

Burke CONNECTION

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Fairfax businessman Rafael Babilonia runs the logistics side of a make-shift collection center while his co-partner Susana B. Slayton points to the shipping label on a pallet of humanitarian-relief supplies earmarked for the coastal City of Naguabo in Puerto Rico. Slayton — a 1980 graduate of Wakefield High School in Arlington — owns Dynamic Animation Systems of Fairfax with Babilonia. They both live in Burke.



PHOTOS BY MARTI MOORE/THE CONNECTION

While their kids are at school on a Friday afternoon, Fairfax County mothers organize boxes of toiletries Oct. 6 before these donated supplies are shipped from the collection center at 14320-A Sullyfield Circle in Chantilly to storm survivors in Puerto Rico.

Area Residents Join Storm Recovery Cause

Unidos por Puerto Rico DMV ships supplies to survivors of two catastrophic hurricanes.

BY MARTI MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County business partners Susana B. Slayton and Rafael Babilonia — both Burke residents — saw it all play out on the television news last month. They watched Category 5 storm Hurricane Irma sideswipe Puerto Rico Sept. 6. In less than two weeks, they were horrified as Hurricane Maria made a beeline toward the island — where Babilonia was born and his parents live.

Babilonia knew this was a train wreck waiting to happen. He experienced the wrath of Hurricane Hugo — exactly 28 years ago, when it packed a Category 3 wallop and punched Puerto Rico. At the time, he and his wife, Martha, lived on the island's northern coast in the City of Guaynabo. It took 52 days for them to get electricity. He said he and his wife went to nearby San Juan then spent the next nine months working for the American Red Cross recovery efforts in the mountains.

They knew Hurricane Maria was much worse.

They knew a direct hit from a Category 4 storm would bring stunned Puerto Ricans to their knees.

A DAY BEFORE Hurricane Maria nearly destroyed the island Sept. 20, Slayton and Babilonia called a federal government liaison to this U.S. Commonwealth and asked how they could help.

They learned about an initiative started by Puerto Rico First Lady Beatriz Rosselló in response to both hurricanes. United for Puerto Rico is a brand new tax-exempt charity that receives assistance from the private

sector to help islanders recover from two natural disasters they weathered in just one month.

It's on like "Donkey Kong" for Slayton and Babilonia, co-owners of Dynamic Animation Systems of Fairfax — which creates virtual training systems for military and police. These Burke residents, whose families attend the same church at Burke United Methodist, wanted to help and rolled-up their

sleeves. They made space at their warehouse in Chantilly for humanitarian relief supplies.

"Before it made landfall, we were creating the Facebook page," Slayton said. Unidos por Puerto Rico DMV is a grassroots effort with more than 1,600 followers and filled with testimonials from donors like Maribel Costa, who brought a car full of supplies from Baltimore to Chantilly:

"I was happily put to work within minutes. It was so wonderful to see so many people moving quickly, very focused and just working so hard to get everything ready for a safe trip to P.R.," Costa remarks on her Oct. 7 Facebook post.

"They are so organized and it just gave me so much confidence that all these donated goods will get to the people who need it most," she said.

This group is among 18 chapters nationwide that help the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration in Washington, D.C., coordinate this movement.

Like Mario — hero of the famous 1980s Nintendo video game — Slayton and Babilonia are building a network of more than 200 volunteers, who want to climb the ladders of success in order to achieve their critical mission: come to the rescue of Puerto Ricans.

"This is like church to them," Slayton testifies. Like Mario, their unit jumps over hurdles and overcomes obstacles.

SOON AFTER Maria passed, she noticed area residents were in tears because they couldn't reach their families on the island. It took them four days to realize islanders



Twelve teenagers of the Burke United Methodist Church youth group assemble 100 school kits worth \$11 each Sunday for the United Methodist Committee on Relief. This Atlanta-based charity distributes supplies in 80 countries affected by large-scale disasters and crises with low-media attention says UMCOR spokeswoman Cathy Earl. The kits were added to a Burke UMC shuttle bus that delivered donations Tuesday, Oct. 10 to an ongoing collection site in Central Virginia at the Culpeper United Methodist Church.

United for Puerto Rico

FROM PAGE 3

with cellular service from AT&T wireless could receive calls only. That's how Northern Virginians learned their friends and family in Puerto Rico had nothing.

Babilonia checks his smartphone constantly. On Monday he points out the City of Ponce is still without power and water. His wife's family lives there in the middle of the island's southern coast.

He says the warehouse has only four chainsaws and two generators. "We need more."

Babilonia and Slayton explain Puerto Ricans are self-starters and need tools to take care of themselves. The island suffered so much devastation and deforestation, residents need chainsaws to quickly chew through trunks nearly 3 feet wide. Most storm survivors are slowed down by the only tools they have. Machetes and hand saws, Babilonia knows, hardly will make a dent in this massive cleanup effort.

Puerto Ricans want to work, Slayton and Babilonia affirm. They believe portable power tools will help islanders regain control of their lives as they strive to rebuild.

Slayton said Dynamic Animation Systems was accepting donations at the Chantilly warehouse — in the Sullyfield Circle Business Park behind the Dulles Expo Center. In response, her landlord offered extra space in a vacant office around the corner.

Donors bring basic human necessities to the second-floor office at 14320-A Sullyfield Circle, which faces state Route 28. Volunteers sort through the supplies. Product is transferred to the warehouse and



PHOTO BY CARLOS ORTIZ

Oh, what a relief it is for Burke resident Rafael Babilonia who was comforted Saturday by the mere sight of his parents, Hedda and Rafael Babilonia Sr., giving a cheerful thumbs-up Oct. 7 at their home in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. They blessed their son with arms long enough to respond to their recent plea for coffee and milk all the way from Northern Virginia.

prepared for shipment on carefully-organized pallets destined to cities and towns throughout the island. Trucks haul the pallets to nearby Washington Dulles International Airport or to the Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland.

VOLUNTEERS helped Slayton and Babilonia combine resources through workplace connections. A generous donor heard about Unidos por Puerto Rico DMV through an employee at his bank. He asked Slayton to take him last week to a nearby Costco Wholesale store, where he dropped almost \$3,000 for supplies. While he stood in the check-out line, Slayton went to the pharmacy to get anti-diarrhea medicine — for storm victims forced to survive on dirty drinking water and spoiled food.

A store employee asked Slayton why she needed so much. She explained.

The Costco pharmacist purchased the entire case of medicine then donated it to the cause, Slayton claims.

Another volunteer — Airman 1st Class Belle Anderson of Fairfax — used her Air Force network at Joint Base Andrews to make room aboard a KC-130 military fuel tanker and help Unidos por Puerto Rico DMV fly two milk runs to the island.

