



Fairfax Station

CONNECTION Clifton & Lorton

HomeLifeStyle

PAGE 11

Brandi Martin and Emily West hold multiple jobs with Mt. Olympics Farm in Ruther Glen, Va. They work on the farm as farm hands and in the markets. "It helps to see the backstage work and the customers here," Martin said. Mt. Olympus Farm offered a large variety of fresh vegetables including heirloom varieties, perennials and small landscaping shrubs at Lorton Farmers Market.

Clifton Home Tour: Living it Up

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Me & My Mom

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Lorton Farmers Market Opens

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5

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PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

The Rumi forum brought together Rev. Meg Peery McLaughlin (right), co-pastor of Burke Presbyterian Church; Riham Osman, communications coordinator for the Muslim Public Affairs Council (left); and Temple B'nai Shalom's Rabbi Laura Rappaport (center).



Before a full room of mostly women, representatives of a variety of religions, Rev. Meg Peery McLaughlin spoke first. The pastor used the anecdote of Jo Ann Robinson, the much lesser-known social activist who she said sat behind Rosa Parks at that fateful time when Parks demanded to sit in the front of the bus.

'Seeking That Which Unites Us'

Rumi Forum presents three religions' takes on women in faith and society.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Across faiths and spanning generations, women have contributed to societies in different ways. But on May 3 at a panel discussion held at Temple B'nai Shalom synagogue in Fairfax Station, one of the goals was finding common threads.

Senior Rabbi Amy Perlin offered an introductory thought to the evening encouraging participants to "seek out in our hearts that which unites us."

The forum brought together Rev. Meg Peery McLaughlin, co-pastor of Burke Presbyterian Church; Riham Osman, communications coordinator for the Muslim Public Affairs Council; and Temple B'nai Shalom's Rabbi Laura Rappaport.

RUMI FORUM for Interfaith Dialogue and Intercultural Understanding put on the event. Rumi's president Emre Çelik said they wanted to "bring everyone together and discover our concern."

Before a full room of mostly women, representatives of a variety of religions, Peery McLaughlin spoke first.

The pastor used the anecdote of Jo Ann Robinson, the much lesser-known social activist who she said sat behind Rosa Parks at that fateful time when Parks demanded to sit in the front of the bus.

Robinson's work to draft and distribute a letter of protest and set up a women's bus boycott was an example of "God quietly working." But working nonetheless.

Referencing examples from Islam, Peery McLaughlin said, "we can all tell stories of how women were relegated to silent work.

"God is not tied up into specific ways of working," she said. Christian women, she

said, have shaped history, playing within the rules of silence.

Riham Osman explained a little about her work, how she was not a religious leader like the other two panelists, but someone who spent most of her day on social media tracking and countering negative stereotypes about Muslims, as well as highlighting positive ones.

But Osman said she, like most Muslims, grew up with stories of strong women in the faith including Asiya the Pharaoh's wife during the time of Moses, who hid her monotheistic beliefs from her husband, and Khadijah, first wife of the prophet Muhammad, who Osman said was an impressive businesswoman hiring men to work along trade routes.

"Today we can see more Muslim women going into corporate America," Osman said, which can still be linked back to the example set by Khadijah.

Learning from original Quran text, though, is an ongoing challenge and controversy, Osman said, due to translations that are both numerous and vary in content.

Rabbi Rappaport's anecdotes largely followed the previous pair's in terms of women in the faith leading in different ways than men.

Esther, the Jewish queen of the King of Persia Ahasuerus, also hid her religion from her husband, Rappaport said. The rabbi explained how Esther had a plan to save the Jewish Persians, but not like a "big, splashy military hero."

FOLLOWING THE PRESENTATIONS was a question-and-answer session with the audience. Burke resident and B'nai Shalom member Jim Sturim brought up some of the gender pronoun updates being made as part



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of reform Judaism, and asked what similar changes might be ongoing in Christianity and Islam.

Peery McLaughlin said she had previously used the "she" pronoun when preaching for Pentecost and many people loved it, but added (somewhat jokingly) that the real controversy comes out when it comes to modifying the song hymnals.

Osman said there haven't been sex-based changes to prayer services, but that in the Muslim community there is a movement of believers out of the mosques because they're not finding the relevance in practice and teaching that they're looking for. Osman called the movement "un-mosquing."

But rather than abandon practicing the faith, Osman said these people are finding "third spaces," gathering places where people feel they can be themselves and feel connections.



Esther, the Jewish queen of the King of Persia Ahasuerus, also hid her religion from her husband, Temple B'nai Shalom Rabbi Laura Rappaport said. She explained how Esther had a plan to save the Jewish Persians, but not like a "big, splashy military hero."

The conversation moved beyond gender to questions about the three faiths themselves. One participant asked how the different communities are counseling people around elections, and another about the violence and threats of violence currently being experienced in faith communities.

"It's hard to get it right," Peery McLaughlin said. "But it's a vulnerable and rich time to being doing this work. If we stick to traditions, there's truth in them. We have something to say."

Rabbi Rappaport added, "When the ground beneath us is shaking, faith communities are a great place to go. Judaism's core values... we'll continue to teach, the dignity of every human being."

Those we'll get people through whatever may come, she said.

For more information, visit www.tbs-online.org and www.rumiformum.org.

Living it Up Clifton Homes Tour enters 45th year.

BY TIM PETERSON

Fairfax Station resident and co-chair of the 45th annual Clifton Homes Tour Kay Gilbert said she likes seeing how, year after year, people come back to the tour “with an interest in how other people live.

“But my greatest satisfaction,” Gilbert continued, “the reason we do it, is so we can give back to our community.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF GINNY AX

The Atwell Home

For the last four decades, the Clifton Community Women’s Club has convinced local residents to open their homes and personal collections to strangers, all in the name of indulging curiosities and raising money.

This year, the club hopes to bring in close to \$20,000 that will go to supporting four \$2,000 scholarships as well as area food banks, the Lamb Center in Fairfax, Centreville Fire Department and Fairfax Station Railroad Museum.

Each year, more than a dozen northern Virginia charities benefit from homes tour proceeds contributions.

“It’s difficult to get people to open their homes,” Gilbert said. “I’m very proud of what we do.”

Gilbert said around 50 people will be volunteering on Thursday, May 18, to help the tour go. That includes members of the Dominion Valley Garden Club, Rocky Run Garden Club and The Garden Club of Fairfax, who are providing flowers and or hostesses for the tour.

In addition to the open homes, the Primitive Baptist Church in Clifton, dating to 1871, will also be open to those participating in the tour. A silent auction and marketplace will be taking place during tour hours and on until 5 p.m. at the Clifton Presbyterian Church.

Of the three homes on the tour this year, two will be accessible with parking in town. A shuttle will transport participants to and from the Atwell home.

