



Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

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Town of Herndon Hosts Old-Fashioned 4th of July

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Dark clouds didn't stop 4th of July festivities in the Town of Herndon. Thousands gathered to enjoy the old-fashioned games, arts and crafts, food, music, vendors and the fireworks display offered by Herndon Parks and Recreation. Many families set up their lawn chairs and blankets in Bready Park Softball Field while others favored the grassy slopes and sidewalks near the Herndon Centennial Golf Course.



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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

JULY 12-18, 2017

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NEWS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The recipients of the Reston Hospital Center Medical Staff Scholarships are: Daniel Alekseyev* – Briar Woods High School; Jodi Montgomery* – Broad Run High School; Deniz Cakmak – Centreville High School; Noura Said – Centreville High School; Sofia Wainwright – Chantilly High School; Carlin Lucas – Dominion High School; Meghan Graby – Herndon High School; Sophie Dornfeld – James Madison High School; Kendall Raymond – Langley High School; Lilly Carrillo – Oakton High School; Afreen Ahmed* – Park View High School; Alexander Nemer* – Potomac Falls High School; Mallory Levenhagen* – Potomac Falls High School; Hasmah Hussain* – South Lakes high School; and Allison Bush – Westfield High School. (*Not pictured in winners photo attached.)

Reston Hospital Center Medical Staff Announces Scholarship Winners

The Medical Staff of Reston Hospital Center awarded scholarships to 15 Fairfax and Loudoun County High School seniors in recognition of their academic excellence and excitement for pursuing a career in healthcare.

At an award ceremony at Reston Hospital Center, John Deardorff, President and CEO of Reston Hospital Center and HCA's Northern Virginia Market, said, "These students are well deserving of the medical staff scholarships as they begin their journeys of exploring careers in the healthcare field. We hope that one day they return to their roots as members of our local medical community."

Each year, the Medical Staff at Reston

Hospital Center offers \$15,000 in scholarships to local high schools. Over the past 19 years, Reston Hospital Center's Medical Staff has awarded more than \$250,000 in academic scholarships to students in Northern Virginia.

"This is one of the Medical Staff's favorite projects every year. We are thrilled to be able to support these young adults as they venture into the world in search of their dream careers. It is our pleasure to get to know such passionate and driven students from our local community as they work towards becoming the future of healthcare," said Dr. Avisesh Sahgal, president of Reston Hospital Center's medical staff.

SCHOOL NOTES

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

Rachel Harhan, of Herndon, earned a Bachelor of Science in education from The University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa, Ala.).

Allison Guengerich, an exercise science major from Herndon, was inducted into Alpha Lambda Delta, the National Honorary Society for First Year Students, during Honors Convocation at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford.

Chelsey Puzzanghero, of Oak Hill, received a B.A. in psychology from Loyola University Maryland.

Sara Guglielmo, of Reston, was named to the Miami University (Oxford, Ohio) dean's list for the spring of 2017.

Sriram Iyer, of Herndon, earned faculty honors from Georgia Tech for the spring semester of 2017.

Micah Doucette, of Herndon, was named to the dean's list at Bard College at Simon's Rock (Great Barrington, Mass.) for spring of 2017.

To inspire students in grades 4-12 to explore their passion for renewable energy and engineering, KidWind, the international leader of clean energy education, hosted the National KidWind Challenge at the American Wind Energy Association WINDPOWER 2017 Conference & Exhibition in Anaheim. A total of 23 high school and 33 middle school teams competed for the chance to win the grand prize of \$1,000, the second place prize of \$500, and the third place prize of \$250. The 2017 National KidWind Challenge Champions included the **Aeolus from Herndon** in third place in the middle school division. Visit kidwindchallenge.org.

John Richards, of Vienna, graduated with a Master of Science in environmental science and policy and a Master of Business Administration from Clark University (Worcester, Mass.). Richards is a member of the Beta Gamma Sigma honor society.

Town of Herndon Hosts Old-Fashioned 4th of July

Hometown fun attracts more than six thousand people to the celebration.

By MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Town of Herndon once again produced and hosted a great all day 4th of July Celebration. For those who wanted to start the fun early, Parks and Recreation opened the pool at the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Avenue from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. Admittedly there was no sandy beach, but who needed it? The water was cool and clear with air temps in 80s, perfect for swimming, and there were no sharks in the water.

Beginning at 6:30 p.m., Parks and Recreation moved the fun over to Bready Park Softball Field, located steps from the community center. The ballpark fences kept little ones safely away from the street and parking lots, as everyone enjoyed a multitude of free activities. After staking their turf with blankets and beach chairs, adults and children alike played old-fashioned yard games such as Cornhole toss.

Sack races were a new experience for many children. The young ones delighted putting both feet into the bags. With the Ready, Set, Go call, the youngsters held their bags up the best they could, and hopped and shuffled their way to the finish line, sacks dangling down to their knees as their parents cheered them on.



Patrons arrived early in the evening, well before dark and the start of the annual fireworks display to enjoy the live music and festivities offered free by the Town of Herndon as part of the annual 4th of July Celebration.

Renee Hoover said, "I came out for the fireworks but the yard games are great, and the price is right – free." Face painting was another definite hit with the children, while the patriotic-themed arts and crafts activities drew in an equal number of children.

Bingo was a winner with the adults. Passersby easily heard the loud calls of BINGO coming from under the tented game area.

There was no need to grill at home or bring a cooler full of food. Food trucks parked along the perimeter of the field sold

hot dogs, hamburgers, Thai food, funnel cakes, snow cones and more.

According to Herndon Parks and Recreation, at 7:15 p.m., they welcomed the five-piece rock band "The Significant Others" to the performance stage. The fantastic music, food, and games kept everyone entertained until dark when the fireworks were set to go off around 9:30 p.m.

While many individuals had gathered at Bready Park to enjoy the pre-firework events and display from that location, a huge num-

ber of spectators safely set out lawn chairs and blankets along barricaded streets near the Herndon Centennial Golf Course where the fireworks were to be lit.

Throughout the spectacular display, oohs and ahhs could be heard from the crowd, and when the explosions ended, they ended with the traditional big bang. A multitude of rockets whizzed high in the sky, one after the other, exploding their light on children and adults, people from so many walks of life and countries.

