



# Burke CONNECTION

Nick and Joe Margraf at Philmont Scout Ranch. Joe Margraf is the Scoutmaster for the Boy Scouts of America Troop 1346 in Burke. On July 24, he led a group of 21 Boy Scouts and seven leaders on a 100-mile trek through Northeastern New Mexico.

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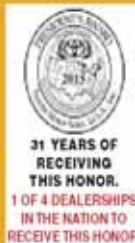
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**Joe Margraf and his crew after they summited Baldy Mountain at a height of 12,441 feet.**



## Burke Scouts, Leaders Plan High Elevation Adventure

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOE MARGRAF

**C**orporate and association meeting planners always remember that one special meeting or event that stands out from the hundreds of others they have worked on over their career. It is even more rare when a planner can tie in a volunteer organization that he/she works with into a successful event. That is exactly what Joe Margraf was able to achieve this past summer.

Margraf is the manager of the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Events (MICE) Division for Omega World Travel in Fairfax. But in his spare time, he is the Scoutmaster for the Boy Scouts of America Troop 1346 in Burke. On July 24, he led a group of 21 Boy Scouts and 7 leaders on a 100-mile trek through Northeastern New Mexico. The group spent 12 days hiking the New Mexico wilderness on a visit to Philmont Scout Ranch. Located in Cimarron, N. M., the 214-square-mile ranch is in the rugged wilderness of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and features trails climbing from 6,500 feet to 12,441 feet.

**THESE TRIPS** are a once in a lifetime opportunity for boy scouts and their leaders, and the preparation for them starts over a year and half in advance. The adult leaders handle all the logistics associated with each trip. In fact, Margraf had planned two other past trips to Canada and the Bahamas, but this one was longer with triple the number of participants. Last fall, Margraf had just started working at Omega World Travel and decided to approach his director about having Omega help with the boy scout trip.

Margraf's meeting team at Omega was able to assemble several detailed proposals for the BSA group to consider. Omega incorporated and negotiated air, ground transportation and hotel options for the Boy Scout crew. Because the scouts and leaders need to acclimate to the high altitude of the area, Omega suggested two cities for the scouts to tour prior to their arrival at Philmont Scout Ranch; Denver/Colorado Springs or Albuquerque. Both cities were above 5,000 feet allowing for good acclimation.

Omega's meetings division researched the local areas of both cities to provide activity options for the group during those two days. The scouts ultimately voted on flying into Denver, and spending two nights in Colorado Springs. While there, they visited the Garden of Gods, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the Cogwheel Railway to Pike's Peak and the U.S. Olympic Training Center. It was the perfect pre-trip before beginning the intense journey at Philmont. With a major part of the planning out of the way, the Scouts and leaders were now able to focus on the intense training required for their trek.



**The first sunrise of the 12-day hiking trek**

Since the boy scout crew is boy-led – meaning the adult advisors are only there for guidance and safety, Margraf's 16-year-old son, Nick was the Crew Chief for his group during the Philmont trek. It was his responsibility to handle all aspects of the hike. Each participant had to carry a 40-50 pound backpack containing all of their supplies, including: tents, first aid supplies, clothing, camp stoves and freeze-dried meals while hiking between camps. The hikes were at a high altitude in bear and mountain lion territory, up and down steep climbs (switchbacks) and often during severe rain storms. The crew never passed a house or town along their journey, and only stopped for a short time every few days at bear-proof "commissaries" to grab more necessities. One of the most difficult yet highly anticipated parts of the trip was the climb to the summit of Baldy Mountain (elevation 12,441 feet.)

**WHILE ON THE TRAIL**, the Scouts participated in backcountry programs including rock climbing, building railroad track, black powder shooting, hatchet throwing, blacksmithing, western campfires as well as a conservation project centered on the upkeep of Philmont's ecosystem.

Cell phones were limited to the leaders; however, service was only available at the highest peaks or openings, with nowhere for charging. Margraf had all the scouts leave their phones behind and he too followed their example. So instead of the scouts being on their phones, they all needed to hang daily bear bags, cook and clean in the backcountry and set up tents before almost daily fast-moving mountain storms crept in during the early afternoons.

Margraf said, "This was truly a once in a lifetime experience and I am so glad I was able to complete the trek with my scouts, fellow leaders and most importantly, my younger son Nick. It was his leadership and daily encouragement that helped me immensely while on the trail."



FILE PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD

**The Kings Park German Band performs during the 2015 Oktoberfest Volksmarch.**

## Burke Church to Host Oktoberfest Walks, Bike Ride

**A**ccotink Unitarian Universalist Church (AUUC), 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke, will host free Oktoberfest walks and a bike ride on Saturday, Sept. 16, at 8 a.m. Join walkers of all ages and cyclists for the annual Oktoberfest Volksmarch and Biketoberfest. The self-guided walks and group bike rides start at the Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church in Burke. German food and drinks will be available for purchase while you enjoy traditional German music.

Walkers may begin anytime between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. but must finish by 3 p.m. The bike ride begins at 9 a.m.

The event (start and end) is held at 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke, just south of the Fairfax County Parkway and Burke Lake Road intersection.

For more information, visit [scenicroutes.us/nvv/events](http://scenicroutes.us/nvv/events) or contact [nicebrowns@verizon.net](mailto:nicebrowns@verizon.net).

A volksmarch, literally translated "people's walk," is a leisurely walk through a scenic, historic, or interesting area over a predetermined route. The free volkmarches pass through for-

ests and around Burke Lake. Choose from a five or 10-kilometer route (three or six miles) and walk, jog or run at your own pace. German food and drinks will be available for purchase while you enjoy traditional German music.

The trail is probably suitable for sturdy strollers but not wheelchairs. An adult must accompany children under 12. Leashed dogs are welcome. There is no charge to participate in the event. American Volksmarch Association credit is \$3 for those who record AVA walks.

The 24-mile group bike ride begins at 9 a.m. Leaders will take cyclists through neighborhoods, along a wide, paved path paralleling Rte. 123 and into Occoquan Park. Restrooms and water are available at the mid-way rest-stop, and a sweep will ensure that no one is dropped.

It's a great opportunity to get some exercise, enjoy the seasonal beauty, savor a tasty bratwurst, listen to some great music and maybe even perform the chicken dance. The event is co-sponsored by AUUC, the Northern Virginia Volksmarchers, and the Potomac Pedalers Touring Club.



**About 50 people attended the 2015 Oktoberfest Volksmarch at Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church in Burke.**



# Boot Filled with Love

BY MARTI MOORE  
THE CONNECTION

**O**n any given day, the concrete median along Waples Mill Road at its intersection with Lee Jackson Memorial Highway in Fairfax is the place where individuals faced with personal hardship muster the courage to ask for financial help from kind-hearted motorists stopped at this red light.

They yielded this spot Labor Day weekend to local firefighters — who hit the pavement and braved oncoming traffic to raise money for kids and adults not strong enough to help themselves in their struggle to move forward each day with muscular dystrophy.

At 4 p.m. Monday, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Capt. Matthew C. Burns and Master Technician Johnathan Macquilliam walk past 10 or more cars, trucks and motorcycles that roll up to this intersection and stop a minute or two — long enough for drivers and passengers to become first responders for a moment and participate in the annual “Fill the Boot” campaign for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

**BURNS AND MACQUILLIAM** belong to a team of 12 firefighters from Station 21 in Fair Oaks, who raised \$3,157.84 Labor Day



PHOTO BY MARTI MOORE/THE CONNECTION

**Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Master Technician Johnathan Macquilliam and Capt. Matthew C. Burns hold their boots high as they work a Labor Day crowd of generous motorists at a Fairfax traffic signal on Waples Mill Road and U.S. Route 50. They helped their Station 21 in Fair Oaks raise \$14,200.12 in just four days, Sept. 1-4, for MDA Greater Washington, D.C., and the International Association of Firefighters disaster relief fund.**

Monday for MDA Greater Washington, D.C. Their colleagues stand and walk in the middle of U.S. Route 50 and down the street

at Jermantown Road. They hold their boots high and flash a smile to the people they pledge to serve during an emergency call.

