

# Horsemanship Event Celebrates Spirit

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## Senior Living

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**Samantha Thompson, of Reston, with Sally, a rescue horse from an auction in New Jersey. "I really love that many of the horses here are getting a second chance while helping so many people improve their lives. It's a perfect balance for us all."**

## Lake House Probe: No Conflict of Interest

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## Reston Woman Sentenced For Supporting Terrorists

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PHOTO BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION  
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## NEWS

### Reston Woman Sentenced for Providing Material Support to Terrorists

**T**wo women were sentenced today for terrorism crimes related to their material support of al-Shabaab, a designated foreign terrorist organization.

Muna Osman Jama, 36, of Reston, and Hinda Osman Dhirane, 46, of Kent, Wash., were sentenced to 12 and 11 years, respectively, for conspiracy to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization, and providing material support to a foreign terrorist organization. The women were found guilty of the crimes after a bench trial in front of U.S. District Judge Anthony J. Trenga on Oct. 25, 2016.

According to court documents, Jama and Dhirane sent money to financiers of al-Shabaab in Somalia and Kenya, which they referred to respectively as the "Hargeisa side" and the "Nairobi side." The defendants also organized what was called a "Group of Fifteen," which included women from Somalia, Kenya, Egypt, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Canada, as well as Minneapolis, Minn. The "Group of Fifteen" met regularly in a private

chatroom that Jama established to organize and track monthly payment of money to the "Hargeisa side," which was used to finance al-Shabaab military operations in the Golis Mountains in northern Somalia, and the "Nairobi side," which was used to fund two al-Shabaab safehouses. One of the safehouses was used by al-Shabaab to store weapons and to prepare for attacks. The other was used to treat al-Shabaab fighters who had been wounded in battle.

A substantial part of the government's case consisted of recorded telephone calls and other communications among the "Group of Fifteen." These recordings demonstrated that the women had close connections with al-Shabaab leadership and were privy to non-public, inside information concerning al-Shabaab activities. Jama and Dhirane were recorded as they laughed as the carnage at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi was still taking place. Dhirane and a co-conspirator were also recorded as they laughed at the Boston Marathon Bombing before it became known who committed the attack.

## You are invited to Reston Association's ANNUAL MEETING 2017

Tuesday, April 11, 7 p.m.  
Reston Association Headquarters  
12001 Sunrise Valley Drive  
Reston, VA 20191

- Hear reports on the state of the association.
- Learn the results of the 2017 Board of Directors Election.

[www.reston.org](http://www.reston.org)



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# Lake House Probe: No Conflict of Interest

Reston Association tries to move forward after Lake House controversy.

BY FALLON FORBUSH  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Reston Association voted to implement all recommendations the Lake House probe suggested in an effort to put the controversy behind it.

The RA's Board of Directors held a special meeting to discuss the report on Monday, March 20.

"This did appear to be a highly-unusual transaction and a one-off transaction, the first potentially of its kind for the association; and as a result of it, there were not past processes or procedures that the association staff could necessarily fall back on," Deirdre Flaherty, a partner of the StoneTurn Group, said during the meeting. Her firm was hired to conduct the investigation and write the report.

To the surprise of many in the community, the report found no conflicts of interest associated with the Lake House throughout the association's voter referendum, property acquisition or renovation.

"We found no conflict of interest, based on your policies," Flaherty said. "There is nothing in your policy that would say that anything that has been raised as a concern by the community is actually a conflict of interest."

Instead, the lack of written policies and procedures was blamed for the mismanagement of the Lake House project, which went over budget and yielded revenue shortfalls ever since it was purchased in July 2015 for \$2.6 million.

**THE REPORT** notes that the RA came to this realization and attempted to remediate this problem prior to the investigation, which was conducted in February.

This remediation was the hiring of Garrett Skinner as director of a new Capital Improvement Planning and Projects Department. He began work on Monday, Jan. 9. The new department, which includes three current RA employees, took over responsibility for the oversight of the association's capital projects.

"While there was remediation already undertaken ... there is still more work to do there, primarily due to the recent hires and just the lack of resource available to get those procedures into place," Flaherty said.

The report also found that the gathering of community input was insincere.

"The engagement of the community was occurring at a place and time after the initial assessment and budget had already been prepared," Flaherty said. "Any time that you are seeking input on the scope of a particular project after you've prepared a budget, by default you're going to be creating a disconnect between the budget and the actual work that the community group is looking to have done."

Transparency was also a concern, as the Board of Directors used closed meetings in



**Deirdre Flaherty of StoneTurn Group answers questions from Reston Association members during a special board of director meeting on Monday, March 20.**

executive session when they could have conducted public meetings, according to the report.

Though the report cleared the RA of any intentional wrongdoing, 14 members of the public showed up at the meeting to address the board.

Some could not fathom that the Lake House project mismanagement was a mistake, but remain convinced that it was deliberate.

"We as members want to trust you," Jill Gallagher, an RA member, said during the meeting. "We as members want you to make decisions in our favor and throughout this process, it doesn't seem that that happened ... it wasn't one mistake, it was time after time after time that decisions were made that were not in the members' favor."

Gallagher told the board that it could regain its members' trust by figuring out how to make up the money that it lost.

Others, including the Reston 20/20 Committee, demanded that the board form a working group to further investigate the situation. "I am still scratching my head on the basic question of why Tetra [the Lake House] was ever purchased," Tammi Petrine, co-chair of the Reston 20/20 Committee, said during the meeting.

She also asked the board why it did not negotiate on the price for the purchase of the property, which the report verifies.

Others wanted to put the controversy to rest and move on.

"There was a referendum and we all voted on it," Michael Levrini, an RA member, said during the meeting. "You can't blame the fact that this association didn't listen to the community."