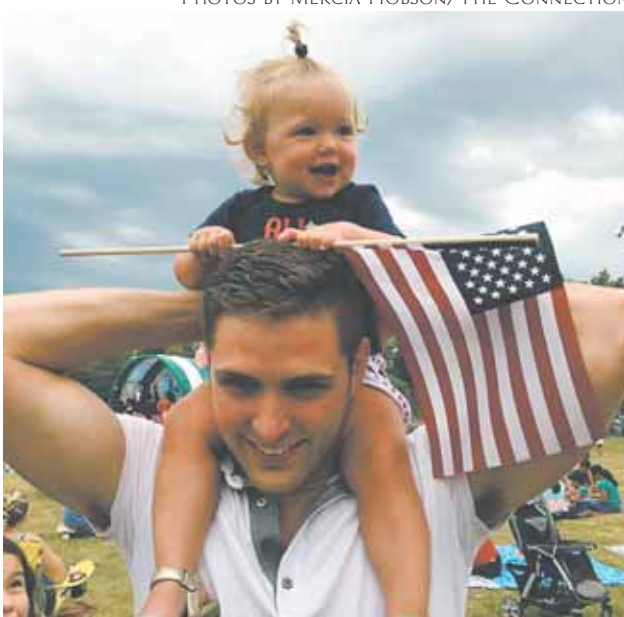


While Narayana Svndarrajan, 10, of Herndon was having her face painted at Herndon's 4th of July Celebration, her mother, Gayathn spoke about the family's anticipation for the evening event. "We've been looking forward to this for five days now. This is our fourth year coming."

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Before the 4th of July fireworks started, Ashton Kooy, 5, and her brother, Grant, 3 of Parkville, Md., each picked out a favorite glow stick necklace offered to them by Kyla Christian, a Town of Herndon employee. Christian commented on the turnout. "It's a good turnout. There is a sea of red, white and blue. And the mood is patriotic," she said.



Baby Kalina Novosel of Sterling held tight to her first American flag and enjoyed a daddy shoulder ride – seeing far and wide all that was happening at Herndon's 4th of July Celebration held at the Bready Park Softball Field. Chris Novosel, Kalina's dad, said, "We are thankful for the amazing festivities happening tonight and to live so close by."



This wasn't the first time Madina Vazirli, 7, of Vienna played Cornhole. With a steady aim she pitched her beanbag at one of the raised platforms with a hole in it. Old-fashioned yard games, arts and crafts, food vendors, live music and fireworks were all part of the Town of Herndon's 4th of July Celebration.

Problems for Public Health

Increasing the number of uninsured is bad for the rest of us, and the economy.

The proposed plan in the U.S. Senate to give the wealthiest Americans massive tax cuts by cutting health coverage for people who are poor, have disabilities and elders, would also affect the rest of the population, and the economy.

People without health insurance face economic uncertainty. When they do incur medical bills, they often cannot pay them in full. This increases costs to providers and decreases the ability to participate in the economy.

People without health insurance are sicker than people with insurance, but they also often can't afford to stay home from work, often exposing others to preventable illnesses. They are less likely to have flu shots and other routine immunizations that protect all of us, including those with the weakest immune systems and those who cannot be vaccinated.

U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine was in Springfield this week talking to people who depend on Medicaid coverage. He and U.S. Sen. Mark Warner have been active in opposing these major cuts to health care.

This bears repeating — here are some other consequences of proposals in the Senate bill:

- ❖ Millions of people lose their health insurance — 22 million fewer would have health insurance by 2026 according to the Congressional Budget Office analysis.

- ❖ In Virginia, more than 14,000 veterans could lose coverage under Medicaid.

- ❖ States could opt out of the law's essential health benefits measure, which requires insurers to cover 10 main benefits, including hospitalization, prescription drugs and other services. That is, companies could sell health insurance that wouldn't actually be health insurance. Would Virginia be a state that opts out? Quite likely.

- ❖ Loss of coverage for pre-existing conditions, including cancer survivors, people who had transplants, people with asthma, arthritis, high cholesterol, hypertension, obesity, mental health issues, ADD, etc.

- ❖ Ending annual and lifetime coverage caps would also impact people who get health insurance from their employers and the private insurance market. For example, a serious accident or an illness that requires repeated surgeries or bone marrow transplants could put any one of us over the coverage cap.

- ❖ Medicaid pays public schools for many services for special education students, but the Senate bill removes schools from eligible Medicaid providers, costing Virginia an estimated \$40 million annually; \$3 million in Fairfax County; \$2 million in the City of Alexandria.

- ❖ \$800 billion plus in cuts to Medicaid puts the funding for most people who are currently in nursing homes at risk. Many of these are people who were middle class but outlived

their savings and coverage.

- ❖ In Virginia, the proposed changes to Medicaid would cost the state \$1.4 billion over seven years.

- ❖ Medicaid pays for much of the fight against opioid addiction, including treatment. Cuts would be devastating to efforts to counter the wave of overdose deaths and other effects of addiction.

- ❖ Coverage for mental health treatment, including addiction treatment, is threatened both by cuts to Medicaid and by changes in the private insurance market.

- ❖ There will be greater need for Medicaid over time. More seniors will be poor, as fewer people who are retiring have pensions or adequate retirement savings. The demand for nursing home beds will be increasing as the population ages.

Read last week's editorial, "Killing the Poor to Pay Millionaires," here: www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/jun/27/opinion-editorial-killing-poor-pay-millionaires/

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS

Send in Your Pet Photos Now

The Pet Connection, a twice-yearly special edition, will publish the last week of July, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by July 20.

We invite you to send us stories about your pets, photos of you and your family with your cats, dogs, llamas, alpacas, ponies, hamsters, snakes, lizards, frogs, rabbits, or whatever other creatures share your life with you.

Tell us the story of a special bond between a child and a dog, the story of how you came to adopt your pet, or examples of amazing feats of your creatures.

Do you volunteer at an animal shelter or therapeutic riding center or take your pet to visit people in a nursing home? Does your business have a pet? Is your business about pets?

Have you helped to train an assistance dog? Do you or someone in your family depend on an assistance dog?

Or take this opportunity to memorialize a beloved pet you have lost.

Just a cute photo is fine too. Our favorite pictures include both pets and humans.

Please tell us a little bit about your creature, identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description what is happening in the photo, and include address and phone number (we will not publish your address or phone number, just your town name).

Email to editors@connectionnewspapers.com or submit online at www.connectionnewspapers.com/pets.

Balancing Our Budget Based on Needs

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

During the primary election season when both parties in Virginia were making their selection of a candidate for governor, one candidate who went on to get his party's nomination proposed the clincher of a policy proposal to secure his success in the election: a billion-dollar tax cut! For those who have been around the state for some time it may sound familiar; the successful car tax-cutting proposal that elected a previous governor is still costing the state about a billion dollars each year. That cut was particularly ironic in that it had the state cutting a local tax by reimbursing the localities for taxpayers. It was great for North-



COMMENTARY

ern Virginians as less wealthy downstate taxpayers reimburse the wealthiest jurisdictions in a reverse "Robin Hood" plan.

Before voters jump at a promise of reduced taxes, I hope there will be a serious consideration of the consequences. Virginia prides itself on being a "balanced budget" state; its revenues cover its operational expenses. Borrowing is permitted under the State Constitution for capital projects when approved by voters unless the project raises enough revenue to pay for itself. All that is good with a major exception. At no time does the state quantify its needs in order to determine what the cost of

government would be if the state met its responsibility in providing funding. Two examples are offered below to make my point.