When and Where

The 45th annual Clifton Homes Tour will take place Thursday, May 18 from 9:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. The silent auction and marketplace are scheduled for 9:30-5 p.m. at the Clifton Presbyterian Church, located at 12748 Richards Lane in Clifton. Tickets for the tour are \$25 in advance, and available at the website www.cliftonnwc.org or several

stores in Clifton, Burke, Centreville and Fairfax. The full list of ticket locations is available online. Tickets can also be purchased on the day of the tour at the church or the homes themselves.

Full home descriptions are courtesy of the Clifton Community Women’s Club Homes Tour.

The Atwell Home, Clifton

Welcome to the home of the Atwells: a professional couple with young children, who enjoy all the advantages of small town Clifton and the historic surrounding area. The captivating photographs of their boys throughout the home were all taken in downtown Clifton. The dining room’s tall, black, glass-fronted cabinet and china cabinet are only some of the many antique pieces collected from Fairfax and Loudoun counties, or from their family.

This striking residence was first built by an English couple and has a spacious entry foyer and wide staircase reminiscent of a country estate. It was designed as a modern-day version of the 18th-century miller’s house at historic Robey’s Mill, a double story porch residence still standing on Popes Head Road.

Tucked into a hillside high above town, the Atwell residence stands an impressive three stories high with two front porches overlooking a picturesque ravine, whose tall trees provide natural privacy from the street. Landscaping this ravine was the first priority when they moved into the home. The porches, spanning the full length of the house, were designed to provide cool spots for relaxing outdoors and enjoying the lush views. The lower-level family room, with a large stone fireplace and plenty of space for family activities, also opens to an inviting stone-floored porch.

The kitchen and living room are flooded with light from windows giving three exposures to the outside, as is the vaulted sunroom/eating area. Walk out to the private back yard and large stone patio with a heated spa. It’s easy to see how enjoyable it would be to look up at the stars in this comfortable space, while listening to the serenading of the local creatures that gave their name to this Frogs Hill area of Clifton.

The homeowners’ excellent use of color is evident throughout the house and there are many personal touches, such as the saltwater marsh scene above the fireplace: a reminder of tidal areas Mr. Atwell enjoyed growing up in Florida. The vivid blue cabinet in the kitchen reveals Mrs. Atwell’s grandmother’s china. The use of blue is carried throughout the house. Many meaningful items and décor, combined with the quality craftsmanship of the dwelling, have created a truly unique, inviting and warm family home.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GINNY AX

The Spikes Home

The Spikes Home, Fairfax Station

Suzanne Spikes and her husband Mike Burns pondered the style of home he would design for them. Suzanne was a great fan of the actress Vivien Leigh, the star of “Gone with the Wind,” and so Mike drew up plans for a house reminiscent of Ashley Wilkes’ “Twelve Oaks.” It was constructed in 1999. Its tall creamy columns, matching painted brick and setting nestled into a grove of tall trees harken back to that antebellum home.

The entrance foyer sets the stage with its grand central staircase, arched openings, architectural niches, columns, finely detailed moldings and crystal chandelier. The living room continues these themes, adding elegant European-style furnishings and elaborate draperies. And whose portrait looks on haughtily from above the mantel? Why, Scarlett O’Hara’s, of course. Look for more tributes to Scarlett in the large dining room, especially in Suzanne’s music box collection. And while the draperies are red, not green, the style recalls those Scarlett turned into a dress to try to impress Rhett.

One of Suzanne’s talents is in creating exquisite dolls. You will find these throughout the house, including in the glass case in her sitting room. Also in this room, note the unusual large quilt hanging above the back staircase. It is from Afghanistan: a gift from a friend and a sentimental reminder of her grandfather’s poignant history there.

Suzanne is active in social and political causes, and the size and flow of her home allow her to host large events. The lower level is another great area for these gatherings. There is a huge horseshoe-shaped custom bar with a fireplace built into it, topped by rare multi-hued granite quarried in the Amazon basin.

Above the bar is a glass cupboard holding a “Flapper” doll and others, which Suzanne painstakingly and expertly created.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GINNY AX

The Andreotta Home

The Andreotta Home, Clifton

The House

The Andreottas designed their handsome 11,000-square-foot four story Colonial home 17 years ago for their family of eight. The home embodies love of family, service to country and a career which spanned the globe.

As you enter the foyer, you will admire the graceful staircase, rich moldings and Persian rugs. The dining room glows under an exquisite Waterford chandelier. Val and Mark have both selected decorative and artistic pieces from around the world. There is a special Russian demitasse set which was a gift to Mark for work he did there. The Lladros were gifts which he brought home to Val when his career took him far away as she kept the home fires burning. More finds are on display in the living room, including an Egyptian hookah pipe, Thai vases, a Prague puppet, Faberge eggs from South America and Greece, and a rare Russian icon. A lovely family portrait adorns the mantel.

Mark’s paneled study has mementos from his West Point days, side by side with “Dream Team” basketball memorabilia. His personal balcony, the “Cigar Room,” is the only space he takes credit for designing. The family room showcases Native

American artifacts along with charming portraits of each of the children. Val’s apple-green kitchen and adjoining multi-function room are command central for the family. Val has a vast framed collection of spoons from cities around the world (about 650 at last count) and they have been to every city represented.

Upstairs are the lovely family bedrooms where Mark and Val keep the hobbies and accomplishments of their grown children on display. A recently redesigned bedroom is a delight. With the sixth grandchild just a couple of months old and two more due this year, Val designed a new nursery. It has a Disney theme with wall paintings by a local artist, Fran Rauch, assisted by George Mason University art students. Each new grandchild’s name and date of birth is set in a star. The adjoining bathroom is themed “Under the Sea.”

The lowest level has a gym and a large rec room complete with Australian sports memorabilia, projection screen TV, pool table, foosball, official Titans football stadium seats (son Joey’s favorite team), an 1800’s player piano and a bar. Outside enjoy the beautiful pool, hot tub, built-in grill, smoker and multi-level deck, the perfect spot for generations of this family to gather.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KAY GILBERT

The Andreotta’s “double slide-out” RV, also part of the Clifton Homes Tour.

The RV and Garage

This is 52 feet of rolling comfort and high-tech gadgetry. It is a 485hp Volvo tractor trailer with 12-speed transmission. At a height of 13’ 4 1/2”, it just clears all interstate overpasses. Mark and Val Andreotta purchased it in 2009, and there are fewer than 10 like it in the United States. Mark had to go to school for six months to get a commercial license just to be able to drive it.

In the lingo of RV’ers, this is a “double slide-out.”

When it is parked, the push of a button causes one side to move out, enlarging the interior, and another bumps out the rear of the master bedroom. One pull raises and lowers custom shades which let in the light and air but prohibit a view from the outside-in.