**THE RA BOARD** of Directors voted on Thursday, March 23, to create a plan of ac-



**"We as members want to trust you," Jill Gallagher, an RA member, told the board during the meeting. "We as members want you to make decisions in our favor and throughout this process, it doesn't seem that that happened ... it wasn't one mistake, it was time after time after time that decisions were made that were not in the members' favor."**

tion to implement the recommendations of the StoneTurn Group's report. The board instructed RA CEO Cate Fulkerson and her staff to draft and develop the implementation plan for the board to consider in May, after its spring elections.

Some of the report's recommendations include:

- ❖ Policies should be established, documented and then reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

- ❖ For every established policy, internal written processes should be established that identifies employees who are responsible for the processes and verifications that they have been done.

- ❖ Establish a comprehensive code of conduct for both the association board of directors and staff.

- ❖ Consider adopting a policy that will provide greater transparency to the considerations undertaken in executive session.

- ❖ Establish a process whereby a project's budget threshold is calculated and included in the budgeting documents.

- ❖ Clarify the existing policy to provide guidance for situations where a project expands or where an estimate is found to be insufficient.

- ❖ Prepare a long-term capital improvement plan and update it on an annual basis.

## Winning March Madness Competition

**Katie Merrit, 9, of Reston, won LearningRx's Brain Awareness Month's March Madness Competition at its Reston center. The March Madness brain competition required all competitors to complete a circuit of five brain training activities as quickly as possible (with accuracy). Merrit held the winning time at LearningRx Reston at 2 minutes and 7 seconds. Visit [www.learningrx.com](http://www.learningrx.com).**



PHOTO COURTESY OF MAUREN LOFTUS

## Another Step to Police Transparency

### Opening up records of “unattended deaths” to families.

The first paragraph of Virginia Freedom of Information Act, passed by the General Assembly in 1968, states that all public records “shall be presumed open.” But the legislation includes an exception that allows police to withhold “complaints, memoranda, correspondence, case files or reports, witness statements and evidence.”

#### EDITORIAL

As a result, many police departments around the Commonwealth, including Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax, have adopted what they call a “blanket” approach to using their exemption. That means they have decided to withhold any document they can without any analysis of whether they should. Police chiefs and prosecutors from across the commonwealth have spoken out against any effort to undermine their broad power of exemption.

To its credit, the Fairfax County Police Department has committed to “release police re-

ports with redactions rather than creating a summary document,” and the new policy is in progress.

During the 2017 session of the General Assembly, state Sen. Scott Surovell’s bill, SB1102, passed both the House and Senate without any votes in opposition. The bill would require police to release the records of investigations of deaths by suicide to the closest family member.

The bill summary: “Virginia Freedom of Information Act; completed unattended death investigations; mandatory disclosure. Requires that records of completed unattended death investigations be released to the parent or spouse of the decedent or, if there is no living parent or spouse, to the most immediate family member of the decedent.”

Gov. Terry McAuliffe proposes to gut the bill by amending it to only require the police to provide a summary of the report.

Families deserve to have access to completed police reports about the death of a loved one. (This is also an issue for murder victims and other situations, but is not addressed by this bill.)

The General Assembly meets for its veto session Wednesday, April 5, and we urge every member who voted in favor of Surovell’s bill

### Tune into Budget Hearings This Week

❖ Tuesday, April 4, 4 p.m., Public Hearing before Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; School Board presents budget to Board. Fairfax County Government Center, Boardroom, 12000 Government Center Pkwy., Fairfax.

❖ Wednesday, April 5, 1 p.m., Public Hearing before Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

❖ Thursday, April 6, 1 p.m., Public Hearing before Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. All meetings streamed live online and available to view on demand.

Residents can listen to any meeting live in the Board of Supervisors boardroom by calling 703-324-7700.

to vote to block the amendment.

We note that police departments do not have to withhold these reports; nothing in the current law prohibits their release. Police departments could choose the compassionate and transparent approach by releasing reports, redacting the names of witnesses and other information as reasonably necessary. This is what the FCPD is working towards.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## Education to Save Our Democracy

BY KENNETH R. “KEN” PLUM  
STATE DELEGATE  
(D-36)



When Thomas Jefferson finished what he considered one of the most significant deeds of

his lifetime in writing the Declaration of Independence in the summer of 1776, he returned home to Virginia and set about turning the ideals of the Declaration into steps that could lead to the formation of the first democratic republic. Among his proposals was that a system of grammar schools be established throughout the state to be topped off by a grand university. He lived to see the University of Virginia become a reality, but his plan for a universal form of education for the masses did not come about in the Commonwealth until 1870 with a Reconstruction-era system of public schools.

formed participants in the election of their representatives. Education is as important today if not more so as it was in the formation of the union. I am reminded of that fact daily.

The experiences of my early days as a classroom teacher remind me that there is a sharp difference between being schooled and being educated. The emphasis in recent times on the acquisition of facts with Standards of Learning and standardized testing fall short of the educated citizen that we need in today’s world. What facts could I have transmitted to my students that would stay with them to guide them through the

SEE PLUM, PAGE 7

## Change of Scenery Good, So is Coming Home

BY JOHN LOVAAS  
RESTON IMPACT  
PRODUCER/HOST



When we retired from the foreign serve twenty-some years ago, we swore an oath to put down roots and never board an airplane

again. Like New Year’s resolutions, that oath did not last long. It turns out travel is in our blood. With the depressing state of affairs for politically sensitive folks in the Metro Washington region, we were quite ready to fly away March 20 for a river cruise through Eastern Europe with old friends.

It was wonderful, sailing down the Danube River from Budapest, Hungary, through Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria and lastly to Bucharest, Romania. We were the first tourists of the season, getting both a lower price and special receptions along the way. The weather was near perfect, with sunshine and temps topping out at about 70 every day but one! Daily news on board was limited to international press clippings—about one third fake news/embarrassment from

Trump, one-third Brexit, and happily NCAA men’s and women’s basketball scores!