The first example is the state's refusal to fund education at the level it has in the past and that is required by the Constitution. A report by the Commonwealth Institute, "State Cuts Mean Fewer Staff and Resources for Virginia Students," (www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org) in April 2017, makes the point. "Statewide, state support has fallen 11 percent per student since 2009 in real dollars. This has impacted the ability of schools to maintain staffing and facilities. Across the state, school divisions have about 2,800 fewer staff than they had in 2009, despite growing enrollment. If they had kept pace with enrollment growth, Virginia's schools

SEE PLUM, PAGE 11



NEWS

Amazon Web Services to Create up to 1,500 New Jobs in Herndon Area

Gov. Terry McAuliffe today announced that Amazon Web Services, Inc. (AWS), an Amazon.com company, will expand its presence with a new East Coast corporate campus at One Dulles Tower in Fairfax County. AWS offers cloud computing services to businesses, government, and educational organizations, including web hosting, application hosting, storage and backup, content delivery, and scalable database solutions. Virginia successfully competed against Texas and Washington for the project, which will create up to 1,500 new jobs.

"It is a tremendous honor for Amazon Web Services to select Fairfax County and the Commonwealth for its East Coast corporate campus," said McAuliffe. "When one of the world's most successful companies chooses to expand its footprint across Virginia, it is a testament to our talented workforce and business climate. Because it was a priority to win this transformational project, we partnered with Virginia's Major Employment and Investment Project Approval Commission to ensure that AWS chose the Commonwealth. We have a longstanding relationship with Amazon and are proud that the company will continue to play a key role in building the new Virginia economy."

"With one of the largest technology workforces in the nation, Northern Virginia is an ideal home for Amazon Web Services' East Coast corporate campus," said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Todd Haymore. "Nearly 7,000 Virginians already are employed by this global leader, and along with Amazon's new distribution center in Frederick County, the company will be adding more than 2,000 new jobs over the next several years. This major win for Virginia is the culmination of teamwork by

Fairfax County, Governor McAuliffe, key General Assembly members, and the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, demonstrating the Commonwealth's inclusive approach to economic development."

Upon the hiring of 600 new employees, Amazon Web Services will be eligible to receive \$7,000 per net new job created, up to 1,500 total jobs, through an MEI custom performance grant, approved by the Governor and the MEI Commission, and subject to approval by the General Assembly.

"Amazon Web Services has quickly established a major presence in Fairfax County, and we are proud that the company has chosen to expand here with its East Coast corporate campus," said Gerald L. Gordon, Ph.D., president and CEO of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. "Any community would be thrilled to have this employer and this kind of corporate presence, and I am delighted the county's diversified IT base, workforce and quality of life offer the right mix for the company."

"Amazon Web Services' decision to expand its operations in the Dulles Technology Corridor is a testament to the quality business climate and tech-savvy workforce our area provides," said state Sen. Jennifer Wexton (D-33). "Amazon Web Services has been an outstanding corporate citizen here in Virginia, and we welcome their new operations."

"Herndon, Virginia will be the home of the East Coast campus of Amazon Web Services," said Del. Jennifer Boysko (D-86). "We are grateful to the Governor, General Assembly members, and VEDP for working together with Amazon Web Services to secure this project, which brings more than 1,000 jobs to my district. Our talented, highly educated workforce and vibrant community welcomes this opportunity."

Vendors Sought for Reston Multicultural Festival

Reston Community Center is seeking arts and crafts vendors, food vendors and civic organizations of all cultures for the 17th Annual Reston Multicultural Festival. The festival will be held Saturday, Sept. 23, at Lake Anne Plaza in Reston.

All vendors' applications are accepted through July 28, 2017. Interested groups or individuals should fill out the appropriate Vendor Application Form, available at www.restoncommunitycenter.com/mcf. To ensure that your application is reviewed in a timely manner, it is essential that all application guidelines are followed and submitted by the deadline.

Visual artists who wish to participate in the Multicultural Festival art exhibit Art Mirrors Culture should check www.restoncommunitycenter.com in mid-July for more information and the Call for Entries. Entry forms will be due on Aug. 18.

Reston Multicultural Festival is a family-oriented event and any material sold or presented must be suitable for all ages and free of any content that would be inappropriate for a diverse, multicultural and multigenerational audience. See application guidelines for more details.

For more information about the festival, visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com/mcf.

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Reston Town Center continues its commitment for community events and free entertainment all year long.

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Herndon Becoming 'Dementia Friendly Community'

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly addresses Alzheimer's Town Hall.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

“Alzheimer's disease will touch every American family at some time or other. There aren't many other conditions you can say that about. Today, Alzheimer's kills more people each year than breast cancer and prostate cancer combined,” said U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) to the attendees of the Town Hall meeting at the headquarters of the National Capital Area Alzheimer's Association in McLean on Monday, June 10.

Connolly was one of several speakers on the agenda, that included representatives from the National Alzheimer's Association, the Agency on Aging from Fairfax and Prince William counties, the Virginia Alzheimer's Commission, and the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association.

Cindy Schelhorn, senior director of communication with the Alzheimer's Association, opened the event and Connolly began the session with a personal story about the disease's effect on his own family. “My Irish immigrant grandmother survived the boat journey to America, even being robbed on the ship. She worked hard. She saved. She was able to bring her own mother and her brothers over from Ireland. She wasn't able to fight off Alzheimer's.”

Connolly told of his grandmother's strength from years of hard work “and walking to Mass everyday.” In some ways, said the congressman, her physical fitness proved to be less than a blessing after the disease struck. “She lived a long time with Alzheimer's. Watching her fade away before my eyes was one of the most difficult things I had to deal with growing up. The worst is knowing your loved one knows something isn't right, but there is nothing they can do.”