"We have shipped and distributed over 120,000 pounds of supplies to Puerto Rico," Slayton said. United Airlines donated cargo containers on their commercial planes. She also mentioned Unidos por Puerto Rico DMV donated pet food to the Humane Society — which made room for humanitarian-relief supplies aboard a private plane headed to the island bring stray animals stateside.

This is no game for the dynamic duo, who will serve throughout the long haul until the residents of Puerto Rico tell them to stop. A local lawyer is providing pro bono aid by helping Unidos por Puerto Rico DMV obtain a tax-exempt status as a 501(c)(3) from the Internal Revenue Service.

Donations are accepted between 9 and 4 p.m., including weekends.

The supply list calls for these items: Flashlights, batteries, medicine, dust masks, toiletries, cleaning supplies, adult diapers, baby food and supplies, pet food and supplies, clothing for all, non-perishable foods, drinking water and juice.

The slogan of this grassroots volunteer movement offers an uplifting chant of encouragement to storm survivors who will rise from the devastating effects of two natural disasters: "Levantamos Puerto Rico!"



PHOTO BY MARTI MOORE/THE CONNECTION

Lake Braddock High School freshman Cecilia Spain adds an eraser to a cloth bag Oct. 8 in the Fellowship Hall at Burke United Methodist Church. This project is a hands-on mission project for the church youth group, which filled 100 school kits worth \$11 each Sunday for the United Methodist Committee on Relief.

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ROUNDUPS

Jewish Community Center to Host First Baby2Tot Fest

The Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia is hosting the first Baby2Tot Fest for families with children from 0-4 years old on Sunday, Oct. 22, from 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at the JCC located at 8900 Little River Turnpike in Fairfax. The day will include a vendor showcase, parenting workshops, Preschool Alley featuring area preschools, Little Planets' natural play area, "Ask a Professional" Corner Café, onsite demos, kid-friendly crafts and entertainment, door prizes, giveaways, and more. Early Bird tickets, by Wednesday, Oct. 18, are \$6 per adult and free for children up to 13 years old. At the door, adult tickets are \$8, children 13 and under are free. Lunch is available through advanced purchase by Oct. 16 — \$9 per adult, \$6 per child. Snacks will be available for purchase throughout the day. Free on-site parking. Visit jccnv.org/baby2totfest or call 703-323-0880 for more information.

Strong Girls Gala Raises \$40,000

The Strong Girls Gala raised \$40,000 to benefit Girls on the Run of NOVA on Thursday, Sept. 28 at Trummers on Main in

Clifton. The event raised funds to support financial aid for the young girls most in need of this youth development program to help them grow into their best selves. GOTR NOVA offered \$139,466 in financial aid in FY17.

The Strong Girls Gala was hosted by the organization's Board of Directors, with Board Member Margie Johnson as the event chair, and sponsored by Wegmans, LookThink, Acumen Solutions, KPMG, 1406 Group, Pohanka Automotive Group, Freeman, Boost Marketing, and MyFlorist.

"The gala was first rate! My daughter had a great time and was able to see strong girls in action," said Walter Smiley, who attended the gala with his daughter, Kaitlyn, as a father/daughter night out.

More than 150 attendees enjoyed an evening of great networking and inspiration.

Katey Comerford, executive director for GOTR NOVA said, "We are so grateful. We have a set priority to ensure all local girls have access to high quality youth development programming through Girls on the Run and, more specifically, to increase access to our program in underserved communities. Through the generosity of everyone who attended our Strong Girls Gala we now have the ability to change the lives of more girls in our region."

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People Support Firearm Limits

... Elected officials should too.

BY SCOTT SUROVELL
STATE SENATOR (D-36)



COMMENTARY

Stephen Paddock's Las Vegas assault rifle killing spree has again highlighted the dangers of Virginia's and America's much-too-lax firearms environment. Virginians know the dangers of high-powered weapons having experienced snipers Malvo and Muhammad and the Virginia Tech massacre. Some of us have been steadily, but unsuccessfully, trying to pass reasonable firearms violence prevention laws in Virginia for years.

For example, after Jared Loughner's 2011 attack on U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, I cosponsored legislation to prohibit the sale of firearm ammunition magazines that hold more than 20 bullets. The legislature has rejected the bill every year since.

In 2015, a Fairfax attorney told me about a

client he defended in a mental commitment proceeding in which his client was found to be a danger to himself or others. Virginia law prohibits these people from obtaining a concealed weapon permit or possessing a firearm, but the law does not prohibit the possession of ammunition. I tried to prohibit mentally-incapacitated people from purchasing or possessing ammunition, but the legislature struck it down.

In 2015, I fought to prohibit Virginia from recognizing concealed weapon permits from other states unless their permits contained the same restrictions required by Virginia law — like those adjudged insane subject to protective order, convicted of two misdemeanors in five years, convicted of assault or sexual battery, addicted to drugs, convicted of driving

while intoxicated in the last three years or dishonorably discharged from the Armed Forces.

Attorney General Mark Herring cancelled numerous reciprocity agreements with other states for these reasons, but months later in 2015, the legislature passed legislation requiring reciprocity. Today, a non-felon, Virginia resident who cannot obtain a concealed carry permit in Virginia can obtain one in Florida and use it here.

Last year, I introduced legislation requiring background checks for all gun purchases. This would close the gun show loophole and ensure that a felon could not evade purchase restrictions by simply buying guns on eBay or other gun-sale websites. My bill was killed 12-3 in the Senate Courts of Justice Committee. While it seems likely that bump stocks will be banned now that 58 innocent people were mowed down, I am not optimistic we will see additional safety improvements in the short term.

I will continue to work for reasonable laws to prohibit firearm violence in Virginia and I welcome any ideas from my constituents. You can reach me at scott@scottsurovell.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Claims Up Against Facts

To the Editor:

In response to Kevin R. Rose's Opinion: Letter to the Editor: Deer Hunting Effect Misrepresented (Connection, Sept. 6-12, 2017).

How convenient for you to not mention that you work with Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF). VDGIF, your employer, profits from the sales of hunting licenses, so it is no surprise that the VDOT data that clearly shows hunting is increasing deer-vehicle collisions in our county bothers you so much.

As a resident in Fairfax County and one who is adjacent to a park where bowhunting is taking place, I also received the postcard you speak of and I requested data from VDOT to see for myself if the content in the postcard is correct and it is. Though it was time consuming to map out all of the deer vehicle collisions (DVCs) in our county over the last three years, which is all VDOT could provide for me, I did see a very obvious trend that did show how approximately 93 percent of all DVCs over the span of these three years is, in fact, within 1 to 1.5 miles of a bow hunted park or in a bow hunted park. Your claims are up against the facts — in this case the VDOT data which fortunately is not biased like you are.

