



Fairfax Station

CONNECTION Clifton & Lorton

Andrew Blacker, 4, and Luke Frogale, 5, enjoy the trains as Pam Frogale looks on at the HO Gauge Model Train Show at Fairfax Station museum.

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PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

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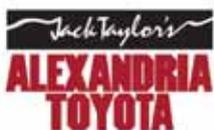
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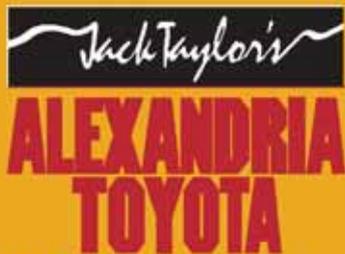
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Nick Craven modeled his module after his hometown in Pennsylvania.



A funeral is on a corner module built by Jim Matthews.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

Model Trains Teach History, Life Skills

Putting together a show takes planning, skill and modules.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

To create the HO Scale train set-up inside the Fairfax Station museum, it takes 10 straight modules and four corners, and the straight modules must be four feet long and two feet wide. All the model train participants in the HO Gauge Model Train Show over the Labor Day weekend know the drill, and each built a different module in the set up, with themes ranging from Civil War to river crossings to a hometown scene from Pennsylvania.

"This is western Pennsylvania, like the world I grew up in," said Nick Craven, as he pointed at his module with modern houses, a church and street with cars, just like a suburban setting. Craven, 35, is a member of the Potomac Module Crew and

resident of Alexandria who lives near the railroad tracks on the northern end of Old Town, providing a soundtrack to his interest in railroads. "I'm right near the tracks going to the power plant, I can hear them all night," he said.

THEY ALL GO for realism when it comes to modules. Jim Matthews' module depicts a funeral. He planned to feature a wedding, but "I found the hearse before I found a bride and groom," he joked. At another show where his module was used, somebody mentioned the morbidity of a funeral, but "that's life," Matthews added.

Melissa Suek of Reston likes the fact that her son Vincent, 2, is getting into the trains. "It builds engineering skills, woodworking, budgeting, it teaches a lot of life skills. We have a lot of wooden trains at home," she said.

And so the trains rolled on, circling the track across bridges, past villages, through the Civil War Battle of Vienna, and past the children who looked on from the tables edge. The HO Gauge Model Train Show at Fairfax Station was one of many held at the

location throughout the year. At each show, the model trains vary in size from the micro sized trains, to N Gauge, O27 Gauge, and G Gauge where the G stands for Garden, and is the biggest model train.

The children are in awe as the cars go by on the tracks, and the older guys control speeds with radio controllers. These are mostly retired men, which seem to be the demographic for this hobby. Children are into trains, refueled in the train world by the Thomas The Train books and cartoons, and the retired men are mostly revisiting a hobby they had when they were kids and have taken it back up.

"This is an old guys hobby, the hobby is aging," said Tim Barr, one of the hobbyists from Manassas who comes to Fairfax Station for shows a few times a year. "I had them when I was a kid, didn't get back into it until I retired," he said.

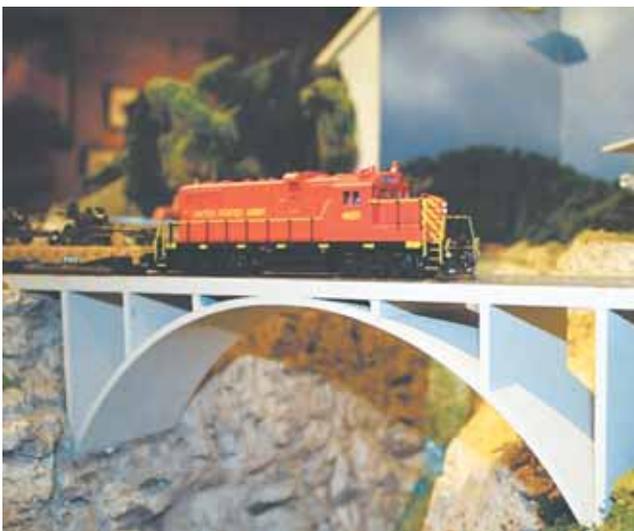
"At 35 I believe I'm the youngest," Craven added. He worked at a hobby shop in Blacksburg, Va. while he was enrolled at Virginia Tech so that helped re-ignite his interest in model trains.

