

Burke CONNECTION

FAMILY
CONNECTION
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(Left) Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) and at-large school board member Jeanette Hough hosted a budget community meeting, featuring (right) County Executive Ed Long, at Robinson Secondary School on March 28.

School Budget Goes Before Board

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Pro Sports — Are We Cursed?
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United Airlines employees May Hester and Jeff Lattea assist Felix Reges and mom Ina Laemmerzahle of Reston to “check-in” to their “Wings for All” simulated flight travel experience at Dulles International Airport.



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

“Captain” Julia Ferguson, a 16-year-old from Lorton, required some extra assistance to try out the Number One seat on the plane, but once in place, she was ready to go.

Wings for All Travel rehearsal offered for individuals with disabilities.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

Glenn Reges and Ina Laemmerzahle are planning on taking their 9-year-old son, Felix Reges, on a trip to Colorado. Many couples would simply book their flights, a hotel room and the rental car and when the day arrived would be off to the airport for a fun-filled family vacation, but things are a bit more complicated for this Reston family. Felix has autism and is legally blind. His parents were worried how they would manage the challenges of travel by air, and how Felix would react to an experience that has been known to cause stress even for the most prepared travellers.

The “Wings for All” program’s latest offering was one way to take a dry run at the travel adventure.

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) teamed up with non-profit The Arc, local chapter The Arc of Northern Virginia, United Airlines, Travelers Aid, MarketPlace Development, and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to simulate a typical airport travel experience for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

About 125 people — participants with differing special needs and their family members — arrived at Dulles International Airport on Saturday, March 25 and were guided through the travel process by an army of volunteers clad in neon-green t-shirts and directed by dozens of like-colored posters with directional arrows and additional instructions.

AT THE UNITED check-in kiosks, United employee May Hester helped each participant use the screens to enter their information and her colleague Jeff Lattea printed out boarding passes. Lattea, whose mother was a special education teacher, has volun-



Giovanni Solis-Sosa of Manassas wasn’t so sure about the jetway portion of the “Wings for All” travel practice as he made his way to the plane with his family, but his smiles returned once he was safely on board.

teered to work this event several times. “I love doing this,” he said. “If it helps give these families the confidence to take trips they may have avoided, it’s worth every minute.”

To gain that kind of confidence is why Lauren Gibson brought her 8-year-old son Aiden out to participate in the program. Where would Aiden take his flight if given the choice? Without hesitation, the youngster declared “Disney World!”

With boarding passes for United “Flight 2839 to Baltimore” in hand, the “passengers” then made their way to the TSA checkpoints. Some accommodations for wheelchairs had to be made. A back brace posed a momentary delay. A few of the parents and guardians looked somewhat anxious, concerned that their participant would become distressed at the on-and-off shoe ac-



Kelsi Da Re gives her “Wings for All” travel rehearsal a “thumbs up” as she boards the United plane for a simulated flight.

tion, the passing through the monitors, and in one or two cases, a wave of the wand, but the piece of the pre-flight travel puzzle that had worried many the most, went off without a hitch and it was on to the subway to Terminal C.

At Gate C12 there was the wait that seasoned travelers have come to expect, as planes are maintained and crews come aboard. Not part of the regular routine, however, was the visit of First Officer Julie Callens, who circled the gate area and introduced herself to all of her passengers, offering souvenir wing pins and a smile.

At first, Kelsi Da Re, 11, was too shy to accept Callens’ overtures and her gifts, but before long the girl, who had travelled from Haymarket to experience the travel rehearsal, was chatting with ease with the pilot, who was fresh off a flight from Frank-

furt, Germany. Callens has volunteered with “Wings for All” before and said she wouldn’t have missed this opportunity, “no matter what.”

Kelsi’s mom, Ann, was thrilled at how things were going. Up to now, she wasn’t sure how her daughter would react to the noises, the lines, and the typical whirlwind of humanity that can be found at the airport. “There have been no plane trips,” she said. She’s thought about a trip to Maine, just for the peace and the beauty, or maybe a trip to see family in Chicago. “I think we can really start thinking about those trips now.”

Robbie Frost, an 11-year-old from Centreville, didn’t seem too shy or really too bothered by the wait at the gate. Surrounded by his grandparents Marsha and Lawrence Frost, from Springfield, and accompanied by his brother Tanner, Robbie had one word for the day’s activities so far: “Awesome!”

AT LAST, the call was given to begin boarding and everyone lined up according to their boarding pass group number. The walk down the jetway did bring on a few frowns, especially from Giovanni Solis-Sosa, but for the youngster from Manassas, there were too many interesting things to check out once he and his family had found their seats, so smiles once again became the order of the day.

The all-volunteer flight crew were prepared for their special passengers. Several of the participants had to be carefully transferred from their own wheelchairs onto special “aisle chairs” that can fit in the narrow cabin space, and then transferred again into their assigned seats. At the end of the “flight,” this process had to be performed in reverse, but was accomplished with minimal fuss and discomfort for the passenger. Janene Shaw, the Dulles Terminal opera

SEE WINGS FOR ALL. PAGE 10

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With a recent rise in hate crimes taking place across the country, Attorney General Mark Herring has addressed the issue at numerous events in Fairfax County already in 2017.



Fairfax County Chief of Police Edwin Roessler (right) said there were 83 hate “events” in the county last year, and 60 in 2015. Most of these, he said, involve graffiti and hate speech.

United Response to Hate

Community and faith leaders, elected officials speak about hate speech, bias incidents and hate crimes.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

More than 100 people filled the Ernst Cultural Center at Northern Virginia Community College’s Annandale Campus on Sunday, March 26, to hear more than a dozen elected and faith leaders, as well as representatives from local organizations speak about hate speech, bias incidents and hate crimes.

With a recent rise in hate crimes taking place across the country, Attorney General Mark Herring has addressed the issue at numerous events in Fairfax County already in 2017.

“There is a lot of fear out there,” Herring said. “I have felt it.”

Herring spoke about a web page he created for his website located at www.nohateva.com, dealing specifically with hate crimes: how are they defined, how to report one, what are resources for victims.

Herring’s page defines hate crimes as those “committed against a person or property motivated in whole or in part by an offender’s bias against a race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity.”

In 2015, the site states, there were a reported 155 such crimes in Virginia.

Herring said he wanted every Virginian to know they have rights he is working to protect, and that professionals in his office are there to “defend, keep families safe and seek justice.”

Steven Gordon, Assistant U.S. Attorney, defined harassment in the context of civil rights and federal laws, and encouraged anyone to contact him directly with complaints regarding harassment they’ve seen



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Dr. Mary Ann Panarelli, Fairfax County Public Schools director for Intervention and Prevention Services, said building youth resiliency, helping them to believe in themselves, can prevent a variety of things, including hateful acts against one another.

or experienced.

Giulio Arseni, Supervisory Special Agent, FBI Civil Rights Division, helped explain the difference between hate speech and a hate crime, particularly with regards to the First Amendment.

“Many times you can do nothing about speech,” Arseni said, “Where does it cross the line?”

Speech becomes a hateful act, in the eyes of law he said, “when it shows serious intent to commit violence against another.”