Kudos to whoever mailed out these postcards. There are people in our county who are sick and

tired of "higher officials" making uneducated decisions and putting the public's safety at risk. Whoever sent out these flyers seems to have noticed deer carcasses beside these bow hunted parks and decided to look into this. Everyone has a right to VDOT data and I'm glad the author of this postcard reminded us of this, since we clearly can't rely on people who are running this so-called deer management program or people who work with pro-hunting VDGIF.

You go on to argue that 92 percent of Fairfax County is within 1.5 miles of a bow hunted park. Please show us how 92 percent of Fairfax County is within 1.5 miles of a park. I grew up in Fairfax County and know well enough you are making this up. All we have to do is look at a map and see that.

As a VDGIF employee you also have access to data from 2005 to 2016. You are comparing 11 years of data that only you seem to have access to to three years of data (2014-2017) explained in the postcards. The postcard clearly states that the author could only obtain three years of data from VDOT. The data in the postcard is based on data collected between May 6, 2014 and April 25, 2017. I had a look at the VDOT data during this time frame and the postcard is accurate in terms of DVCs and locations. If you did your homework and looked at the same dates, you would have the same numbers as the postcard. This also goes for the dates of the deer sterilizations in Fairfax City. The postcard also gave accurate data for those three years.

Not a surprise that you, VDGIF, have several years worth of VDOT data, yet, we the residents of Fairfax County only have access to three years of VDOT data.

As for the research articles you clearly did not read, hunting does increase the overall deer population since hunted herds did have an increased incidence of multiple deliveries. In this case a significant increase of twins and triplets in deer herds that were hunted. Why do you call this insignificant?

Rob Brooks
Fairfax Station

Column As an Inspiration

To the Editor:

As a regular reader of Kenneth Lourie's "Cancer Column," I'd like to request the Editor to please consider giving the column a much-deserved face-lift. The Connection needs to shed more light on Lourie's illuminating accounts of dealing with the deadly disease, and overcoming the odds, instead of burying it in the shadow of the Business Directory with an Obituary-like black border! Also, a color profile picture would breathe new life into these weekly gems. I understand, Lourie is an Ad/Sales Representative, but more importantly, he is a Survivor and an inspiration to us all.

Considering the other cancers plaguing our society — fake news, mass shootings, and reality shows that are anything but real to most of us — it is all the more urgent to highlight real-life, first-hand accounts from people like Lourie who are fighting the real fight. If, perhaps, we read such stories of courage and positive determination, it could inspire a sorely-needed dose of consideration, empathy, and kindness in our community, or at the very least, give us a much-needed reality-check.

To Mr. Lourie, thank you for sharing your story every week, and wishing you continued strength...

Shaila Muralidhar
Great Falls

Fairfax County Steps to Limit Unsustainable Pension Liabilities

To the Editor:

Fairfax County can limit its unsustainable pension liabilities if it seeks serious policy options. But it has not.

Unfunded pension liabilities of its five main pension systems in June 2016 were an unsustainable \$5.6 billion, up \$0.8 billion in that year alone. Moreover, that un

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

funded level would be far larger were its liabilities based on realistic 5.5 percent discount rates rather than 7.25 percent discount rates.

One of five systems is the Educational Employees' Supplementary Retirement System (ERFC) for public school employees. Its unfunded liabilities surged 27 percent last year. Worse, this supplemental system entices good employees to retire as early as 52.

In short, four of five systems — not the Virginia Retirement system — are unduly generous. If the County were prudent with liabilities for which it ultimately is responsible, it would seek — and consider — serious pension options. But it has not. To be prudent, the County should seek impacts on its unfunded liabilities of:

1. Changing full pension ages to the first of the Social Security age or one satisfying the Rule of 90 (age plus service years),
2. Eliminating employee contributions to, and eligibility for, pensions for new and unvested employees,
3. Using realistic pension discount rates of 5.5 percent rate,
4. Capping cost-of-living adjustments at 2 percent,
5. Increasing contribution rates by both employers and participating employees by 0.5 percent over each of the next five years and
6. Enhancing returns by shifting funds to diversified low-cost index funds.

Dr. David V. Pritchett
McLean

Not Red Or Blue Issue

To the Editor:

Since the start of the gubernatorial election many issues important to the people of Virginia have taken center stage, but one issue deserves more attention from our candidates — Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's is a national crisis that is devastating families in Virginia and straining our economy. According to the Alzheimer's Association, there are 140,000 Virginians over the age of 65 living with Alzheimer's, and 458,000 more providing them with unpaid care. In 2017, the commonwealth will pay \$826 million in Medicaid costs for people living with Alzheimer's. Those numbers are only expected to rise as the population ages.

I have lived in Northern Virginia for most of my life. I first hand experienced the painful toll of this horrible disease — my mother

passed away from early onset Alzheimer's in 2003. Despite retirement pensions, private and federal government health coverage, and three children contributing both financially and emotionally, my parents had to declare bankruptcy due to mounting medical bills. It's a disease that impacts the entire family economically, physically and emotionally.

In recent years the federal government has grown its commitment to help families affected by Alzheimer's through increased research funding. Additionally, the Commonwealth published the "Dementia State Plan: Virginia's Response to the Needs of Individuals with Dementia and their Caregivers" in 2011 and issued an update in 2015. The next governor of Virginia will be responsible for continuing its successful implementation.

Still, much work remains. Alzheimer's isn't a red or blue issue — it impacts us all.

Please join me in asking Ralph Northam and Ed Gillespie, and all candidates seeking office in Richmond about their plan to address the Alzheimer's crisis. As a resident of Alexandria and proud citizen of Virginia, I hope that this is taken seriously and action will take place.

Shannon C. Malone-deBenedictis
Alexandria

Fresh Voices Kept Off Stage

To the Editor:

In reading the Connection's lengthy story about the gubernatorial debate in McLean ("Rorschach Politics," Connection, Sept. 27-Oct. 3, 2017), I was amazed that you did not even mention that there is a third candidate on the ballot for Governor: Cliff Hyra, the Libertarian Party candidate. Cliff is a patent/intellectual property attorney who works for a firm here

in Reston. He lives in a Richmond suburb with his wife and four children.

Not only did the Connection fail to mention that Mr. Hyra is a third candidate running for Governor who is already qualified to appear on the ballot, you failed to mention that he was in the debate hall that evening. And not only did the Connection fail to mention that Cliff Hyra was in the debate hall, you failed to mention that the Democrat and Republican candidates conspired to keep him off the stage, and out of the debate. The Ds and Rs don't want your readers to even hear a fresh, engaging, alternative choice.

The Democrat and Republican crony capitalists in the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, the sponsor of this farce, acquiesced in this charade. Whoever becomes Governor, I'm sure the Ds and Rs will "take care" of their friends in the Chamber for helping to silence alternative voices.

The Democrat and Republican parties regularly keep alternative political parties out of debates. They've been doing it for decades. Consider just last year's presidential debates: the two old parties kept Green Party candidate Jill Stein, who was on the ballot in 45 states and D.C., and Libertarian Party candidate Gary Johnson, who was on the ballot in all 50 states and D.C., out of all the debates.