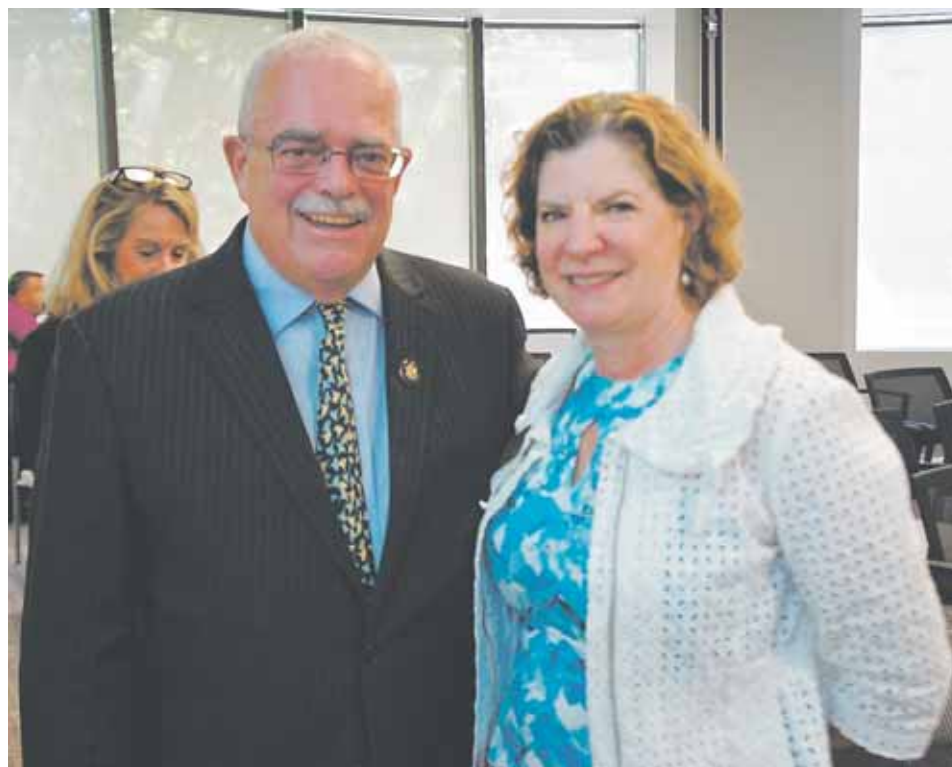
THE CONGRESSMAN has co-sponsored the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act and the Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act, supported the RAISE Family Caregivers Act and is a member of the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer's. But he is concerned. “The President's FY 2018 Budget, and many of the bills currently on the table would wreak havoc, throwing people out of nursing homes and adult care centers, and severely limiting care and resources for our vulnerable seniors.” A threatened 18 percent cut in the funding for the National Institutes for Health “would gut federally funded research ... it certainly would bring us no closer to a cure,” said Connolly. “And right now, there is no cure. There really isn't much in the way of treatment.”

“There are about 140,000 Virginians es-



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

The panel at the Alzheimer's Town Hall included U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11), and representatives from the National and local Alzheimer's Association, Area Agencies on Aging, the Virginia Alzheimer's Commission, and the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association.



U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly with Toni Reinhart who is spearheading efforts to make Herndon the first “Dementia Friendly Community” in the Commonwealth, with education and training in real-life encounters and situations to make living with dementia easier on patients, caregivers, families and the community.

timated to be suffering from some form of dementia,” said panelist Sharon Davis with the Virginia Alzheimer's Commission, and she says the effect of the disease takes a toll on the family as well as the afflicted. “I have spent more than half of my adult life as a caregiver.” Davis's husband is now a live-in patient at a memory-care facility, suffering from early-onset Alzheimer's. Her mother lived for 18 years with the disease.

“It's a tragedy. It's a disease that robs them of what should be the best years, time they

have earned to relax and enjoy.” As Davis pointed out, it's also a disease that can have devastating emotional and financial impacts on families, as many struggle to cope physically and financially to provide usually round-the-clock care.

Stories of heartbreak and challenges continued, but Karen Hannigan with Fairfax County Area Agency on Aging wants to get the word out that there is help and support, for the patient and the families and caregivers.

“Herndon is so community-focused. Our leaders are very service-oriented. I think it's the best place to get this rolling in Virginia.”

— Toni Reinhart,
owner of Herndon-based
Comfort Keepers

“We operate based on the ‘No Wrong Door Initiative’ model,” said Hannigan.

That model means that persons who call for help don't encounter a “sorry, wrong department and we can't help” response. “No matter what, we guide you. Our staff are ‘field-trained.’ We know the system. Let us do the navigating and take away at least that much stress from the situation.”

Negotiating the government regulations, the gaps between Medicare and Medicaid, the insurance maze, and trying to find appropriate resources while dealing with the actual disease and its effects on the patient, and possibly on the family as caregivers, can be overwhelming. “Call us, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at 703-324-7948,” said Hannigan. “You don't need to know all of the information. We do. Just tell us your story.”

The National Alzheimer's Association also offers a helpline. “It's free care consultation. It's nationwide. We work with agencies around the country and can help you get to the right people,” said Jane Priest, program manager with the association. “24/7, call us at 1-800-272-3900, or visit the website at www.alz.org.”

Along with more assistance for patients, caregivers and families, Priest and others on the dais and in the audience want to see more focus on education and training, as well. The National Alzheimer's Association and the regional chapters are dedicating more time and resources on outreach programs. Annandale resident Catherine Bergstrom who attended the event welcomes this initiative.

Bergstrom related the experiences of her husband who had to be hospitalized. “This was a hospital, and they still did not know how to deal with a patient suffering from this disease.”

Sharon Davis of the Virginia Alzheimer's Commission added her own stories of her husband's treatment at hospitals and medical facilities that worsened his mental state, instead of improving the situation.

SEE TOWN HALL, PAGE 10

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Home LifeStyle

Redefining Space

Designer thinks outside the proverbial box.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL

A local interior designer believes in thinking outside the box when it comes to making the best use of space in one's home.

"My advice to homeowners is to embrace spaces within their homes as if they were never assigned," said Joe Van Goethem of Joseph Van Goethem Interior Design in McLean. "Depending on location, a space previously designated as a walk-in closet can be purposefully transformed into an intimate guest bedroom, home office, or multipurpose wine cellar and bar."

Van Goethem followed his own advice when he transformed a walk-in foyer closet in his home into a multipurpose wine cellar, complete with a wine refrigerator, beer cooler, ice maker and cigar humidor. "Why a walk-in closet if it's seldom used, and only to become an open invitation for hidden clutter?" he asked. "Envision new, functional possibilities for every space within your home."

Van Goethem, who not only designed the space, but also completed the construction himself, believes that "playing with scale and attention to every detail are key when considering the transformation of a confined space such as a walk-in closet," he said. "[The] closet had a nondescript narrow solid door, glued-down wood veneer floor, shelving and hanging rods, and one light fixture."

In finishing the project, Van Goethem widened the door framing to accommodate a new French door and added storage space for a concealed television. He also installed an intercom to allow those in the cellar to communicate with those in the kitchen.

"I ripped up the old floor [and replaced it] with Spanish marble tile flooring," he said. "I added a baseboard and crown moulding, and created a grid of moulding on the walls which I painted with Farrow & Ball's Purbeck Stone. I installed Extra



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOE VAN GOETHEM

Interior designer Joe Van Goethem transformed a walk-in closet in his McLean home into a wine cellar.

Fine Arrowroot Grasscloth hand crafted wallcovering by Phillip Jeffries within the recesses of the grid."

Van Goethem said his goal was to make the design of the new cellar consistent with the aestheticS of the rest of his home. The space includes a large drum light fixture and side lamps. An oversized cabinet holds the stemware and barware. He added a commissioned seascape painting by California artist Jonathan Koch and modern teapots by Washington, D.C. ceramicist Joe Hicks.

