Accountability Office studied past hiring freezes and found them "not effective." The government is more likely to rely on overtime and contract work, which often costs taxpayers more. Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Americans have total uncertainty in their professional lives. Agencies are unable to make efficient, long term plans, driving up costs and hurting morale. Over time, Americans trying to manage social security benefits, travel in airports, or secure healthcare will see the impact of this freeze when benefits are not mailed or airport security lines move much more slowly.

Two other classes of citizen are hit particularly hard: people with disabilities and veterans.

In 2015, due to Obama Administration initiatives, 19 percent of the federal government's new hires were people with disabilities. The federal government has hired

109,000 people with disabilities in the past five years.

Veterans stand to be among those hardest hit by the hiring freeze. The Veterans Administration is one of the largest federal employers, but is also significantly understaffed. Delivering the care promised to those who served in the armed forces depends on having effective staff to deliver that care.

Over 30 percent of the civilian federal workforce is made up of veterans, a number which has grown consistently as agencies prioritized hiring vets. Many of the positions held vacant by the hiring freeze would have gone to vets, and the progress we have made on veteran unemployment will be halted.

Contrary to this administration's claims, the federal workforce is dwindling as a share of the population. And 85 percent of federal workers are located outside the beltway. It is also aging, and over a third of the current feds will be eligible for retirement by September. Federal workers have been treated as a piggy bank by Congress for years now, their pay raises delayed or denied, they've been furloughed and had their benefits cut. Now their morale is hit by politicians who make them a political punching bag. A bill just proposed in Congress would make all federal workers "at-will" employees, exposing them to political retribution and punishment by a hostile administration without recourse.

The federal workforce is not, as Mr. Trump has said, a "swamp." It is a group of committed Americans who serve us, and they deserve better from Congress. The Republican Party has total control over the levers of government. Will any of its leaders have the decency or the courage to fight for the civil service which serves us all?

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Who Pays Taxes?

To the Editor:

It is tax time again and one's thoughts turn to the question of just who in America is paying the taxes that keep our country running. Who pays the expenses for the White House and the President as well as the security protection for him and his family here and on their worldwide trips? Who pays the salaries and benefits of our elected officials and their staffs? Who pays for our schools and libraries and for our roads and infrastructure? Who pays for police and fire protection? Who pays for government agencies and for our military and our veterans? Who pays for wars and walls and prisons? Who pays for public transportation? Who pays to help states when a natural disaster occurs? Who pays profitable businesses to move to our city, county or

state or to stop them from leaving? The list goes on and on and on.

Big business tries to pay as little tax as possible with the help of loopholes or a move to another

country or both. Rich people, with the help of tax laws, hire accountants and lawyers to help them pay as little tax as possible in this life and even when they're dead. Heck, even our President pays no taxes

and is very proud of that fact.

So, who is left to pay? The people who can least afford it!

**Rebecca Horahan**  
McLean

#### Free St. Patrick's Day Lyft Rides Offered in Area

Preparing to combat that time of year when, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), nearly one-third of all U.S. traffic deaths are caused by drunk drivers, free Lyft rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area next Friday, March 17, 2017 (St. Patrick's Day).

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the 2017 St. Patty's Day SoberRide program will be in operation beginning at 4 p.m. on Friday, March 17 (St. Patrick's Day) and continue until 4 a.m. on Saturday, March 18 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired

drivers during this traditionally high-risk holiday.

During this 12-hour period, area residents celebrating with alcohol may download Lyft to their phones, then enter the code SOBERRIDE in the app's 'Promo' section to receive their no cost (up to \$20) safe transportation home. The SoberRide code is valid for new and existing Lyft users.

Last year, 250 persons in the Washington-metropolitan area used WRAP's St. Patrick's Day SoberRide program rather than possibly driving home impaired. The charity also offers its SoberRide program on Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day, Halloween and the winter holidays this

year starting on Dec. 15, 2017 and operating through and including New Year's Eve.

Lyft will provide SoberRide trips throughout the Washington-metropolitan area to local residents age 21 and older who otherwise may have attempted to drive home after drinking.

SoberRide is offered throughout Lyft's Washington, D.C. coverage area which includes all or parts of: the District of Columbia; the Maryland counties of Montgomery and Prince George's; and the Northern Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William. More information about WRAP's SoberRide initiative can be found at [www.soberride.com](http://www.soberride.com).