For readers who are sick and tired of the two old political parties and the games they play, and the way the Democrats and Republicans try to keep citizens ignorant, readers can learn for themselves about Cliff Hyra here: cliffhyra.com and here: [Facebook.com/CliffHyra/](https://www.facebook.com/CliffHyra/)

Steve Resz
Reston

Write

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

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PHOTO BY ANGIE SECKINGER

A collection of framed Hermes scarves line one of the walls in the lady's retreat by designer Marika Meyer.



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Todd Martz and Susan Nelson use felt flowers made by women in Nepal to accessorize the family room.



PHOTO BY ANGIE SECKINGER

An abundance of seating make the pool space by Kim Asner of Country Casual Teak a tranquil oasis

Inside D.C. Design House

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BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

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Location: 9004 Congressional Court, Potomac, Md.

Tickets: \$35 at www.dcdesignhouse.com/copy-of-events

Open through Oct. 29: Saturday-Sunday 12-5 p.m.; Closed Mondays; Tuesday-Friday 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 29: DC Design House, last day, 12-5 p.m.

For the 10th anniversary of the D.C. Design House, 23 designers transformed the Potomac, Md. home which includes nine bedrooms, nine full bathrooms, four half bathrooms, a cinema, two-story library, a pool and a pool house. Visitors will have the opportunity to walk through the 27,256 square-foot estate to view the latest in home design trends. Proceeds from the event benefit the Children's National Health System.

It was actress Grace Kelly and the movie "To Catch a Thief" that inspired

Designer Marika Meyer's creation of the lady's retreat. "I thought of her elegance and her scarf blowing in the wind," said Meyer.

A collection of framed Hermes scarves line one of the room's walls.

Much of the room's furniture, including two vintage, velvet chairs and a neutral sofa, surround a Lucite cocktail table, creating a balance between modern and traditional styles.

"When designing the room I thought, 'who would live in that room and what would she be like?'" said Meyer.

Meyer used custom-designed, hand-painted fabric from her own collection for the room's drapes, pillows, stools and other accessories. One of her biggest obstacles

was making the large room feel intimate. "I designed it to make it beautiful and functional, she said. "I created different destinations so it doesn't feel so overwhelming."

Among those destinations are a large secondary, a game table and a bar cart.

Dubbed A Study in Blue, the library by designer Kelley Proxmire draws inspiration from the library of New York socialite Brooke Astor. "I knew it was a classic and I had seen a recent picture and I knew it was a classic," said Proxmire.

"Her books were probably antique, leather-bound and I knew that I something wanted something neat and tidy like that."

The room's dark wood paneling is brightened with natural lighting and accessorized with blue and white porcelain and painted books

in varying shades of blue.

The designer's goal was to create a technology-free zone that allowed for uninhibited conversation. "Families need a place to sit and talk to each other without being on

the telephone and watching television," said Proxmire. "I want all my rooms to say, 'Come and sit.' I don't want them to be too standoffish."

Marrying modern and traditional design elements, Alexandria-based design duo Todd Martz and Susan Nelson created a family room that is both energizing and relaxing, and is meant to be an electronics-free zone.

"The scale of the house is formal, but we wanted to created a room that is family friendly," said Martz. "We wanted to incorporate children's art, but display it in a way that's elegant."

The walls are covered with bright yellow wallpaper that provides an energetic backdrop for blue and white porcelain accessories. To accommodate the lives of a modern family, the white sofa is covered in Crypton fabric, which is stain-resistant and easy to clean. Other furniture in the room, which includes two faux leather chairs are

centered around a handmade, wooden coffee table.

Children's artwork hangs inside the bookcases among blue and white ginger jars. "It makes the book cases a little less serious," said Nelson.

The poolside oasis created by Kim Asner of Country Casual Teak allows visitors to be transported to a luxury spa. Lush greenery and teak lounge chairs surround the pool. An abundance of seating, a cabana and a pool house make the space ideal for entertaining a crowd or enjoying the space's serenity.

"The area is large so we needed substantial furniture," said Asner. "The cabana looks grand and impressive, but it's also comfortable."

Located at 9004 Congressional Court, Potomac, Md., the home is listed at \$10.28 million by Long and Foster Real Estate. Open through Oct. 29, tickets are \$35. Visit www.dcdesignhouse.com.

"When designing the room I thought, 'Who would live in that room and what would she be like?'"

— Marika Meyer

Bright yellow wallpaper energizes the family room by Todd Martz and Susan Nelson.



PHOTO BY ANGIE SECKINGER

SENIOR LIVING

Be Useful, Fit, And Have Fun

Staying busy and remaining productive in the “Golden Years.”

BY EDEN BROWN
THE CONNECTION

fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-324-5406.

For active “seniors,” there is nothing worse than when the bank teller and the waitress start calling you “sweetie” or “dear,” and the passengers in priority seating on the bus get up to offer you a seat.

Old? Of course none of them feel old. The hair may be graying, the shoes may be sneakers, and the membership may be AARP, but Northern Virginia is a haven for people who want to stay active and useful after retirement.

Join a Musical Group

Sallie Klunk of Arlington says she plays in a small musical group at a local nursing home. “I play flute with three other instrumentalists and about 10 singers once a week at Powhatan Nursing Home. Residents are provided with song sheets. My husband Dave and I played at Powhatan Nursing Home for 10 years as a piano and flute duo before I joined my present group.”

During her time in the nursing home in Fairfax, she learned about Pets on Wheels, and saw the impact it had on residents. “For the residents, singing and enjoying animals are enriching experiences.”

Volunteer for Pets on Wheels

The Fairfax Pets on Wheels program requires six steps: submit an online application; attend an orientation on the first Wednesday of each month, starting at 7:30 p.m. Get a pet behavior assessment. Pet Handler teams are required to pass a behavior assessment to evaluate the pet’s controllability, aggression, reaction to strangers, and overall behavior and level of stress in unfamiliar surroundings. Step 4: Get a Fairfax County Government Appointee Background Form. Step 5: Certify your pet’s wellness. A FPOW health certificate is completed by your pet’s regular veterinarian certifying that the pet is healthy and vaccinations are current. Step 6: Attend training at the facility of your choice.

To learn more, email dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov

Wednesday Mid-Week Hikers

“Another way to stay fit and social is the Wednesday Mid-Week Hikers,” Nora Palmatier said. “We have a large listserv and someone organizes a hike each week, then you go or not.”