Another button transforms the outside by opening an awning, dropping down a big grill and accessing a large refrigerator/freezer and a flat screen TV. Val designed the spacious interior with plush leather seating in the salon and every creature comfort.

There is space to sleep eight. The loft sleeping area was designed with grandchildren in mind, who will enjoy this cozy hideaway with built-in TV and video games. The tile floors are heated, the shower stall has an etched glass design, and the master bedroom has a Sleep Number bed.

The Andreottas built the ultimate man cave garage to house the RV.

For this motorcycle enthusiast, an RV adventure is not complete without plenty of Harley Davidson motorcycle and three-wheeler “toys.” There is the trailer which hooks up to the RV and can hold two cars — a hydraulic lift raises the first one to fit the second under it — plus a golf cart and two motorcycles.

Val made sure that the garage exterior would complement the style of the house.

As you walk along the driveway on your way to the house, look back at the garage and you will see that it has an attractive Colonial facade and chimney.

NEWS

Can't Dampen the Spirit

Soggy Relay for Life held at Workhouse Arts Center.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Here's to sticking it to cancer. That was the message West Springfield High School field hockey player Bridget May had in mind when she got the idea to sell T-shirts to raise money for the Relay for Life.

May, a sophomore, organized a tie-dye party for people who purchased shirts with her design, the weekend before the May 6 Relay for Life day of remembrance and celebration held at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton.

"Cancer runs badly in my family," May said in an email, "and events like this are what gives me hope that future generations won't have to suffer from cancer."

May said she sold 79 shirts and the team in total donated more than \$1,000 to the signature fundraiser for the American Cancer Society.

Though fundraising has been ongoing since September 2016 and will continue through August this year, Saturday still marked a culmination of everyone's efforts.

Over the course of the day about 150 people filtered through and took part in opening ceremonies, cancer survivors' and caregivers' laps and a survivors' luncheon. There was also Jazzercise, yoga and

"Bark for Life" with a dog obstacle course and pet look-alike contest.

May said she walked about 13 miles with her teammates.

Around 7:45 p.m., participants lit luminarias to honor people who lost their battles with cancer.

Relay for Life community manager Leah Nolan said soggy weather on May 6 didn't dampen the spirit of the day.

"There's something special about a rainy Relay for Life," she said.

Two of the day's speakers were Springfield residents Dana Sones and her daughter Karina. Karina was diagnosed with Leukemia in 2005, as a 4-year-old.

As part of her therapy, Karina began beading jewelry, which has become Xreations by Karina. After several treatments, she's now cancer-free.

"She shared an acronym for HOPE: Hero, Optimism, Perseverance and Endurance," said Nolan. "They're an amazing family that is the true definition of optimism and hope."

May said she has lost a classmate to cancer, and is neighbors with a cancer survivor. Despite the hardships associated with having a friend or loved one with cancer, May said she's impressed with how "[people] carry on with beautiful smiles on their faces every day."

To date, Nolan said \$70,861.14 has been raised.

Future local Relay for Life events are scheduled for later this month and in June, including for the Langley-McLean, Reston and Herndon areas.

For more information, to donate or become involved with Relay for Life, visit www.relayforlife.org/springfield.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Center, West Springfield sophomore Bridget May organized a tie-dye party for people who purchased shirts with her design, the weekend before the May 6 Relay for Life. Left is West Springfield senior Marie Laverdiere, right is sophomore Caroline Simonsen.

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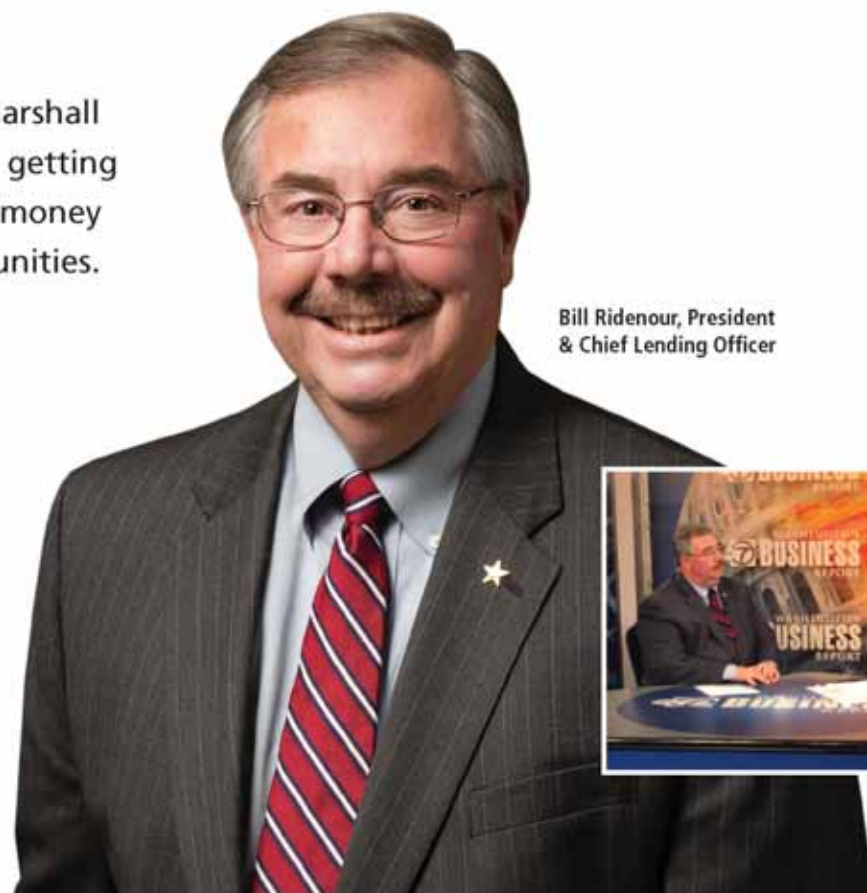
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OPINION

Troubled History of Voter Disenfranchisement

BY DAVE MARSDEN
STATE SENATOR (D-37)



COMMENTARY

Virginia has a troubling history of disenfranchising voters based on criminal convictions and failing to restore those rights when disenfranchised citizens have completed their sentences. In the recently completed 2017 session of the General Assembly, Republican Sen. Tommy Norment introduced a constitutional amendment (SJ 223) that would have allowed for the restoration of voting rights for violent felons (which includes burglary and certain drug offenses) after release from prison, a five-year waiting period, and the payment of all fines, fees, and restitution. Democratic opposition argued that these unpaid monies constituted a modern version of the poll tax. Though poll tax laws are no longer on the books, Virginia has one of the nation's most extreme policies restricting the voting rights of criminal offenders and one of the most racially disproportionate, with more than one in five black adults barred from voting due to a criminal conviction.