Generous motorists respond throughout the four-day weekend with immediate aid to stuff the boots of Station 21 with \$14,200.12.

“Crews have been out ever since Friday,” says Burns, who is the station commander. “Even in the rain,” he adds.

Area residents got a taste of Hurricane Harvey Saturday after it weakened over southern portions of the United States then dropped rain all day on Virginia, the District of Columbia and Maryland on its way offshore.

Master Technician Joel Kobersteen of Station 40 in Fairfax Center is the “Fill the Boot” coordinator for the entire county. He is a former firefighter in Houston and says this year’s fund-raiser also helps his Texas colleagues — who are battling storm fatigue while they help other Hurricane Harvey survivors. As soon as their shifts are over, first responders have to deal with their own personal losses, he mentions.

Kobersteen says the International Association of Firefighters Local 2068 struck a deal with MDA Greater Washington, D.C., to help more than 75 Houston firefighters who lost their homes and personal belongings to the flood while they rescued victims

SEE BOOT, PAGE 5

## “The Fairfax is like a cruise ship.”

—Colonel Philip (Phil) J. Saulnier, USA, Retired and Judith (Judy) Saulnier, Residents at The Fairfax for 3.5 Years

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# Boot

FROM PAGE 4

last week and saved lives.

If that's not enough human suffering, the National Hurricane Center is tracking a powerful Category 5 storm called Irma as it pushes through the Caribbean. Tuesday night, weather forecasters say Irma may hit South Florida Sunday evening as a Category 4 hurricane.

**THE FIRST \$50,000** raised in this year's "Fill the Boot" campaign goes to the IAFF disaster relief fund. The next \$500,000 is earmarked locally for the MDA Greater Washington, D.C. Any surplus benefits the union's disaster relief fund, Kobersteen explains.

According to his preliminary figures Tuesday afternoon, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department has raised \$626,736.05 Friday through Monday. Kobersteen is waiting for complete numbers from all 38 fire stations and other support systems, such as the 911 call center.

Officials at the Muscular Dystrophy Association in Chicago say it will take several days to gather financial figures from all "Fill the Boot" campaign coordinators nationwide.

Muscular dystrophy is an umbrella term for several neuromuscular diseases — such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known



PHOTO BY MARTI MOORE/THE CONNECTION

**Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Capt. Matthew C. Burns adds another bill to his boot Monday afternoon while Master Technician Johnathan Macquilliam flashes a smile at motorists stopped at a red light in Fairfax on Waples Mill Road and Lee Jackson Memorial Highway. They worked with nearly a dozen firefighters from Station 21 in Fair Oaks to collect \$3,157.84 on Labor Day for a local chapter of the Muscular Dystrophy Association.**

as ALS or Lou Gehrig's Disease. Learn more about muscular dystrophy and how it helps survivors at [www.mda.org](http://www.mda.org).

Find information about the IAFF disaster relief fund at [www.iaff.org](http://www.iaff.org).

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# OPINION

## Disparity, Poverty Hidden by Communities' Wealth

**“How hard would it be for someone to invite me in for a bowl of soup?”**

COMMENTARY

BY STEPHANIE BERKOWITZ  
NORTHERN VIRGINIA FAMILY SERVICE

The U.S. Census Bureau confirmed in July what we already know: many Northern Virginia residents are doing well financially. In fact, Loudoun County, the City of Falls Church and Fairfax County are the three wealthiest jurisdictions in the U.S. while Arlington and Prince William counties and the City of Fairfax also rank in the top 20.

The new Census Bureau numbers mask the fact that there are pockets of poverty throughout our region, and many of our neighbors are struggling.

Having worked at Northern Virginia Family Service (NVFS) for 18 years, I have met countless residents who come to us for help finding affordable housing, food, healthcare, medications and job training. Without support, these issues continue to negatively impact the families around us, creating larger barriers to self-sufficiency and the opportunity to thrive in our booming region.

I'm thinking of Zaheer Iqbal, who emigrated to the U.S. from Pakistan with a master's degree in English literature, a Fulbright scholar-



ship and having worked with the U.S. military in Pakistan fighting the Taliban. In spite of his experience and education, the best job he could find was cleaning toilets and working as a cashier at an Annandale gas station. (Did I mention he also speaks seven languages?) Zaheer “graduated” to a job as a hotel night clerk in Fairfax, leaving that job every morning to go to our six-month Training Futures job program. Training Futures saw his potential and helped him make valuable connections within the business community.

He recently landed a job with a government contractor. But it took Zaheer four years of sleepless nights and uncertainty about how he would support himself and his twin boys to get to that point.

When I think about the disparity in our region, I think of the 77-year old woman who has been coming to our Hunger Resource Center in Manassas on and off for 20 years as her situation changes. (She asked that I not use her name because she doesn't want her family to know she continues to rely on the food bank.) When she was raising her son as a single mother and working as a waitress, there were times when she had to choose between paying the mortgage and feeding her family. At one point, her house was in foreclosure. Today, she is living off her monthly social security check, which doesn't cover her basic expenses. She is drawn

to the fruits and vegetables at the Hunger Resource Center and, on the days they have eggs, she “celebrates” by making an omelet. As a senior living alone, she says she feels invisible to her neighbors. “How hard would it be for someone to check up on me or invite me in for a bowl of soup?” she asks through tears.

And when I think of the challenges facing so many of our neighbors I am thinking of Carla Rocha, who grew up in Reston and graduated from high school in Sterling. All she wanted was a safe, affordable place to live with her son. Instead, she lived in her car, slept on friends' floors and stayed in transitional housing provided by Second Story – one of many outstanding nonprofits in Northern Virginia that provide a safety net for vulnerable children and youth.

Carla moved five times in six years. “I could adapt easily,” she told me. “It was harder on my son. That is a lot of change for a kid.”

With support from nonprofits like NVFS and Second Story, Carla has a great job and has been able to buy her own place. But for many other residents, living wage jobs and affordable housing remain elusive.

For nearly 100 years, NVFS has been committed to helping vulnerable residents become self-sufficient. If you are proud to call Northern Virginia home, help us in creating a stronger community where all families and individuals can thrive. Maybe you can start by inviting someone in for a bowl of soup.

*The writer is president and CEO of Northern Virginia Family Service.*

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Fomenting Disunity and Hate

To the Editor:

I was appalled to read the letter (“American Values,” Aug. 30) by a group of Democrat politicians, libeling Donald Trump. No fair-minded person could honestly construe anything Mr. Trump said as a “defense of Nazism.”

Mr. Trump's initial response was: “We condemn in the strongest possible terms this egregious display of hatred, bigotry, and violence on many sides.” Who but an actual fascist could disagree?

Trump then re-stated: “Racism is evil — and those who cause violence in its name are criminals and thugs, including KKK, neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and other hate groups are repugnant to everything we hold dear as Americans.” No honest person — politician or not — could interpret this as support of Nazism.

As to the facts in Charlottesville, many of the original protestors were not neo-Nazis or Klansmen, but simply there to protest the re-

moval of Robert E. Lee's statue from the park named after him. Similarly, not all the counter-protestors were club-wielding, rock-throwing antifa — some just believed the statue should be removed. So again, Mr. Trump was undeniably correct that some [not all] on both sides were fine people.