**Fifteen-year-old Timothy Gulyan plays Christmas music with fellow clarinetists. His teacher brings together all her clarinet students to perform with each other several times a year.**



PHOTO COURTESY OF LINDA GULYN

## Practice Makes Perfect

**Local educators share strategies for getting children to practice music.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**W**hen Linda Gulyan's son reached high school age and asked to quit his clarinet lessons, the Arlington mother of four declined his request.

"My son Timmy is an excellent clarinet player. The philosophy I've established in my house is that music is part of your overall education like science or math, so you can't just quit," said Gulyan, saxophonist, former music teacher and professor of psychology at Marymount University.

During the month of March, which is designated as Music in our Schools Month, educators highlight the benefits of quality music education programs. Part of a music education is practice, encouraging that in children can be daunting for some parents.

For children who play a musical instrument, regular practice is not only a path toward proficiency, it helps establish discipline that is useful in other areas of one life's. This habit, however, must be established purposefully says John Kilkenny, assistant professor of music at George Mason

University. "Treat practice time like a part of child's daily routine," he said. "They have to have a consistent time for practice. For example, they come home from school each day, have a snack and practice for 30 minutes."

One key to keeping children motivated to practice is setting goals, be they long-term or for the current practice session. "Goal-oriented practice for younger kids, like a recital to work toward, for example is a good motivator," said Kilkenny. "The biggest thing is consistency, practicing at or near the same time every day just like everything else they do so that it becomes part of their routine."

Adding a light-hearted element to practice, which can be seen by some children as laborious, also encourages students to practice. "There should be some sense that playing the instrument is supposed to be fun and students should ... have some flexibility beyond a rigid experiences," said Kilkenny. "It shouldn't feel like it's a negative experience."

For parents who have trouble getting a child to start a practice session, McCoy recommends trying different times of the day.



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-Karri Parker (McClellan), Virginia

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### Summer Day and Residential Soccer Camps For ages 5-18 in Virginia



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or call 703-393-7961 for more details.

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

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



# CALENDAR

Send announcements to [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## ONGOING

**Slave Life Exhibit.** Through March 31, various times at the Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. \$7 adults, \$6 students, and \$5 seniors and children age 5-15. Artifacts excavated from around Sully's 18th-century slave cabins. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site/) or call 703-437-1794 for more.

**Mosaic Art with Anita Damron.** Mondays through April 3, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. All mosaic methods taught in this class. \$200 + a \$50 supplies. Call 703-956-9560 or visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com) for more.

**Ice Skating in the Pavilion** 8 a.m.-11 p.m. open daily through March. College Night Skate, Rock N Skate, Cartoon Skate at the Ice Skating Pavilion Every Thursday, 6-9 p.m.; every Friday, 8-10 p.m. Skate Shop, 1818 Discovery Street, Reston Town Center. 11900 Market Street. Receive \$2 off admission with valid college ID. Live DJ & music, games & prizes; skating continues until 11 pm. Share the ice with Scooby-Doo, Cat in the Hat and more. 703-709-6300 [skating@restontowncenter.com](mailto:skating@restontowncenter.com) [restontowncenter.com/skating](http://restontowncenter.com/skating)

**All-comers' Group Fun Run at Potomac River Running.** Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. For beginners or competitive runners, come out for a fun, low-key run that is safe and social. Call 703-689-0999 [potomacriverrunning.com](http://potomacriverrunning.com).

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

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

**Teen and Adult Art Classes**  
**ArtSpace Herndon** Every Monday from 5:30-8:30 p.m. 750 Center Street, Herndon. Drawing and Mixed Media with Melanie Stanley - During Fall and Winter of 2016. Cost: \$45/class. The class will use a variety of techniques for drawing, painting, mark making, and collage using fine arts tools and materials. Students will be taken down a creative path to learn to use drawing tools and brushes more effectively. Register by emailing Melanie, and she will send you the supply list and payment options/information: [ridingfree2@gmail.com](mailto:ridingfree2@gmail.com). 703-956-9560. [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com).

## THURSDAY/MARCH 16

**Farm Animals Bedtime.** 7-8 p.m. at Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Oak Road, Herndon. Learn how animals such as cows, pigs and goats get ready for some shut-eye. Bring a flashlight or lantern along, and please dress for the weather. Call 703-437-9101 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/fryingpanpark/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/fryingpanpark/).