Kate Hughes provided details: “Initially organized in the late 1970s, the PATC Mid-Week Hikers are an enthusiastic collection of retirees, semi-retirees and others that love to hike. While the pace varies somewhat within the group, participants need to be very fit as most hikes are a brisk 8-12 miles, with up to 3,200 feet of elevation gain. Including a lunch break, most hikes last 5-6 hours. Hike locations include the Shenandoah National Park, the George Washington National Forest in Virginia, Sugarloaf Mountain and Catocin National Park in Maryland. Hikes are posted on the PATC website calendar (top of the homepage www.patc.net) a few days before each hike.”

The Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) also has an easy hikers group. There are dozens of other hiking meet-ups in the Northern Virginia area, and finding them is easy: see www.meetup.com/topics/hiking/us/va/arlington/

Master Gardeners

The Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Master Gardener program trains participants in best management practices of gardening and landscaping techniques that preserve and sustain the environment. Offered by the Arlington County Office, in partnership with the City of Alexandria, The Master Gardener Training classes are offered once a week several times a year. The class is 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. with a break for lunch from 12-12:30 p.m. The cost of the 2017 volunteer training is \$235 for Arlington/Alexandria residents and \$285 for non-residents.

Limited scholarship assistance is available. Contact coordinator Leslie Fillmore, at 703-228-6426 or leslief7@vt.edu or look up activities on www.mgnv.org.

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

THROUGH OCTOBER

Fall Festival and Pumpkin

Playground. Various times at Burke Nursery & Garden Centre, 9401 Burke Road, Burke. Weekdays is \$10 per person and the weekend price is \$14 per person. Call 703- 323-1188.
Pumpkin Patch. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. at the St. George's United Methodist Church, 4910 Ox Road, Fairfax. Buy fall pumpkins and decorative gourds grown by Native American farmers to support jobs in a high unemployment area in Arizona. Email office@stgumc.org or call 703-385-4550.

OCT. 11-14

Photography Exhibit. Various times in the Center for the Arts lobby on George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. "Slavery in Northern Virginia" photo exhibit by Osher Lifelong Learning Institute's Photography Club. Visit www2.gmu.edu/.

THURSDAY/OCT. 12

Art and Lunch. 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Fairfax Art League event, bring lunch and enjoy the company of other artists. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net or call 703-587-9481.

Digital Storytelling Workshop.

10:30 a.m.-noon at George Mason University, Innovation Hall Room 215-G, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Award-winning storyteller Laura Packer will help storytellers identify audiences and their needs, hone the voice, and tell a story in a way that will reach out and change the world. Call 703-993-1170 or visit english.gmu.edu/.

Making America Green Lecture.

noon at George Mason University HUB Ballroom, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Mark Jacobson, a renowned climate scientist, Stanford professor, and science director of Mark Ruffalo's Solutions Project, will detail his vision and plan for 100 percent renewable energy in the U.S. by 2050. Free. Email dkeubric@gmu.edu.

FRIDAY/OCT. 13

Poetry Night. 6-9 p.m. at the Epicure Café, 11104 Lee Hwy, Fairfax. An evening of poetry by Shara McCallum author of Madwoman, Jenny Johnson, author of In Full Velvet, and Debra Nystrom, author of Night Sky Frequencies and Selected Poems. Visit www.fallforthebook.org.

Drone Flying Demonstration.

7 p.m. at South Run District Park, 7550 Reservation Drive, Springfield. The DC Area Drone Users Group (DUG) will host a brief discussion and then hands-on flight demos of small, unmanned aircraft systems. Call 703-866-0566 or visit fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec/southrun/.

OCT. 13-14

Fairfax City Ghost Tours. 7-8:30 p.m. at Old Town Square, 10415 North St., Fairfax. Stories of the spirited individuals who may still roam Old Town Fairfax. Comfortable walking shoes advised. Cider and treats provided. \$15. Ages 12 and up. Call 703-385-7858 or email parksrec@fairfaxva.gov.

SATURDAY/OCT. 14

Fall Walk Fundraiser. 8:30 a.m. at Lake Accotink Park, 5660 Heming Ave., Springfield. The Hemophilia

VCO Opens 47th Season

Performing "Royal Tributes" at Northern Virginia Community College.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

An enduring presence in Northern Virginia, the Virginia Chamber Orchestra (VCO) will open its 47th season with "Royal Tributes." The specially themed concert will be conducted by VCO Music Director David Grandis. He selected musical works by contemporary and classic period composers that pay respect to queens, both past and present.

The "Royal Tributes" compositions that patrons will hear are related to Monarchs including Marie Antoinette of France, Queen Elizabeth II of England, and Salote Tupou III, Queen of Tonga. "We know from past experience that audiences will enjoy hearing not only the 'classical top 40,' but also selections they may never previously had an opportunity to hear," said Grandis.

"Beyond the renowned Haydn, the contemporary composers to be represented have received more modern accolades. Dominick Argento was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1975. And, Sir Malcolm Arnold was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for his overall service to music. One of Arnold's pop-culture works is the theme song for the Academy Award winning film, "The Bridge Over the River Kwai."

For those less familiar with the professional Virginia Chamber Orchestra, it is a chamber orchestra by design. It is not a downsized symphony orchestra. "The music of a chamber orchestra has intimacy



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIRGINIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Virginia Chamber Orchestra Music Director David Grandis

and transparency as well as power and drama," said Grandis.

The "Royal Tributes" concert will include: Haydn's "Symphony No. 85" in B flat major, H1:85, Arnold's "Sinfonietta No. 2, Op. 65," Argento's "Royal Invitation: Homage to the Queen of Tonga" and Gerald

Finzi's "Romance in E flat major, Op. 11"

Adding to the overall interest of the music, the VCO will have a narrator providing add intriguing true stories to further illustrate the "Royal Tributes" theme. Works by Virginia artist Mark Malecki will be on display to provide a visual arts presence to the

event.

The Virginia Chamber Orchestra is supported in part by grants from the Arts Council of Fairfax County and its patrons and other donors.

♦ **Station 32 Fire Station Tour** — Fairview, 5600 Burke Centre Parkway.

♦ **Station 14 Fire Station Tour** — Burke, 9501 Old Burke Lake Road.
Bunny Man Lecture. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street. County Archivist and Bunny Man expert, Brian Conley, will talk about the legend of the Bunny Man which has captivated Northern Virginia fear-seekers for over four decades. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/events/ or 703-293-6227.

Railroad Museum's 30th

Anniversary. 1-6 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Virginia State Delegate for the 40th District, Tim Hugo, will preside over the rededication ceremony of the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. Free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

Benefit Musical. 6:30 p.m. at the The Historic Sydenstricker Schoolhouse, 8511 Hooes Road, Springfield. Friends of Sydenstricker Schoolhouse will hold a fundraising event at the Schoolhouse featuring a special musical performance by the Rossi Family and a performance of Will

Rogers' USA, a one-man show performed by Rob Cork. Visit www.sydenstrickerschoolhouse.org.