It's hard to avoid the conclusion that the Democrat politicians who signed the defamatory letter to the Connection are primarily interested in fomenting disunity and hate by hyping fears of neo-Nazis among the voters.

**Michael Crawford**  
Great Falls

## For Tax Reform Benefiting All

To the Editor:

Trump wants to cut taxes for the rich who already have too much — who already translate their wealth into power to pervert our political and economic systems.

If Republicans are serious about tax reform, then why not go back to their favorite period in history — when Ike was president?

Under Ike's 90 percent top income tax, we had world-class living standards, science and research, public schools, road and media — we had Fairness Doctrine reporting with real investigative journalism.

Why? Because, instead of stealing from innocent hardworking Americans like my dad, the rich paid their fair share for membership in the society that benefits them most.

Go ahead and reform taxes, but do it to benefit all Americans, not just the top 1 percent.

**A.J. O'Brien**  
Herndon

## Deer Hunting Effects Misrepresented

To the Editor:

Did you receive a disturbing flyer in the mail about archery hunting in Fairfax County? The flyer displays a graphic depiction of a deer with an arrow through its face (from N.J.) and claims that

bowhunting is responsible for deer vehicle collisions (DVCs). This flyer from an anonymous source has raised many questions, as it was designed to do. However, the question you should be asking is: Are these claims true?

To not bury the lead, the answer is no. This flyer goes beyond a simple misunderstanding of ecological systems or DVCs. It falsely represents an analysis of VDOT data and takes a single sentence from the scientific literature out of context with the dubious intent of convincing you that the science supports their position when it does not.

But how do we know? The VDOT data used in the flyer were acquired through a Freedom of Information Act request. The DVCs in the data were mapped against the Fairfax County Deer Management Program in order to investigate the flyer's claim that 92 percent (287 of 310) of the DVCs occur within 1 mile of a park undergoing deer management. We found that claim was false. In order to include 287 DVCs, we had to count DVCs within one and a

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# LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

half miles from parks, not one mile. Why does that matter? First, it shows the authors' willingness to reject reality and replace it with their own fantasy. Second, 92 percent of Fairfax County is within one and half miles of a property in the Deer Management Program. Therefore, 92 percent of the DVCs happen on 92 percent of the area of Fairfax County. The VDOT data do not support the claim that DVCs increase because of deer management activities.

There is a research project in the City of Fairfax investigating an experimental deer sterilization method. The flyer claims that only three DVCs occurred in the city during the time of the study. However, the VDOT data shows seven. The flyer goes on to attempt to claim that the sterilization study has decreased DVCs. To investigate this claim, I used VDOT data from 2005 to 2016 for the City of Fairfax. Prior to the study being implemented in 2014, the City of Fairfax averaged 1.3 DVCs per year (12 DVCs in 9 years). During the study, the City of Fairfax averaged 2.3 DVCs per year (7 in 3 years). The number of DVCs has actually increased during the time of the

deer sterilization study.

However, as an honest man, I cannot suggest that this slight increase is a result of the sterilization project. The increase, while real, could be caused by any number of factors.

The flyer goes on to claim that an article published in the Journal of Wildlife Management in 1985 supports the long-held belief by those that oppose hunting that bowhunting actually increases deer populations. The article in question is "Reproductive Dynamics and Disjunct White-tailed Deer Herds in Florida" by Richter and Labisky. This study did find that female deer in hunted populations had an insignificant increase in fawns versus deer in non-hunted populations. Why? Here is where we lose the authors of the flyer because we have to apply a little ecological knowledge, or maybe read the entire article they misrepresent. This article goes on to explain that hunted deer populations are more healthy deer because they are in better balance with their environment and are better capable of reproducing than non-hunted deer because non-hunted deer are less healthy. That does not mean that hunting will increase the deer

population. In fact, hunting reduces the deer population because it overcomes the slight increase in reproduction associated with healthy deer. Hunting is how deer populations are managed in Virginia and the declining deer herd in the state is testament to the efficacy of the method.

There are other false claims in the anti-hunting flyer, but I hope that I have made my point. Perhaps there is a reason the author of the flyer did not sign their work. I will sign mine.

**Kevin R. Rose**  
Certified Wildlife Biologist

## Win-Win Fuel Economy

To the Editor:

Cleaner, more efficient cars are a no-brainer. It's a win-win for your pocketbook, the environment and fuel supplies. The U.S. set light-duty vehicle standards in 2012 that will nearly double the efficiency of new cars and light trucks by 2025. An overwhelming majority of Americans, along with car manufacturers, support these standards, which encourage innovation and efficiency. No other fed-

eral policy is delivering greater oil savings, consumer benefits, and global warming emissions reductions than these standards. To date, Virginia drivers have saved \$870 million at the pump due to strong fuel economy and global warming emissions standards.

The Trump administration is trying to slam the brakes on these vehicle fuel economy and carbon pollution standards, which would result in more air pollution, higher gas costs and a loss of jobs. These standards protect from dangerous air pollution, which is especially important given that Richmond has some of the highest rates of childhood asthma.

More tailpipe pollution would place this vulnerable population at increased risk. And that's simply unacceptable. By 2030, Virginia would produce 13,700 new jobs. Money saved on gas is pumped back into the local economy, driving growth and putting people to work. The average household in Virginia will reap this benefit as long as policymakers don't weaken these protections.

If this bill succeeds, the Trump administration would essentially be imposing a new tax on drivers, forcing us to spend more of our hard-earned paychecks at the gas

pump and drive less efficient, dirtier vehicles. These savings are especially important to Americans who are working hard to make ends meet. Lower and middle income households (\$30,000 or less) spend up to 10 percent of their income on gasoline.

And when the price of gas spikes, that figure multiplies. Sen. Warner should tell the president to lead the way to protect consumer savings and developing cleaner, more efficient cars instead of trying to slam the brakes on progress.

**Kelsey Crane**  
Fairfax

## Write

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

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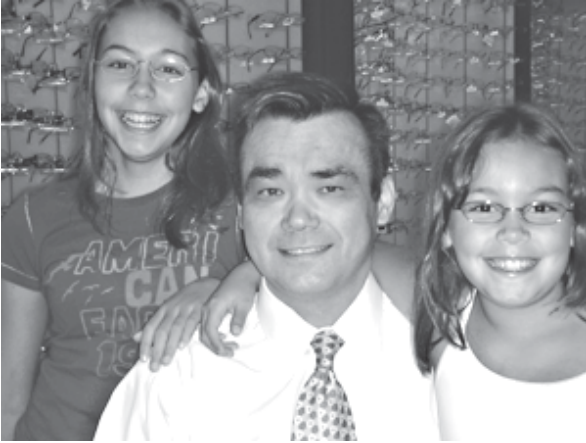
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## WELLBEING

# Healthy and in Season

From juicy apples to hearty cabbage,  
how to reap the health benefits of fall produce.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

**W**ith her one-year old daughter in tow, Ellen Knight poked at apples and caressed peppers on a Sunday morning at the Bethesda Farmers Market. The activity is part of her weekend ritual, searching for the freshest, most flavorful seasonal fruits and vegetables to use in meals throughout the rest of the week.

"I'm a little neurotic about produce and farmers markets," she said. "I try to only buy at farmers markets and only buy what's in season. I'm excited about fall and the new changes in what's coming in from the local farms."