Fairfax County Chief of Police Edwin

Speakers

Speakers at the “United Response to Hate Speech, Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes” included:

- ❖ U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly, 11th Congressional District
- ❖ Mark Herring, Attorney General
- ❖ Sharon Bulova, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
- ❖ Imam Johari Abdul Malik, Dar Al Hijrah Islamic Center
- ❖ Giulio Arseni, Supervisory Special Agent, FBI Civil Rights Division
- ❖ Steven Gordon, Assistant U.S. Attorney
- ❖ Seth Gordon-Lipkin, Education Director, Anti-Defamation League
- ❖ Rev. Dr. Steven Hyde, Ravensworth Baptist Church
- ❖ Rabbi David Kalender, Congregation Olam Tikvah
- ❖ Dr. Mary Ann Panarelli, Fairfax County Public Schools
- ❖ Rev. Carlos Penaloza, Ekklesia Church
- ❖ Col. Ed Roessler Jr., Fairfax County Chief of Police
- ❖ Rev. Lisa Rzepka, John Calvin Presbyterian Church
- ❖ Kenneth Saunders, Director, Fairfax County Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs
- ❖ Rabbi Amy Schwartzman, Temple Rodef Shalom

Roessler said there were 83 hate “events” in the county last year, and 60 in 2015. Most of these, he said, involve graffiti and hate speech.

“Around the country, hate and bias are everywhere, including around this county,” Roessler said, “We will not tolerate this in Fairfax County.”

Roessler urged residents to engage with their local police districts; that FCPD representatives would come out to homeowners’ association meetings, to other local groups, to show they care, take responsibility and investigate any hate events.

Dr. Mary Ann Panarelli, Fairfax County Public Schools director for Intervention and Prevention Services, said building youth resiliency, helping them to believe in themselves, can prevent a variety of things, in-

cluding hateful acts against one another.

Panarelli spoke about the importance of mentors in the community, that “every child needs to have an adult that cares and is trusting,” whether that be a teacher, parent, or community member who reaches out.

The program also included expressions of the Golden Rule from 10 different religions, including Bahá’ism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism.

Religious leaders also discussed exploring community solutions to hate speech and crimes.

More information about bias crime committed in Fairfax County is available through Chief Roessler’s website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/crime/biascrime.htm.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF FCRC

More than 300 voters attended a Fairfax County Republican Committee straw poll and candidate forum on March 25, according to FCRC executive director Eric Johnson. The event was held at Robinson Secondary School.

Gillespie Wins GOP Straw Poll for Governor at Robinson

More than 300 voters attended a Fairfax County Republican Committee straw poll and candidate forum on March 25, according to FCRC executive director Eric Johnson. The event was held at Robinson Secondary School.

With 55.84 percent of the vote from those in attendance, Ed Gillespie won the poll for Virginia governor. State Sen. Jill Vogel (R-27) received a winning 64.36 percent of votes for Lt. Governor. John Adams won the poll for Attorney General, with a 61.69 percent majority.

Matt Ames, FCRC chairman, said in a statement that winning in Fairfax County "is the key to

winning in Virginia.

"[One] in seven Virginia voters lives in Fairfax County," Ames said. "No candidate has been elected Governor of the Commonwealth without also caring Fairfax County in more than 30 years — and that includes Republican Governors McDonnell, Gilmore and Allen."

Primary Elections June 13

Primary elections will be held in Virginia on June 13 this year. The deadline to register to vote, or update an existing registration, is Monday, May 22. The deadline to request an absentee ballot to be mailed to you is Tuesday, June 6. Your request must be received by your Registrar by 5 p.m.



State Sen. Jill Vogel (R-27) received a winning 64.36 percent of straw poll votes for Lt. Governor.

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(Left) Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) and at-large school board member Jeanette Hough hosted a budget community meeting, featuring (right) County Executive Ed Long, at Robinson Secondary School on March 28.

FCPS Budget Goes To Board

School system facing nearly \$50 million gap in funding.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Leading up to the Fairfax County Public School Board presenting its advertised FY2018 budget to the Board of Supervisors Tuesday, April 4, several school board members and supervisors have been hosting community meetings on the subject.

Last week, Braddock representative Megan McLaughlin and Springfield's Elizabeth Schultz each hosted meetings on Wednesday, March 22. In Lee district, school board member Tammy Derenak-Kaufax held a joint meeting with supervisor Jeff McKay.

McLaughlin said it was very valuable to have the meetings — discussion at hers lasted three hours — before the three days of public hearings following FCPS presenting its budget to the supervisors.

"So citizens have an understanding of what the school system's needs are," said McLaughlin, "as we talk about the revenue challenges that face all county programs."

As it sits, McLaughlin said, about \$48.5 million represents the gap between the \$2.8 billion budget FCPS has advertised (an increase of 5.1 percent or \$135.1 million over FY2017) and the transfer the supervisors have advertised they can afford.

Since the advertised budget was voted on by the school board in February, they've seen \$12.5 million in additional revenue, including more funding from the General Assembly, funds from the third quarter carry-over and savings in health care costs.

As McLaughlin and other board members are about two months away from voting on a budget, she said the meetings were also

important for hearing feedback from constituents about ways to reduce costs that don't directly impact the classroom.

George Becerra of Burke attended McLaughlin's meeting, held at the Kings Park Library.

"We need to take ownership of what we want," said Becerra, an FCPS parent who makes regular appearances at FCPS board meetings and many other government events. "As far as a school system, what do we want to have? Is that realistic financially? To get down to what the basic structure of our school system is, we need to evaluate efficiently what's working."

"For some folks, it was the first time they'd thought about, we can't afford everything," Becerra continued. "How to go about affording — that's the harder one."

McLaughlin handed out a list of potential chopping block items at her meeting prepared by interim superintendent Dr. Steven Lockard and school system staff.

AMONG THE TOPICS most discussed, she and Becerra said, were potentially dropping fourth grade strings, as well as unknown contracting and consulting costs for specialists from outside the school system.

McLaughlin said she and Mount Vernon representative Karen Corbett Sanders have been trying to get clarity from the FCPS central office on how much these contracts cost the system annually, since last fall.

"What analysis has been done by administration to reduce those costs first? Do we believe as a school system that every single one of those existing costs is mission-critical?" McLaughlin said. "Before we target services that directly impact the classroom... We haven't gotten a comprehensive answer yet."

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) and at-large school board member Jeanette Hough hosted another budget community meeting, featuring County Executive Ed

SEE FCPS BUDGET, PAGE 11

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Expand Medicaid Now

Virginia has missed out on \$10 billion, 30,000 jobs and care for 400,000 citizens.

Virginia's General Assembly has refused to accept one of the key provisions of the Affordable Care Act, expansion of Medicaid at almost no cost to Virginia that could have covered 400,000 uninsured Virginians and would have brought more than \$10 billion into the state. It has also cost lives.

Ironically, the failed bill to "repeal and replace" the Affordable Care Act included changes to Medicaid that would have penalized states, like Virginia, that did not expand Medicaid, permanently reducing federal funding.