OCT. 14-15

Fall Festival. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Whitehall Farm, 6080 Colchester Road, Fairfax. Featuring a large corn maze in the shape of a chicken, pumpkin patch, farm animals, inflatable bounce houses, hay ride, and nature trail. \$12, active duty military and their families receive \$2 off per ticket. Also takes place Oct. 21-22. Visit www.whitehall.farm.

SUNDAY/OCT. 15

Rose Display. 2-4 p.m. at Merrifield Garden Center- Fair Oaks, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Arlington Rose Foundation hosts seminar on new and interesting roses for next year's garden. Free. Call 703-371-9351 or email arinformation@aol.com.

OCT. 16-19

Halloween Costume Exchange. Drop off various times at Sherwood Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Pick up new costume on Friday, Oct. 20 from 6-9 p.m. Drop

off gently used and clean Halloween costumes Monday through Thursday, and come pick up a great second hand costume for this year on Friday. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts or call 703-385-7858.

THURSDAY/OCT. 19

Cabaret Performance. 7 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Live musical entertainment by featured actors and singers from the City of Fairfax Theatre Company. Visit www.fairfaxcitytheatre.org.

FRIDAY/OCT. 20

Pathway to Wellness Conference. 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Keynote Speaker will be Jennifer Marshall, founder of "This is My Brave," and other presenters will talk about how creativity, poetry, music and dance can be part of recovery. \$30. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb or email wwwcsb@fairfaxcounty.gov.
Cocktails by Candlelight. 6:30 p.m. at at George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Sip on period cocktails as you learn to how to make 18th-century mixed drinks and snacks in the hearth kitchen. \$35, \$25 for Friends of Gunston Hall. Call 703-550-9220 ext. 240 or email mkcraver@gunstonhall.org.

SATURDAY/OCT. 21

2nd Annual Shelane's 5K Run/Walk. 7:30 a.m. at Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Free kids activities: rock wall, moon bounce, face painting, arts and crafts and more. Come run/walk to help raise awareness and resources for postpartum mood disorders in memory of Shelane Dawn Gaydos. \$30 for 5K, kids fun run, \$10. Visit shelanesrun.org/ or call 571-332-9026.

Help The Homeless 5K Walk 2017. 8:30 a.m. At Fairfax City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax. A 5K through the neighborhoods of Fairfax City or the 1.5 mile short course. \$32. Visit www.PathwayHomes.org.

Trick or Treating. 1-3 p.m. at The Colonnade, Braddock and Union Mills Road, Clifton. Rain or shine. Visit www.rappaportco.com or call 571-382-1200.

2017 Library Jubilee Gala

Fundraiser. 5:30-8 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. "The Library Goes Hollywood" with food, ice cream, auction and photo booth with VIP Hollywood guest, Marilyn Monroe. \$75. Call 703-324-8300 or email jubilee@FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org.

Trunk or Treat. 6-8 p.m. at Franconia United Methodist Church (FUMC), 6037 Franconia Road. Games, snacks, hot cider in the church parking lot. Visit franconiaumc.org/ or call 703-971-5151.

Campfire Stargazing. 8-10 p.m. at Burke Lake Park is located at 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Astronomical naturalist identifies the stars, constellations and other night-sky features, and make S'mores. \$10. Call 703-323-6600 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burkelakepark/.

SUNDAY/OCT. 22

Clifton's Ivakota Farm History. 3:30-5 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Lynne Garvey-Hodge, a Fairfax County History Commissioner, lectures on Clifton's Ivakota Farm, which from 1915 to 1925 served as a school and home for unwed mothers and their children. Call 703-324-8300 or email jubilee@FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

NEWS

Former Addict Shares His Story

Chris Herren, former NBA player and addict, speaks to parents and children in county schools.

BY BASMA HUMADI
THE CONNECTION

"The beauty of living in sobriety is that you find the silver lining in your saddest stories," said former NBA player Chris Herren. "You make peace with the past. You forgive – and you allow yourself to be forgiven."

Herren spoke and shared his story Monday, Oct. 2 to parents at Fairfax High School. Students at the high school also gathered earlier that day to listen to Herren's speech during school hours. The focus of his speech encompassed Herren's personal journey through recovery and addiction, and the need for communities to focus on wellness.

Herren had it all, lost it all, then struggled to build it all back. He started drinking and smoking pot infrequently as a teen then tried a line of cocaine for the first time in college. It led to a 14-year long addiction on numerous different substances, which would go on to cost Herren \$25,000 a month to support. Landing a stint with the Boston Celtics, getting kicked out of college or seeing his newborn son couldn't help end it.

"It's hard in any profession – hiding," Herren said. "It's hard no matter what you do in life to balance work and an illness. Often times, they don't go together. To try to manage that and sustain that, it was exhausting and unmanageable."

Herren will continue to share his story around high schools in Fairfax County throughout the week as well. By speaking to high schoolers, faculty and parents, Herren hopes to change the attitude of those willing to listen.

"I think when it comes to addiction, as communities, we've put so much emphasis



PHOTO BY BASMA HUMADI/THE CONNECTION
Addressing a crowd of parents, Herren hopes that more will take initiative in looking out for their children

on how bad it gets instead of how it begins," Herren said. "We want to show our kids how ugly and painful addiction becomes instead of understanding at 13, 14, 15, 16 years old why we would even take a chance on letting it begin."

Challenging educators and children to change the structure of the typical systems they live in is one major factor Herren wants to influence. He is now nine years sober.

"I think wellness should be a core class from the beginning," Herren said. "I think you should empower kids to be able to communicate their struggle and to build their self-esteem and self worth. Not every kid has a uniform to hide behind and build their confidence. Not every kid is involved in sports or theater or band. There's a lot of kids out there that need some affirmation."

One parent in the crowd, Alina Lockridge, admitted that Herren's speech to high school students earlier that day helped her daughter grow interested in understanding their family's past with addiction.

"At first, I did not want to come down," Lockridge said. "[My daughter] started talking about what she experienced and the things I thought I had hid from her about my family's addiction. You put it in such a way that made her think and frame it as, 'What did they experience? How can we help them?'"

We didn't inherit the earth from our parents. We're borrowing it from our children.

—Chief Seattle
(1788-1866)
Suquamish/
Duwamish chief



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Epic Story About Combating Racism

Co-produced by Hub Theatre and Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Building robust community partnerships for the Fairfax County performing arts scene, Fairfax's Helen Hayes Award recipient Hub Theatre and the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia (JCCNV) are developing a staged reading of a new play. The play is "The Secrets of the Universe (and other songs)" based on little-known actions to combat racism from two towering figures of American society, Marian Anderson and Albert Einstein.