As the weather gets cooler and temperatures drop, the bumper crops of fall can be found in flavorful abundance at farmers markets, grocery stores and even backyard gardens. Among the most nutritious and readily available produce are cabbage, peppers, squash, beets and other root vegetables, says Chef Pete Snaith of Culinary Cooking School in Vienna.

"The fall harvest is a glorious time for peak-of-the-season vegetables and fruits," he said. "Farmers markets will be piled high ...."

With a flavor that can be the basis of both sweet

and savory dishes, sweet potatoes are one of the most nutritious foods to debut in fall, says nutritionist Allison Speer of the Speer Nutrition Group in Alexandria. "They're loaded with potassium and vitamin E," she said. "In fall there's a greater variety available like Purple Stokes, Garnet and Hannah."

Choose small or medium-sized sweet potatoes that feel heavier than they look, advises Speer. "Store them in a dark place and keep them cool, but not cold," she said. "Letting them get cold ruins the flavor."

Winter squash is an umbrella term for a wide-range of squash varieties with thick, tough skins, such as butternut and acorn. Most readily available beginning in early fall and slow to go bad, winter squash can be stored whole for several weeks, says Arlington-based dietitian Melissa Hawkins, RD. "They are full of vitamins A and C," she said. "They also have a lot of potassium and fiber, which can make you feel full and satisfied for a longer time."

Hawkins also touts the versatility of winter squash. "I like to use butternut squash or pumpkin in soup," she said. "Acorn squash can be made into a puree. One of my favorite things to do is to spiralize winter

SEE HEALTHY, PAGE 7

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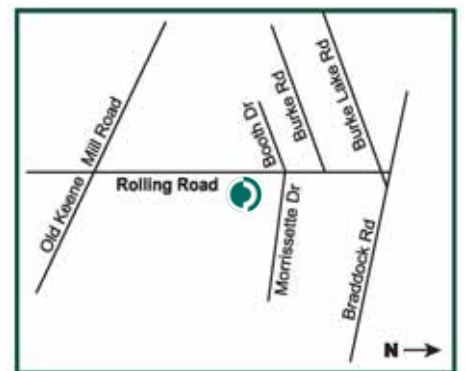
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## WELLBEING

**Cabbage, a cousin of the trendy superfood kale, is packed with fiber and vitamins C and B6.**

PHOTO BY  
MARILYN CAMPBELL



## Healthy and in Season

FROM PAGE 6

squash to make spaghetti or noodle-like strands that I use instead of pasta. It's super easy and deeply satisfying."

Though its trendier cousins kale and Brussels sprouts get more hype, Hawkins says that cabbage is a versatile superfood that should not be overlooked. "There are so many varieties like Savoy and Napa and it's full of vitamins C and B6 and fiber," she said. "Leafy greens in general, like chard, mustards and kale, are nutrition powerhouses and are at their best in the fall."

Cabbage and other greens are low in calories and can be prepared in a myriad of ways, adds Speer. "One of the simplest ways to cook them is to roast them or stir fry them," she said. "Cabbage can also be stuffed or turned into slaw."

Most commonly seen in dark red, beets come in a variety of colors like white, pink and orange. They're earthy, sweet and nutritious, says Hawkins. "Eating beets is almost like taking a big multivitamin," she said. "You're getting vitamins A, B and C, plus iron, potassium, folic acid and beta-carotene."

Beets can be eaten raw or pre-

pared in a variety of ways, says Speer. "You can roast them, puree them or even make beet chips," she said. "They can stain your hands and clothing so you have to be careful when handling them."

Among the foods most often associated with fall are apples. With varieties ranging from tart Granny Smiths to sweet Fujis, there's an orb for every palate, says Speer. "Apples are packed with fiber and vitamin C," she said. "You can slice them or eat them while, so they're accessible and easy to carry and eat."

Select apples that are firm and without blemishes or bruises, and coat them with lemon juice after they've been cut to keep them from turning brown, advises Speer.

Choosing produce that is fresh and in-season, makes it easier to prepare them with little fuss so that their nutritional value is preserved. "Fresh vegetables deserve quick, simple, healthy preparation," said Snaith. "Steaming, blanching, grilling, and roasting quickly come to mind. Apples, watermelon, and peaches are abundant now as well. You can top off a delicious meal with a light dessert of baked apples or grilled peaches with homemade vanilla ice cream."

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**Fairfax County Zoning Administrator Leslie Johnson addresses the community during an open house about zMod, the county's initiative to modernize its Zoning Ordinance.**



**Michelle Minstrell of Falls Church (center) and John McEwan (right) speak to Fairfax County Zoning Administrator Leslie Johnson (left) about their experience operating Airbnb rentals in the county.**

# Short-Term Rentals Debated

BY FALLON FORBUSH  
THE CONNECTION

**A**s Fairfax County works to regulate the use of short-term rental properties, disputes between neighbors continue to flare up.

STRs, or spaces that are rented by tenants for fewer than 30 consecutive days, can be accessed through lodging reservation websites like Airbnb and other companies, like Craigslist, HomeAway and FlipKey. However, operating such a rental is illegal in the county because the zoning ordinance does not account for their existence and therefore does not permit them.

"Localities have always had the authority to regulate short-term rentals," said state Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36). "I'm not sure why Fairfax County had never acted before this year, but many localities in Virginia have."

Surovell voted for Senate Bill 1578, "Short-term rental property; registration of persons offering property for rental," which was signed into law on March 24, taking effect on July 1. The new legislation authorizes localities in the commonwealth to adopt an ordinance to require people to register annually in a short-term rental registry.

"When the legislature decided to step in, it created some uncertainty about where we were going to go with the subject, but before we acted, it was always thought that localities could regulate Airbnb-type rentals all they wanted to," he said.

The legislation solidifies what localities already had the power to do and will encourage those that have not addressed the issue to do so, according to Surovell.

The legislation has motivated Fairfax County to act, but not before disputes started brewing in residential neighborhoods.

**TWO ROOMS** of the Herrity Building in Fairfax were filled to standing room only on July 26, during an open house about the county's proposed zoning changes.

"This is our first foray into what we're calling an open house," said Leslie Johnson, zoning administrator for the county. "We

## Three Community Meetings Scheduled

Up until Aug. 31, the county was collecting public feedback about STRs through an online survey. County residents can learn about the results from the survey and weigh in on the topic during three community meetings this month:

- ❖ **Tuesday, Sept. 5, 7 p.m.:** Hunter Mill District Community Room at the North County Governmental Center, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston.
- ❖ **Wednesday, Sept. 13, 7 p.m.:** South County Government Center, 8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria.
- ❖ **Monday, Sept. 25, 7 p.m.:** Dranesville District Community Room at the McLean Governmental Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean.

The Zoning Administration Division will start putting together concepts, strategies and recommendations for the Board of Supervisors to consider after the September meetings, according to Leslie Johnson, zoning administrator.

"Ultimately, we have to present something to the board for them to react to and for them to approve, but we try to provide professional recommendations to them," Johnson said.

have a lot of different topic areas that we're working on as part of the amending of the zoning ordinance. We thought it was a good opportunity to bring people in to talk to our staff, to be able to ask questions on what we're doing and just let people know that we are working on modernizing our zoning ordinance."

The Zoning Administration Division of the Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning launched the Modernization of Fairfax County's Zoning Ordinance initiative, or zMod, after the plan was presented to the Board of Supervisors in March.

"Our ordinance is 40 years old and it does need some rebooting," Johnson said. "We're looking at not only updating some of the provisions, but more importantly, we're also looking at updating the format and kind of restructuring it; maybe bucketing uses so they're more in categories, so as uses change, we have a better ability to put new uses into a category."