Several are members of the National

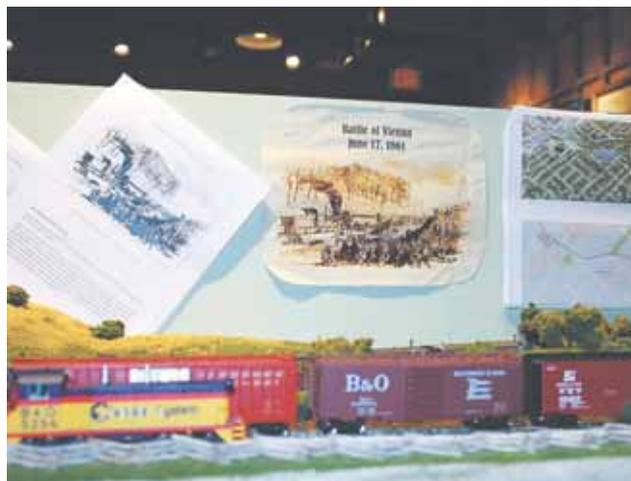
Model Railroad Association (NMRA) that sets the loose standards for model railroading. For example, there are two types of modules the NMRA says, and one is "Mainline," and the other "Industrial." The mainline modules are straighter and more level for longer and faster trains, while the industrial focuses on freight trains of sorts. "Secondary as it is so constructed as to allow certain grades and shorter radii such as is found in branch line and logging or industry areas," the NMRA says.

Roger Boughton, from the Fairfax Station show, took the train last year from Springfield to the NMRA Annual Convention this summer in Orlando, Fla. At the convention, the manufacturers were showing advances in the hobby. Electronics and radio controls "are getting more sophisticated," Boughton said. In 1976, the convention was in Washington, D.C. he said,

BACK AT THE TRACKS, staring at the trains going by, Andrew Blacker, age 4, is wide eyed. His father Bill knows the fascination. "We spend a lot of time in Lorton Station watching the trains," he said.



This realistic bridge crosses a river.



The Battle of Vienna is a module with Civil War troops and supporting information about the battle.



The handheld radio control has replaced the floor mounted transformer of old.

Boot Filled with Love

BY MARTI MOORE
THE CONNECTION

On 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.

Fairfax County firefighters raise another \$126,736 for disaster relief.

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

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—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.

Find information about the IAFF disaster relief fund at www.iaff.org.

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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.

Burying Utilities Should be a Priority

BY SCOTT SUROVELL
STATE SENATOR (D-36)



As we enter hurricane season, I start to get questions about burying utility lines. We are making limited progress in Virginia but efforts hit a setback last week.

In communities built since the mid-1980s all utilities are underground. In the older parts of Northern Virginia, such as where we live here in eastern Fairfax and Prince William counties, nearly all utilities are above ground.

In June, 2012, Northern Virginia was rocked by a Derecho that stormed in from Chicago, killed 22 people and caused over \$2.9 billion in damage. Our older infrastructure, coupled with our heavy older and established tree canopy caused major utility outages.

In the Derecho's aftermath, I heard calls through my district

for undergrounding of utility lines. I even held a townhall focused exclusively on undergrounding power lines.

In the 2014 General Assembly Session, the General Assembly passed legislation declaring power line undergrounding in the public interest and authorizing Dominion Power to spend no more than \$200 million per year and recover up to \$2 billion from ratepayers to underground electrical lines but required the effort to focus on lines that were particularly prone to outages. Dominion's methodology focuses on lines that have failed nine or more times in the last 10 years.

Unfortunately, this program does not bury cable or phone lines due to problems with cost, coordination and easements. I am exploring methods communities

could partner to achieve this, but it is a very difficult problem. Also, none of this addresses undergrounding commercial utilities which is something that is only funded by localities, is desperately need on U.S. 1, and I will write about that separately in the future.