On Monday, Gov. Terry McAuliffe proposed a budget amendment restoring his authority

to pursue planning for Medicaid expansion in the wake of the failed repeal effort in Congress.

Kansas and North Carolina are taking steps this week to expand Medicaid, hoping to join the 31 other states plus the District of Columbia that have already done so.

More than 140,000 residents of Fairfax County have no health insurance. More than 40,000 residents of Arlington and Alexandria have no health insurance. That's more than 12 percent of the people who live in one of the wealthiest areas in the nation.

A Harvard Medical School study determined that the decision by 25 states to reject the expansion of Medicaid coverage under the Affordable Care Act would result in between 7,115 and 17,104 more deaths than had all states opted in. In Virginia, the number of deaths due to failure to expand Medicaid: between 266 and 987.

From a practical perspective, declining federal money to provide healthcare to uninsured Virginians makes no more sense than declining federal funds for transportation or education.

In Virginia, 102,000 uninsured people with

a mental illness or substance use disorder could qualify for coverage if Medicaid were expanded under the Affordable Care Act.

As Virginia and the rest of the nation wrestles with heroin and opioid addiction, expanding Medicaid would allow for expanding treatment programs. One of the big obstacles to helping people who are fighting addiction is the availability of treatment when it is most needed.

"The time has come for us to bring our taxpayer dollars back to serve the individuals who need them the most," said McAuliffe. "With this amendment, I'm asking the General Assembly to work with me to pursue Medicaid expansion and put this funding to work for our most vulnerable Virginians."

Primaries for candidates for the House of Delegates plus governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general are in June, with all seats on the ballot in November. An important question as voters choose: What is their position on Medicaid expansion? How did incumbents vote?

— MARY KIMM

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Disappointed

To the Editor:

I'm a little late in getting back to this but I was deeply disappointed in the article, "Standing Together Against Hate," by Tim Peterson (Connection, March 9-15).

He summarizes U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly and state Sen. Dick Saslaw being anything but "united" at a gathering to condemn threats against local Jewish community centers. Unless by united, the reporter means they mutually reinforced each other's talking point?

Connolly is described as saying "the 2016 Presidential election represented a sliding back in the history of America. As a consequence hate groups are feeling emboldened." I'm assuming he was blaming the victory of Donald Trump for these threats against the centers.

Saslaw echoed the sentiment and added, "And that it didn't help with Trump encouraging supporters to violently remove protestors from his rallies, offering to pay their legal expenses."

Given a chance to do something that "unites" most people, Connolly and Saslaw displayed rank hack partisanship. Why must everything be politicized, used as an excuse to attack political opponents? Are they incapable of being civil, even to their own constituents who might disagree with

them?

I guess they considered it more important to repeat the meme du jour.

Mr. Connolly surely knows that the locus of anti-Israel activity in the United States is Mr. Connolly's Democratic Party along with liberal groups on campuses.

And Mr. Saslaw is aware that the center of political agitation is the "Resistance" movement in the Democratic party and its allies to the left. It is Trump supporters who are attacked by masked anarchistic "Black Block" professional protesters and agitators. And it is Republican and conservative speakers who are attacked on campuses, as we saw with Charles Murray at Middlebury College recently.

Furthermore, it was the previous (Democrat) administration that set U.S.-Israeli relations back years and buddied up to hostile nations such as Iran. Donald Trump had already met (favorably) with Israeli leaders before the gathering referred to in the article.

Now we learn that the threats may be the work of a mentally disturbed Israeli-American citizen.

Apologies from Connolly and Saslaw? Will they be more circumspect in the future?

One last question, these days reporters are constantly tossing out the word "unsubstantiated" when Donald Trump says something, how about applying the

same filter to some of the wilder claims from Democrats?

Brett Moss
Burke

Trumpcare is Greater Threat Than Russia

To the Editor:

Do we care about Russia? We should. But while the FBI investigates whether Trump's campaign worked with a known enemy to intervene in our elections, I am concerned with a far greater threat to the health of our democracy, the Trump healthcare bill.

As a mom who carries an Epi-pen for her son, as someone who is familiar with the cost of expensive diagnostic tests and care for rare diseases, as someone who has studied the business of healthcare and practices for wellness, I could argue against the merits of Trumpcare, but I won't. Logic tells us the foundation of the bill is wrong.

The GOP healthcare bill is a terroristic threat to the fundamental power of our nation, the likes of which Putin could have never inflicted upon us. What better way to destroy a nation than physically weaken its people? A nation full of ill people who are financially compromised and emotionally distraught cannot create a strong, safe or independent country.

How malicious. How devious. To promote the bill as increasing health care choice when it will cut health insurance for millions of people. Trumpcare is a greater risk to our security than a foreign agent because it will cripple the source of our success, our people. We, enlisted (wo)men, government workers, technology innovators, doctors, teachers, artists and police officers should all exercise our choice to grant everyone access to health care by rejecting the GOP proposal.

In Northern Virginia we know better. In the districts where representatives have blindly or complicity argued for such a destructive bill, let's remind them that we know better. To the senators who have provided lukewarm support for access to healthcare, let's call them out.

Margaret Gallen
Reston

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

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Del. Eileen Filler-Corn addresses the audience prior to the screening of the documentary.



More than 200 people attended the Richmond screening.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Filler-Corn Addresses Audience at Richmond Screening of PANS/PANDAS Documentary

Last Thursday, Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41) joined a crowd of more than 200 at the Richmond screening of "My Kid is Not Crazy," a documentary following the lives of six children affected by either Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections (PANDAS) or Pediatric Acute-onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome (PANS).

PANS occurs when an infectious trigger, environmental factors, and other possible triggers create a misdirected immune response, resulting in inflammation on a child's brain. PANDAS specifically occurs when the infectious trigger is streptococcus bacteria (which causes strep throat). The event was sponsored by the PANS Research and Advocacy Institute. The crowd included many physicians and family members of children inflicted with PANS/PANDAS.

The delegate from Springfield only recently learned of PANS/PANDAS herself after a local activist reached out to her about her son's condition. The Founder

and President of PRAI contacted Filler-Corn in the fall, explaining her idea for legislation. Filler-Corn introduced HB 2404 and along with the support of PRAI and advocacy of many parents, the bill passed this session. The bill will create an advisory council on PANDAS and PANS and will advise the Commissioner of Health on research, diagnosis, treatment, and education relating to these identified disorders and syndrome. "Some of the best ideas for legislation comes from members of our community," said Filler-Corn. Gov. Terry McAuliffe has since signed HB 2404 into law.

Filler-Corn was at the screening addressing the large crowd prior to the screening of the documentary and she shared prepared greetings from the Governor. "PANS/PANDAS is not a new disease. The main issue is diagnosing it, as so many parents and physicians...can attest," wrote McAuliffe. "It is our shared hope that efforts to raise awareness about PANS/PANDAS will decrease the often lengthy period before a child is diagnosed and contribute to one day finding a cure."