There are 14 provisions being drafted under the modernization plan, according to Johnson, including adding more generic guidelines for restaurants, which have not been updated since 1981. The definitions for restaurants would be more generically defined in three categories: general restaurant; restaurant with a drive-through; or a carryout restaurant. Locations for restaurants would also be revised to reflect the newly defined uses and use limitations would be simplified. Parking for restaurants would also be changed by converting the basis for restaurant parking requirements from the number of seats and employees to the square feet of a restaurant's gross floor

area.

Also being drafted is an increase to the percentage allowed for residential homeowners to cover their backyards with patios, pool decking and other man-made features. Current provisions only allow for up to 30 percent of a backyard of a single-family dwelling to be covered. The changes could allow for up to 60 percent of coverage.

The county's Sign Ordinance is also being rewritten in response to a U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* in June 2015, which clarified when municipalities may impose content-based restrictions on signage. The rewrite of the zoning rules for signs will make them content-neutral.

Among all of the proposed updates, short-term rentals are the hot topic, says Johnson.

"There were people that have concerns about short-term rentals that are creating problems for them in their neighborhoods," said Lily Yegazu, who works for the Department of Planning and Zoning and manned the STR booth at the open house. "There are also people that wanted to know how to do it [list property for short-term rental]."

Whether people support STRs or not, they are currently illegal in the county.

"We do not allow for transient occupancy of a dwelling unit, unless it's a bed and breakfast, which requires special exception approval [from the Board of Supervisors]," Johnson said during the meeting.

Amanda Staudt and Peggy Hillman of North Reston, who have an Airbnb property operating on their street in a residential neighborhood, were vocal about their

opposition to STRs at the meeting.

"We have a small cul-de-sac with 21 kids 18 and younger," Staudt said. "One of the houses on our street, the owner moved in a year and a half ago, moved into the basement and started renting out individual rooms at about \$35 a night. So basically, it was a small hotel."

The women's anxiety over safety concerns with their transient neighbors was made real.

"We have had incidents where we've had to contact the police because of some of the residents, or customers — whatever you want to call them — were giving undesired attention to teenage girls in the neighborhood," Staudt said.

"We don't know how many people are in the house at any one time in each room," Hillman added. "We don't know how many people can stay in a room. There's multiple cars, which disrupt our street, which is not a wide street."

The two women said they have complained to the county non-stop over their concerns of the illegal activity on their street.

"They've been semi-responsive, but they've basically said that they are limited in what they can do on enforcement," Staudt said.

"They're having trouble enforcing their existing regulations," Hillman added.

The two women worry that if the county cannot regulate current law, then the county will not be able to enforce a potential registry if STRs are permitted.

"If they can't enforce it now effectively, how are they going to enforce it if they make it more complicated and available to more people?" Hillman said.

Hotels have always been regulated and people don't have a right to run hotels in residential neighborhoods.

"If somebody begins to use their property in a way that looks like a hotel, then they're going to find that the government takes an interest in how they use their property," Surovell said.

SEE COUNTY, PAGE 11



## NEWS

# County to Regulate Short-Term Rentals

FROM PAGE 10

But he agrees with Staudt and Hillman that the county's enforcement has been weak.

"Fairfax County code enforcement in general is pretty pathetic," Sen. Surovell said. "It tends to be mainly complaint driven."

**OVER THE PAST YEAR**, the Fairfax County Department of Code Compliance received 18 complaints of possible STRs operating in the county, according to Tony Castrilli, a spokesperson for the county government.

"DCC staff investigated these complaints and found sufficient information to corroborate two [short-term rentals], one in the Mason District and one in the Mount Vernon District, for which notices of violation were issued," Castrilli said. "Some of the other cases were closed because there was insufficient evidence that STRs were actually operating at those addresses or that there were any other zoning violations occurring."

The property owners who were issued notices of violation were: John and Mary Lou McEwan for their property at 9319 Ludgate Drive in Alexandria and Blake and Sara Ratcliff for their property at 3320 Grass Hill Terrace in Falls Church, according to Castrilli.

John McEwan and Blake Ratcliff are appealing their citations and have been scheduled to have hearings on Nov. 29, according to McEwan.

McEwan said he would be appealing the violation at the cost of \$600 because he was told by various county employees that no citations would be given while the county considers changes to the zoning laws.

Others in the crowd were worried that the overwhelming tide against STRs could sway the opinion of officials and bar them from



**"Our ordinance is 40 years old," Leslie Johnson, zoning administrator for the county, said during the open house. "It was adopted in 1978 and it has been amended 467 times, so we think it's time to kind of bring us forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and update it."**

participating in a form of income they have come to rely upon.

Michelle Minstrell lives in her home in Falls Church and regularly rents out a spare room on Airbnb to help cover the expense of her mortgage and has never received a complaint from her neighbors.

"We have permit parking on our streets and I have off-street parking for that additional resident and my vehicle is off the street as well," Minstrell said. "I've never had any noise problems. Neighbors have not mentioned issues at all."

With Minstrell's advice, another single woman in her neighborhood with a mortgage has started renting out space in her home on Airbnb.

"There is such a huge range of what the short-term rental can be," she said. "I live in my house and I'm only renting a small portion of it."

"I fear that the people who might be angry about it are seeing the whole party houses, absentee homeowner situation and not realizing that there are those of us who are making money to pay for our mortgage off of a roommate," she added.



PHOTOS BY FALLON FORBUSH/THE CONNECTION

**Amanda Staudt and Sean Willson, who both live in Reston, are opposed to permitting short-term rentals in residential areas of the county.**



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### Meeting Dates and Locations

Open House begins at 4:00 pm in each of the locations:

<b>Tuesday August 29, 2017</b> Germanna Community College Center for Workforce & Community Education 10000 Germanna Point Drive Fredericksburg, VA 22408	<b>Thursday, August 31, 2017</b> The Prior Center at UVA-Wise 437 Stadium Drive Wise, VA 24293	<b>Monday, September 11, 2017</b> Culpeper District Office Auditorium 1601 Orange Road Culpeper, VA 22701
<b>Thursday, September 14, 2017</b> Chesapeake Conference Center 700 Conference Center Drive Chesapeake, VA 23320	<b>Monday, September 18, 2017</b> NOVA District Office The Potomac Room 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030	<b>Monday, October 2, 2017</b> Hilton Garden Inn Richmond South/Southpark 800 Southpark Boulevard Colonial Heights, VA 23834
<b>Wednesday, October 4, 2017</b> Holiday Inn Lynchburg 601 Main Street Lynchburg, VA 24504	<b>Tuesday, October 10, 2017</b> Blue Ridge Community College Plecker Center for Continuing Education One College Lane Weyers Cave, VA 24486	<b>Thursday, October 12, 2017</b> Holiday Inn Valley View 3315 Ordway Drive Roanoke, VA 24017

Meeting materials will be available at <http://www.ctb.virginia.gov/planning/fallmeetings/> beginning August 29, 2017.

If you cannot attend a meeting, you may also send your comments on highway projects to Infrastructure Investment Director, VDOT, 1401 E. Broad St., Richmond, Virginia 23219, or SixYearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov and on rail, public transportation and transportation demand management to Public Information Officer, DRPT, 600 E. Main St., Suite 2102, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or DRPTPR@drpt.Virginia.gov. Comments will be accepted until October 20, 2017.

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# Musical Celebration for Fairfax County Milestone

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra presents  
'Fairfax Jubilee Program.'

BY DAVID SIEGEL  
THE CONNECTION

**M**ajor events to commemorate the 275th anniversary of Fairfax County's founding continue; this time musically from the county's own Fairfax Symphony Orchestra (FSO). Opening its new season and celebrating its own 60th anniversary, the FSO, under the musical direction of Christopher Zimmerman, will premiere a Fairfax-specific work by Mark Camphouse titled "Resolutions."