Over the past two years, Dominion has been implementing this program. For example, Dominion finished burying a problematic line in Waynewood last week and held meetings last month regarding plans to underground certain lines on Mason Neck.

Focusing on outage-prone lines not only improves reliability for those customers, but it improves service for everyone by allowing work crews to focus on other outages (e.g. your house) and get your power turned back on, plus it reduces repair costs over the long term which reduces everyone's rates.

However, Dominion cannot do this without supervision from the State Corporation Commission (SCC) who must approve all util-

ity actions that affect electricity rates. The SCC rejected the first proposed round of undergrounding so we passed additional legislation last session to make the General Assembly's intent more clear.

Although the SCC approved the first \$122 million phase, last week — while the costliest hurricane in history was hitting the United States — the SCC rejected Dominion's second request for 244 miles of undergrounding at \$270 million which creates uncertainty for the continued effort and will slow everything down.

We have a long way to go to get our area infrastructure up to par with the newer parts of Northern Virginia and next session, I plan to do everything I can to limit the SCC's ability to kill these projects — they are too important.

It is an honor to serve as your state senator. Please let me know if you have any feedback at scott@scottsuovell.org.



LETTER

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 half miles from parks, not one mile. Why does that matter? First, it shows the author's 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

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday.

Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers.

Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

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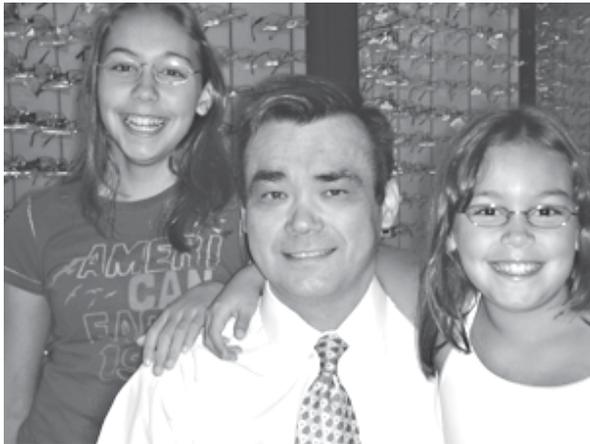


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WELLBEING

Healthy and in Season

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

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

With 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 Culinaria 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 9

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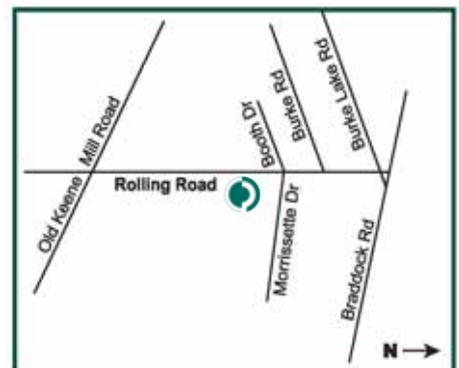
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WELLBEING

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 8

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 and 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 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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FILE PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD

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

Burke Church to Host Oktoberfest Walks, Bike Ride

Accotink 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 Biketoferfest. 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.

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.

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.

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.

For more information, visit scenicroutes.us/nvv/events or contact nicebrowns@verizon.net.

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 midway rest-stop, and a sweep will ensure that no one is dropped.

A volksmarch, literally translated "people's walk," is a leisurely walk through a scenic, historic, or interesting area over a predetermined route. The free volksmarches pass through forests and around Burke Lake. Choose from a five or

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.



Bob Westin, of Springfield, plays the stumpf fiddle with the Kings Park German Band during the 2015 Oktoberfest Volksmarch at Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church in Burke.

VDOT Virginia Department of Transportation

Public Meetings Fall Transportation Meeting

You are invited to participate in public meetings held by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The meetings will begin with an open house followed by a town hall style meeting. The open house will provide information on various transportation initiatives including proposed changes to Virginia's project prioritization process (SMART SCALE), recently funded projects in the Six-Year Improvement Program, Virginia's Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan, and Scenario Planning and Freight plans. Representatives from the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment, Departments of Transportation and Rail and Public Transportation, along with Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Planning District Commissions, and Transit organizations will be in attendance to highlight their transportation programs and to discuss your ideas and concerns on Virginia's transportation network. The open house will be followed by a town hall session, where you can engage in discussion and ask questions about the various initiatives. Comments will be accepted informally at the meeting and may also be submitted via email, or online.