As Sen. Norment presented this amendment on the floor of the Senate, an interesting debate broke out in the chamber recalling the 1901-02 Virginia Constitution. GOP lawmakers argued, accurately, that the 1901-02 Constitution had the same felony disenfranchisement requirements that existed before the Civil War. What escaped Republican notice was that in 1876 petit larceny — minor property theft — was added to the constitution as a disenfranchising offense. The purpose was to entrap landless and impoverished African Americans who were caught stealing small items such as farm animals, including chickens. The 1876

amendment mirrored the notorious "pig laws" passed in Mississippi that same year. Virginia justified its new law under the generally held concept that "chicken stealers were so poor that they could not support their families, lacked moral character, and as they lacked economic citizenship they were underserving of political citizenship." Though felony disenfranchisement had been the tradition, petit larceny was slipped into the constitution in 1876 as a means to specifically disenfranchise African Americans. That some whites would be caught up in this disenfranchisement was an acceptable tradeoff, as African Americans were already in prison at five times the number of whites. Anyway, whites with criminal convictions could apply for gubernatorial restorations of voting rights; governors generally refused such restorations for African American applicants.

The Republican argument had been that felony disenfranchisement in the 1838 Constitution, which predated the Civil War, proved that it was a race-neutral concept because this constitutional provision was included when only whites were allowed to vote. However, the clear attempt at disenfranchisement by petit larceny made clear that their assertion was inadvertently disingenuous. In the 1889 gubernatorial race, lists of police records were sent to precinct polling officials to be used in excluding black voters.

The following is excerpted from the *Washington Bee*, a newspaper at the time (1889):

[I]t is enlightening that in the 3rd Precinct over 600 blacks waited in a "blacks only" voting line and 900 blacks waited in line in the

4th Precinct. Voter intimidation ensued as men who were self-identified Republicans and blacks were met with challenges such as "I believe you have been convicted of stealing." Even when denied, the charge led to being taken out of line and arrested for "impudence" if an argument ensued. Black voters were queried on the constitution for 20-25 minutes to slow the lines. Lists of black voter police records were on hand to deny voting. They were mailed to registrars. Voters were delayed for hours as they inched forward in the lines and many could no longer wait and went home.

The "whites only" line, it was reported, moved smoothly.

Virginia has a long pattern of using criminal conviction as a means of disenfranchising African Americans. Petit larceny was in our constitution in 1876, continued in the 1902 constitution, until removed in the 1971 version. It was added to exclude African Americans from voting. There are undoubtedly Virginians alive today who had lost the right to vote because of a conviction for petit larceny. Our prison system still has five times as many African Americans incarcerated as whites. We do not need a constitutional amendment that complicates who can and cannot vote in our commonwealth. The rule should be simple: regardless of your offense, if you are in prison you cannot vote; if you are out of prison you are entitled to vote. This standard would be consistent with the majority of other states. Virginia's history with voting rights is simply too troubling to put forth a new constitutional amendment that will continue to disadvantage African Americans.

Special thanks to Professor Pippa Holloway of Middle Tennessee State University, and Helen Gibson of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service whose source material was used for this article.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Taking Exception on Medicaid Expansion

To the Editor:

Col. Krisinger's dismissal of the proposal to approve the Medicaid expansion proposed by state Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37) is exceedingly short sighted (Connection, May 4-10, 2017). His position is typical of some who have a fully funded "government assisted" health care plan.

The proposed Medicaid expansion is a program by which the citizens of Virginia can gain a benefit from the taxes that they have already paid. There is no added cost to the taxpayer. This is Federal tax revenue that is returned to the state for the use of the citizens. The State's earlier refusal to accept

this money allowed it to go to other recipients in other states. It did not reduce the tax burden for Virginia citizens' one iota.

What better use of tax revenue is there than to provide a direct benefit back to the citizens in need? This is a better use of my tax dollars than the extravagant "federal assistance" for bombs and bullets dumped in desert wastelands or the building of a border wall that will never accomplish its intent.

E. Tracy Schonrock
Fairfax Station

Unnecessary Alarm

To the Editor:

Recent rhetoric and editorials dealing with health care policy in the United States lead to confusion and unnecessary alarm by bringing together two topics: health in-

surance coverage; and pre-existing conditions. Health insurance does two things: reduces cost for the policy holder by means of the discounts insurance companies achieve through volume buying; and, (like insurance in general) assists the policyholder deal with the financial consequences of something very bad which might, or might not, happen. A pre-existing condition, however, is something bad that has already happened.

For pre-existing conditions the health care policy question should be, how to pay for treatment rather than how to coerce insurance companies to pay. Health insurance policies covering pre-existing conditions (e.g. diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure) are widely available. Paying for pre-existing catastrophic conditions (e.g. organ transplant; cancer; multiple sclerosis) is another matter. Forcing insurance compa-

nies to take on the cost of treatment for all afflictions, regardless of scope, and spreading these costs through the premiums paid by healthier people, plus tucking in a few government subsidies, is one way (as in Obamacare). There are other ways to pay for treating these catastrophic conditions. The recent healthcare bill passed by the House of Representatives offers an alternative way.

Most people in the United States do not suffer from catastrophic health conditions. Those of us whom God made more fortunate in our health have a responsibility to help those less fortunate. I hope your newspaper will avoid partisan rhetoric and instead foster informed discussion leading to a national policy on how to help the minority who can not pay for the treatment of a catastrophic health condition.

Allan Ruppard
Reston

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NEWS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The candidates spoke of their personal backgrounds, the issues most important to them, and why they are running for office.

Democratic Women of Clifton Host Forum

More than 200 Democrats came together at the Town Hall in Clifton for the Annual Democratic Forum on April 30. Attendees got to meet and greet, listen, and ask questions of gubernatorial candidates Ralph Northam and Tom Perriello; Lieutenant Governor candidates Justin Fairfax, Susan Platt, and Gene Rossi; and seven Northern Virginia Democratic candidates for the House of Delegates: Donte Tanner (40th District), Tilly Blanding and Kathy Tran (42nd District), Hala Ayala and Ken Boddye (51st District) and Hannah Risheq and Latifa Lyles for John Carey (67th District).

The candidates spoke of their personal backgrounds, the issues most important to them, and why they are running for office.

Audience members spoke of the challenge of picking the best candidates among those they heard. Chair Jane Barker urged attendees to work for their candidates and to rally behind those who win the primaries.

All Democratic women in Northern Virginia are invited to join Democratic Women of Clifton. For more information about activities, meetings, or membership, write cliftonwomendems@aol.com or visit www.democraticwomenofclifton.org.

Party at Main Street

Main Street Child Development Centers' Family Game Night and Volunteer & Donor Appreciation Night was held April 27. More than 150 family members, donors and volunteers enjoyed an evening of pizza and game playing. The

center, located in the City of Fairfax, provides comprehensive early childhood education programs and support services to empower children between the age of 2-5, and their families, regardless of their financial circumstances.