Audiences attending the special evening will also experience a performance of Elgar's Cello Concerto by renowned Israeli cellist Amit Peled. For his performance, Peled will share the sound of the historic cello of Pablo Casals playing the rare, 1733 Goffriller given to him from Maestro Casals' widow.

"We are delighted to open our season with the world premiere of Mark Camphouse's new work in celebration of Fairfax County's anniversary," said Jonathan Kerr, Executive Director, FSO. "Camphouse showcases the County's past, present, and future through a moving new musical composition. It reflects the County's poignant history, powerful progression, and immense achievements."

"It is a joy to play a role in helping to commemorate the 275th anniversary of Fairfax County's rich history, phenomenal growth and notable achievements and, most importantly, its vibrant and exciting future,"



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FAIRFAX SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Israeli cellist, Amit Peled

## Where & When

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra presents "Fairfax Jubilee Program" at the George Mason University, Center for the Art, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performance Sept. 16 at 8 p.m. Tickets: \$39-\$53-\$65. Call 888-945-2468 or visit [www.fairfaxsymphony.org](http://www.fairfaxsymphony.org). Note: Pre-performance discussion with conductor Christopher Zimmerman and special guests.

said Camphouse, a Professor of Music, George Mason University.

In an interview, Camphouse spoke not only of his new orchestral composition, but also about his avid interest in history. That

interest led him to title the "Resolutions." He wants his work to "take audiences on a journey through time and honors a varied, resolute, powerful, and celebratory Fairfax County."

Camphouse noted that George Mason, an American patriot, Fairfax County resident and friend of George Washington, penned the "Fairfax Resolves." The "Resolves" were key to the early history of Fairfax County, to the Commonwealth of Virginia and the founding of the United States. The "Resolves" included political arguments and resolutions on issues such as no taxation without representation.



Mark Camphouse, composer of the new musical composition "Resolutions."

In a wide-ranging interview with the FSO's Kerr, on significance of the arts in today's world, Kerr noted that the arts are critical to society. "They help us understand ourselves and each other." He went on to say that "as our County and our nation become increasingly diverse, the arts provide a universal language. No matter our age, ethnicity, or gender...the arts unite us."

"I can't wait to hear the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra perform the exciting, original musical legacy in honor of Fairfax County's 275th Anniversary," said Sharon Bulova, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

# 'Tech Babies' at Epicure Cafe

Jessica Robinson, founder of Fairfax's "Better Said Than Done," presents a one-woman show.

BY DAVID SIEGEL  
THE CONNECTION

**T** rue, personal storytelling about real life can take audiences to unexpected, intimate places. Jessica Robinson, founder of Fairfax's "Better Said Than Done" will be telling a very personal story of the challenges she and her husband faced when they had to turn to modern medicine and technology that "set them off on a bumpy path" to having a baby, as Robinson said.

Robinson expects her own story to appeal to a wide audience as she aims to show "men and women dealing with their own fertility challenges and fears can hopefully find hope in my story, and support for what is truly an emotional and uncomfortable journey."

"Tech Babies: Baby Making in the Modern Age" is the title Robinson gave to her one-woman performance. During her 70-minute performance and then open discussion, Robinson will take the audience through "twists and turns along the way of the pregnancy. I will take the audience through the experience of being a patient, trying to make a baby, and watching helplessly while doctors uncover one after another potentially devastating issue."

It is "important for me to tell because it was such a lonely, scary experience to live through — in no small part due to the fact that I didn't feel comfortable talking about it," said Robinson. "So many people struggle with getting pregnant or staying pregnant, and yet most people don't feel comfortable talking about it. It should be okay to discuss out in the open. I am hoping that my



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Jessica Robinson, founder, "Better Said Than Done" and storyteller for "Tech Babies: Baby Making in the Modern Age."

story generates conversation and helps some people who might have gone through or who are currently going through some of the same challenges.

"Anyone who has suffered from struggling

## Where & When

"Tech Babies: Baby Making in the Modern Age" performed at Epicure Cafe, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax, at 5 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 10. Doors open at 4:30 p.m. Entry is \$10 per person, at the door. Full bar and dinner menus are available and seating is limited to first come, first served. Note: The story is intended for an adult audience.

to get pregnant, or with challenges during their pregnancy, will know that they are not alone and that there are other people who have been there and are there now," said Robinson.

"Tech Babies" is also for "those in the medical field who can gain some insight into what the patient feels when scary terms or situations arise," noted Robinson.

"Tech Babies: Baby Making in the Modern Age" will be at Fairfax's independently-owned Epicure Café. "Storytelling is one of the most intrinsically human arts. In hearing other people's stories, we find and better understand pieces of ourselves," said Mojdeh Rezaeipour, creative manager, Fairfax's Epicure Café. "It can be really healing personally and collectively to share that experience."



# CALENDAR

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

## ONGOING

**Artist Marilyn Harrington's** "Dyeing to Change," exhibit, is on display at the Workhouse Art Center, 9518 Workhouse Rpad, Lorton through Oct. 8. Call 703-584-2900 for more.

**Lake Accotink Park Carousel Closed.** The carousel at Lake Accotink Park has been closed for the remainder of the 2017 operating season for needed repair work. Mini-golf and marina will continue operating as normally scheduled through Oct. 16. Call 703-324-8745 for more.

**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](http://www.fpow.org) for each month's location. [www.fpow.org](http://www.fpow.org), 703-324-5424 or [dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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 Road, Fairfax. The exercises are for strength, balance and maintaining limberness. Contact SCFB office at 703-426-2824

**Cafe Ivrit (Hebrew Cafe).** Wednesdays. 8:15-9:15 a.m. Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Shalom (hello) Did you always want to converse in Hebrew? Join Na'ama each week for conversational Hebrew. You will learn and practice Hebrew in a fun and interactive way while learning more about Israel. Free, however we ask that you try to attend regularly. RSVP [Naama.Gold@jccnv.org](mailto:Naama.Gold@jccnv.org).

**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](http://www.fairfaxvd.com). 703-273-3638.

**English Conversation Groups** weekly at George Mason, Burke Centre, and Lorton Libraries Practice and improve your English. Visit: [va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/eventcalendar.asp](http://va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/eventcalendar.asp)

**Funday Monday** 10:30 a.m., every Monday at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. There will be music, movement, storytelling, performances, crafts, and more. Open to children of all ages, especially those who haven't started school. Free and open to the public, donations appreciated. 703-385-7858 [www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts)

**Kingstowne Farmers Market opens.** 4-7 p.m. every Friday through Oct. 27, 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](mailto:Chelsea.roseberry@fairfaxcounty.gov) or call 703-642-0128 for more.

## SEPT. 6-30

**The Trawick Prize Art Exhibit.** Burke artist Michele Montalbano named as one of the finalists for the Trawick Prize. Various times at at Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Suite E. Bethesda. Finalists artwork is on display Sept. 6-30. Call 301-215-7990 for more.

## THURSDAY/SEPT. 7

**Access Services Assistive Technology and Disability Resource Fair.** 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax.



PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

**Diners relax under the tent during the 2015 Burke Centre Festival.**

## Burke Centre Festival Returns Sept. 9-10

Burke Centre Festival will be held Saturday, Sept. 9, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday, Sept. 11, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

The festival is Burke Centre's signature event, which celebrates the spirit of the community. Admission and many activities are free.

❖ Flag-Raising Ceremony opens the Festival each year with the Burke VFW

Post 5412 and Boy Scout Troop 1345.