Meeting Dates and Locations

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

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

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.

The Commonwealth is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on these policies or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-2730 or the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-4440 (TTY users call 711).

SCHOOLS

Loss in Overtime

South County QB Michael Tull #17 runs for positive yardage in the Sept. 1 game against Westfield. Tull rushed for 43 yards for the game. The Stallions lost 28-27 in overtime.



PHOTOS BY WILL PALENSCAR

South County's Dillon Spalding #9 scored four touchdowns, two rushing and two receiving.



AREA ROUNDUPS

Celebrate Constitution Day At Historic Pohick Church

The community is invited on Sunday, Sept. 17 to a free celebration of Constitution Day at Historic Pohick Church at 1 p.m. A presentation on the history of the U.S. Constitution and its relevance today will be given by Paul Walden, president of the George Washington Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, and historical re-enactor, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Costa, who portrays the Rev. Lee Massey, the 2nd colonial rector of Pohick Church. The SAR will be handing out copies of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, and docent tours of the 1774 parish church of George Washington and George Mason will be available after the presentation.

Historic Pohick Church is located at 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton, on U.S. Route 1 between Telegraph Road and Pohick Road. For additional information, call the church office at 703-339-6572, or visit the website at www.pohick.org

Historic Pohick Church To Host Country Fair

The 72nd Annual Pohick Church Country Fair will be held on Saturday, Sept. 30 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The fair includes games, booths, moon bounce, smoked pork barbecue, funnel cakes, homemade apple butter, free children's games, historic colonial church tours, organ concerts, live music, a classic car show, a Boy Scout camping and cooking demo, and much more.

Pohick Church is located at 9301 Richmond Highway in Lorton, on U.S. Route 1 between Telegraph Road and Pohick Road. For more information call Fair Chairman Doug Smith at 703-644-0480 or visit the Pohick Church website at www.pohick.org

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Musical Celebration for Fairfax County Milestone

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra presents
'Fairfax Jubilee Program.'

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Major 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. 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

True, 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."

ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at 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. The 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 for each month's direction. 703-324-5424 or dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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

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.

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

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

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. It is open to children of all ages, however especially for those who haven't yet started school. Programs are free and open to the public, donations are gratefully appreciated. There is ample free parking in the downtown area, and stroller access at the rear of Old Town Hall on Main St. 703-385-7858 www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts

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

www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

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.



the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 8

Movie Under the Moon. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Van Dyck Park, 3720 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Featuring "The Sandlot," starts at 7:30. Free. Visit fairfaxva.gov for more.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 9

Chinese Food Fest. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at Wegmans Fairfax, 11620 Monument Drive, Fairfax. Attendees can taste Peking duck Wegmans-style, authentic stretched noodles, fresh handmade dumplings, and bubble tea. Noodle stretching demonstrations hosted by guest chef Charlie Zhang, from Henan province, China. Free except classes. Visit www.wegmans.com or call 703-653-1600

Mixed Media Demonstration. 11 a.m.-noon at 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/ 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 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 for more.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 10

Community Welcome Picnic. noon-2 p.m. at Sydenstricker United Methodist Church, 8508 Hooes 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 or 703-451-8223 Visit 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/

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@markteam.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, 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
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 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.fairfaxvfd.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

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 or contact 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 or Brian at 703-764-3845, LBBAKEITH@gmail.com

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NEWS



COURTESY OF VOLUNTEER FAIRFAX

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

Seeking Members for Volunteer Emergency Team

Orientation set for Wednesday, Sept. 20.

Hundreds 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."

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

For more information on VET, contact Paul Anderson at 703-246-3533 or email Anderson at emergency@volunteerfairfax.org.

BULLETIN

Submit civic/community announcements at 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 or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit 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.

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.

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 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, or visit 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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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-uncumbered 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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