Supporting Area Schools on Grand Opening Day

The new Jersey Mike's Subs, located at 5250-G Port Royal Road, opened its doors on Wednesday, March 15 and celebrated their grand opening with a free sub fundraiser to support Lake Braddock Secondary School and Annandale High School. Franchise owner Pat Foley circulated 10,000 coupons throughout the community offering a free regular sub for a minimum \$1 contribution.



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FAMILY CONNECTION



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Local national parks like Theodore Roosevelt Island are ideal for family staycations, says Lois Stover, Ph.D. of Marymount University.

Backyard Adventure

Ideas for a spring break family staycation.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

For Katie Wendel, a spring break vacation this year won't mean loading up the car and driving several hundred miles or waiting in long lines at the airport. While the Bethesda mother of five is planning to enjoy some relaxing downtime with her family, she won't venture far from home.

"We're going to be tourists this year and visit the monuments and museums in Washington. We're also going to try to find every avenue in the city that's named after a state," said Wendel. "If you think about it, there's so much to do in this area that we all take for granted. You really don't have to leave the area to feel like you're in another city."

From museum exhibits to adventure centers, a goldmine of family getaways abounds locally. There are even activities for family bonding available without leaving home.

"Ask the kids what they would like to do. Involve them and give [them] a choice. Whatever it is they suggest, come up with a plan to document their adventure so they can share it with grandparents or siblings away at college, said Lois Stover, Ph.D., dean, School of Education and Human Services at Marymount University. "Let them help plan the Metro route or just look at the Metro map and randomly pick a station and explore that area."

"A lot of adults assume that kids want a big trip, but a lot of times a kid will say, 'I want to blow bubbles in the back yard.'"

It's important for children to have a say in how the family uses its free time," said Carolyn Lorente, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Northern Virginia Community College.

Among the recommendations that Stover offers are activities at one's neighborhood library and trips to

indoor public swimming pools. For animal-loving families the National Zoo offers beasts ranging from elephants and eagles to tigers and frogs.

"Get outside and take the family to one of the lesser known national parks, like Prince William, or walk the C&O Canal," said Stover.

There's also Gravelly Point Park near Reagan Washington National Airport in Arlington, which is ideal for family picnics, games of kickball or simply watching airplanes take off and land.

"If it's warm, do a beach day in the backyard [or] set up an indoor mini-golf course with Nerf balls [or use] Wiffle balls and bats," said Stover. "Have a dance party, a science day. Have a 'Today is Blue, or whatever color works, Day,' so everyone wears blue, all foods are blue, you ride the blue line Metro just to see where it goes, [for example]."

The U.S. Botanic Garden Conservatory on the National Mall is where Stephanie Kleinman is planning to take her twin daughters during spring break.

"The girls call it a museum for plants, and it's neat to go from the desert to the jungle all within one building," said Kleinman who lives in McLean. "We'll probably check out some of the other museums while we're downtown."

There are times when a staycation can be more relaxing than travel, says Lorente. "If you look at the list of the top 100 stressors in life, taking a vacation is on the list," she said. "A staycation, when done with purpose, can really be good."

Advanced planning is a key to making that time spent together meaningful, advises Lorente. "A lot of times people say they're taking a staycation and they end up doing chores around the house. And everybody is on their electronics," she said. "But it's really about family bonding and everyone coming together and creating shared experiences as a family."



Blankets for Children in Hospital

Pack 1683, chartered by the Newington Forest Community Association, completed a service project for the INOVA Children's Hospital No Sew Fleece Blanket project. The program is designed to bring a little sense of home to the children who have to spend overnight in the hospital. Led by Cubmaster Jess Speaker, the scouts completed almost 10 no sew fleece blankets for kids to enjoy at the hospital, and take home for theirs to keep. For more info on Pack 1683, visit www.pack1683.org/.

FREE SEMINARS & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Fairfax County is offering the following

Free Seminars for Family Caregivers of Older Adults.

Register for all seminars at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults or call 703-324-5205, TTY 711.

- * **Five Questions to Consider About Paying for Long-Term Care — WEBINAR.** Wednesday, April 5 — Noon-1 p.m. Your computer or telephone. You will receive an email with access instructions.
- * **Medicare 101 -** Wednesday, April 12 — 2-3:30 p.m. Reston Community Center — Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston.
- * **Strategies for Difficult Conversations -** Monday, April 17, 2017 — 7-8:30 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax
- * **Caregiver Boot Camp - Dementia 101.** Saturday, April 29, 2017 — 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax

Fairfax County's free **Family Caregiver Telephone Support Group** meets by phone on Tuesday, April 11, 7-8 p.m. The group will discuss using the internet to help your caregiving journey. Register beforehand at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults and click on Telephone Caregiver Support Group. Call 703-324-5484, TTY 711.

Fairfax County is offering a free **Chronic Disease Self-Management program** on Wednesdays, April 19-May 24 from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Bethlehem Baptist Church, 7836 Fordson Rd., Alexandria. Learn and share positive strategies to better manage overall

health. Register beforehand at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults or 703-324-5489, TTY 711, or email Colleen.Turner@FairfaxCounty.gov.

The **Fairfax Commission on Aging** meets on Wednesday, April 19 at 1 p.m. at the McLean Governmental Center - Community Room, 1437 Balls Hill Rd., McLean. The public is welcome to attend and join in the comment period that begins each session. Find out more at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/coa.htm. Call 703-324-5403, TTY 711 for meeting access needs.

ElderLink Support Group for Caregivers meets on Wednesday, April 5, at 10 a.m. Calvary Hill Baptist Church, 9301 Little River Tnpk., Fairfax. For more information, call 703-324-5489, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/elderlink.htm.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The **Chronic Disease Self-Management Program** needs volunteer leaders to facilitate workshops. Call 703-324-5374, TTY 711, or go to www.FairfaxCounty.gov/dfs/OlderAdultServices/chronic-disease.htm.

Fairfax County needs volunteers to **drive older adults to medical appointments** and wellness programs. Call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadultsand click on Volunteer Solutions

Meals on Wheels needs Drivers and Coordinators for routes throughout the county. Call 703-324-5406.

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Excelling in Business and Labor

Commission for Women honors trailblazers.

By TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Constance “Connie” Cordovilla remembers signing up for college courses in the mid-’60s and being interested in taking electrical engineering. “Nice girls go into English,” her counselor told her. “What makes you think I’m a nice girl?” she said she responded.

Cordovilla is associate director, Human Rights and Community Relations, American Federation of Teachers (AFT), AFL-CIO. She was recognized as one of seven “Trailblazing Women in Labor and Business” for 2017 by the Fairfax County Commission for Women.

The recognition ceremony was rescheduled due to snow and held Wednesday, March 22 at the county government center.

Sondra Seba Hemenway, women’s commission vice chair and at-large commissioner, said the evening was about recognizing how women had made significant contributions in labor and business, and had an impact on history and the lives of others. “Women have always worked, and not always been paid the same, or at all,” Seba Hemenway said. “This year we’ve identified seven truly remarkable women” to recognize. This year was the first for which the commission accepted nominations for honorees. Fairfax County Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova said her path for being elected and serving as both a supervisor and chairman — as a woman — was made easier by “strong women who came before me.” Previous chairs Jean Packard, Audrey Moore and Kate Hanley helped residents to be more comfortable with women representing them in local government.