❖ Free Shuttle Bus Service along Burke Centre Parkway; free parking all weekend at all five community centers.

❖ Festival Wine Garden will be open Saturday only, Sept. 9, 5-10 p.m. Cave Ridge Vineyards is the featured winery again this year. For ages 21 and older.



## Live Music

**On Wednesday, Sept. 13, Shawna Caspi is in playing at 7:30 p.m. at the Epicure Cafe, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Performing in support of her fourth album Forest Fire, which was released Sept. 1.**

Fairfax Art League Village Gallery, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. Artist Julia Malakoff will demonstrate how to incorporate mark making and collage papers into mixed media designs. Free. Visit [www.fairfaxartleague.net/](http://www.fairfaxartleague.net/) for more.

**Artists Reception.** 6-9 p.m. at the Workhouse Art Center, 9518 Workhouse Road, Lorton. Artist Marilyn Harrington and her "Dyeing to Change," exhibit, which is on display through Oct. 8. Call 703-584-2900 for more.

## SEPT. 9-10

**Burke Centre Festival.** 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Burke Conservancy, 6060 Burke Centre Parkway. Arts and crafts, live shows, rides, face painting, and festival foods. Visit [www.burkecentreweb.com](http://www.burkecentreweb.com) for more.

## SEPT. 9-20

**Northern Virginia Senior Olympics.** Various times and locations, more than 50 different events taking place at more than 25 venues across Northern Virginia. Call 703-403-5360 or visit [www.nvso.us](http://www.nvso.us) for more.

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 10

**Community Welcome Picnic.** noon-2 p.m. at Sydenstricker United Methodist Church, 8508 Hoopes Road, Springfield. Everyone is invited to a community welcome picnic with burgers and hotdogs with all kinds of side dishes, along with live music by Bob Perilla's Big Hillbilly Bluegrass Band and fun activities for children of all ages. Free. Contact Maile Bradfield at [maile.bradfield@sydenstrickerumc.org](mailto:maile.bradfield@sydenstrickerumc.org) or 703-451-8223 Visit [sydenstrickerumc.org](http://sydenstrickerumc.org) for more.

**Vietnam Memorial Lecture.** 2 p.m. at Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center. 10209 Main St., Fairfax. "The 35 th Anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial," Janet Folkerts, curator of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection, will share stories of the artifacts left at the Memorial and the soldiers they honor and memorialize. Free. Call 703-385- 8414 for more.

**Tech Babies Storytelling Show.** 5 p.m. at Epicure Cafe, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Jessica Piscitelli Robinson presents an hour long story about experiences trying to make a baby, when the tried and true method failed. \$10. Visit [www.bettersaidthandone.com/](http://www.bettersaidthandone.com/) for more.

## TUESDAY/SEPT. 12

**Veterans Care Center Information Meeting.** 7-9 p.m. at the Springfield American Legion Post 176, 6520 Amherst Ave., Springfield. A public information meeting that will address the benefits of the soon-to-be-built Puller Veterans Care Center. Email [meredith@markkeam.com](mailto:meredith@markkeam.com) or call 703-350-3911 for more.

## WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 13

**Shawna Caspi in Concert.** 7:30 p.m. at the Epicure Cafe, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Performing in support of her fourth album Forest Fire, which is being released on Sept. 1.

## THURSDAY/SEPT. 14

**Acoustic Soul Concert.** 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive. Part of Hometown Thursdays with local bands from the Fairfax Area. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

**Artist Reception.** 7-9 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax  
The Fairfax Art League will be having a reception at the Old Town Hall Gallery, meet the featured artist. Visit [www.fairfaxartleague.net](http://www.fairfaxartleague.net) or call 703-587-9481.

## FRIDAY/SEPT. 15

**Music on the Plaza.** 7-8 p.m. at Old Town Plaza, 3955 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Live music and dance to relax by, weather permitting. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

**Bingo.** 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Smoke free Bingo, free coffee, entertaining callers, a friendly atmosphere, \$1,000 guaranteed jackpot, treasure chest progressive raffles, and food available for purchase. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit [www.fairfaxvd.com](http://www.fairfaxvd.com), or call 703-273-3638.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 16

**Outdoor Yoga.** 8-9 a.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax

Yoga by Pure Om. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a mat and water bottle. Free. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

**Oktoberfest, Walks, Bike Ride.** 8 a.m. at Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church (AUUC), 10125 Lakehaven Court. German food and drinks will be available for purchase while enjoying traditional German music. Free. Visit [scenicroutes.us/nvv/events](http://scenicroutes.us/nvv/events) or contact [nicebrowns@verizon.net](mailto:nicebrowns@verizon.net)

**Bikes for the World.** 9 a.m.-noon at Saint Mary of Sorrows Church, 5222 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. Bring usable/repairable bikes and spare parts to the Farrell Hall parking lot for shipment to poverty stricken areas of the world. Contact Cathy at 703-307-5512, [cat.gaiser@gmail.com](mailto:cat.gaiser@gmail.com) or Brian at 703-764-3845, [LBBAKEITH@gmail.com](mailto:LBBAKEITH@gmail.com).



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## NEWS

# Seeking Members for Volunteer Emergency Team

**Orientation set for  
Wednesday, Sept. 20.**

**H**undreds of highly trained volunteers spring into action every time disaster strikes in Fairfax County, supporting professional firefighters, police and rescue squads who are working in affected communities.

It is rewarding work but it can also be physically demanding and grueling and requires weeks of intensive training to prepare for. It is not for everyone.

Beyond the front line though lies the Volunteer Emergency Team (VET), a group of dedicated citizens charged with assisting with the mobilization and disbursement of "spontaneous" volunteers, a sometimes untrained but equally critical group of citizens who will always step forward in urgent times of need.

The VET operates temporary volunteer reception centers, a triage of sorts, where team members make sure that all on-the-spot disaster volunteers are placed in situations where they will do the most good and stay safe.

RSVP Northern Virginia, a program of Volunteer Fairfax, is seeking volunteers to join the VET.

"Being part of the VET is an opportunity to play a critical role during an emergency without undergoing extensive training or enduring the physical effort required for other volunteers who work closer to an impact zone," says, Paul Anderson, VET program manager. The VET is a program of Volunteer Fairfax.

"It is a way to help out in a storm without getting your feet wet," says Anderson.

Fortunately, disasters are rare in Fairfax, but when they do occur, like when a flash flood inundated homes and roads in the Huntington Area of Fairfax County six years ago this September, a properly staffed VET team is vital, according to Anderson.

The VET sprang into action in Huntington setting up a volunteer reception center outside the impacted flood zone.

The VET center helped process more than 100 volunteers who contributed more than 400 hours of service, according to Emily Swenson, chief operating officer of Volunteer Fairfax. "While it's hard to put a value on the support of neighbors we can say the over 400 hours donated would be valued at over \$8,000," Swenson says. "The VET was critical in ensuring that all our volunteers were fully utilized and placed in a safe location," Swenson says. "In times of crisis, the community truly depends on the VET."



PHOTO COURTESY OF VOLUNTEER FAIRFAX

**Volunteers help clean-up flood damage in  
the Huntington Community of Fairfax  
County in September 2011.**

When setting up a physical reception center is not possible, Volunteer Fairfax creates a virtual volunteer processing center to accomplish the same goals, as it has various times during winter storms, Swenson says.

All VET members are required to attend an initial orientation before taking part in 15 hours of free classroom instruction. VET volunteers must be available during community emergencies, ideally for six-hour shifts on the days following a disaster. "VET members are encouraged but not required to stay involved year-round so they have a better feel for their community when an emergency arises," Swenson says.