## MARCH 17-19

**From the Mouths of Monsters.**



**Maestro Fleary and the Orchestra will perform the "With Youth in Mind: Birds, Bees and Odditease," show on Sunday, March 19, 4 p.m at Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Visit [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com) for more.**

Various times at Herndon High School Auditorium, 700 Bennett St., Herndon. \$5 for students, \$15 for adults, appropriate for students in grades 7-12. Visit [herndonhighschooltheatre.ticketleap.com](http://herndonhighschooltheatre.ticketleap.com) for more.

## MARCH 17-APRIL 1

**Emerging Visions: Interactions.** Various times at the Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE), 12001 Market Street, Suite 103, Reston. After viewing Shih Chieh Huang: Synthetic Transformations, students were asked to explore different interpretations and aspects of interactions. The final selections will be on view in the gallery. Opening reception, March 18, 6-8 p.m. Visit [restonarts.org](http://restonarts.org) or call 703-471-9242 for more.

## SATURDAY/MARCH 18

**Family Fun Saturdays.** Throughout the day at Fountain Square, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Activities include:

- ❖ Horse Carriage Rides noon-5 p.m.
- ❖ Free Funnel Cakes, 1 p.m., while supplies last

❖ Meet Reston Town Center Mascot, "Resty" the Dog Visit [cornerstonesva.org/rest-on](http://cornerstonesva.org/rest-on), email [ON@cornerstonesva.org](mailto:ON@cornerstonesva.org), or call Cornerstones at 571-323-9555 for more.

**St. Patrick's Day Party.** 6-9 p.m., at St. Veronica's Church parish hall, 3460 Centreville Road, Chantilly. A family event that includes food, drink, sing-alongs, Irish dancers and plenty of smiling Irish eyes. Adults \$7, Children \$5, drinks extra. Visit [www.stveronica.net/](http://www.stveronica.net/) or call 703-773-2000 for more.

**Opening Reception.** 6-8 p.m. at Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001

**Kids' Trout Fishing Day, Saturday, March 25 from 8 a.m.-noon at Sugarland Trail Stream behind the Herndon Police Station, 397 Herndon Parkway. Stream will be well stocked with hundreds of trout. All necessary equipment will be provided and Trout Unlimited members will help clean the fish. Registration is required. Ages 2-12. To register, reserve a fishing rod go to [bit.ly/2017TroutFishingDay](http://bit.ly/2017TroutFishingDay). Call 703-435-6800, ext. 2106 or [Tim.Lander@herndonva.gov](mailto:Tim.Lander@herndonva.gov) for more.**



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

**On Thursday, March 23, Beverly Cosham sings cabaret favorites 2:15-3:30 p.m at Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Visit [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com) for more.**

Market St., Reston. Emerging Visions: Interactions featuring works of art created by Fairfax County students from Herndon, South Lakes and Oakton High Schools, on exhibit through April 1. Visit [www.restontowncenter.com](http://www.restontowncenter.com) for more. Visit [restonarts.org](http://restonarts.org) or call 703-471-9242 for more.

## SUNDAY/MARCH 19

**Maker Faire NoVa.** 11:00 a.m. until 5 p.m. at South Lakes High School and Langston Hughes Middle School,



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston. Tech enthusiasts, inventors, entrepreneurs, educators and curious minds. Visit [nova.makerfaire.com/](http://nova.makerfaire.com/) for more.

**Opening Reception.** 3-5 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, the Art Gallery and Performance Space, 750 Center St., Herndon. "There's No Place Like Home" exhibit by members of the Great Falls Studios, on display March 14,-April 8. Visit [ArtSpaceHerndon.com](http://ArtSpaceHerndon.com) for more.

**Maestro Fleary and the Orchestra.** 4 p.m at Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. "With Youth in Mind: Birds, Bees and Odditease" show. Visit [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com) for more.

## TUESDAY/MARCH 21

**Design and Wine Workshop.** 7-9 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Artist Ronni Jolles will be teaching the technique she's developed over the past 16 years called "Painting with Paper." Call 703-956-9560 or visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com) for more.

**Runaway Home Concert.** 7:15 p.m. at the Folk Club of Reston-Herndon, 110 Devil's Backbone Overlook, Stephenson. Guitar, fiddle and vocals give the group a rock-country sound. \$12 Members, \$13 Non-members. Email [DAHurdSr@cs.com](mailto:DAHurdSr@cs.com) for more.