It was our first time in countries formerly under Soviet Russian influence or domination. We saw and heard much about the Communist years, for

the most part referred to by people we talked with as the darker times. Physical signs were abandoned factories and many city blocks of monotonous, soulless gray apartment buildings, especially in evidence in Bulgaria which has progressed least since its revolution. On the other hand, the Romanian and Hungarian capitals were amazing with their beautiful wide boulevards, classic architecture and nightlife reminiscent of places

SEE LOVAAS, PAGE 7

### Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue.  
Email [reston@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:reston@connectionnewspapers.com)



# NEWS

## Hudgins on Reston National Golf Course Redevelopment

**H**unter Mill Supervisor Catherine Hudgins has issued the following statement regarding Reston National Golf Property:



**Hudgins**

“Recently there has been advertisement for the Reston National Golf course property, promoting the proposed redevelopment as a by-right, mixed use development opportunity. The property is located at 11875 Sunrise Valley Drive and 2018 Soapstone Drive, Reston – Tax Map reference: 17-4 ((11)) 4A, 26-2 ((2))8 and 26-2 ((5)) 4.

At this time, it is appropriate to reiterate the process for redeveloping this property, based on an interpretation by Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning stating the following:

\* Based on the previous approvals, the redevelopment of the property from a golf course to residential uses would first require an amendment to the Reston Master Plan which is part of the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan, as well as obtaining both Development Plan Amendment approval and Planned Residential Community Plan approval from the Board of Supervisors.

According to the interpretation, the process is clear and concise and must be followed in order for development other than a golf course or open space to be considered for the property.”

### FAITH NOTES

*Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community, including special holiday services. Send to reston@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday.*

**St. Anne’s Episcopal Church**, 1700 Wainwright Drive in Reston, holds Sunday services at 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and contemporary service at 5 p.m. during the summer. Nursery, Sunday school and adult education available. 703-437-6530 or [www.stannes-reston.org](http://www.stannes-reston.org).

**Washington Plaza Baptist Church** will hold Adult Bible Study at 9:30 a.m. Sundays at Lake Anne Village Center. The group is studying the Gospel of Mark. Services follow at 11 a.m.



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- Halloween Spooktacular**
- Celebration of Lights**
- Cars and Coffee**
- Farmers Market**



Photos by Walt Lawrence

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# Senior Happenings

at Tall Oaks Assisted Living

Join us for these great, free events for seniors and their families. Space is limited. RSVP to EDooley@TallOaksAL.com.

## Alzheimer's Support Group

Monday, May 15 at 7 pm

## Movie Under the Stars

Free admission!

Friday, May 18 at 7 pm

Co-hosted by Care with Love

## Smoothies at the Lake Ann Community Center

1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston

Tuesday, June 6 at 11 am

## Ice Cream Social at the Lake Ann Community Center

1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston

Thursday, June 8 from 1:30 to 3:30 pm

## Tall Oaks Community Yard Sale

Saturday, June 10 from 9 am to Noon

## Alzheimer's Support Group

Monday, June 12 at 7 pm

## Fourth of July Celebration

Enjoy a chef-prepared lunch and a tour. Reservations required.

Tuesday, July 4 from 11:30 am to 1 pm

## Sip and Paint at Tall Oaks

Thursday, July 13 from 4 to 6 pm

For more information or to schedule a tour of Tall Oaks, call 703-834-9800.

# Tall Oaks

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## Senior Living



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From left: Tony Crooks of AEW Global; Hunter Mill District Supervisor Cathy Hudgins; David Ross, partner and president of Atlantic Realty Companies; Del. Ken Plum; Adam Schulman, partner and vice president of Atlantic Realty Companies; Reston Association Board President Ellen Graves; and Rick Irwin of IntegraCare.

## New Senior Living Facility Under Construction

Atlantic Realty Companies broke ground for the Hunters Woods at Trails Edge Senior Living Community project at 2222 Colts Neck Road in Reston on Thursday, March 30. The project will replace the former United Christian Parish with 210 units for senior living – 90

designated as independent living, 81 for assisted living, 15 special needs and 24 assigned to memory care.

Construction is set to begin with demolition of the existing structure immediately and completion is expected by January 2019.

### CALENDAR

#### FRIDAY/APRIL 7

**Senior Tea.** 10:30-noon at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. View the current exhibit and enjoy a cup of tea on the second Friday of the month, all teas are free and open to the public. Visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com) or call 703-956-9560 for more.

#### SATURDAY/APRIL 8

**Managing Inflammation Naturally.** 2 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Registered dietician Natalie Kannan will share ways to manage chronic inflammation through diet and healthy eating choices. For adults, free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library) for more.

#### WEDNESDAY/APRIL 12

**Medicare 101.** 2-2:30 p.m. at the Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Fairfax County is offering the free seminar, Medicare 101. Contact Karen Brutsché at 703-390-6157 for more.

#### SATURDAY/APRIL 22

**Sun Dance Performance.** 7 p.m. at Herndon Senior Center, 873 Grace St. "Music To Take You Away" with standards like Fly Me To The Moon, Sentimental Journey along with Drive My Car, Proud Mary, and Come Sail Away. Call 703-464-6200 for more.

#### MONDAY/MAY 15

**Arts Festival Week.** Various times at the Herndon Senior Center, 873 Grace St. 12th Anniversary and Arts Festival Week with artwork from the seniors on display, and a way to exercise creativity to keep body, mind, and spirit strong and resilient. Call 703-464-6200 for more.