The VET is holding an orientation Wednesday, Sept. 20, at 6 p.m., at the Volunteer Fairfax Headquarters, 10530 Page Avenue in the City of Fairfax.

To sign up for the orientation and find more information, visit [www.eventbrite.com/e/volunteer-emergency-team-vet-orientation-tickets-37098747352?aff=es2](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/volunteer-emergency-team-vet-orientation-tickets-37098747352?aff=es2)

For more information on VET, contact Paul Anderson at 703-246-3533 or email Anderson at [emergency@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:emergency@volunteerfairfax.org).

## FAITH NOTES

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

**Faith Communities in Action** meets the first Wednesday of every other month from 2-4 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, Conference Rooms 2 and 3, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax.

**The Bahá'ís of Fairfax County Southwest** offers "Interfaith Devotions: World Peace and Unity" for the general public on Saturdays. These free devotional gatherings meet at the Pohick Regional Library, Room #1, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke, 22015.

**St. Leo the Great in Fairfax** hosts "Night of Praise" the first Saturday of each month, featuring praise music and Eucharist adoration at 7 p.m. Located at 3704 Old Lee Highway in Fairfax.

**The Immanuel Bible Church MOPS group** meets on Mondays at 7

p.m. at Immanuel Bible Church, 6911 Braddock Road, Springfield. MOPS is for pregnant or parenting mothers of children from infancy to kindergarten. 703-922-4295 or [www.MOPS.org](http://www.MOPS.org).

**Events at Mount Calvary Baptist Church**, 4325 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax:

❖Adult Bible Study every Wednesday starting at 7 p.m., Youth Bible Study at 7:15 p.m.

❖Full Praise and Baptism Service at 7 p.m., the last Wednesday of every month. 703-273-1455.



# BULLETIN

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

## SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

**RSVP**, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at [chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org) or call RSVP at 703-403- 5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit [www.rsvpnova.org](http://www.rsvpnova.org).

## TUESDAY/SEPT. 12

**National Active and Retired Federal Employees Lunch.** 11:30 a.m.-noon at American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. Presentation on "Hearing Loss & Hearing Aids-Beware and Be Wise" by Bonnie O'Leary Outreach Manager, Northern Virginia Outreach Center. \$11. Call 703-280-2356 or email [rrharney2@gmail.com](mailto:rrharney2@gmail.com).

## TUESDAY/SEPT. 19

**ESOL classes.** noon-7:30 p.m. at The Church of the Good Shepherd, 9350 Braddock Road, Burke. Day and evening English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes open to those who wish to improve their English skills. Call 703-323-5400 for more.

## IN-PERSON, TV DEBATES

**The League of Women Voters** of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA) will hold four in-person forums and three televised forums for the public and the press to learn about the candidates who are running for election to the Virginia House of Delegates. The League invited all certified candidates campaigning for office in their respective districts. At the in-person forums, question-and-answer sessions will be followed by an opportunity for informal conversations with individual candidates. The public and press are encouraged to attend. For more information about the candidates' priorities and positions, visit [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org).

In-person forums:

- ♦ **Thursday, Sept. 28** at 7 p.m. at Providence Community Center: 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax.
  - ♦ **Thursday, Oct. 12** at 7 p.m. at Hayfield Secondary School, Lecture Hall: 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria.
  - ♦ **Wednesday, Oct. 25** at 7:30 p.m. at Sully Government Center: 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly.
- The televised forums at Fairfax County Public Access are on Channel 10 or livestreamed on YouTube "Inside Scoop Livestream." The public can submit questions by email to [theinsidescoopvt@gmail.com](mailto:theinsidescoopvt@gmail.com) or call 571-749-1142 between 7-8:30 p.m. Tune in on: **Monday, Sept. 11** at 8 p.m.; **Monday, Sept. 18** at 8 p.m.; and **Monday, Oct. 2** at 8 p.m.

## SEPT. 29-30

**Fall Children's Consignment Sale.** 9 a.m.-8 p.m., at Cameron United Methodist Church, 3130 Franconia Road. Some items are half price on Saturday. To become a seller, email: [CUMC.CCS@gmail.com](mailto:CUMC.CCS@gmail.com), or visit [www.cameron-umc.org/](http://www.cameron-umc.org/).

## ONGOING

**Haven of Northern Virginia** provides support, compassion, information and resources to the bereaved and seriously ill. To become a Haven volunteer, please call 703-941-7000 to request an orientation. Volunteers must complete a 30-hour training and commit to one year of service answering Haven phones (2.5 hours weekly). Next training is scheduled for fall 2017.

**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.

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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. <b>-Werner Heisenberg</b>			

## Nothing To Do With Cancer, Almost



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

How lucky am I? In the last two days, I have been the extremely lucky, though presumably random, recipient, of not one but two unsolicited phone calls offering me FREE accommodations at any number of Marriott and Hilton hotels, fairly reputable brands, I'd say. All I have to do is transport my wife, Dina, and myself to the agreed-upon hotel during the designated window of opportunity and voila, a semi-unencumbered vacation for two awaits. And believe me, the offer couldn't have come at a better time. Let's be honest, what more than a cure does a "terminal" cancer patient need than a reasonably priced, stress-free get away from his every day? Need I even characterize that previous question as rhetorical?

Now since I hung up rather quickly, I don't have all the details, other than their phone numbers of course. Because, as you might imagine, I still have a few questions I'd like answered — you know, to optimize the benefits/coordinate the timing of our vacation. But the 'unsolicited' nature of the call didn't enable me to organize my thoughts and ask all the appropriate questions. Nevertheless, the opportunity seems worthy of a follow-up phone call.

Ideally, what I'd like to do is bracket my vacation/air fare and the miscellaneous travel expenses I'm undoubtedly going to incur around the respective properties' availability. Meaning, I'd like to fly once and stay twice; staying in their respective properties in the same city/location switching out of Marriott after my first free weekend stay and then booking into the Hilton for my next free weekend stay (and I'd be willing to pay for my mid-week excursion during the transition). In effect, making the trip a two-for-one as opposed to a not-going-at-all. And in so arranging, using as much of corporate America's largess and marketing budget as is cleverly possible for a non-corporate America employee to exploit. Not having pursued this possible presumption quite yet because I've just had chemotherapy on Friday and I'm not really in the mood to tangle with a fast-talking, smooth operator, who though he/she may have my best travel plans at heart, may not exactly be feeling my strain. So I'm going to wait a few days until I regain my bearings — and patience, and tolerance and call them back unsolicited at a time convenient for me but possibly not so for them and see if we can make a deal.

Because, to tell you the truth, if I could coordinate two hotel reservations — along with all the amenities with which I'm likely to be showered for accepting these extraordinarily generous offers, combined with some free air miles I've accumulated with United Airlines/their travel partners, this indeed could be the trip that my oncologist encouraged us to take when he first delivered the life-changing/life-ending prognosis: "13 months to two years" back in late February 2009. Further adding that, before starting chemotherapy, was as good as I would likely feel for a long time. And as I have come to learn, the quality of my life is very important to my oncologist.

At that time however, I didn't feel the need and/or wasn't motivated to follow my oncologist's suggestion; I wanted to get started on my treatment. Now, eight and half years later, perhaps the timing is better, especially given that it presents itself at the beginning of a new Redskins football season. And if I may quote the late, great, former, head coach of the "Over the hill gang," George Allen: "The future is now." So let me sift through the offers this week and see if I can indeed take the "trip we've always dreamed of." I know it's often said that you can't go back. Maybe we can still go forward.

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





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