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Jesus Ochoa of Linda Vista Farm held a flat of his pesticide-free marigolds he and his family have grown in their greenhouse in Montross, Va. No annual may be easier to grow than marigolds, which bloom brightly from late spring through the first frost in fall.



Reed Mihalow knew great looking and tasting asparagus when he saw it. He purchased stalks from Kuhn Orchards, LLC. The diameter of the spear does not equate with quality. When the tips begin to loosen is when the spears become tough and fibrous.

Linda Clarke of Annandale and granddaughter Brooke, of Lorton, having fun as always.



Lorton Farmers Market Opens

Customers get more than locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables.

By Mercia Hobson
The Connection

At the Lorton Farmers Market, operated by the Fairfax County Park Authority, there's tons more than produce on the farmers' stands. There's small-batch roasted nuts, preservative-free baked goods and handcrafted all natural and organic granola; there's grass-fed beef, soups, teas, and fresh handmade dog treats. But be sure to leave Fido at home. No dogs are allowed at the Farmers Markets. The Lorton market is located at 8990 Lorton Station Blvd. It opened for the season on Sunday, May 7, and will be open every Sunday after that, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. until Nov. 12.

The market is situated within steps of the Virginia Regional Express Depot, new brick office spaces, and trees. The setting couldn't be any nicer, and with ample parking, customers will always find a nearby place to park. The occasional whistle of the approaching trains adds to the ambience and reminds shoppers to enjoy a slower pace of life, if only for a short time.

ON SUNDAY MORNING, Lorton Farmers Market Managers Amy Poe and Sue Wolinsky stood ready. Vendor tables overflowed with fresh produce, baked loaves of bread, sweets, and flowers from within a 125-mile radius. Like other Fairfax County markets, Lorton's is "strictly

producer-only" meaning vendors must grow, raise or make "from scratch" everything they offer. This gives customers the unique opportunity to talk to farmers about product origin.

When Poe was asked what was unique about the Lorton market compared to other markets, she said that although the Lorton Market was recognized as the Most Picturesque Fairfax County Farmers Market by the Washington Post more importantly, "It is the commitment of our vendors, they are very supportive of each other."

Fairfax County encourages vendors who make products to use locally sourced ingredients as much as possible. Meg Cooksey, co-owner and head baker at Ginger Cakes Bake Shoppe, couldn't agree more. "Our products use a lot of fruits and vegetables from other vendors here today, especially the strawberries and zucchinis" Cooksey said.

All markets offer great local, seasonal produce, brimming with nutrients and freshness, but at the Farmer's Market in Lorton, relationship building, knowing your farmer and knowing your food, is key. Offering a shopping experience with plenty of pedestrian space, the Lorton vendors can freely mingle, walk about and talk about their farming practices, get to know their customers, even provide family recipes.

Stephanie Foster wanted to experience that interaction firsthand. Even though she and her husband Greg had been members



Lorton Farmers Market Managers, Amy Poe, third season and Sue Wolinsky, ninth season, are passionate about the importance of markets. "Family farming is dying out. So [Farmers Markets] help keep them afloat," Wolinsky said.

of a Community Supported Agriculture subscription (CSA), the Fosters realized they wanted to know the farmer that grew their food. "I can meet the farmer and interact with him," Foster said.

Wolinsky added, "You can talk to a vendor about pest control and learn more about what you are going to eat."

Thirteen qualified and selected vendors, whose business locations were within the 125-mile range limitation, sell their produce and products at the Lorton Farmers Market. As she rearranged items on her display tables, Lorrie Little of Kuhn's Farms located 100 miles away in Cashtown, Pa. said, "We use local people to help us; they plant and pick all fruit and vegetables by hand."

Jesus Ochoa is the owner of Linda Vista Farms in Montrose, Va., 110 miles away. He and his daughter Anayeli had been up before



While Suraj Kumar, 4, munched on his cookie purchased from Ginger Cakes Bake Shoppe, his family shopped the produce stalls. Fresh strawberries, lettuce, Swiss chard, and more awaited their selections.

dawn preparing for the market. Asked how they had already grown such beautiful flowering plants and the large assortment of vegetables, Anayeli explained, "We start growing produce and flowers in February, in our greenhouse. They are pesticide-free."

When buyers purchase local fresh produce that has been picked at its prime rather than produce that ripens on a truck as it is shipped to grocery stores they can see and taste the difference. Market Manager Poe said her family could tell the difference. You can't get that at a grocery store.

Reed Mihalow was one of the first shoppers at the market. He had purposefully come to the market to get fresh stalks of asparagus from Kuhn Farms. "Tonight, I'm going to make a fresh pasta primavera with asparagus."

FOR A LIST of vendors at the Lorton Farmers Market along with a detailed description of their products, visit fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/lortonmkt.htm.

Linda Clarke and grandson Dylan relaxing on the beach in the Outer Banks.



Three Generations — from left: Tricia Barry and Hannah Barry (of Crosspointe neighborhood in Fairfax Station) and Lori Ocampo (of Fairfax Station neighborhood in Fairfax Station). Photo taken at Greentree Preschool's "Parents Tea & Music Revue" event on April 26.



Me & My Mom



Caitlyn Mutteru, of Springfield, sends this photo with her mom, Audrey and brother Kevin. "We love to spend time together outdoors as we explore the town and our community," she writes.

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SCHOOLS

South County's All Night Grad Party Helps Keep Graduates, Community Safe

In less than two months, more than 500 seniors will graduate from South County High School.

To celebrate the milestone and to help keep them – and the community – safe, local parents, teachers and businesses are uniting once again to throw an All Night Grad Party (ANGP) at the school.

All Night Grad Party was created by Mothers Against Drunk Driving to keep teens safe on a celebratory, but dangerous night. It's been a safe, effective and much-anticipated tradition at South County and other high schools for years, both locally and nationwide.

This year, the event will be held from 11 p.m. on June 16 to 5 a.m. on June 17. The party is parent-chaperoned, drug-, alcohol- and smoke-free, and features dozens of inflatables, fun activities, all-you-can-eat food, and chances to win amazing and useful prizes for college and post-high school life.

This year, the theme is "Legendary Beach Party." Matthew Ragone, South County High School principal, says, "When I first started teaching, in the early '90s before All Night Grad Parties (ANGP) existed, I

remember the yearbook sponsor saying to me that every year he would have to save a page for a student memorial in anticipation of a tragedy. Whatever the statistics, I can tell you from personal experience, the advent of the ANGP has saved lives. There is no way to measure how many because ANGP doesn't just get seniors off the road for one evening a year, it teaches them they can have a great time without drugs and alcohol. That's a lesson for a lifetime. A long, long lifetime."