## THURSDAY/MARCH 23

**Cabaret Singer.** 2:15-3:30 p.m at Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Beverly Cosham sings cabaret favorites. Visit [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com) for more.

**Sip, Shop, and Stroll.** 7-9 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Shopping event that includes one night only offers, gifts, and giveaways. Free. Visit [www.restontowncenter.com](http://www.restontowncenter.com) for more.

## FRIDAY/MARCH 24

**Student's Short Films.** 7-9:30 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Nine short films from the Film and Video Studies curriculum at George Mason University. \$20. Call 703-956-9560 or visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com) for more.

**Bluegrass Concert.** 8 p.m. at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon. Eddie's wife Martha adds her vocal talent to the group and the resulting sound of this trio is a hit, whether singing or playing instrumentals. \$15 children 12 and younger free. Call 703-435-8377 for more.

## SATURDAY/MARCH 25

**Kids' Trout Fishing Day.** 8 a.m.-noon at Sugarland Trail Stream behind the Herndon Police Station, 397 Herndon Parkway. Stream will be well stocked with hundreds of trout. All necessary equipment will be provided and Trout Unlimited members will help clean the fish. Registration is required. Ages 2-12. To register, reserve a fishing rod go to [bit.ly/2017TroutFishingDay](http://bit.ly/2017TroutFishingDay). Call 703-435-6800, ext. 2106 or [Tim.Lander@herndonva.gov](mailto:Tim.Lander@herndonva.gov) for more. (Rescheduled from March 18)

**Family Fun Saturdays.** Throughout the day at Fountain Square, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Activities include:

- ❖ Mini Train Rides noon-5 p.m.
- ❖ Caricature Artist, noon-4 p.m.
- ❖ Free Sweet Treats, 1 p.m., while supplies last

- ❖ Balloon Artist 1-4 p.m.
- ❖ Meet Reston Town Center Mascot, "Resty" the Dog

Visit [cornerstonesva.org/rest-on](http://cornerstonesva.org/rest-on), email [ON@cornerstonesva.org](mailto:ON@cornerstonesva.org), or call Cornerstones at 571-323- 9555 for more.

## SUNDAY/MARCH 26

**Choral Symphony.** 3 p.m. at the Hylton Performing Arts Center, 10960 George Mason Circle, Manassas. The Reston Chorale and the Piedmont Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of Maestro Glenn Quader, will be performing Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, the "Choral Symphony." Visit [www.HyltonCenter.org](http://www.HyltonCenter.org) for more.

**Women's Choral Festival.** 4-6 p.m. at the Community of Faith United Methodist Church, 13224 Franklin Farm Road, Herndon. Featuring the Oakcrest School Girls Concert Chorus along with piano and string quintet. Call 703-620-1977 for more.

## TUESDAY/MARCH 28

**Reston Art Films.** 7:30 p.m. at CenterStage, Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods Village Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Watch three films by film director Rebekah Wingert-Jabi, a Peabody Award recipient and Reston native. Visit [www.publicartreston.org](http://www.publicartreston.org) for more.

## WEDNESDAY/MARCH 29

**Raul Midón Concert.** 8:00 p.m. at the CenterStage, Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Singer/songwriter/multi-instrumentalist playing from his ninth album, "Bad Ass and Blind." \$15 Reston/\$20 Non-Reston. Visit [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com) for more.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 1

**Watershed Cleanup Day.** 8 a.m.-noon at Runnymede Park, 195 Herndon Parkway. Runnymede Park and Sugarland Run watershed cleanup day and shred. Volunteers should dress for the weather, wear boots with sturdy soles, and bring work gloves, and there will be a free secure document shred truck on the premises too. Visit [tinyurl.com/HerndonCleanup](http://tinyurl.com/HerndonCleanup) or call 703-435-6800 x 2014 for more.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 2

**Tidewater Guitar Quartet.** 4-6 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Tidewater Guitar Orchestra members John Boyles, Sam Dorsey, Todd Holcomb and Cliff Morris have recently come together with guitars. Call 703-956-6590 for more.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 8

**Classical Ballet Theatre.** 7:30 p.m. at CenterStage at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Complimentary pre-performance cocktails at 6:30 p.m. Visit [www.cbntva.org](http://www.cbntva.org) or call the box office at Box Office: 703-476-4500.