#### ONGOING

**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.

**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).

**Sunrise at Reston Town Center** offers a monthly Caregiver Support Group on the fourth Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8 p.m. Monthly support group offers a safe place for family caregivers, to meet and develop a mutual support system and to exchange practical information and possible solutions. Learn about resources available in the community and how to manage caregiver related stress. Call 703-956-8930 or email [Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com](mailto:Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com) to RSVP.

**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.

# Plum

FROM PAGE 4

rough waters of governance today? A few of course, but more important are the skills they may have learned by being social scientists, historians, and political scientists in my classroom and using the skills of those disciplines to understand and react to the world we face today.

Popular in the mid-1960's when I was in the classroom was the discovery approach to teaching the social studies made famous by Amherst College. There were few lectures in the classroom about what happened in history. Rather the students were taught to collect information, weigh evidence, identify points of view, question sources, draw conclusions and "discover" what went on in historic periods of history and why.

Those skills are more important today

than ever. The ability to separate among news stories the fake news, alt-news, satire, points of view, and evidence is increasingly vital.

Hopefully there will come a time when more of those who make the news will be acting in an ethical and responsible manner, motivated to serve with the good of the whole in mind rather than simply personal gain.

With the increasing speed and number of sources of mass communications, skills of the social scientist are more important than ever. Thomas Jefferson was right—schools are critically important to democracy. Even more important is that the students coming out of school have the skills necessary to be functioning members of society that will preserve and strengthen our democratic republic.

# Lovaas

FROM PAGE 4

like Paris. And, business seemed to be booming.

Other highlights: We saw storks just returning to their 6-8 foot diameter nests atop power poles in several cities; Prince Charles of Great Britain visiting a park in Bucharest as part of his Brexit goodwill tour; and, flowering plum trees in every country—which explained all the plum brandy in the markets we visited along the way. Otherwise, we sat back and enjoyed the remarkable vistas as we sailed between ports along the Danube—ancient castles, impregnable stone fortresses, cathedrals, and charming little villages dotting the shores.

All too soon it was time for the long flight back—Bucharest-Munich-Dulles. One tip if you plan transatlantic journeys: Try to get on a Lufthansa Boeing 747 flight—more legroom in Economy, aisles you can jog around on (OK, not really jog but you can walk comfortably), and bathrooms big enough for a full-sized person. Avoid the newer Airbus 330-300 which has none of these.

It is really great to be home. Lake Anne and Washington Plaza Cluster may not be

quite up to the glamor of Budapest or Bucharest, but they do indeed offer the charm rivaling their European counterparts. And, there are lots of nice people all around us here, too. We have avoided turning on the TV news for the first few days. But, we are rested and ready to get back into that fray once we gird our loins and such.

Best of all, in just over three weeks, we will ring the bell to open the Reston Farmers Market for its 20<sup>th</sup> season. We are marking the 20<sup>th</sup> by opening earlier—Saturday, April 29, and closing much later, Dec. 9, than ever before.

More on Northern Virginia's number one farmers market next time!

## SCHOOL NOTES

Send school notes to north@connectionnewspapers.com by noon on Friday.

**Christine Roesch**, of Reston, was selected to present a research project titled "The Layout of Grass and a Trip to Starbucks can Influence Which Way you Walk to Class" at The University of Alabama's Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Conference held on March 30.



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



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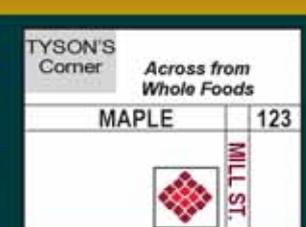


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# ENTERTAINMENT

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

## ONGOING

**“No Place Like Home.”** Great Falls Studios presents a juried art show on exhibit through April 8 at ArtSpaceHerndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com)

**Lake Anne Exhibit.** Deadline is June 2 to enter photographs for the Lake Anne show. The exhibit runs from June 5-July 2 and is free and open to the public 9 a.m.-8 p.m. throughout the week at the JoAnne Rose Gallery, Reston Community Center at Lake Anne, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. Visit [www.leagueofrestonartists.org](http://www.leagueofrestonartists.org) for more.

**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.

**“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).

**Emerging Visions: Interactions.** Various times through April 1 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. Visit [restonarts.org](http://restonarts.org) or call 703-471-9242 for more.

## FRIDAY/APRIL 7

**Senior Tea.** 10:30-noon at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. View the current exhibit and enjoy a cup of tea on the second Friday of the month, all teas are free and open to the public. Visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com) or call 703-956-9560 for more.

**Meditation for Peace and Well-being.** 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Longtime meditator Gerry Gorman will share a simple technique of spiritual meditation that can help achieve a lasting state of peace and happiness. For adults, free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library) for more.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 8

**Founder’s Day.** 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Lake Anne Plaza, 1609 Washington Plaza N., Reston. A celebration the 53rd anniversary of Reston’s founding. Visit [www.restonmuseum.org/foundersday](http://www.restonmuseum.org/foundersday) or call 703-709-7700 for more.

**Aqua Egg Hunt.** 1:30.m. at Herndon Community Center pool, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Children will collect as many floating and sinking eggs as possible in the time allowed. \$10. Open swim at 4 p.m. Visit [herndon-va.gov/](http://herndon-va.gov/) for more.

**Fiber Artist Workshop.** 2-4 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Join fiber artist, Cecile Batchelor, in making a quilt with paper. In this two-hour session, children will learn a little bit about tessellations, color theory, and how to construct a quilt. Ages 10-14. Visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com) or call 703-956-9560 for more.

**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.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 9

**Founder’s Day Art Show.** 2-4 p.m. at the JoAnne Rose Gallery, Reston Community Center at Lake Anne, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. The League of Reston Artists presents their annual Founder’s Day exhibit in honor of the group’s founder, Patricia MacIntyre. The exhibit runs from April 3-30. Visit [www.leagueofrestonartists.org](http://www.leagueofrestonartists.org) for more.