Rhonda Mustafaa, SCHS PTSO president, agrees. "The All Night Grad Celebration is a safe and sober event," she says. "No worries about your child's location. There will be no dangerous party hopping, just a well-organized and chaperoned event by parents and educators. When you buy a ticket you can rest easy knowing that your graduating senior is having a blast with friends in a safe and inclusive environment."

For more information and to buy a ticket (or to donate one to a student in need), visit southcountypptso.org/angp/ticket-sales/.

SCHOOL NOTES

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

Kami Richter, of Alexandria, graduated from Fort Lewis College (Durango, Colo.) in December. Richter received a bachelor's degree with a major in anthropology.

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class **Kelly**

C. Quispe graduated from basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, San Antonio, Texas. Quispe is the daughter of Nicanor and Edelvina Quispe of Springfield. She is a 2007 graduate of Bishop Ireton High School.

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Walk-In Closet Design Ideas

From chandeliers to luxury seating, the options are plentiful.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

When an Old Town Alexandria couple decided to remodel their master bedroom suite, they wanted to pay particular attention to the room's two walk-in closets. Designer Gene Delgado of Hopkins & Porter Construction, Inc., in Potomac, Md. was tasked with overhauling the spaces to give the couple the maximum amount of storage for their clothing and accessories.

"We ordered a storage system from Poliform, an Italian luxury modern furniture brand, that does exquisite closet systems," said Delgado. "The closet spaces are very modern with lots of built-in lighting. Because of the angled ceilings ... we are designing a cabinet for shoe storage and some shelving for purses and luggage. I'm doing a chandelier for the wife's closet to make it warmer and more feminine."

With available accessories ranging from elaborate lighting to luxury seating areas, there's no need to settle for a closet that

looks like a cross between a laundry room and a landfill. When it comes to walk-in closets, the options for creating a dream space are plentiful say designers.

"Closets are no longer utilitarian spaces for your clothes. People want their closets to be beautiful," said Delgado. "The trend is that they are bigger, more beautiful and more luxurious. Those with large spaces can have everything from coffee makers to seating areas."

When beginning the design of a closet space, Julia Walter, showroom manager at Italian design firm Boffi, advises clients to make an inventory list of items that will go inside such as long-hanging clothing foldable clothing and shoes.

"What plays into the inventory list is how the client prefers to use their closets," she said. "For example, do they mostly hang or do they fold clothes. It's helpful to see what the client's closet looks like currently [and] works and what doesn't."

A combination of small and large drawers is important for the different items to store, says Walter. For example, small drawers can hold items like jewelry, underwear and socks while larger drawers can hold items like scarves or exercise clothes."

"I like to use the upper most shelves in closets for bulky storage like luggage, hat

cases [and] for items that are either not used too much or are seasonal," said Walter. "Open shelves are great for display of shoes and handbags."

Invest in a full-length mirror and install it behind the door or on an open space that won't take away from storage, advises Allie Mann, designer, senior interiors specialist with Case Design/Remodeling, Inc.

"Use every inch of a closet space for storage. There may be small niches that are perfect for scarves, handbags [and] belts," she said. "Build in shoe shelving if possible. Keeping shoes off the floor gives a more organized look to the space. If you want to keep shoe boxes, be sure to label them with photos of the shoes inside so you don't have to open every box to find the pair you're looking for."

For those with a generous budget, Interior Designer Todd Martz, co-owner of Home on Cameron in Old Town Alexandria advises investing in a lighting system for viewing clothing and distinguishing colors.

"Add pullout shelves and rods to organize outfits. [Add] drawers with glass inserts to see contents," he said. "Group accessories [like] belts and purses by color for easy access."

Accessories that Walter recommends adding to a walk-in closet include belt hang-



PHOTO ANGIE SECKINGER/BOFFI GEORGETOWN

Open shelving for storing shoes and handbags are among the features that designer Julia Walter recommends for walk-in closets.

ers, tie hangers, jewelry drawers and safes. "If space allows, a center island is a great feature for getting dressed and showcasing certain items," she said. "Before a night out, [for example] a gown and shoes can be displayed."

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Celebrating Beethoven

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Where & When

One of the most celebrated of Beethoven's symphonies, Symphony No. 9 with its famous "Ode to Joy" choral will be performed by the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra (FSO) in a special evening. The FSO is observing its 60th year as a leading Fairfax County arts institution.

Why will it be special evening? The "Ode to Joy" performance will include a collaboration with other major Fairfax County-based performing arts gems – the Fairfax Choral Society and the Music & Arts Chorus combining for the "Ode to Joy."

Beethoven's 9th has "a clear message of a common humanity in his 'Ode to Joy,'" said Christopher Zimmerman, music director, FSO. The symphony was written as Beethoven grappled with deafness, adding "an extra dimension to appreciating his extraordinary achievements and the nature of his musical expression."

"It is a good thing for enriching the artistic life of a community if its arts organizations are able to work together and collaborate on projects," added Zimmerman. "It will bring out the best in each organization. It can produce something new, and it helps bring all arts to a wider audience."

The full evening of Beethoven will also include the FSO performing Beethoven's Symphony No. 1. By performing both Beethoven's Symphony No. 1 and No. 9 in one concert an audience "will be able to hear the extraordinary artistic evolution of this com-

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra with the Fairfax Choral Society and the Music & Arts Chorus in performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 1 and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 at George Mason University, Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performance: Saturday, May 13 at 8 p.m. Tickets \$24, \$39, \$53. Call 888-945-2468 or visit www.fairfaxsymphony.org. Pre-Performance discussion at 7 p.m. with David Ginder of WETA 90.9-FM with FSO Conductor Christopher Zimmerman and special guests.

poser," said Zimmerman.

For the Fairfax Choral Society, now in its 55th year, "performing masterworks for chorus and orchestra" is always a high on the list of performances," said Doug Mears, artistic director. Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" is "one of the greatest in this genre and it is a privilege for our choruses to be able to perform it with the FSO. I hope our audience will experience ecstatic and exhilarating emotion."

Terry Stoneberg, director of music, Music and Arts Chorus described "Ode to Joy" as one of the most difficult works for chorus ever written. "Too often choruses are buried by the sheer volume of sound that an orchestra produces."

At the Center for the Arts performance, "the audience will not only be able to hear the combined choruses, they will feel the chorus singing through the orchestra and get a sense of the excitement and power that Beethoven wrote into this piece."

This is a rare evening with some of Fairfax County's finest performing artists working together for a stirring connection with Beethoven's greatness.

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

Adventures in Learning. Each Wednesday through May 10, 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.