The play, with songs by Helen Hayes Award recipient Marc Acito, is "about the union of hearts, minds, and souls in a quest to unlock the secrets of the universe," said Helen Murray, artistic director, Hub Theatre. "Einstein and Anderson are two incredible

Where & When

Hub Theatre and the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia (JCCNV) present "The Secrets of the Universe (and other songs)," at the JCCNV, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Performance, Sunday, Oct. 14, 2017 at 4 p.m. Tickets: \$16 (general admission), \$14 (JCCNV members, \$12 for groups of 15 or more. Call 703-323-0880 or visit www.jccnv.org.

figures, both able to reach beyond themselves to a higher understanding of the world, meeting and forming a friendship."

Presenting this original drama will "enrich our collective audiences," said Jeff Dannick, executive director, JCCNV. "Here is a unique opportunity to observe and enjoy a unique relationship between two historic giants. Eighty years after their extraordinary meeting, the themes and issues



PHOTO COURTESY OF HUB THEATRE

Helen Murray,
Artistic Director,
Hub Theatre



PHOTO COURTESY OF JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Jeff Dannick,
Executive Director,
Jewish Community
Center of North-
ern Virginia

brought forward in the play continue to resonate."

Asked about the reading and the artistic process Murray said, "this is a workshopped staged reading of a play in progress. So no costumes or props, just music stands and actors with scripts. The cast will include professional actors from the area."

The reading also provides an opportunity for the audience to provide their in-

formed feedback.

Playwright Acito is expected at the performance to take in what he sees and hears from the actors and audience alike, to further develop the script on its next step to full production.

Murray went on to say, "it is exciting to have a partner in bringing this show to our community. With the help of JCCNV we will be able to reach a broader audience with the messages found in this play – ones of tolerance, friendship and diversity."

"Our institutions are very different in purpose and structure, but whenever our missions align, this partnership delivers amazing experiences for our audiences. It demonstrates the best in what makes Northern Virginia such a special place to live," said Dannick.

"The Secrets of the Universe (and other songs)" is a message of tolerance, friendship and diversity. It aims to depict personal and public struggles to overcome racial prejudice where and when it can occur. For this show, It started with being denied a hotel room.

Fiery Tango Music and Dance

'Tango Buenos Aires: The Spirit of Argentina' at the Center for the Arts.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Journey to Argentina right here in your own Northern Virginia backyard. Take in the passion-filled dance and music called the tango. Considered one of Argentina's great cultural arts, "Tango Buenos Aires: The Spirit of Argentina" will be displaying authentic, alluring dance movements fired-up with classic tango music performed live.

"Tango Buenos Aires: The Spirit of Argentina" will focus on the power of the tango to engage performers and audiences alike with its addictive nature. The tango program will trace the evolution of the tango as a dance and cultural style. Patrons will find themselves gazing at "very beautiful dances and a story being told. There are high energy dances, sensual dances, and dances with high kicks and lifts," said Rosario Bauza, artistic director, "Tango Buenos Aires."

On stage will be 10 dancers and a singer, plus musicians performing live music. The music compositions will include works by Carlos Gardel, a central figure in tango history and Astor Piazzolla as well as original music by Fernando Marzan and other composers.

Enjoying a live performance, rather



PHOTO COURTESY OF COLUMBIA ARTISTS MANAGEMENT INC.

"Tango Buenos Aires: The Spirit of Argentina" comes to George Mason University, Center for the Arts, on Saturday, Oct. 14.

than seeing on a screen either big or small, Bauza hopes the audience will become "happy and joyful as they see our performance."

"We would like the audience to depart our Center for the Arts performance with a desire to visit Argentina and experience tango

there also. They will have also learned a little about the life of Carlos Gardel, who is known as the voice of the Tango," said Bauza. "Above all else we hope everyone enjoys 'The Spirit of Argentina.'"

There will be a specially developed feature for the tango dance event at the Cen-

Where & When

"Tango Buenos Aires: the Spirit of Argentina" performing at the George Mason University, Center for the Arts, 4400 University Ave., Fairfax. Performance: Saturday, Oct. 14 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$50, \$43 and \$30. Call 703-993-2787 or visit www.cfa.gmu.edu Note: Pre-performance discussion with member of the company. Also free beginners' Tango Class led by instructors from Tango Mercurio starting at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 14. Space is limited and advance registration required. Open to ticket holders for the "Tango Buenos Aires" performance. Registration at cfa.gmu.edu/calendar/2496/.

ter for the Arts that will add audience participation. There will be a free beginners' tango class to those with tickets to "Tango Buenos Aires." The free dance lesson is to start before the Saturday evening performance. There will be instructors from Tango Mercurio, a Northern Virginia dance company and studio. The basics of tango will be taught to those who pre-register. In addition, there will be a pre-performance discussion with members of the performance troupe.

So, come to "Tango Buenos Aires: The Spirit of Argentina" to celebrate Argentina's enduring tango; its ardent music and dramatic moments. Even take the opportunity to learn new dance skills or brush-up on old skills with the free tango lessons being made available.

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County Marks Constitution Week

At the Sept. 12 meeting of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Anna Maria Fitzhugh Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, was honored with a Proclamation which officially designated Sept. 17 to Sept. 23 as Constitution Week in Fairfax County. Pictured are Anna Maria Fitzhugh Chapter members with Braddock District Supervisor John C. Cook and Chairman Sharon Bulova.

Library Goes Hollywood for 2017 Gala Fundraiser

Fairfax Library Foundation is rolling out the red carpet for library supporters on Oct. 21, 5:30-8 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library for the 2017 Library Jubilee: The Library Goes Hollywood!

The Library Jubilee is the Foundation's largest fundraising event each year, with 100 percent of proceeds invested into Fairfax County Public Library. It is a chance to raise funds for the library, acknowledge donors, and celebrate the achievements of library programs.

Have you ever noticed that many of the best movies are adapted from books? This year's Jubilee celebrates the stories we find in our libraries and on the big screen with our theme, The Library Goes Hollywood. This premier event brings together the best in Fairfax County: in attendance will be Foundation and Library leadership and staff, elected officials, published authors, business leaders, and library supporters.

The Foundation is raising money for Fairfax County Public Library programs like Changing Lives Through Literature, giving first time juvenile offenders an alternative to formal court action, and Ready to Read

Early Literacy Outreach, bringing interactive reading experiences to preschool students. The newest funding area is the New American Initiative, raising funds for English Language Learning materials. Last year the Library Jubilee raised \$120,000, with greater proceeds than ever before going to library programs and services.

Each year at the Jubilee, attendees celebrate this work of the Library and Foundation while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, musical entertainment and a silent auction. Shirley's Catering and Peterson's Ice Cream will be back this year with their delicious treats, savory and sweet.

A jazz trio from Mason Music Productions will provide live music in the new Pohick Regional Library, while guests bid on auction items including winery visits, hotel packages, and passes to Disney World. There are some new things in store for this Jubilee, like a photo booth and VIP Hollywood guest, "Marilyn Monroe."