"Details are important in design, but they are everything ... when transforming a small space like the repurposing of a walk-in closet," said Van Goethem.

"My advice to homeowners is to embrace spaces within their homes as if they were never assigned."

— Joe Van Goethem of Joseph Van Goethem Interior Design



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THE CONNECTION
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SPECIAL PULLOUT TAB

Newcomers & Community Guide
August 23, 2017

The annual Newcomers and Community Guides for each of our 15 communities with inside facts on what makes each community special, their secret places, the real power players, how to get involved and more.

Including the history, schools, parks, libraries, local people, elected officials, county/city offices, how decisions are made, a calendar of events and other vital community information.

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Send entertainment announcements to www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

Jazz in the City Exhibit. Various times at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Kristine Keller and Robert Gilbert paint with an interest in New York. Call 703-956-9560 or visit www.artspaceherndon.com for more.

Cardboard Boat Regatta.

Registration now open for race on Aug. 12, 2-6 p.m. at Lake Anne, Reston. Participating teams of all ages will construct and decorate their own life-size cardboard boats. For more information or to register a team, visit www.restonmuseum.org/cardboard. Team sponsorships begin at \$100 for adults and families or \$40 for students (ages 10-18 years of age). For questions or more information on getting involved, contact Elizabeth Didiano at lacbregatta@gmail.com or 703-709-7700.

Free Concerts. Through Aug. 26, 7:30-10 p.m. every Saturday night in the pavilion at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. Call 703-912-4062 or visit www.restontowncenter.com/concerts for more.

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

Teen and Adult Art Classes

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

THURSDAY/JULY 13

Rob Ickes & Trey Hensley (Bluegrass). 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Kidwell Farm, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Thursday Evening Concert Series. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

FRIDAY/JULY 14

Mac and Cheese Night. 6:30-9 p.m. at The Lake House, 11450 Baron Cameron Ave., Reston. July 14 is National Mac and Cheese Day and The Lake House is celebrating with a macaroni craft, noodle games, and food. \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. Email kelsey@reston.org or call 703-435-7995 for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 15

Comedy and Magic. 10-10:45 a.m. at Reston Town Square Park, 11990 Market St. A fast-paced, side-splitting family vaudeville show filled with audience participation and circus skills with a sprinkling of magic. Presented by Reston Community Center and Reston Town Center Association. Free. Call 703-476-4500 or visit restoncommunitycenter.com.

Family Game Days. 10:30 a.m.-noon at Town Hall Square, 730 Elden St., Herndon. Different games each Saturday from corn hole to sack races. Free. Email

Be Transported to Music Nirvana

‘Rodgers and Hammerstein’s A Grand Night for Singing’ at NextStop Theatre.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

A cornucopia of musical standards of the American Songbook, but with fresh interpretations will bring the joys of love to NextStop Theater audiences. It is “Rodgers & Hammerstein’s A Grand Night for Singing” the initial offering for NextStop’s 2017-18 season

The music of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II fueled major Broadway musicals for decades. NextStop will soar with nearly three dozen musical numbers in a special cabaret setting with patrons up-close to the performers. Under the direction of Michael Bobbitt, the songs have been “reimagined in funny, touching and unexpected ways; all for audience delight.” said Bobbit.

In its 30 year history, first as Elden Street Players and now NextStop, there has not been a work by Rodgers and Hammerstein produced noted Evan Hoffmann, NextStop’s artistic director. “What better way to start a new season, than with a musical that takes all of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s most iconic songs and gives them clever and unexpected meanings?”

A musical revue, the production received several Tony Award nominations. It was originally conceived by Walter Bobbie, with arrangements by Fred Wells and orchestration by Michael Gibson and Jonathan Tunick. The music at NextStop will take off under the music direction of Northern Virginia favorite, Elisa Rosman.

Featuring songs that will leave patrons humming, “A Grand Night for Singing” includes memorable numbers like “If I Loved You (“Carousel”), “Everything is Up to Date in Kansas City” (“Oklahoma”), “Do I Love You Because You’re Beautiful?” (“Cinderella”), “Honey Bun” (“South Pacific”). And of course, “It’s a Grand Night



PHOTO BY S. METCALF/COURTESY OF NEXTSTOP THEATRE
Karen Vincent and Matthew Hirsh in “Rodgers and Hammerstein’s A Grand Night for Singing” at NextStop Theatre in Herndon.

for Singing” (“State Fair”).

“You will be surprised at how many songs you know if you didn’t think you would,” said Bobbitt, “They are essential parts of our pop culture with fantastic music and lyrics; some of the best ever written.”

The evening will feature the voice of Karen Vincent. She was Helen-Hayes Award nominated for her performance in Next Stop’s “Kiss Me Kate.” The production also features Matthew Kirsh, who received a Helen Hayes Award for NextStop’s “Catch Me If You Can.” They will be joined by Kathleen Riddle, Marquis White and Sarah Ann Silver.

Rodgers and Hammerstein’s music and lyrics are never out-of-date; remaining deep parts of the Great American Songbook. “Rodgers & Hammerstein’s A Grand Night for Singing”

speaks to the heart; whether you are young or older, even if you are less familiar with them from your own past,” said Hoffmann.

Where & When

NextStop Theatre presents “Rodgers & Hammerstein’s A Grand Night for Singing” performed at 269 Sunset Park Drive (Inside the Sunset Business Park on Spring Street), Herndon. Performances: July 20 to Aug. 20, 2017. Thursdays at 8 p.m.; Fridays at 8 p.m.; Saturdays – July 22 at 7 p.m., July 29 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., Aug. 5, 12, 19 at 8 p.m.; Sundays – July 23 at 2 p.m., Aug. 6 at 2 p.m., Aug. 13 and 20 at 8 p.m. Tickets \$40. Call 866-811-4111 or visit www.nextstoptheatre.org.

free fitness sessions with a variety of fitness instructors every Sunday morning. Call 703-668-0256 or visit stores.athleta.net/store-4866/

Sunday Art in the Park. 3-5 p.m. in the Park Reston Town Square Park, 11900 Market St. See local art and talk to artists. Visit restonarts.org or call 703-471-9242 for more.

Le Hotclub de Biglic Concert. 4-6 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Gypsy Jazz style of music. Call 703-956-9560 or visit www.artspaceherndon.com for more.

Sunday Art in the Park. 7-8 p.m. at Reston Town Square Park, 11990 Market St. Jonathan Snowden, one of Britain’s well-known flutists, and his wife Su Snowden (piano) present a selection of favorites. Free. Call 703-476-4500 or visit restoncommunitycenter.com.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 19

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra

parks/performances.

SUNDAY/JULY 23

Exercise with Athleta. 11 a.m.-noon at Reston Town Center Pavilion, 11900 Market St., Reston Town Center. Barre with Brooke from Pure Barre of Reston; part of Athleta’s free fitness sessions with a variety of fitness instructors every Sunday morning. Call 703-668-0256 or visit stores.athleta.net/store-4866/.