**In Concert.** 7 p.m. at Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Professional Touring Artist Series: Dana and the Glorious Birds. Call 703) 476-4500 for more.

## 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.

## APRIL 11-MAY 6

**The Art of Resilience.** 10-noon at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. An exhibit showcasing the artwork of Azriel and Irene Awret. Reception April 29, from 7-9 p.m. Visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com) or call 703-956-9560 for more.

## WEDNESDAY/APRIL 12

**Trends in TV Viewing.** 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Allan Hide from the Fairfax County’s Department of Consumer and Cable Services will cover the “enabling devices” required to access television channel services. For adults, free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library) for more.

## THURSDAY/APRIL 13

**Color Me Happy.** 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Turn loose the inner artist in this adult coloring session. Coloring pages, pens and pencils provided. For adults, free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 15

**Egg Hunt.** 9:30 a.m. at 777 Lynn St., Herndon, behind the Herndon Municipal Building. Story readings, coloring mural, tattoo shack, petting zoo, photo-op with Easter Bunny, instrument “Petting Zoo” brought to you by Bach to Rock. \$9 in advance or \$10 at the event. Visit [herndon-va.gov/](http://herndon-va.gov/) for more.

## MONDAY/APRIL 17

**Herndon Poetry Group.** 7-8:30 p.m. at the Herndon Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. Poetry Planet: A Community Poetry Reading. April is National Poetry Month, join the community to appreciate poetry together. Free. Visit [tinyurl.com/hnqb8n3](http://tinyurl.com/hnqb8n3) to sign up.

## THURSDAY/APRIL 20

**Dollars and Sense Discussion.** 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Monthly book group discussion



**“De Mi Alma,” choreographed by Classical Ballet Theatre faculty member Meghan Rudorfer, earned Emilie Gregory recognition during the 2016 Youth America Grand Prix. More recently, the renowned Miami City Ballet School invited Emilie to train in its residence program year-round.**

PHOTOS BY TONY DE LA PAZ

## An Evening with the Ballet

Join the dancers of Classical Ballet Theatre as they bring to the stage innovative works by today’s leading contemporary choreographers including Roni Koresh of Koresh Dance Company, Iquail Shaheed formerly of PHILADANCO, Lauren Edson formerly of Trey McIntyre Project, and faculty of Classical Ballet Theatre.

Saturday, April 8, at 7:30 p.m. with complimentary pre-performance cocktails at 6:30 p.m. CenterStage at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Find tickets and information at [www.cbntva.org/evening](http://www.cbntva.org/evening), or call 703-476-4500, ext. 3.

focuses on business leaders and markets. April’s book is “The Everything Store: Jeff Bezos and the Age of Amazon” by Brad Stone. For adults, free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library).

## FRIDAY/APRIL 21

**Learning Ally Celebration.** 9-10 a.m. at Herndon Middle School, 901 Locust St., Herndon. Presentations followed by cake and ice cream. Visit [www.fcps.edu/HerndonMS](http://www.fcps.edu/HerndonMS).

## FRIDAY-SUNDAY/APRIL 21-23

**Guys and Dolls.** Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m. at Herndon High School Auditorium, 700 Bennett St., Herndon. (Enter the school through Door #6.) Cast and crew from Herndon High put on a musical comedy following a ragtag gambler, his showgirl fiancée, a high-rolling heartthrob, and a modest missionary, as their lives intersect. \$15. Visit [www.herndon-drama.org](http://www.herndon-drama.org).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 22

**Spring Fling Vendor Sale.** 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Herndon High School Cafeteria, 700 Bennett St., Herndon. Items for sale include arts & crafts, costume jewelry, clothing, books, cosmetics, household items and more. Call 703-810-2200 for more.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 23

**Love Maria.** 4-8 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Evening includes award nominated film “Woman in Gold.” Gregor Collins, author of “The Accidental Caregiver” will be present to speak about his experiences caring for Maria Altmann and to sign his book, available for purchase. Visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com) or call 703-956-9560 for more.

## TUESDAY/APRIL 25

**Spring Flower Bouquets.** 7-9 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. This Tess Rollins workshop will teach participants to brighten up a space with paper flowers and the art of working with paper. A Design and Wine Event. If possible please bring a mini glue gun, otherwise all supplies are provided. \$35. Visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com) or call 703-956-9560 for more.

## APRIL 26-30

**Gently Used Books and Media Sale.** 5-8 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. All proceeds go to support the Reston Regional Library and the Fairfax County Public Library system. Visit [www.RestonLibraryFriends.com](http://www.RestonLibraryFriends.com) for more.

## THURSDAY/APRIL 27

**Family Challah Bake.** 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Congregation Beth Emeth, 12523 Lawyers Road, Herndon. Evening of challah making, dinner and dancing. Enjoy kosher pizza, salad & dancing while the challah rises. Email [Office@bethemeth.org](mailto:Office@bethemeth.org) or call 703-860-4515x101.

## FRIDAY/APRIL 28

**Empty Bowls.** 5:30-8 p.m. at Floris United Methodist Church, 13600 Frying Pan Road, Herndon. Food served in a handmade pottery bowl to keep as a reminder that there are those in the community with empty bowls. All proceeds will be donated to “Food for Others,” the largest distributor of free food directly to the hungry in Northern Virginia. \$25 for adults in advance/ \$30 adults at the door/\$15 for children under 12. Visit [www.givingcircleofhope.org](http://www.givingcircleofhope.org).

## EASTER EVENTS

### SATURDAY-SUNDAY/APRIL 8-9

**Easter Eggs-Stravaganza.** 9 a.m.-6 p.m. at Roer’s Zoofari, at the corner of Hunter Mill Road and Baron Cameron Drive in Vienna. Egg hunts, safari tours, and more. Participants in the Easter Egg hunt are asked to bring their own basket. Call 607-757-6222, or visit [www.roerszoofari.com](http://www.roerszoofari.com).