“But there’s still work to do,” Bulova said. Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill) added they need to “work to make certain, continue to see that everyone has the opportunity to excel.”

“This year, women’s rights and issues are



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Seven women from around Fairfax County were recognized March 22 as “Trailblazing Women in Labor and Business” by the Fairfax County Commission for Women. From left are Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill), Siobhan Green, Ashley W. Chen, Connie Constance Cordovilla, Staci L. Redmon, Lovey Hammel, Patricia “Pat” Saah Bayliss, Board Chairman Sharon Bulova and Sondra Seba Hemenway.

front and center,” said honoree Patricia “Pat” Saah Bayliss, former executive director, office manager and secretary, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). “These are some things we need to be more aware of.”

Bulova and Hudgins helped present a Board of Supervisors proclamation naming March 2017 Virginia Women’s History Month.

In addition to Cordovilla and Saah Bayliss, the other award honorees include:

- ❖ Dolores Trevino-Gerber, First Vice President, NOVA Labor Federation; Secretary, Tenants-Workers United

- ❖ Staci L. Redmon, president, CEO and owner, Strategy and Management Services, Inc.

- ❖ Ashley W. Chen, president and CEO, ActioNet



Chairman Sharon Bulova (right) and Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill), left, helped present a Board of Supervisors proclamation naming March 2017 Virginia Women’s History Month.

- ❖ Siobhan Green, co-owner, CEO, Lead Technology and Open Data Strategist, Sonjara, Inc.
- ❖ Lovey Hammel, president, Employment

Enterprises, Inc.

More information about the Commission For Women’s 2017 honorees is available online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cfw.

Wings for All: Practice Flight at Dulles International

FROM PAGE 2

tions coordinator who was on hand throughout the event, said that the airport and many of the airlines were pleased to accept training from Kymberly DeLoatche, The Arc of Northern Virginia’s travel training project coordinator. As part of her duties, DeLoatche teaches airport personnel how best to interact with special needs passengers, how to alleviate many of their fears and make the experience the best possible for all.

Once everyone was safely belted in, the crew did their checks and the “flight” was underway, courtesy of an “engine-in-operation” soundtrack that was played over the PA system. Just a few minutes after “take-off” the cabin crew offered a beverage service.

When the “We’ve reached our cruising altitude” announcement was made, those able and who wished to do so were allowed to move about the cabin for some exploration. Flight attendant Rosemary Koenig said that airplane bathrooms have caused anxiety for some special needs passengers being such a small space, and equipped with louder-than-normal flushing mechanisms, so the fliers are welcomed to check them out during this travel walk-through.

There was one added bonus to the “Wings for All” journey that isn’t part of a typical travel experience — the chance to visit the cockpit. Many braved the close quarters for a chance to see the heart of their flying machine, and a lucky few, like 16-year-old Julia Ferguson from Lorton, even climbed into the captain’s seat and tried out the

wheel.

AFTER THE ON-BOARD ADVENTURE, the newly-minted air travelers returned to the main terminal and the baggage claim area — a few of the passengers had checked bags that were awaiting their arrival near Carousel 2 — and a luncheon where they were joined by many of the staff, volunteers and the crew of Flight 2839.

MWAA media relations specialist Andrew Tull, who also joined the day’s “flight” hopes to help make more people aware of programs like “Wings for All.” Rizza and Erwin Lai of Fairfax only found out about the event a few days earlier, when they were researching the regulations regarding medications on flights. They want to take their 2-year-old son Ryle to visit their family in the Phil-

ippines. “It’s a long flight and Ryle has a lot of medications,” said Erwin Lai. “We were worried, so we looked it up and that is where we found out about this program.” The Arc of Northern Virginia’s DeLoatche urges the families of anyone with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities to contact them for assistance for any of their needs, concerns or questions. A “Wings for All” event is planned for the fall at Reagan National Airport, so more special passengers can become real-life travelers. Learn more about The Arc of Northern Virginia at www.thearcfnova.org.

As for Felix Reges, he passed all steps of the simulated travel day with flying colors and is ready for that family trip to Colorado.

CAPPIES REVIEW

From left: Sam Howard, Harry Sheikerz, Annie Kraemer, Joe Neff, Catalina Smith in the New School's production of "The Outsiders."

PHOTO BY
JOHN POTTER



A Story of Violence and Love

The New School presents "The Outsiders."

BY MEGHAN MURPHY
GEORGE MASON HIGH SCHOOL

Rich versus poor. Ruffians versus aristocrats. Switchblades versus fists. Two rival gangs, the Socs and Greasers, came together to finally settle their rights to a small town turf on March 18 in The New School's production of "The Outsiders."

Penned by S.E. Hinton when she was just a junior in high school, "The Outsiders" was published in 1967 and has since become a staple in underclassmen English courses. The coming-of-age novel tells the story of adolescents having to navigate the perils of 1960's suburban street violence as well as tough lives at home centers and centers on 14-year-old Ponyboy Curtis and his brothers and friends in the Greasers gang. This cult classic was made into a film in 1989, and Christopher Sergel's stage adaptation was published in 1990.

The cast stunned their audience with the heart-wrenching telling of this beloved story. Though living in a much different setting than that of gang warfare stricken streets of "The Outsiders," the cast handled the maturity and weight of the show with relatability and innocence.

The success of the show centered on the beautiful portrayals of Ponyboy and Johnny (Harry Sheikerz and Joe Neff). Sheikerz perfectly captured the turmoil and isolation of Ponyboy, while his smiles and kind demeanor on stage enticed audience members to fall in love with the joyful side of the innocent 14-year-old. He used the New School's black box theater as an opportunity to get up close and personal with the audience to intimately share Ponyboy's life story.

Neff exposed the anxiousness and insecurity of Johnny through constant shaking and tremors in his voice, and the command Neff had over his character through line delivery and motion brought Johnny's tragic dramatic arc to center stage. His authentic death, where he choked out the famous last words "Stay gold, Ponyboy," made the tears in the completely focused eyes of the viewers finally spill.

Other onstage standouts included Sam Howard, whose tough, cold, and mean representation of Dallas, the most violent Greaser, was evolved on stage to produce a character audiences could empathize with. Each time Howard stepped on stage, he ensured that Dallas had matured and softened a bit more, thus he took on an original interpretation of Dallas. Annie Kraemer's portrayal as the Soc rich girl named Cherry brought not only purity and determination but a sadness that represented the hardships of the Socs. Finally, the gender swap of Darry (Maggie Duncan) and Two-Bit (Celia Martyn) from males in the book to females in this production was creative and brought pleasant uniqueness to a classic story.

The New School crew used a simple and versatile set to represent a house, movie theater, church, parking lot, roads, and a hospital with very few set changes. The effective lighting designed by Jonathan Rushbrook, which allowed for quick and realistic scene changes, came to a climax when paired with sound to showcase a fire in a church using only one wall of the theater. Furthermore, the sound crew (Caedmon Cooper, James Dombroski, and Isabella Chevez) made scenes without elaborate sets come to life.