## APRIL 11-13

**Spring Break Art Camp.** 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Art teacher Emily VanDeburgh will focus on drawing, acrylic painting, and mixed media with an emphasis on specific styles and master's work. Call 703-956-6590 or email [jdimambro@artspaceherndon.com](mailto:jdimambro@artspaceherndon.com) for more.



## NEWS

# Optimistic About State of the Hospitality

**Panelists at Northern Virginia Chamber Forum discuss state of hospitality under the new administration.**

BY ANDREA WORKER  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce gathered some heavy hitters to offer their thoughts and answer questions from a standing-room-only audience at the “State of Hospitality Under the New Administration” symposium on March 6. While they weren’t forecasting a banner year, the panelists were cautiously optimistic about how the local industry would fare under the new administration.

❖ Barry Biggar, president and ceo of Visit Fairfax since 2008, with tenures in similar positions for Convention and Visitors bureaus in Texas, Kentucky, and Calgary, Canada.

❖ Mark Carrier, senior officer with D.C.-based B.F. Saul Hospitality Group, owners and operators of business class hotels, including the Hay-Adams. Carrier is also the current chairman of the American Hotel and Lodging Association, the advocacy voice for the industry.

❖ Chris Klauda, director of Destination Research for STR, the company that has been providing metrics, trend information and benchmarking for the industry since 1985.

❖ Carroll Rheem, vice president, Research and Analytics for Brand USA, the public-private organization established by the Travel Promotion Act in 2010 to promote the United States as a premier travel destination.

**THINGS HAVE BEEN LOOKING UP** of late. While the economic woes that began in 2008 did not hit the region as hard as they did other parts of the country, lodging had not begun experiencing any real return to pre-crash prosperity — until last year, according to Biggar and his panel colleagues.

“Revenue per occupied room (RevPar) was up 5 percent locally, versus 3.2 percent nationally,” said B.F. Saul’s Carrier, who added that it “had been a while” since the region had outperformed the country in these statistics. Carrier placed the blame on sequestration and the effects of budget cuts and government shutdown threats for keeping the DMV’s hospitality sector depressed in comparison to other U.S. markets.

Biggar concurred. “Seque-what?” is a response he said he has frequently received when asking peers around the country if the mandated budget cuts had affected hospitality in their localities. In 2013, when the rest of the nation was beginning to rise from the downturn, the negative impact of sequestration meant that all industry sectors and economic drivers in this region couldn’t keep pace.

In addition to the increases in RevPar in 2016, occupancy rates have also been on the rise: “71.3 percent in Fairfax County are the latest figures for last



PHOTO BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION  
**Jim Corcoran, (far left) CEO of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, moderates a panel of industry experts at the “State of Hospitality under the New Administration” forum.**

year, “again, something we haven’t enjoyed for a while,” said Biggar.

Being a “company town” can also have its benefits, as well as its disadvantages. Carrier and Biggar both saw opportunities in the proposed funding increases for the military. Those benefits may be more largely felt in the southern part of the states, if monies are allocated to building new naval vessels and equipment, but increased support services in Northern Virginia could also translate into additional room nights for local lodging establishments.

The overall positive outlook of the panel members came with some concerns and cautions of challenges by the industry experts.

Brand USA’s Rheem noted that airline bookings, an important measuring tool used to predict lodging trends, were down significantly since the start of the year.

“Vacation travel is a lot about emotion,” said Rheem. Travel bans and the perception of cultural divides can create an atmosphere of personal insecurity, and “security always ranks at the top of travel surveys,” added Biggar.

Rheem has found in her research that travellers from Canada and Europe, “and, to no one’s real surprise, Mexico seem to view the new administration the most negatively.” More discretionary travellers from those places indicate that they will wait and see how things shape up before visiting the United States, as opposed to Chinese and other Asian travellers for whom politics seem less of a factor in their travel decisions. “In some places, we use local voices to push our message that the U.S. is still a great place to come to,” said Rheem.

Biggar held up an article from a newspaper in Canada that suggested its citizens also wait, “maybe as long as four years. The Grand Canyon and Disney World will still be there.”

Brand USA has also found that currency rates are playing a big role in travellers’ choices. For other than political reasons, many Canadians and others are choosing Mexico for their sunshine holidays. “Why not?” remarked Rheem. “Mexico is 30-40 percent cheaper, the U.S. 20-30 percent more expensive right now.”