For more information on sponsorships and how to be involved, call 703-324-8300 or contact Jubilee@FairfaxLibraryFoundation.org.

Judy Ryan of Fairfax Announces Retirement Sale

Shifting economic trends and demographics have taken their toll on this local family run business. Judy Ryan of Fairfax was an outgrowth of the Image and Color Consulting business Ryan owned beginning with Color Me Beautiful in a studio in Fairfax City. Developing into a retail location for apparel and accessories, the operation moved to Twinbrooke Centre on Braddock Road in 1988. Home décor and gifts were added to respond to customer requests.

"The world was a very different place in 1988. No online shopping, free shipping, free returns, no Amazon and my customers and I were a lot younger," said Ryan. "Our customers are retiring, down-sizing, leaving the area and generally shopping less. Our wonderful, loyal customers have supported us with great attendance at our monthly events, but day to

day traffic has diminished."

The decision to retire was a very difficult one. Judy Ryan said, "If the store could stay in business while I worked 30 hours instead of 50 or more [a] week, I'd probably work until I'm one hundred."

A letter mailed and an email went out announcing that a Retirement Sale will begin on Oct. 12 at 10 a.m. "The store will most likely remain open until December as the inventory is sold down and new merchandise will arrive. And, we haven't even begun to put out our wonderful Christmas collection," she said.

Judy Ryan and her team look forward to thanking their customers in person and to helping them find some good presents and some nice things for themselves to remember the store.

BULLETIN

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

DEMENTIA CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS

Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke sponsors a monthly meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, noon-1:30 p.m., for caregivers to learn and to share with others experiencing similar challenges. Before attending, contact the facilitator, Eileen Thompson at 703-451-8626 or eileen.thompson1@gmail.com.

THURSDAY/OCT. 12

Short-Term Rental Community Meeting. 7 p.m. in Conference Rooms 9 and 10 the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Drive, Fairfax. The county scheduled another meeting to discuss proposed zoning rules for short-term rentals with the community. The public will be able to provide feedback, ask questions and learn about the results from the community survey. Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov for more.

IN-PERSON, TV DEBATES

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA) will hold forums 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, 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.

SATURDAY/OCT. 14

Town Hall Meeting. 9 a.m. at Junior Achievement Finance Park, 4099 Pickett Road, Fairfax. Supervisor John Cook presents a town hall on Raising Teens in the 21st Century. Call 703-425-9300 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news2/event/parent-resources-town-hall-meeting-raising-teens-in-the-21st-century/.

Office Hours. Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck will host Saturday office hours. Email mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov.

❖ 9-11:30 a.m. at Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton.

❖ 12:30-3 p.m. at the Mount Vernon District office, 2511 Parkers Lane, Mount Vernon.

SUNDY/OCT. 15

Women's Health and Wellness. 3-5 p.m. at the Clifton Town Hall, 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton. The Democratic Women of Clifton and No. VA invite members and the general public to an important meeting on women's health and wellness. A local ob/gyn and a cardiologist will speak and take questions. Email cliftonwomendems@aol.com or visit www.democraticwomenofclifton.org.

BRADDOCK ROAD STUDY

Community Meetings. Braddock District Supervisor John Cook and the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) will host a series of community meetings focused on specific sections of Braddock Road this fall.

❖ **Wednesday, Oct. 18:** Beltway area – Braddock Hall, 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke

❖ **Wednesday, Oct. 25:** Burke Lake intersection – Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke

❖ **Thursday, Nov. 16:** Ravensworth Road intersection – Ravensworth Baptist Church, 5100 Ravensworth Road, Annandale

❖ **Monday, Dec. 11:** Burke Lake intersection, second meeting – Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke

The goal of the Braddock Road Multimodal Study is to develop commuting improvements for the corridor from Guinea Road to I-495 to Ravensworth Road. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/braddockroadmmstudy/.

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What To "Ware?"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Recently I received a very generous offer in the mail: a \$10 gift certificate from my local hardware store acknowledging my upcoming/now passed birthday. From what I could read, there was no minimum purchase, no exclusions and no small-type print, just a reasonable expiration date: Oct. 31, approximately six weeks out from the day I received this unexpected gift. More than enough time, one would imagine.

The only problem: what am I going to get at the hardware store, other than the employees' pity about how little I know about so much? Most of the time when I'm in a hardware store (typically I'm not browsing, unlike the cookie aisle at the supermarket), I'm attempting to solve a problem I have at home for which I have very little experience and extremely poor instincts at rectifying. Not only do I rarely know what I'm talking about, I don't even know the proper questions to ask to enable/assist the employee in figuring what the heck my problem actually is – other than me, that is.

I'm very much out of my element in a hardware store. A fish out of water doesn't begin to describe my situation. Tevye, from "Fiddler on the Roof" in speaking to his daughter, Chava, about marrying outside the faith came close: "a bird may love a fish, but where would they build a home together?" Build a home? I have enough difficulty maintaining one that's already built.

When I'm asked, or when I offer it, usually I say: "I know two things: sports and chocolate." I guess I could also add being a cancer patient/survivor, but I don't want to redirect a perfectly innocent conversation into a totally different direction: me and my druthers. Although, my situation has been publicly consumed in the Connection Newspapers going on eight and half years; in person, I try to not let it be the first or even second thing that comes out of my mouth. And I never initiate, though I'm happy to respond if asked. Generally speaking, I'd rather it not be about me and my cancer. As my mother used to say "It's enough already."

But none of this comes up in a hardware store. In fact, the only thing that comes up is my Adam's Apple as I sheepishly swallow and admit how incapable I am as a homeowner/do-it-yourselfer and how much help I need to do almost anything. At least the parking is free so it's not a total loss.

As you might imagine, this situation doesn't exactly lead to an easy conversation or a satisfying outcome. Quite the contrary. I know one thing for sure however, if left to my own devices, either I will cause additional and costly damage in my crude attempt to self-repair, or I will hurt myself in the process. And waste money as well, as the end of the day will likely find me and the problem no closer to a resolution than we were at the beginning of the day.

As William Shakespeare might have written: it will be much ado about nothing as nothing much will have been done. In these recurring circumstances, all I can hope for is a safe landing, so to speak, one in which, as pilots often joke: I can walk away uninjured.

Given that I'm a tool twit and have failed miserably at homeowner 101, what then could I possibly buy at the hardware store with my gift certificate? I just got an idea: lightbulbs. I couldn't possibly screw that up, could I? I mean, they're supposed to be screwed up – into the socket, right? What could be more natural for me?

One last question though: when I place the bulb into the socket, do I screw them to the right or to the left?

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



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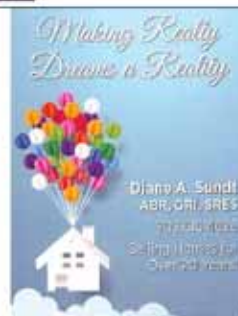


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