Sunday Art in the Park. 3-5 p.m. in the Park Reston Town Square Park, 11900 Market St. See local art and talk to artists. Visit <http://restonarts.org> or call 703-471-9242 for more.

Artists Reception. 4-6 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Artists submitted photos for the 2018 Herndon Town Calendar, and are eligible for to receive the Herndon Town Calendar People’s Choice Award. Photos will be on display from July 11-August 5. Call 703-956-9560 or visit www.artspaceherndon.com for more.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 26

The Grandsons Jr. (Children Songs). 10-11 a.m. at the Visitor Center Pavilion, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Wednesday Morning Children’s Series. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov

THURSDAY/JULY 27

Summer Movie Series. 2 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Hindi musical about a musician who falls for an unhappy woman who is waiting for her absent love to return. In Hindi, with English subtitles. Free. Call 703-689-2700 for more.

Jazz History Lecture. 6-7 p.m. at Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market Street, Suite 103. Michael J. West is a jazz journalist that delivers a lecture followed by open conversation. Free. Visit restonarts.org or call 703-471-9242.

The Spiritual Rez (Reggae/Funk). 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Kidwell Farm, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Thursday Evening Concert Series. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

SATURDAY/JULY 29

Family Game Days. 10:30 a.m.-noon at Town Hall Square, 730 Elden St. Different games each Saturday from corn hole to sack races. Free. Email parksandrec@herndon-va.gov or call 703-787-7300 for more.

Dollars and Sense Book Club. 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Topic will be “Things a Little Bird Told Me” by Biz Stone. Free. Call 703-689-2700 for more.

Love Canon Concert. 7:30-10 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. Bluegrass version of hits from the ’80s. Call 703-912-4062 or visit www.restontowncenter.com/concerts for more.

Hillbilly Gypsies Concert. 7:30 p.m. at Arrowbrook Centre Park, Field Point Road, Herndon. Bluegrass music. Call 703-324-7469 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances.

SUNDAY/JULY 30

Film Screening. 6 p.m. in Timothy’s Episcopal Church, 432 Van Buren St., Herndon. Martin Scorsese’s newest film about a 17th century Portuguese Jesuit priest. Email kkinsolv@yahoo.com or tlallen1@fcps.edu for more.

News

Sophia Skiavo, 15, of Chantilly volunteers at Herndon Community Television. She tested one of HCTV's photo magnets to frame an image of her mom, Amy Skiavo, and the iconic Herndon Depot. The photo frame magnet is part of HCTV's new Social Media outreach campaign, Share Your #HCTVLove of Herndon.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID SKIAVO

Love of Herndon, Televised

Herndon Community Television is set to launch social media campaign.

By MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Although Herndon Community Television (HCTV) has actively engaged in social media for quite some time, after a year of planning, they are ready to harness even greater potential by connecting people, photos and information with their organization through their new outreach campaign named, "Share Your #HCTVLove of Herndon." The social media campaign is user-friendly and photo-centric.

According to Marsha Kerman, programming director at Herndon Community Television, the nonprofit organization will launch the campaign during the July 14 Friday Night Live! concert scheduled for 6:30-10 p.m. on the Herndon Town Green located at the Municipal Building, 777 Lynn St., in Historic Downtown Herndon.

HCTV staff and volunteers will be on hand Friday evening to explain the campaign. Posters displayed in local businesses throughout Herndon will also explain the campaign and be used to spread the word. Kerman said the objective is straightforward: participants post photos with the hashtag #HCTVLove of their favorite Herndon spots, themselves, or loved ones on their social media accounts, like Facebook and Twitter. HCTV will share what is happening in the community by incorporating recent posts into their televised "Bulletin Board" which runs between scheduled programs.

As a creative fun incentive and to reinforce the L-O-V-E theme, HCTV will distribute 400 photo frame magnets with a cutout heart shape in it. The free magnet can be picked up at the HCTV tent during the July 14 Friday Night Live! concert. Participants are encouraged to incorporate the magnet in their images Kerman said.

HCTV will also be promoting the campaign and distributing magnets at Arts Herndon's Third Thurs-



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON

Herndon Community Television will distribute 400 photo frame magnets with a cutout heart shape in it as a creative fun incentive to reinforce the L-O-V-E theme of their new photo-centric Social Media Outreach Campaign, "Share Your #HCTVLove of Herndon."

day Arts Crawl, scheduled for the evening of Thursday, July 20, 6-9 p.m.

Herndon Community Television is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation that serves as the only public access station for the Town of Herndon. HCTV broadcasts more than 17 hours of daily non-commercial television programming consisting of a diverse lineup of original hyperlocal content paired with informative and entertaining programs from across the world. In addition to producing recurring series and covering local events, Herndon Community Television provides the civic function of live broadcasts for Town of Herndon Public Hearings. Viewers in the Town of Herndon, Fairfax County, and parts of Loudoun County can enjoy HCTV on Verizon FiOS Channel 28 and Cox Communication Channel 23. HCTV can be watched worldwide from a live stream via their website.

Herndon Community Television is primarily run by volunteers and is always looking for new members of the community to help grow their station and their programs. Individuals interested in obtaining more information or volunteering can contact HCTV's Executive Director, Nancy Rose, at hctv23@hctv.org or 703-689-2323.

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-Werner Heisenberg

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NEWS

Town Hall Discusses Alzheimer's Challenge

FROM PAGE 6

"And what about a patient that can't communicate to the emergency room staff because of their condition?" asked Connolly, or even worse, the Alzheimer's sufferer who doesn't have a caring family member who can help "interpret" during medical transactions or who can advocate on the patient's behalf?

THE OUTREACH PROGRAMS of the Alzheimer's Association seek to train the general public, as well as doctors, caregivers, law enforcement personnel and others on how to recognize if someone is suffering from Alzheimer's or dementia, and how to best react and assist.

Currently, there are no "Dementia Friendly Communities" in Virginia. The model, which seeks to raise awareness of the disease and of dementia in general and offer training and tips for real-life encounters is being tested in other jurisdictions nearby. Toni Reinhart, owner of Herndon-based Comfort Keepers that provides in-home senior and elder care services, wants to change that. This month, she is gathering local service and community leaders in her area to make Herndon a "proof of concept" project. "Herndon is so commu-



PHOTO BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Catherine Bergstrom of Annandale relates the hospital experiences of her husband, who suffered from the disease. "It was a hospital ... and they did not know how to deal with this condition or situation. We need to educate and raise awareness even to doctors and medical staff."

nity-focused. Our leaders are very service-oriented. I think it's the best place to get this rolling in Virginia."