**BUDGET AND POLICY** uncertainties add to the concerns that hoteliers and other Northern Virginia businesses have when trying to assess the impact of the new administration on the regional economy. Reports that major cuts to agencies and programs like the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Federal Emergency Management System, and even the Coast Guard, as the President seeks ways to pay for the promised protective wall along the country’s southern border, have all local business on high alert.

Still, when asked by event moderator Jim Corcoran, the CEO of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, if they voted “positive or negative” for the 2017 hospitality outlook, all four of the panelists ultimately gave their thumbs-up.

“Of course, it’s early days,” said Biggar, “but in the long run, Trump knows our business. He is all about trade. This could be a positive.”

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# "Literatti"



By **KENNETH B. LOURIE**

A not-so-necessarily fashionable set of people involved in the care and feeding of cats; more specifically, the purchase, cleaning, replenishing and discarding of their leavings/litter.

At present, and going on for nearly five years now, we live with five indoor cats: brothers Biscuit and Chino, siblings Andrew and Sloane, and one single female named Twinkle. Having lost our previous cat, Smokey, prematurely to outside effects: cancer at age 10, we decided on our next feline go 'round, that we would not let them out. It's much healthier for the cat, we were told, and so as our current brood grew, we committed to keeping them all inside. And inside cats, like Forrest Gump in The White House, have to go. And if their box/boxes are not cleaned and refreshed regularly, you might not be so happy about where they do go. Therefore, to avoid the inevitable, we are extremely litter centric. Although we may not have the requisite number of boxes available for their disposal (the unofficial mandate is one box per cat), nevertheless, we try to be extra busy with the task at hand. After years of this arrangement, the cats and our house seem none the worse for wear. It's not exactly a small price to pay (litter is not inexpensive and its weight sometimes makes for an awkward transport home), but there is absolutely no alternative.

With respect to the cats' litter box-use and occasional abuse, their behavior really is remarkable. Getting them to use their litter box doesn't require any training per se, as in house-training a puppy. In our experience, it's simply been a matter of availability and proximity, though I can't say for sure if unboxed residue has anything to do with location. If anything, it has to do with their owners negligence in providing a freshly scooped box. All we have ever done is place the kitten in the litter box and then they seem to know how to do the rest. Except for the cleaning of the box. They don't exactly fend for themselves. However, so long as the owners scoop and refill regularly, the cats are relatively low maintenance. The litter box remains high maintenance though.

To secure that maintenance, there are a few tools of the trade to consider. One is the litter scoop. Having broken numerous plastic scoops over the years, I made a commitment (in money) years ago to an industrial strength, commercial grade-type scoop; a metal scoop with a rubber handle. I haven't looked backwards since or forwards in a store. That scoop has been indestructible and has been worth every penny/dollar of its extra cost. My advice: don't skimp on the scoop.

As for litter boxes, size probably does matter, so far as avoiding "unpleasantness" is concerned. As to using boxes with covers (rather than the standard open-air boxes) or moving parts, recently, for the first time in our respective 50 years or so of cat ownership/accommodation, we bought a box with a cover and a swinging flap, providing the cats privacy, and access to go in and out (like a doggie door) and also to control litter spillage and to manage odors. Skeptical at first about the cats' likely reaction, within a very short time, all five were "flapping" and "littering" without any further adieu or mess. Initially, I thought the flap would intimidate them and the cover would crowd them. Moreover, I thought one or another would have a problem with something or other causing us to scrap the whole project. Amazingly, the exact opposite has transpired.

As much of a success as the metal scooper has been for me, I am now able to add, without any hesitation or reservation, that the cover/enclosed box with the plastic flap has similarly breathed fresh air (literally) into our multi-cat, litter box existence. There's also a charcoal filter in the box to absorb odors (to which we've likely gone nose-blind). Turns out to be a win-win, when one (this one in fact), might have thought (did think) it would be a lose-lose. However, unless we remain vigilant with the scooper, this situation could certainly take a turn for the worse.

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

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### WEDNESDAY/MARCH 15

**Home Buying Basics.** 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Find out what every new buyer needs to know from planning to financing, to shopping, to closing. Free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library) for more.

### ONGOING

**Exercise for Parkinson's.** Every Monday, 1:15-2:15 p.m. Reston Sport&Health, 11445 Isaac Newton Square, Reston. This program brings together people impacted by Parkinson's Disease to participate in various physical exercises aimed at improving posture, balance and circulation and increasing strength, muscle control and mobility. Free. [parkinsonfoundation.org](http://parkinsonfoundation.org). [ckacenga@sportandhealth.com](mailto:ckacenga@sportandhealth.com) 703-621-4148.