The New School delivered an emotional and poignant rendition of "The Outsiders," with the remarkable cast and crew telling the story of being outcast as well as welcomed, of violence and love, of death and the discovery of what it means to live.

FCPS Budget Goes Before Board

FROM PAGE 5

Long, at Robinson Secondary School on March 28. "Citizens expressed the same frustration we have on the board," Cook said in an email following the meeting. "We have more proposals than we have the ability to fund them."

Cook continued that Fairfax County is being increasingly bound by Virginia law and policies that fail to address current issues adequately.

"Our citizens seem to appreciate the limits provided by an economy that is not growing suffi-

ciently," Cook said.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the public hearings on budget at the Board of Supervisors or to sign up to speak at one of the hearings, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/2017/public-hearings-proposed-fy-2018-budget.htm. Hearings are scheduled for Tuesday April 4 at 4 p.m., April 5 at 1 p.m. and April 6 at 1 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, located at 12000 Government Center Parkway in Fairfax.



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ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

“Her Story” Art Exhibition. Through April 2, gallery hours are Mon.-Fri: 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun: 12-5 p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Show focuses on how women have a role in inspiring and shaping our society. Visit www.workhousearts.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 31

Bingo. 7 p.m. at the Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department) 4081 University Drive. Fairfax. Benefits the Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/ for more.

Dance Gala Concert. 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. The Gala Concert is Mason Dance Company's crowning season event featuring “Second to Last,” by Alejandro Cerrudo, “Mass,” by Robert Battle, “Balance/Imbalance,” by Soon Ho Park, and a new work by Susan Shields. \$10-\$25. Call 703-993-8794 or email cdevlin6@gmu.edu.

MARCH 31-APRIL 1

Spring Children's Consignment Sale. Friday at 9 a.m.-8 p.m. at Cameron United Methodist Church, 3130 Franconia Road. Some items are half price on Saturday. Email CUMC.CCS@gmail.com for more.

Artist Reception. 7-9 p.m. at Village Gallery, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. The “I Still Dream Of You” paintings encompass the time from 2002 onward and are the artist's attempt to come to grips with the tragedy of losing a child in infancy. The exhibition will run from April 1-29. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net or call 703-409-5061.

SATURDAY/APRIL 1

Yard Sale. 8 a.m. at Green Acres Center, 4401 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. Proceeds benefit the 2017 City of Fairfax Independence Day Celebration. Donated items may be dropped off at Green Acres on Friday, March 31st between 5-8 p.m. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

2017 Laps for Learning. 8:30 a.m. at Rolling Valley Elementary School, 6703 Barnack Drive, West Springfield. Raise funds, get healthy and support the school PTA. All Rolling Valley students and their siblings are invited to participate. Walk is followed by a health fair, 9:30-11 a.m. Visit www.fcps.edu/RollingValleyES/ for more.

Watershed Clean-Up. 9-11:30 a.m. at Hidden Pond Nature Center, 8511 Greeley Blvd., Springfield. Help remove bottles, cans, tires, and other carelessly dumped debris from local streams. Call 703-451-9588 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks.

City of Fairfax Fishing Derby. 9:30 a.m. at Ashby Pond Conservation, 9817 Ashby Road, Fairfax. Ashby Pond Conservatory will be stocked with hundreds of trout, bring a fishing rod, bucket, plastic bag and ice. A limited quality of fishing rods will be available on site to borrow. Bait will be supplied. Volunteers will provide instruction, pond education and fish cleaning demonstrations. Fee: \$5 per fisherman. Three 45-minute fishing time slots available. Tickets available on-line and at Sherwood Center, Green Acres Center and City Hall P&R Office starting Monday, February 1, 2017. Call 703-385-7858 to pre-register.

Forgotten Fairfax Lecture. 11 a.m. at City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Forgotten Fairfax Presents Beacon Field and Hybla Valley Airports: A Talk by Anna Marie Hicks and Harry P. Lehman. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library or 703-293-6227, ext. 4.

Job Fair for Teens. Noon-2 p.m. at West Springfield High School, 6100 Rolling Road, Springfield. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/springfield/teenjobfair.htm for more.

Kite Festival. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Mason Neck. A day of kite flying and children's activities, crafts, and guided tours. Kites will be available for purchase in the museum shop. \$10 adults; \$8 children 6-18, complimentary admission for Friends of Gunston Hall. Call 703-550-9220 or email historic@gunstonhall.org.

MONDAY/APRIL 3

Funday Monday. 10:30 a.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. A variety of children's activities and entertainment including music, movement, story telling, performances, crafts, and more. Children of all ages. Free and open to the public, donations are gratefully appreciated. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts for more.

TUESDAY/APRIL 4

Burke Historical Society Research Seminar. 7 p.m. at Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road. Featuring Bob Patrick, former director of the Veterans History Project (VHP) of the Library of Congress. Free. Email slawski_brian@yahoo.com for more.

APRIL 4-MAY 30

Storytime in the Park. Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. at Old Town Square, Fairfax. Visit fairfaxva.gov/parksrec or call 703-385-7858.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

National Walking Day. 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Springfield Town Center, 6500 Springfield Center Drive, Springfield. American Heart Association and Sheehy Auto Stores are hosting a prize-filled walking course at the Springfield Town Center. Visit heart.org/nationalwalkingday for more.

APRIL 5-MAY 10

Adventures in Learning. Each Wednesday, 9:15 a.m.-1 p.m. at United Baptist Church, 7100 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Each Wednesday starts with gentle seated yoga at 9:15. Lectures from healthcare experts from 10:45-11:45. Discussion group 12-1 p.m. \$35 for all six weeks or \$10 each. Call SCAS 703-941-1419 or visit at shepherdscenter-annandale.org for more.

APRIL 5-30

“Cherry Blossom Kimonos.”

Various times at the Workhouse Arts Center, Building 9, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. The kimonos show is part of a campus-wide celebration of cherry blossom events in the region, titled “Late Bloomers.” The artists will be on hand to talk about their work at the gallery reception in the Arches Gallery in building W9 on Saturday April 8, 6-9 p.m. featuring light appetizers. The reception is free and open to the public. Visit www.workhousearts.org/event/exhibit-late-bloomers/ for more.

Festival Returns to Mosaic

Film and music festival at Mosaic's Angelika Theater April 10-23.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Celebrating the film lover and filmmaker, Fairfax's home-grown Northern Virginia (NOVA) International Film and Music Festival returns for its third year at Mosaic's state-of-the-art Angelika Film Center. This year's festival will be two-weeks in length with added events aimed at the music aficionado.

The 2017 NOVA Festival will use its two weeks to screen more films and have more sessions on the business-side for area filmmakers, screenwriters, and those interested in cinema production and distribution.

“We're thrilled that the acclaimed Northern Virginia International Film and Music Festival is returning to Fairfax County this year, as it is an exceptional demonstration of the art and culture that embodies this region,” Barry Biggar, President & CEO of Visit Fairfax, the official destination marketing organization of Fairfax County.

“A film festival of this caliber is not only important to our visitors, but also greatly contributes to the quality of life of our residents,” added Biggar.