### FRIDAY/APRIL 14

**Good Friday Services.** Noon-3 p.m. at Dranesville Church of the Brethren 11500 Leesburg Pike, Herndon. The service will be the Seven Last Words of Christ featuring six half hour services with six local clergy. Email Rev. Kelly at [tkelly@stfrancisgreatfalls.org](mailto:tkelly@stfrancisgreatfalls.org) for more.

### SATURDAY/APRIL 8

**Aqua Egg Hunt.** 1:30.m. at Herndon Community Center pool, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Children will collect as many floating and sinking eggs as possible in the time allowed. \$10. Open swim at 4 p.m. Visit [herndon-va.gov/](http://herndon-va.gov/) for more.

### SATURDAY/APRIL 15

**Egg Hunt.** 9:30 a.m. at 777 Lynn St., Herndon, behind the Herndon Municipal Building. Story readings, coloring mural, tattoo shack, petting zoo, photo-op with Easter Bunny, instrument “Petting Zoo” brought to you by Bach to Rock. \$9 in advance or \$10 at the event. Visit [herndon-va.gov](http://herndon-va.gov).

### SATURDAY-SUNDAY/APRIL 15-16

**Easter Eggs-Stravaganza.** 9 a.m.-6 p.m. at Roer’s Zoofari, at the corner of Hunter Mill Road and Baron Cameron Drive in Vienna. Egg hunts, safari tours, and more. Participants in the Easter Egg hunt are asked to bring their own basket. Call 607-757-6222, or visit [www.roerszoofari.com](http://www.roerszoofari.com).



“Pastoral,” painting by Dorothy Donahey; acrylic on canvas, 30” x 40”

## Reston Art Gallery & Studios Presents ‘First Blooms’ by Dorothy Donahey

Dorothy Donahey presents her latest works in the show “First Blooms” at Reston Art Gallery & Studios, on exhibit from April 1 until April 30. All are welcome to the gallery reception Sunday, April 9 and meet the artist from 2-4 p.m. The title of Donahey’s new show is inspired by the spring landscape, and a goal to “give people a little sunshine,” born out of the news, the cold, and the loss of cherry blossoms at the Tidal Basin.

Through the paintings in this show, the season can be enjoyed throughout the year.

The “First Blooms” exhibit can be viewed during gallery hours every weekend afternoon, or by chance on weekdays, at Reston Art Gallery & Studios (RAGS), 11400 Washington Plaza, Reston, on the waterfront at Lake Anne Plaza. For information call RAGS at 703-481-8156, find it on Facebook/RAGSReston, and visit RestonArtGallery.com.

### BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to [connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/) by noon on Friday.

#### SATURDAY/APRIL 8

**Free Lice Removal.** 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at 455B Carlisle Drive, Herndon. Lice Clinics of America is providing free lice removal. Call 646-843-1803 or email [nsalerno@5wpr.com](mailto:nsalerno@5wpr.com) for more.

#### Managing Inflammation Naturally.

2 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Registered dietician Natalie Kannan will share ways to manage chronic inflammation through diet and healthy eating choices. For adults, free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library) for more.

#### WEDNESDAY/APRIL 12

**Medicare 101.** 2-2:30 p.m. at the Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Fairfax County is offering the free seminar, Medicare 101. Contact Karen Brutsché at 703-390-6157 for more.

#### FRIDAY/APRIL 14

**Good Friday Services.** Noon-3 p.m. at Dranesville Church of the Brethren, 11500 Leesburg Pike, Herndon. The service will be the Seven Last Words of Christ featuring six half hour services with six local clergy. Email Rev. Kelly at [tkelly@stfrancisgreatfalls.org](mailto:tkelly@stfrancisgreatfalls.org) for more.

#### ONGOING

**Sunrise at Reston Town Center** offers a monthly Caregiver Support Group on the fourth Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8 p.m. Monthly support group offers a safe place for family caregivers, to meet and develop a mutual support system and to exchange practical information and possible solutions. Learn about resources available in the community and how to manage caregiver related stress. Call 703-956- 8930 or email [Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com](mailto:Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com) to RSVP.

**Exercise for Parkinson’s.** Every Monday, 1:15-2:15 p.m. Reston Sport&Health, 11445 Isaac Newton  
SEE BULLETIN BOARD, PAGE 11

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# Sick & Tired



By **KENNETH B. LOURIE**

Man o' man was I sick last weekend (that was not a question). It began as a runny nose, followed by an annoying hacking cough, compounded by sneezing and watery eyes, an occasional headache, with zero interest in food and hardly any energy to get myself out of bed where I spent practically the entire two days. I haven't been that sick/incapacitated since, I don't know when. Thankfully, there was no temperature, sore throat or nausea to further complicate my inability to move off the bed. And most thankfully, there was no urgency to visit the bathroom (I don't know if I would have had the wherewithal to even get there). Otherwise, I might have actually had to call/email the doctor and/or make an appointment at the Emergency Room. After all, I do have cancer so I really shouldn't ignore — totally — the times when I'm feeling uncharacteristically bad. This past weekend, had I gone from bad to worse, I would have called.

However, my symptoms, as miserable as they were, especially for two days, didn't meet the this-is-it threshold as set forth by my oncologist. Though the symptoms were new and different versus the everyday norm, they certainly weren't uniquely different (lung cancer related) for a seasonal-type cold. Moreover, the pain/discomfort/cough wasn't coming from my lungs, and the symptoms had only lasted a few days, not a few weeks. I therefore determined that unlike Babe Ruth who felt "just as bad" as he sounded in his famous Babe Ruth Day farewell speech at Yankee Stadium on April 27, 1947, I wasn't dying. I was just sick with a bad cold, one that was worse than any I remember (although maybe I've forgotten. See column titled "I Can't Forget What I Don't Remember" published 3/22/17).