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

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

orientation. Also, see weather policy for possible cancellations.

www.fpow.org, 703-324-5424 or dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov.
Carolina Shag. Wednesdays. 6:30-10 p.m. Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m. No partners needed. Dinner menu. \$8. Under 21 free. nvshag.org.

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

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

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

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

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opens. 4-7 p.m. every Friday at Kingstowne Giant Parking Lot, 5870 Kingstowne Center, Alexandria. Freshly picked, producer-only vegetables and fruit, from-scratch bread (including gluten free), baked goods, kettle corn, salsa, hummus, cake pops, fruit popsicles, and ice cream. Email Chelsea.roseberry@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-642-0128 for more.

MAY 5-13

“The Music Man.” Various times at Church of the Good Shepherd, 9350 Braddock Road, Burke. \$15 for adults, \$10 for children. Visit goodshepherdplayers.com or call 703-505-7434.

FRIDAY/MAY 12

Spring Concert. 7:30 p.m. at St. Stephens United Methodist Church, 9203 Braddock Road. The Maranatha Singers will present “Bon Voyage.” Free. Call 703-250-5013 for more.

SATURDAY/MAY 13

Burke Lake Golf Center Ribbon Cutting. 10 a.m. at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Fairfax County Park Authority Board will host a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the \$6.6 million renovation of the Burke Lake Golf Center driving range. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/golf/blgc/ or call 703-323-1641.

BBQ and Car Wash. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at St George’s United Methodist Church, 4910 Ox Road, Fairfax. 13th Annual Community BBQ and Car Wash. All proceeds go to fund missions-children at risk, feeding the hungry,

and family housing. BBQ meal \$10, family meal \$34, car wash by donations. Visit stgumc.org/index.html for more.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 17

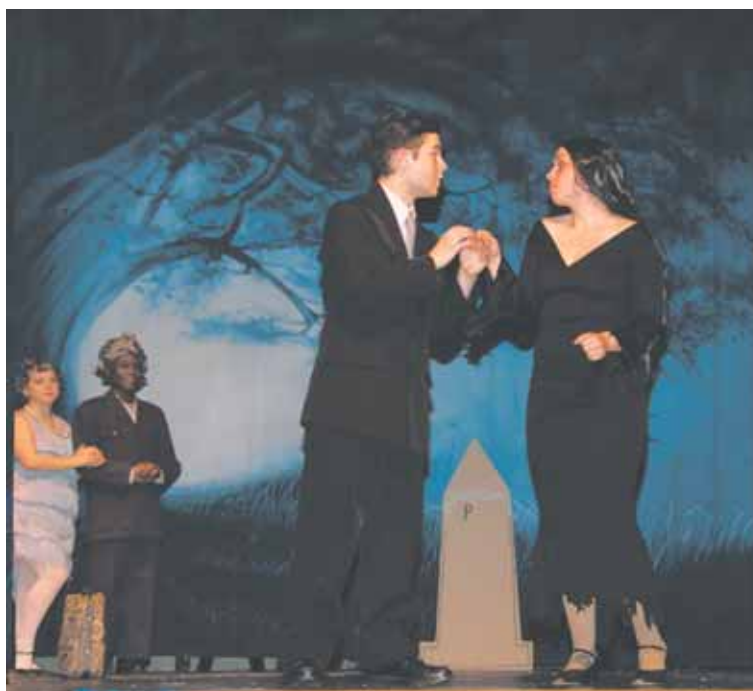
Chamber Golf Classic. 1 p.m. at Laurel Hill Golf Club, 8701 Laurel Crest Drive, Lorton. Event is the main fundraiser for the Mount Vernon Lee Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Fund and will be capped at 120 golfers. Email Info@MtVernon-LeeChamber.org for more.

THURSDAY/MAY 18

Clifton Homes Tour. 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane. Clifton Community Woman’s Club presents annual tour of homes in Clifton and Fairfax Station. Silent Auction and Marketplace at Clifton Presbyterian Church. Proceeds donated to local scholarships and charities. \$25 in advance, \$30 day of tour, free to silent auction. Visit www.cliftoncwc.org for more.

Fashion Show and Luncheon. noon-2 p.m. at the Church of the Good Shepherd, 9350 Braddock Road, Burke. Proceeds to support support the Shepherd’s Center of Fairfax-Burke. \$30. Visit www.scfbva.org for more.

Burke Historical Society. 7 p.m. at the Sherwood Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy, Fairfax. The evening will feature Cindy Bennett speaking on “Camp Alger and a Local Epidemic.” In 1898, Camp Alger’s poor sanitation led to typhoid and a disastrous relocation march. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/events/ or call 703-256-3800.



‘The Addams Family’

Gomez, Morticia and the whole crew will be taking the stage for the South County production of “The Addams Family,” May 12-13 at 7 p.m. each night at at South County High School, 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. Visit www.southcountytheatre.org for more.

FRIDAY/MAY 19

Bike to Work Day 2017. Registration — now open — is free and open to anyone who commutes in the region, from first timers to daily cyclists. All

registrants will be entered in a regional bicycle raffle, and the first 16,000 to register and attend will receive a free t-shirt at one of more than 85 pit-stops throughout Northern Virginia. Register online at www.biketoworkmetrodc.org. Email

Megan Goodman at mgoodman@mwcog.org, or call 202-962-3209.

Family Movie and Dinner Night. 6-8 p.m. at the Sydenstricker United Methodist Church, 8508 Hooes Road, Springfield. Hawaiian luau and watch the Disney film “Moana.” Free. Call 703-451-8223 or visit sydenstrickerumc.org/movienight.

SATURDAY/MAY 20

Antique Car Show. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St. The show is presented by Northern Virginia Regional Group of the Early Ford V-8 Club and the city. Call 703-273-6097 or visit nvrg.org for more.

Hope and Health Festival. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Lorton Park, 9518 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Free health screenings, food, inflatables, children’s games and activities will be available to all in attendance. Visit www.lortonaction.org for more.

Map and Compass Reading. 11 a.m.-noon at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Mark Chapin, the founder of the Mountaineer Wilderness outdoor program, an Air Force veteran and graduate of the Wilderness Survival School and Sea Survival School will be sharing his knowledge with teens and adults. \$10. Call 703-323-6600 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burkelakepark/ for more.

SUNDAY/MAY 21

Ensemble Gaudior Concert. 4-5 p.m. at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Chamber music from the classical era on period instruments including a reproduction of Mozart’s piano. Free. Email foma@standrews.net for more.

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-Thomas Fuller

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PHOTO COURTESY OF FRED ZAMON

On April 30, a group of L4 Swimming masters swimmers joined blind teammate Michelle Duquette at Burke Racquet & Swim Club for the third annual "Swim Like Michelle" fundraiser to benefit the Foundation Fighting Blindness.