**Master Gardener Training.** The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit [fairfaxgardening.org](http://fairfaxgardening.org) or call Dora Lockwood at 401-864-4778 for more.

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

**Hypothermia Prevention: An Emergency Program for the Homeless.** To help our vulnerable neighbors survive the winter, we provide overnight shelter with a "no turn-away" policy at all emergency homeless shelters during freezing weather. Through the coldest months of the winter, we also provide the Hypothermia Prevention Program, a countywide community network of 45 overnight shelters. Through this program last winter, our nonprofit and faith-based community partners served almost 1,000 men and women with a safe, warm place to sleep. If you see someone at night who is unsheltered and you think could be at risk of hypothermia, call the county's non-emergency phone line at 703-691-2131, TTY 711.

**Passages Divorce Care.** Tuesdays 6:45 to 9:00 p.m. beginning Sept. 13 through Jan 7. Vienna Presbyterian Church is located on the corner of Maple Avenue (Rt. 123) and Park Street in Vienna, Virginia. Cost to cover materials \$20, scholarships available. 703-938-9050, [www.viennapres.org](http://www.viennapres.org), or send an email to [Passages@ViennaPres.org](mailto:Passages@ViennaPres.org)

The **Herndon Adult Day Health Care Center** needs volunteers to assist with fitness activities, arts and crafts, mealtime, entertainment and much more. For these and other volunteer

opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The **Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program** needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email [Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov). Also visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/).

**Submit a Nomination for Volunteerism & Community Service Awards** The Virginia Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards is looking to recognize individuals and groups whose volunteer activities contribute to the life and welfare of Virginia citizens. There are a variety of categories for both individuals as well as groups so if you have a special volunteer in your organization or know of a group that should be nominated, please visit the website to get started: <http://virginiasservice.virginia.gov/volunteering/governors-volunteerism-awards/>

**Fairfax County** needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

**Respite Care** volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or [Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Fairfax County's Meals on Wheels** urgently needs drivers in the Annandale, Franconia/Kingstowne, Reston, Mount Vernon and McLean areas. 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults).

**Habitat Heroes Project.** The fourth Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. - noon. Join the Habitat Heroes in protecting Reston's forests from aggressive plants and restoring them to their natural state. Wear long sleeves, long pants, and if possible, gardening gloves to protect from insects and dangerous plants. R.A. will provide tools, gloves, snacks, and water. To volunteer and find more information, contact [hbrock@reston.org](mailto:hbrock@reston.org) or 703-435-7986.

**ARTSPACE HERNDON.** ArtSpace Herndon needs volunteer docents to greet guests, answer the phone and complete sales during normal gallery hours. Volunteers are also needed a few hours each month to assist with exhibit installation and special performing arts events. Training is provided. Flexible shifts are available. For additional information see our website [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com). Or contact us at 703-956-9560, [volunteer@artspaceherndon.com](mailto:volunteer@artspaceherndon.com). ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon.

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## Prepare for Spring

With spring nearing, the Fairfax County Master Gardener Association (FCMGA) is spreading gardening news and fostering camaraderie amongst area gardeners. The FCMGA have set up plant clinics in various places around



the county, booths at farmer's markets and libraries, and a help desk located at Government Center, Pennino Building (10th floor) to offer free, unbiased, and research-based advice on selecting and caring for ornamental plants, vegetables, and lawn. Residents can take advantage of in-person answers to gardening questions, plant and insect identification, soil tests, and more. For a fee of \$30, FCMGA volunteers will visit the homeowner's property to assess the general condition of the turfgrass, survey and identify major weeds, measure the lawn area, take a soil sample and provide recommendations. FCMGA also has speakers come out to citizens groups and HOA meetings to highlight a wide range of gardening topics. For exact times and locations, check out the plant clinic schedule on the FCMGA website: <http://fairfaxgardening.org/plant-clinics/2017-plant-clinic-schedule>.





A bit of attitude. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors poses after their appearance at the Leadership Fairfax Breakfast with the Board.



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Patricia Harrison, Fairfax County Deputy Executive, (middle) receives the Katherine K. Hanley Award for Public Service from Rodney Lusk, and award namesake Katherine Hanley.