Nevertheless, since I'm not a doctor, just a patient, presumably I should know what my body is telling me. However, I may not be so inclined to listen (fear mostly). Though my life may occasionally be at stake, I still struggle with the facts of my case. I delude myself into thinking that if I don't give in to the pain and suffering — as rare as they usually are, then I won't suffer the consequences: dying before my time. I don't want to believe the worst so I don't. I wouldn't attribute my above-average life "unexpectedness" since diagnosis (eight years — AND ALWAYS COUNTING) as the power of positive thinking since I never read the book written by Norman Vincent Peale. But I try not focus too much on my diagnostic reality.

I mean, it's not as if I laugh in the face of death; heck, I cry more than ever, especially while watching programs on television when heartstrings are pulled. Somehow though, I try not to take my cancer personally, if that makes any sense? I try to take it the same way Curly Howard of The Three Stooges took his many slapstick pratfalls: "I'm a victim of soycumstance."

But when I get sick, whether or not I feel anything in my chest/lungs, I cross over into an entirely new realm. No more am I able to talk/humor myself into or out of things, no more am I able to deny my cancer reality and no more am I able to pretend that all is right in my world. It's during these situations when the metaphorical/proverbial you know what hits my emotional fan that I suffer the most. Unfortunately, there's not a shut-off button. I just have to ride it out, as bumpy as it typically is, and hope I come out the other end in better shape than when I went in.

So far, so good. Although I'm still coughing a bit and blowing my nose, all the other symptoms have subsided and no more do I feel worse for the wear. I don't suppose it's cancer-related, but of course, what do I know? What I do know is this: if the remaining symptoms linger, I'll worry, and on Wednesday, April 19 — and for the following week, I'll worry even more awaiting the results from the CT Scan and lower abdomen MRI I have scheduled that day (it's a special: two for one). Granted, these tests are not any newer than catching a cold, but still, I can't help wondering: since I was diagnosed as "terminal," this can't keep going on forever, can it?

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

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<b>Zone 3:</b> The Alexandria Gazette Packet The Mount Vernon Gazette	<b>Zone 6:</b> The Arlington Connection The Vienna/Oakton Connection The McLean Connection The Great Falls Connection

FROM PAGE 9

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](mailto: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.

**Toy Drive in Collaboration with Nonprofit FISH Through Dec. 16**

Stop by 11890 Sunrise Valley Drive any weekday from 9-4 and drop a new, unwrapped toy in the donation box in the lobby. All toys will be distributed to needy children within Loudoun County and to Herndon/Reston children via the non-profit Herndon-Reston FISH, Inc. Toys should be for the ages of Newborn to 16. The last day for donations is December 16. Call 703-

### FAITH NOTES

*Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community, including special holiday services. Send to [reston@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:reston@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Thursday.*

**St. Anne's Episcopal Church**, 1700 Wainwright Drive in Reston, holds Sunday services at 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and contemporary service at 5 p.m. during the summer. Nursery, Sunday school and adult education available. 703-437-6530 or [www.stannes-herndon.org](http://www.stannes-herndon.org).

**HAVEN of Northern Virginia** offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. Contact 703-941-7000 or [www.havenofnova.org](http://www.havenofnova.org) for schedules and registration information.

**The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and the Jewish Outreach Institute** offer the Mothers/Parents Circle, an umbrella of free educational events and resources. Jewish rituals, ethics and the creation of a Jewish home, regular meetings and group Shabbats and holidays. Participants include Sha'are Shalom, Congregation Beth Emeth, Temple Rodef Shalom and the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia. [ShalomDC.org](http://ShalomDC.org).

**Hope Fellowship Church** will temporarily be meeting at Hyatt Place, 21481 Ridgeway Circle, Sterling. Sunday worship services are Sundays at 9:30 and 10:45 a.m., a Bible Study is on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. and a weekly prayer conference

860-4600 for more information.

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://virginiaservice.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 [habrock@reston.org](mailto:habrock@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.

call is Thursdays at 9 p.m. The public is invited to join a Bible believing, multi-ethnic/multi-cultural congregation, with Bible-based sermons and uplifting music. [hopefellowshipchurchloudoun.org](http://hopefellowshipchurchloudoun.org).

**Epiphany United Methodist Preschool**, 1014 Country Club Drive, N.E. in Vienna, is now enrolling 3- to 4-year-old students. 703-938-2391 or [www.epiphanypreschool.com](http://www.epiphanypreschool.com).

**Washington Plaza Baptist Church** will hold Adult Bible Study at 9:30 a.m. Sundays at Lake Anne Village Center. The group is studying the Gospel of Mark. Services follow at 11 a.m.

**Nondenominational Christian businessmen** meet for prayer, Biblical discussion and fellowship 7 p.m. Fridays at Anita's, 1051 Elden St., Herndon and noon Thursdays at 555 Grove St., Suite 200, Herndon. Call 703-795-1257.

**Trinity Presbyterian Church**, 651 Dranesville Road, Herndon, has Sunday worship services at 10 a.m. during the summer. Nursery and childcare are provided starting at 8 a.m. until the end of the service. [www.trinityherndon.org](http://www.trinityherndon.org).

**Vajrayogini Buddhist Center**, Unitarian Universalist Church, 1625 Wiehle Ave., Reston, holds weekly classes starting Sept. 12, Thursdays 7:30-8:30 p.m., for the general public which use Buddhist teachings to practice meditation. \$12 or \$6 for students, seniors and unemployed. 202-986-2257 or [www.meditation-dc.org](http://www.meditation-dc.org).