'Swim Like Michelle'

**Fundraiser supporting
Foundation Fighting
Blindness held in Burke.**

It can be hard enough just to swim in a straight line. Michelle Duquette does it blind. On April 30, a group of L4 Swimming masters teammates joined her in the experience as part of the third annual "Swim Like Michelle" fundraiser. Proceeds go to the Foundation Fighting Blindness.

Duquette had sight until she was 13, when she

began losing her vision. Less than 10 years later, she was completely blind.

Now more than a decade after that, she continues to train in the pool at Burke Racquet & Swim Club, with her mother Bobbe tapping her softly with a tennis ball-capped cane to let her know she's come to the end of a length.

To experience something akin to blindness while swimming, Duquette's teammates put on blacked-out goggles and attempted to swim a relay race with two teams competing.

For more information, visit www.blindness.org.

— TIM PETERSON

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PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Bobbe Duquette (right) taps a swimmer wearing blacked-out goggles during the third annual "Swim Like Michelle" fundraiser to benefit the Foundation Fighting Blindness.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FRED ZAMON

Bobbe Duquette (left) taps a swimmer wearing blacked-out goggles during the third annual "Swim Like Michelle" fundraiser to benefit the Foundation Fighting Blindness.

BULLETIN BOARD

Send 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.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke serves those 50 and older who no longer drive. **Volunteer drivers** are needed for trips (Monday-Friday) to medical appointments and companion shopping within the Fairfax/Burke area. **Office workers** are needed to answer phones in the SCFB office (Monday-Friday) to match drivers and those who need rides. Call 703-323-4788.

TUESDAY/MAY 9

Dementia Caregivers Support Group. noon-1:30 p.m. at the Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. Sponsored by the Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke. The group is for those caring for someone with dementia or interested in learning more about providing caregiving to a person with a disorder that affects memory and cognition and may impact behavior and physical abilities. Before attending, contact the facilitator, Eileen Thompson at 703-451-8626 or Eileen.thompson1@gmail.com.

THURSDAY/MAY 11

Fairfax 50+ Employment Expo. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Fair Oaks Marriott Hotel, 11787 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax. Jewish Council for the Aging, Fairfax County and AARP are sponsoring the event. The event is free and no registration is necessary. Go to www.accessjca.org/programs/senior-employment/.

SATURDAY/MAY 13

Yard Sale. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. King of Kings Lutheran Church and Preschool, 4025 Kings Way, Fairfax. All proceeds will support Youth Missions. Call 703-378-7272 for more.

MONDAY/MAY 15

Homework and Study Strategies. 11 a.m.-noon at PEATC, 8003 Forbes Place, Suite 310, Springfield. In person and webinar options. Topics to be covered include how to help children get organized and manage time and various strategies to be used for specific homework difficulties. Register to attend: www.eventbrite.com/e/peatc-parent-coffee-and-presentation-with-remotewebinar-viewing-tickets-31717825871. Webinar: zoom.us/webinar/register/80b22ca516ff533366858a512be5123a.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 17

Legal Considerations for Caregiving. 1 p.m. at Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax. An elder law attorney will lead this discussion on legal needs to be taken care of such as powers of attorney, wills and estates, guardianships, and trusts. Contact Christi Clark, christi.clark@insightmcc.org, or call 703-204-4664 for more.

THURSDAY/MAY 18

Van Dyck Park Workshop. 7:30 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway. The Parks and Recreation Department has launched the Van Dyck Park Master Plan to help plan the future of this park. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/ for more.

SATURDAY/MAY 20

Hodge Podge Yard Sale. 7 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at the Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. On sale will be furniture, collectibles, household goods, books, clothing and much, much more. All proceeds will benefit the many ministries of Pohick Church, which serves the southern Fairfax and northern Prince William County areas. Call 703-339-6572, or visit www.pohick.org.

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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them. -Werner Heisenberg			

"Bulky Boy"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Is the nickname I gave Andrew, one of our male cats. It's because he's a bit portly, like his father, yours truly. However, Andrew's nickname is not the impetus for this particular column. The impetus for this column is my tendency, as the primary (almost exclusive) buyer of miscellaneous household goods and to a lesser extent, services, to buy in bulk/quantity, not necessarily quality; although that's a subject of a long-ago column and perhaps a future one as well — dare I cross that Rubicon again, and one that has earned me this identical nickname to Andrew.

As a cancer patient originally diagnosed as "terminal" — at age 54 and a half, eight-plus years ago, time becomes an integral/essential part of your life; what there is of it presently, what you have been told you have left of it and what you — in your wildest dreams, every day and every night, hope you actually get to do: live a relatively "normal" life expectancy.

Even though life has gone on years past my original "13-month to two-year" prognosis, I still struggle with the emotional yin and yang of whether I'm closer to the end or further from the beginning (date of diagnosis). And is so struggling, everyday decisions that might have a time element/time-sensitivity to them are complicated. Is it necessary to do it/buy it/obligate myself to it now when the benefit might be later? A later I might never see? If I'm trying to enjoy life in the present as much as possible to fend off the inevitable and relentless stress that a "terminal" cancer diagnosis imposes, then how does a future benefit help me now?

As a few examples and finally to the point of this column: buying in bulk. 240 dryer sheets — for two adults, one of whom works at home and doesn't exactly get dressed for it; 90 tall kitchen trash bags — we use one bag a week, and that includes bagging the cat litter for five indoor cats; paper towels — enough quantity that we could likely wrap them around our entire house if we had to; toilet paper — is sacrosanct, one can never have enough in stock; and tissues/Kleenex — given how frequently my eight-years-of-post-chemotherapy nose runs — constantly, is also sacrosanct (although I can always use toilet paper, paper napkins or paper towels in the pinch; not exactly the same pinch as if the toilet paper inventory runs out, however). Naturally, these items are all non-perishable so their life expectancy is not a consideration. But since mine is, sometimes I think I need to buy them or else, because when I do need them it will be too late.

As for perishables, obviously it makes little sense to overbuy (expiration dates notwithstanding, except mine). I can't eat all the food quickly enough anyway (another point of contention from a previous column), although I may try. But even I know, in my cancer-induced haze, that spending money now on an unpredictable future though penny-wise and beneficial in some emotional ways, might be pound-foolish. I need to feel good today - period, not feel good today about something I might benefit from tomorrow. I mean, how else am I even going to get to tomorrow? Don't I need to filter out potentially harmful/debilitating mental and physical images/impacts and try to live as unencumbered as possible (to invoke one of my deceased father's favorite words)? Cancer is already an uphill battle. If I don't want to live the legendary life of Sisyphus, pushing a figurative rock up a hill, only to have it fall back down time and again, I need to find a way/strategy to both manage my budget and control my mind. Obviously, I want to live like I have a future, but not at the expense of my present. You can call me "Bulky Boy" all you want, but "crazy-kookie" not so much.

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



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