Connolly applauded all of these efforts, as he pledged to continue to fight for Alzheimer's funding. "There are 1.1 million people in Fairfax County. Eleven percent are

over 65. The fastest growing population is over 80. This is an issue that won't just go away. We need to take action now. Contact your members of Congress — and not just the 'friendlies!' We have a 'moon-shot' for fighting cancer. Well, we need a 'moon-shot' to fight Alzheimer's disease."

FAITH NOTES

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

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church needs knitters the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 7 p.m., at 432 Van Buren St., Herndon. The church's Prayer Shawl Ministry is offering free knitting instruction while providing shawls, blankets and other knitted items for people in need. No cost and yarn can be provided. Email shawl@saint-timothys.org or visit the Pastoral Care page at www.saint-timothys.org.

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

Trinity Presbyterian Church, 651 Dranesville Road, Herndon, has Sunday worship services at 10 a.m. during the summer. Nursery and childcare are provided starting at 8 a.m. until the end of the service. Call 703-437-5500 or visit www.trinityherndon.org.

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center, Unitarian Universalist Church, 1625

Wiehle Ave., Reston, holds weekly classes starting Sept. 12, Thursdays 7:30-8:30 p.m., for the general public which use Buddhist teachings to practice meditation. \$12 or \$6 for students, seniors and unemployed. Call 202-986-2257 or visit www.meditation-dc.org.

St. Anne's Episcopal Church, 1700 Wainwright Drive, Reston, holds Sunday services at 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and contemporary service at 5 p.m. during the summer. Nursery, Sunday school and adult education available. Call 703-437-6530 or visit www.stannes-reston.org.

HAVEN of Northern Virginia offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. Call 703-941-7000 or visit www.havenofnova.org for schedules and registration information.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and the Jewish Outreach Institute offer the Mothers/Parents Circle, an umbrella of free educational events and resources. Jewish rituals, ethics and the creation of a Jewish home, regular meetings and group Shabbats and holidays. Participants include Sha're Shalom,

Congregation Beth Emeth, Temple Rodef Shalom and the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia. Visit ShalomDC.org.

Hope Fellowship Church will temporarily be meeting at Hyatt Place, 21481 Ridgetop Circle, Sterling. Sunday worship services are Sundays at 9:30 and 10:45 a.m., a Bible Study is on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. and a weekly prayer conference call is Thursdays at 9 p.m. The public is invited to join a Bible believing, multi-ethnic/multi-cultural congregation, with Bible-based sermons and uplifting music. Call 703-599-3527 or visit www.hopefellowshipchurchloudoun.org.

Epiphany United Methodist Preschool, 1014 Country Club Drive, N.E. in Vienna, is now enrolling 3- to 4-year-old students. Call 703-938-2391 or visit www.epiphanypreschool.com.

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

BULLETIN

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ by noon on Friday.

THURSDAY/JULY 13

The American Legion Department of Virginia Hiring Fair. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at The Hilton Washington Dulles Airport, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon. Call 202-578-9255 or visit hiringourheroes.org for more.

DMV To Go. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Reston Town Center Pavilion, 11900 Market St., Reston Town Center. DMV wireless office on wheels – apply or renew an ID card and driver's license; get driving records; obtain vehicle titles, license plates, decals, order disabled plates, and more. Visit re.ston.tc/P9HLkh for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 15

Free Health Screening. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Fox Mill Giant, 2551 John Milton Drive, Herndon. Customers can receive free blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol screenings. Visit www.giantfood.com for more.

THROUGH JULY 28

Vendor Application Deadline. Reston Community Center is seeking arts and crafts vendors, food vendors and civic organizations of all cultures for the 17th Annual Reston Multicultural Festival. The festival will be held Saturday, Sept. 23, 2017 at Lake Anne Plaza in Reston. Interested groups or individuals should fill out the appropriate Vendor Application Form, available at www.restoncommunitycenter.com/mcf.

THROUGH JULY 31

Backpacks for Students. Various times at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 10550 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Christ the King's Team Service is collaborating with Reston's aid to families organization Cornerstones and school supplies collection organization Kids R First to help youngsters in the community. Collections will run through July; drop off in the church lobby. Visit www.gflutheran.org or call 703-759-6068.

Plum

FROM PAGE 4

would have 10,400 more staff instructing students and making sure the schools run smoothly.”

The other example is in health care. The Remote Area Medical (RAM) clinic in Wise County is well known having been featured on an edition of 60 Minutes. There thousands of Virginians receive their health care for the year in a weekend clinic held on the local fairgrounds. The federal Affordable Care Act did not help as the legislature would not take federal monies to expand Medicaid that would have helped these people in need. The state turned its back on nearly \$5 billion paid into the federal system by Virginia taxpayers because it did not want to have anything to do with what it termed Obamacare. What has happened in the meantime? A second RAM weekend clinic has been opened in Lee County nearby to Wise in Southwest Virginia, and a new clinic has been started in Emporia in Greensville County in Southside Virginia.

We definitely need to balance our budget, but we need to balance it against our needs. How could we seriously propose to cut our income when there continue to be such extensive unmet needs in the Commonwealth?

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A Near Catastrophe, Always

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



As I bring our two cat carriers up from the basement in order for “The Buff Boys” to acclimate in anticipation of their impending visit to the veterinarian, I can’t help but think back to the spring of 1976. That’s when an appointment to mend my male cat, Tillie, nearly went very wrong.

To this day, the circumstances still haunt me. Tillie had been a surprise birthday gift given to me in September 1975, along with a puppy I named Gus (both named after a W.C. Fields’ movie, “Tillie and Gus”).

Tillie was an all-black domestic short hair. Gus was a German Shepard/St. Bernard mix. He was beautiful. He had a white-ish beige coat, floppy ears and a curly tail.

Introduced to one another at 6 weeks old, Tillie and Gus were the best of friends/siblings. Though I made sure they spent their evenings inside, during the day, both were outside. (We had a fenced-in yard so Gus was confined. Tillie however, as you might imagine was not. He had the run of the neighborhood.)

Sure enough, one day, Tillie got into a cat fight. His tail had been bitten and was beginning to abscess. I knew I had to take him to the veterinarian. However, I was in college and had very little money to spare. Nor did I have a credit card either. (Those were the days before credit card companies solicited college students.) In a financial bind, I called my parents and asked for money (I did work in the dining hall all through college but lived in a house off campus and had the usual room and board-type expenses).

They sent me \$25. (In my mind, I can still see the check.) In addition to whatever other money I could scrape together, I guess it was enough so I took Tillie to the “vet” for repair. He stayed overnight. The next day, I got the call that he was ready for pick-up. That’s when the event occurred that has affected me/my animal-owning life going on – four decades plus.

I went by myself. I had a car; a 1970 Ford Maverick, but no cat carrier. I was, apparently, planning on simply holding Tillie in my arms as I had done the day before. However, the pick-up was not nearly as uneventful as the drop-off.