“Our NOVA International Film and Music Festival showcases the creative talents in the local area. It offers an opportunity to see films before they are screened nationally,” said Fernando Mico, festival founder. “The Festival is an opportunity for filmmakers to display their work in a competitive setting as well as learn the important business-side of the film industry.”

THURSDAY/APRIL 6

EGG-STREME Night Egg Hunt. 7 p.m. at the Civil War Interpretive Center, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Bring a flashlight and a bag/basket to collect eggs. Visit with the Easter Bunny beginning at 7 p.m. Visit fairfaxva.gov/parksrec or call 703-385-7858.

FRIDAY/APRIL 7

Bingo. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit www.fairfaxvfd.com or call 703-273-3638.

SATURDAY/APRIL 8

Easter Egg Hunt. 9 a.m.-noon at Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria. Email markarenin@verizon.net for more.

Write in Cursive. 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. “Hands-on” workshop that helps children ages 8 to 12 learn to write in cursive. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library or call 703-293-6227, ext. 6.

Unneeded Items Auction. 6-9 p.m.



The Festival will present a “Legend Award” to Eduardo Sanchez, who is best known for his ground-breaking film, “The Blair Witch Project.”

This year the festival will present a “Legend Award” to Eduardo Sanchez, who is best known for his ground-breaking film, “The Blair Witch Project.”

At last year's festival Red Zeppelin Productions, a Springfield-based film company, had its feature-length film “TRI” screened at the festival. In a recent interview, Theodore A. Adams III, President, Red Zeppelin Productions said the festival offers an opportunity “to meet and collaborate with distributors, financiers and award-winning filmmakers from the US and from around the world.”

The film “TRI” is a drama about the first-time triathlete who was inspired by a cancer patient. The film was meant to “teach, inspire and invoke action,” noted Adams. In an age when films are screened beyond a traditional movie house, Adams added that “TRI” has been available on digital platforms for viewing; it all started with the NOVA Festival.

Both Mico and Adams suggested that beyond seeing new movies another reason to take in the Northern Virginia Film and Music Festival is the opportunity “to network with fellow artist and film-goers.”

at Knights of Columbus Hall, (behind St. Leo the Great Church), 3700 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Proceeds to fraternal and charity fund-raising organization that supports Alzheimer's, Cooley's Anemia, and Cancer research. Email Joe.lamarca@italianheritagelodge.org or call 703-475-6962 for more.

APRIL 8-9

7 Fingers of the Hand. Saturday, April 8 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. and on Sunday, April 9 at 4 p.m. in the George Mason University's Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Production of Cuisine & Confessions. Visit cfa.gmu.edu/ for more.

SUNDAY/APRIL 9

Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold a N gauge T-TRAK model train show. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

NPR Author. 2 p.m. at the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St., Fairfax. National Public Radio News correspondent and author Tom Gjelton will discuss his

book, “Nation of Nations: A Great American Immigration Story,” a study of several immigrant families in Fairfax County and the challenges and upheavals the new arrivals and their communities faced. Call 703-385-8414 for more.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 12

Springfield Christian Women's Connection Luncheon. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Annual charitable fundraiser with a cake auction. Reservations call 703-922-6438 or e-mail SpringWmConn@yahoo.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 15

Holy Saturday Silent Retreat. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Free. Spend a day in noble silence, meditating and creating a space to be still and listen. Our day will be spent alternating between sitting and walking meditation with some periods of stretching. Only a small fraction of meditation practices will be guided. Call 703-281-1767 or register online at unitysilentretreat.eventbrite.com.

SPORTS



John Riggins' 43 yard TD in Super Bowl XVII led to the Redskins first Super Bowl victory over Miami, 27-11.

Pro Sports in Washington — Are We Cursed?

BY STEVE GREENHOUSE
AND DAVE RYAN
OLLI AT GEORGE MASON
UNIVERSITY

Washington's four major professional sports franchises have been around a long time, but sure don't have much to show for it, rues Steve Greenhouse, a retired electrical engineer, Reston resident and long-suffering fan who recently conveyed his tale of woe to members of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in a four-week course in Loudoun.

While there have been a few championships, there have also been long periods of mediocre play. The baseball, basketball and hockey clubs have won a grand total of two championships in a combined 165 seasons, while the Redskins haven't won the Super Bowl for a quarter century.

GREENHOUSE'S COURSE traced the history of the four teams, their high points and low, their greatest players, their management travails and the cultural issues that influenced their history.

After the Redskins franchise moved to Washington from Boston in 1937, all of the team's league titles were attained during two 10-year spans: between 1937-45, they went to the NFL Championship game five times, winning two of them. The second span was the first Joe Gibbs era lasting from 1982-91, when the Skins won three Super Bowls. Since Dan Snyder purchased the Redskins in 1999 however, the team has never advanced to the conference championship game. In the 2014-15 seasons, the Redskins hired a new coach and a general manager; the latter was fired last Thursday, perfectly illustrating the franchise's dysfunction.

The Washington Nationals (nee Senators) baseball team, founded in 1901, was one of the American League's eight charter franchises. From 1911-33, the Senators were one of the more successful franchises, winning three AL pennants and their only World Series in 1924. The team included one of the greatest pitchers of all time, Walter Johnson. After being abandoned by the Senators and then an expansion team, Washington went without baseball for 33 years. Baseball returned in 2005, when the Montreal Expos franchise became the Washington Nationals. The Nats have won three division titles, but no playoff series.



Washington player-manager Bucky Harris scores on his home run in the fourth inning of Game 7 of the 1924 World Series.

The Washington Wizards (nee Bullets) basketball team was the only one to play in the National Basketball Association (NBA) finals four times during the 1970s. A long shot to win the 1978 NBA Championship, they defeated the Seattle SuperSonics to bring a professional sports championship to Washington for the first time in 36 years. From 1981-2013, however, the Wizards made the NBA playoffs only 11 times, never advancing to the conference finals. The 2014 and 2015 seasons saw an uptick in the Wizards' performance, making the playoffs both years only to lose in the conference semi-finals. Last year, they failed to make the playoffs.

Since their founding in 1974, the Washington Capitals ice hockey team has won one conference championship to reach the 1998 Stanley Cup Finals (in which they were swept by the Detroit Red Wings four games to none), and captured nine division titles. Ted Leonsis, owner of the team since 1999, revitalized the franchise by drafting star player Alexander Ovechkin. The Capitals record in the playoffs has been abysmal; they have lost 10 playoff series after having led by two games.

ALL FOUR of our teams have made substantial and significant changes in the last few years: new coaches, roster makeovers and attempts to fix management dysfunction.

An optimist might conclude these changes will lead to success in the near future, even championships. A superstitious pessimist will continue to moan and groan as our teams persist in their losing ways, but keep on rooting for them nevertheless.