# Leadership Fairfax Hosts Breakfast with Supervisors

BY ANDREA WORKER  
THE CONNECTION

**O**n Friday, March 10, Leadership Fairfax (LFI) held its annual Breakfast with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for the 26th time. The county's governing elected officials are usually only captured on film in their professional personas, but this time each supervisor was announced in the style of a college hoops star a la March Madness. One after the other they high-fived, fist-bumped and attitude-gestured with an LFI partner as they made their way to the dais.

There were more laughs during the "Ask the Supervisors" portion of the program, particularly when the speakers were asked to name their favorite childhood snack food. Supervisor Kathy Smith, Sully District, confessed to something with white bread and sugar to looks of horror from some of her colleagues.

Moderator Casey Veatch, principal of Veatch Commercial Real Estate, balanced humorous interludes with serious questions. The supervisors were called upon to highlight some of the county's successes in 2016, as well as the obstacles that were faced and that may still lie ahead. "We're going to get news you can use today. No fake news here," he said.

**CHAIRMAN SHARON BULOVA** rose to the challenge of presenting a State of the County address in less than three minutes. The establishment of a civilian Police Review Panel, whose nine members were recently announced, was one of the year's high notes, according to Bulova. The panel "will act as an independent portal for residents to submit concerns or complaints and will promote further transparency in our community policing," she said.

Bulova also spoke of the success of the Diversion First program, which kept 375 people from potential arrest in 2016. Diversion First is designed to seek alternatives



Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill) gets into the swing of things during her introduction.

to incarceration for persons with mental illness or developmental disabilities who come into contact with the criminal justice system for low-level offenses. "It's the right thing to do," she said, "to get people assistance instead of jail time where possible," and it also saves county dollars and police resources.

After Bulova's remarks, Veatch called for a "speed round," with each supervisor commenting on an important project, event, or challenge. Some of their responses included:

❖ John Cook (Braddock) – Continuing the work of the Diversion First program.

❖ John Foust (Dranesville) – Economic Growth Fund. Foust supports providing start-up and entrepreneurial funds and "maker spaces" to make Fairfax a leader in diverse economic innovation. He encouraged everyone to read the county's economic

success strategic plan.

❖ Penny Gross (Mason) – Environmental protection and energy efficiency are critical, particularly with threatened cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency and similar organizations.

❖ Pat Herrity (Springfield) – The growing opioid abuse and deaths crisis. "It's in your neighbourhood. A partnership for awareness, prevention and treatment" is needed.

❖ Cathy Hudgins (Hunter Mill) – Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Metro) improvements. "We need to remember that 1.1 million services were provided during the Inauguration and the Women's March in January without incident," but there are no federal funds for maintenance and operations for Metro, although 45 percent of its riders are government workers. "We need everyone involved

in the funding."

❖ Jeff McKay (Lee) – "One Fairfax is one of the most important things we've done." In a joint resolution with the Fairfax County Public Schools Board, the supervisors passed the written policy that demands all policies and decisions be put to the test, using a "lens of equity." "A zip code shouldn't determine your potential," McKay insisted.

❖ Kathy Smith (Sully) – Working on the Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance, which hasn't been amended since 1978. "There are processes to make changes, but it takes too long and inhibits growth." And, she noted, "We're getting a Wegman's in Sully District,"

❖ Linda Smythe (Providence) – Continue efforts to revitalize communities like Merrifield. "Has anyone been to Mosaic? That's what can be done."

❖ Daniel Storck (Mount Vernon) – Promoting public/private partnerships that are having significant success in his district with "gateway projects" and school innovations.

**IN ADDITION** to putting the Board of Supervisors on the hot seat, this annual event is also the time when the Katherine K. Hanley Award for Public Service is presented. The award's namesake, former Fairfax County Board Chair and Secretary of the Commonwealth Katherine Hanley, was on hand to bestow this year's honor on Patricia Harrison, Fairfax County deputy executive.

With 30 years of service in Fairfax County, Harrison, who oversees the county's human services agencies and programs, "has played an integral role in improving the lives of families in our community," said co-presenter Rodney Lusk of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority and an LFI alum.

Leadership Fairfax offers three different educational programs: The Signature Program, the Emerging Leaders Institute and the Lifetime Leaders program for those newly retired or preparing to retire. See [www.leadershipfairfax.org](http://www.leadershipfairfax.org) for more information.