# Horsemanship Event a Celebration of Human, Equine Spirit

## Students from Spirit Open Equestrian Program shine at Ride4SPIRIT.

BY ANDREA WORKER  
THE CONNECTION

**N**o fooling. The April 1 Ride4SPIRIT Horse Show at the arena at Frying Pan Park in Herndon was an opportunity for the participants of the Spirit Open Equestrian Program to show off their achievements to family, friends and visitors at their first event of the year. It was also a time to celebrate a very important agreement between the program, the park, and the Fairfax County Park Authority.

The nonprofit, which runs a variety of programs that provide intensive therapeutic and equine-assisted life skills learning opportunities under the leadership of founder Davorka “Dada” Suvak, late last year was given some not-unexpected, but nevertheless, potentially devastating news. The farm space adjacent to Frying Pan Park, which they had been leasing for years, was being re-zoned and sold to a McLean developer. Suvak and her herd had to find new digs to continue a program which has served hundreds of developmentally and intellectually challenged individuals, wounded warriors, children, youth and adults with a variety of disabilities, and teens and young adults, many able-bodied, who are looking for a way to explore their own potential and make friends of both the human and equine variety.

So, it’s been even busier than usual in the Spirit Open Equestrian Program’s world in the last few months. They have just completed a massive “moving day” project — no easy feat when you are talking about 14 rather large, four-footed “family members” and all of the luggage that goes with them. Most people just move the contents of their homes. In this case, the “homes” had to be moved, as well.

**THERE WILL BE CHALLENGES** ahead, “But for now,” said Suvak, “with so much community support and the gracious assistance of Frying Pan Park and the Fairfax County Park Authority,” Spirit Open Equestrian Program will continue its work in its new location on five acres in the back of the park, while a long-term solution is sought. Riders, parents, and Spirit staff are beyond relieved.

“Our 9-year-old son Aaron, has been in the program since he was about 3,” said Brian Roethlisberger of Fairfax. “When he comes here, he gets to spend time out of his wheelchair. This is physical and mental therapy that is fun, and that gives him a real sense of accomplishment.” Roethlisberger added that the parents of the riders benefit immeasurably, as well. “We can network, we can just visit and relax, while these wonderful people improve the



**Davorka “Dada” Suvak is the founder and program director of Spirit Open Equestrian Program. A minute in her presence and you know that the work for this PATH Certified Therapeutic riding instructor is a true labor of love. Here she’s hanging with Glory, a former barrel racer turned equine therapist.**

quality of life for our children. If the program had to move further out, a lot of the families just couldn’t get here. And I don’t even want to think about the consequences if the program had to dissolve.”

Tom Nystrom, 16, from Falls Church and another program veteran, had a cheering section at the event in older brother Jake, mom Jill, and dad Christopher, as he showcased some pretty impressive horse-handling.

“I am so proud of him,” said Jake. “Go,

Tommy!” he yelled out, as Tom and his mount did another trot by the stands.

Amory Blochsom has only been in the program for just a few months, “but he really took to it. He’s a natural,” said his mother Christina. The 11-year-old from Reston couldn’t wait to show his parents the ribbon he was awarded for his equestrian efforts. Asked if he thinks he will stick with the program, Amory answered with a definitive “yes!” The Blochsoms are frequent visitors to Frying Pan Park.

**Amory Blochsom, 11, of Reston, could hardly wait to show his ribbon to his parents. Amory joined the program about two months ago, but “he loves it,” said mom Christina. “It’s already having a wonderful effect.”**



PHOTOS BY  
ANDREA WORKER  
THE CONNECTION

“I grew up on a farm,” said Christina. “This is so special, to still be able to have this kind of experience in the middle of the bustle of Northern Virginia.” It was during a visit to the park that she discovered the Spirit Program and thought she would let Amory check it out. “It’s been wonderful.”

**SOME OF THE STUDENTS** have graduated to solo-rider status, but there is always a multitude of instructors, assistants, volunteers, and young Equine Assisted Learners (EALs) on hand for immediate support. Careful, ongoing assessment means that each rider gets the amount of on-the-ground helpers needed to make their therapeutic adventure a safe and happy one. And, of course, Suvak is always nearby as well, with encouragement, pointers, and praise.

Samantha Thompson is a freshman at South Lakes High School in Reston. She has been an EAL since just after the fifth grade. She recently achieved her goal of being able to assist the therapy riders. “I was too young in the beginning, so I had to keep learning and proving to Dada that I was ready.” Samantha loves to watch as the riders develop and achieve new successes. “Watching them be so happy, that makes me happy.”

Samantha also relishes the growth in her own abilities and the friendships she has made. “We don’t do cliques here. We are really a team, from all ages, all backgrounds, all abilities.” She also loves the fact that many of the Spirit horses are rescues, and they are getting a second chance to enjoy life while bringing joy to so many.

Samantha and others were on duty at the far end of the arena, allowing people to “meet and greet” some of the equine therapy ambassadors. Wyatt and Levi Balthis of Annandale seemed a bit hesitant at first, but before their visit was over, they had both taken turns on top two different Spirit horses, and expressed themselves ready for more.

**SPIRIT OPEN EQUESTRIAN PROGRAM** offers many levels of therapy and learning opportunities, even corporate team building events, psychotherapy with equines, and an environment where youth can develop confidence, and learn the ways of responsibility, teamwork, patience and empathy. “There is something for everyone, and everyone has something to offer in return,” said Suvak.

Suvak and her dedicated army hope you will visit them to ride, to volunteer, to donate, or just to spend some time with an amazing community of special people and their special equine friends. Their website at [www.spiritquestrian.org](http://www.spiritquestrian.org) tells their story and the services they offer, along with videos of riders and staff at work and moving testimonials from family members of Spirit participants.

Suvak says that scholarships and financial assistance may be available, “so don’t let financial considerations stop you from participating in this wonderful way to learn and grow, and get the most out of life, no matter your challenges.”