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) provides first-rate educational, social, and cultural opportunities for citizens of Northern Virginia at teaching sites in Reston, Loudoun and Fairfax. More information about its program and events can be found at www.elli.gmu.edu

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www.BurkePresChurch.org

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703-569-9862 www.messiahumc.org

Holy Week and Easter Schedule

April 9 - worship at 8:15, 9:30, and 11:00 am

April 13 - Holy Thursday service at 7:30 pm

April 14 - Good Friday service at 7:30 pm

April 15 - Easter Egg Hunt at 10 am

April 16 - Easter Sunday worship at 8:00, 9:30, and 11 am

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Worship Gathering - Sunday 8:45 & 11 AM
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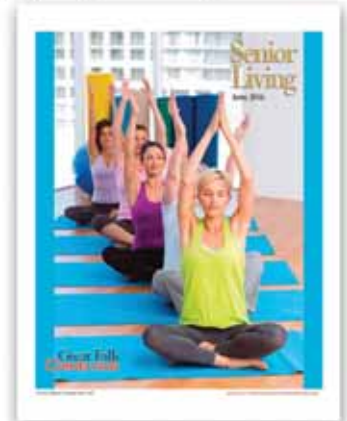
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The Fairfax Connection
The Fairfax Station/Clifton/
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Zone 3: The Alexandria Gazette Packet
The Mount Vernon Gazette

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NEWS

Police Stations Turn To ‘Nextdoor’ Neighbors

Cops tout better
community policing.

BY FALLON FORBUSH
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County residents are major users of the Nextdoor social network and the Fairfax County Police Department has taken advantage of it to connect with the communities they patrol and protect.

Nextdoor spokesperson Joseph Porcelli joined the FCPD at the McLean District Police Station on Thursday, March 23, for a press conference to acknowledge the county’s widespread adoption of its free service.

“Over the past year, we have seen the community embrace Nextdoor as a valuable and reliable communication tool,” Deputy Chief of Police for Administration Lt. Col. Tom Ryan, said during the press conference. “In fact, resident adoption has been so strong that Fairfax County is now the fastest growing county using Nextdoor in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast.”

Adoption of Nextdoor in Fairfax County has more than doubled over the past year. Now more than 100,000 residents, in more than 760 neighborhoods, are connected to each other and the police department.

These neighborhoods were acknowledged for their adoption of Nextdoor at the press conference:

- ❖ Most Members Enrolled – Fort Hunt-Stratford, Alexandria
- ❖ Most Talkative Neighborhood – Bentana Park, Reston
- ❖ Most Supportive Neighborhood – Hunters Green Cluster, Reston
- ❖ Most Social Neighborhood – Reflection, Herndon
- ❖ Most Helpful Neighborhood – Memorial Heights, Alexandria



PHOTOS BY FALLON FORBUSH/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Police Department officers were awarded for their utilization of Nextdoor while on the job (from left): Deputy Chief of Police for Administration Lt. Col. Tom Ryan, Officer Tara Gerhard of the Sully District Police Station and Officer Wayne Twombly of the Fair Oaks District Police Station.

- ❖ Most Generous Neighborhood – Chantilly Highlands, Herndon
- ❖ Most Watchful Neighborhood – Old Trail, Reston
- ❖ Most Welcoming Neighborhood – WVPCA, Annandale
- ❖ Nextdoor Neighborhood Champions – Burning Bush, Fairfax

Ever since the department started using Nextdoor a year ago, the social network has given them access to communicate with more people than ever before, according to Ryan.

“The residents need to understand that we work for them,” Ryan said. “They do not work for us, we do not control them. We work for them. We are your police department. I can’t emphasize that enough and therefore you have a right to know what’s going on in your neighborhood. You have a right to know what’s going on in your community.”

When crimes happen, crime prevention officers use the social network as another

platform to post alerts and warnings that are intended to keep their communities safe and help officers locate suspects.

These crime prevention officers also monitor the social network for chatter to stay abreast of happenings in their communities.

“We could not do our jobs without the help of Fairfax County residents,” Ryan said.

Ryan then told the audience that he would like to replace the term “community policing” with the term “community engagement.”

“Nextdoor allows us to do that,” he said. “Nextdoor allows us to get the word out to a multitude of neighborhoods and a lot of people in just a short amount of time.”

“Being proactive is getting the word out quickly,” Ryan said. “We can target information to certain neighborhoods that are more impacted [by crime or crisis].”

The department created an Instagram account in September and also uses Twitter and Facebook.

BULLETIN BOARD

Send civic/community notes to the Connection at connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ or call 703-778-9416. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

THURSDAY/MARCH 30

Nomination Deadline. These awards recognize dedicated community service done by our youth and encourage them to continue to be active in their communities, sponsored by Eagle Bank. Cash prizes will be awarded in the tiered amounts of \$100 for elementary school students, \$200 for middle school students, and \$300 for high school students. Email NSCAServiceAwards@gmail.com for more.

FRIDAY/MARCH 31

Scholarship Application Deadline. The Springfield/South County (SYC) Board of Directors are sponsoring the George Angulo Scholarship Award. The \$1,000 college scholarship will be awarded annually to an area high school senior with a history of volunteer service. Visit www.sycva.com for more.

Senior Safety Summit. 9 a.m.-noon at the Braddock District Governmental Center, 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Braddock District Supervisor John C. Cook invites the public to

attend a health and safety summit for seniors. Contact Braddock District Supervisor John C. Cook’s Office at 703-425-9300 or Battalion Chief Willie F. Bailey, Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department at 703-246-3801.

SATURDAY/APRIL 1.

Civil War Scholarship Deadline. Scholarship to be given for research of local Civil War history. The Bull Run Civil War Roundtable in Centreville offers a \$1500 scholarship to a public or private high school senior who resides in Fairfax, Fairfax City, Prince William County, Manassas City, or Manassas Park and will attend college in the fall of 2017. Information and application instructions can be found at bullruncwrt.org.

Special Education Conference 2017. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. at Hayfield Secondary School, 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. The latest research, strategies, and trends in the education of students with disabilities. Over 60 workshops to choose from and over 80 exhibitors to see. Translators available. Register: www.fcps.edu/node/33238 or call 703-204-3941 for more.

Teen Job Fair. noon-2 p.m. at West Springfield High School, 6100 Rolling Road. Co-sponsored by West Springfield High School Student Government Association and Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce. Call 571-423-1086 for more.

SUNDAY/APRIL 2

Kick Off National Crime Victims’ Rights

Week. 4:30 p.m. check in begins at at the Fairfax Corner Shopping Center, 4100 Monument Corner Drive, Fairfax. Join the Fairfax County Police Departments Victim Services Section on Sunday, April 2, 2017 to help launch the 2017 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week (April 2-8), with the 5th Annual 5K Walk and Crime Victim Tribute. Crime victims, survivors, family members, friends, and the community are invited to raise awareness for victims’ rights in Northern Virginia and show their support for all victims of crime. Free. To register, visit www.surveymonkey.com/r/NCVRW2017.

SATURDAY/APRIL 15

Fibromyalgia Fight Club. 2-4 p.m. at City of Fairfax Regional Library Meeting Room, 10360 North St., Fairfax. CFS NOVA and Fibromyalgia Fight Club welcome Linda Tannenbaum, CEO/President, Open Medicine Foundation, to speak on research in ending Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and related diseases. Free. Email nanczyryan@gmail.com, call 703-785-2525 or visit www.openmedicinefoundation.org for more.

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