Once I got outside the building, Tillie began squirming (his tail had been shaved and had stitches where the abscess/bite had been inflicted) and broke free from my grasp. He ran off about 20 yards – or so to the rear of this modest one-story building and stopped just shy of a chain-link fence which separated where we all were to another neighborhood – beyond my reach. My fear: had Tillie climbed over that fence somehow, he likely would have been gone forever.

Slowly I approached Tillie, repeatedly calling his name as quietly and reassuringly as I could, trying not to rattle, startle or scare him in any way; presuming post-surgery, in an unfamiliar place, possibly in pain, it might not take much from his father to cause him to scamper off and disappear.

As I casually walked toward him, amazingly, Tillie sort of stood still, enough for me to scoop him up. Which I did and then carefully walked back to my car and drove us both home without any further ado – except for the rest of my taking-cats-to-the-“vet” life. And yes, that means now.

And though I’m not stupid enough to transport cats without cat carriers anymore, I am only at ease once we’re back home and have let the cats out of their boxes and released them into the house (all our cats are indoor cats). Throughout this process, I must check the latches on their carriers a half-a-dozen times; in the house, in the car, in the parking lot outside the “vet’s” office, in the waiting room, in the examining room and then again afterwards; back in the waiting room while I pay, in the car on the way home and finally in the driveway as I prepare to carry the carriers/cats across the yard and into the house. Once inside with the cats/carriers in hand, finally I can relax. Home at last.

Forty-one years ago; it seems like yesterday, or maybe tomorrow if the “vet” can see us. And that’s what worries me. Been there and unfortunately, have done that.

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

The Last Straw for Marine Animals and Fish

Karan Marari, 11, is out to change practices and behaviors related to the use of plastic straws in restaurants.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Herndon and Reston are not coastal beach towns. There is no bustling Atlantic boardwalk, amusement park, and ocean surf filled with marine life. Yet, when it rains in Herndon, Reston, and elsewhere in the region, stormwater runoff picks up litter – cigarette butts, plastics, and other debris, carrying them to the closest storm drain. Even with grates and detention ponds, polluted runoff usually flows into the nearest run, stream, river or lake, then into the Chesapeake Bay and the ocean. Unlike sewer systems with treatment plants, stormwater runoff is not treated.

Karan Marari, 11, of Reston is passionate about marine science. Although Marari lives in Reston, not a coastal town, he is determined to tackle ocean plastic pollution one straw at a time. His goal is to reduce the use of plastic straws locally with his “no straw request.” He is educating restaurant owners, urging them to change their wait staff’s behaviors and practices that lead to the unsolicited placement of plastic straws in patrons’ drinks.

While attending a weeklong summer session at Virginia Institute for Marine Studies (VIMS) – William & Mary College, Summer Science Camp 2016, Marari studied the impact of plastic pollution on marine life. He refined his education further, focusing his environmental interest on the seemingly innocuous plastic drinking straw. The National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior reports Americans use 500 million straws a day, that’s 1.6 straws per person per day. Recycling of straws is generally an afterthought, and compostable straws can be upwards of four times the cost of plastic straws.

MARARI SAID HE LEARNED plastic straws made the top 10 list of marine litter found during Ocean Conservancy’s International Coastal Cleanup 2016 Report – a fact corroborated by Ocean Today at NOAA.gov.

Marari said straws are mistaken for food by marine life, endangering their lives. Straws, being lightweight, float on the top of the water and are caught in under surface currents as well. Straws can become lodged in nostrils, blowholes, and gills of marine life as the animals and fish skim the surface for food or swim. Straws are ingested too. Marari added plastic is non-biodegradable. “It will never disintegrate entirely,” Marari reported. Instead, plastic breaks into smaller and smaller pieces. Marari explained marine animals eat the small pieces, and as ABC.net reports in their article by Genelle Weule, Feb. 27, 2017, there is “evidence of microplastics in deep-



Karan Marari, 11, has his eye on being a marine environmentalist. In the meantime, his goal is to educate and work with local restaurant owners, such as Barrie Impellizzeri, co-owner of Lucia’s Italiano Ristorante in Herndon, by sharing information about the adverse impact plastic straws have on marine life. Jim Powers, a restaurant patron, sips his drink without a straw.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



When Karan Marari was informed of negative feedback from some of Lucia’s customers who believed Marari’s “No Straw Campaign” was a way to reduce expenses for the restaurant owner, Marari reformatted his table posters. He added his photo and the reason why he was doing the campaign, taking on the accountability.

So Marari considered the one item on the list that was an option for individuals to change, not corporations – the use of plastic straws.

Marari said he next thought about where most plastic straws were used. “I figured it was probably restaurants,” he said. “So I made a sign and tried to find restaurants

that would support my idea. I decided to come to Lucia’s Restaurant first because the owner, Mr. Barrie [Impellizzeri] sponsored an event my mom was doing.”

Asked how he felt presenting his offer first policy that requested the wait staff at Lucia’s only provide straws if asked, Marari looked down. “I was nervous,” he said. “That’s because I never talked to a store owner before about this sort of business.” Marari added he was also afraid Impellizzeri would reject him and his idea.

Impellizzeri said, “Karan sold me on it. He told me his idea, his background, how he was back from marine bio camp and he had the idea about plastic straws. I thought it was an excellent idea.” Asked if there had been a significant difference in straw usage, Impellizzeri said, “I would say, we’ve had a reduction in the use of straws by 25 percent. I think it was higher at the beginning.” Explaining how he implemented the program, Impellizzeri said, “We switched from putting unwrapped straws in every drink to no straws in the drinks at all. Now we ask the customers if they would like a straw.”

FEEDBACK from customers is vital though. “I’ve heard positive and negative [customer feedback],” Impellizzeri reminded Marari. “Positive, that it is a great idea. I never thought about that before. And when I tell them how it started and with whom, they are astonished by a young man coming up with this idea and taking it on.”

Marari shared that he had to reformat the design of his poster, as feedback from some Lucia’s customers indicated they believed the offer first policy was Impellizzeri idea to save money, cut expenses. “A few weeks into it, some people began saying it was just the restaurant wanting to save money. I don’t know why they would think that,” Marari said out loud. “So I wrote a biography on the back of my poster.”

As for the impact of one person, a child, dedicated to create change, Impellizzeri said that when he speaks with customers and tells them about Marari, his campaign, and that he is only 11, “It gives me goosebumps while telling Marari’s story to customers, about this young man and his vision of the future.”

Asked if he’ll keep the campaign going, Impellizzeri said, “I’ll keep this going as long as I can. It’s a smart decision. You don’t have to drink out of a straw. And we all share the same planet.”

Marari continues to approach restaurant owners in Reston, Herndon, and Maryland about his campaign to reduce plastic straw usage through an offer first policy. The most recent restaurant to sign on is Passage to India | Spice Xing by Chef/Owner Sudhir Seth located in Maryland.

For more information about choosing to be straw free, email Noplasticstraws@gmail.com.