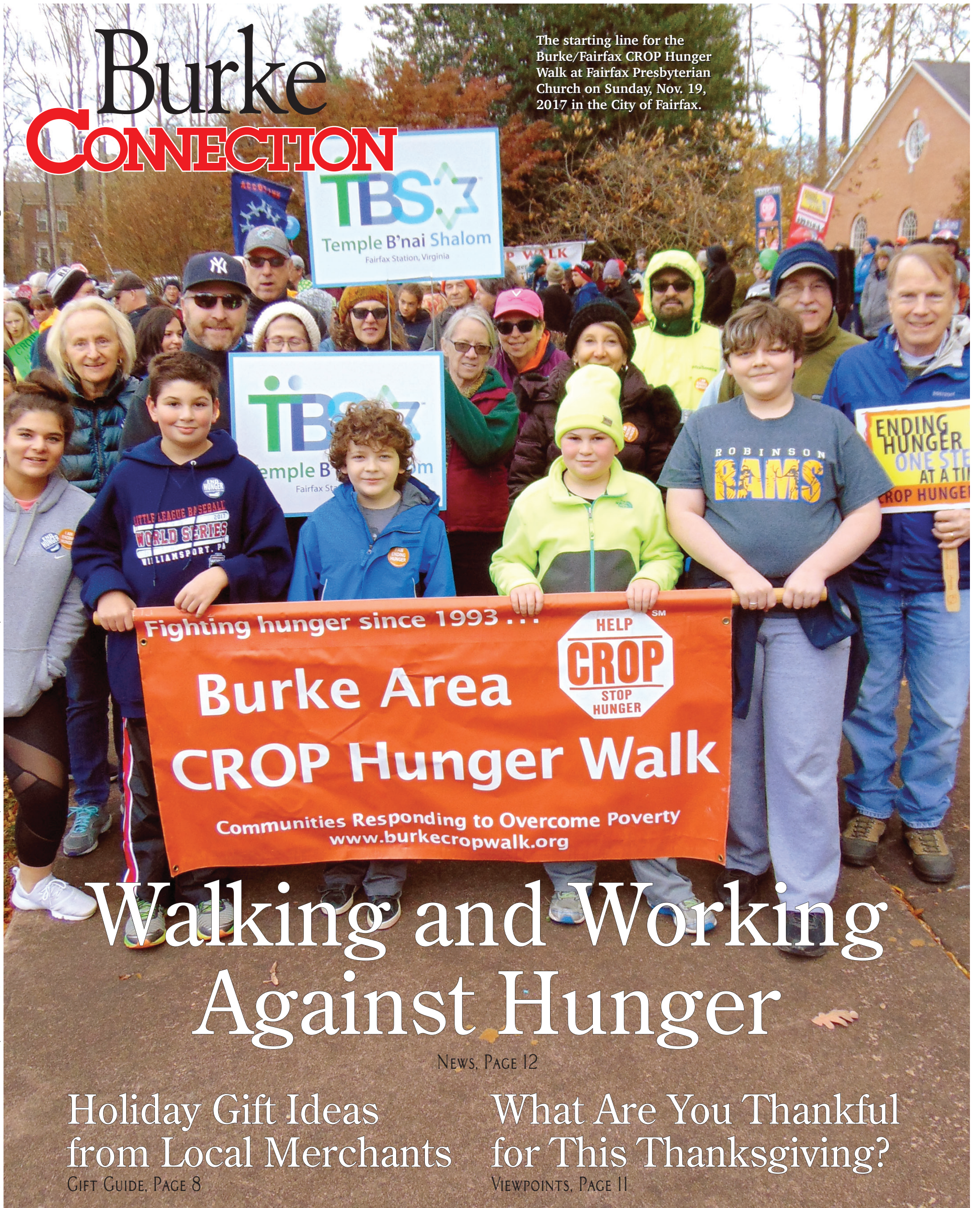


Burke CONNECTION

The starting line for the Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk at Fairfax Presbyterian Church on Sunday, Nov. 19, 2017 in the City of Fairfax.



Walking and Working Against Hunger

NEWS, PAGE 12

Holiday Gift Ideas
from Local Merchants

GIFT GUIDE, PAGE 8

What Are You Thankful
for This Thanksgiving?

VIEWPOINTS, PAGE 11

NOVEMBER 23-29, 2017

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'A Disaster for Northern Virginia'

Connolly holds roundtable on congressional tax plan.

BY ANDREA WORKER

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) says that he and his Democratic colleagues are more than willing to work in a bipartisan effort on meaningful tax form. "As a leader of the New Democrat Coalition, a group of pro-business Democrats, I have written on several occasions to Speaker Paul Ryan and Ways and Means Chairman Kevin Brady asking them to partner with us ... to simplify the tax code, create revenue ... and provide middle class tax relief."

Speaking at a roundtable gathering that the congressman hosted at the offices of the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors (NVAR) on Monday, Nov. 13, to discuss the consequences of the GOP tax plans, Connolly says those overtures have been rejected.

"Congress had a real opportunity to pursue neutral tax reform that would lower corporate tax rates and benefit the middle class." Connolly expressed "deep disappointment" at the House and Senate bills being proposed, categorizing both as "shameful, corporate giveaways" that will have unprecedented and far-reaching negative effects on Northern Virginia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the nation.

Connolly reported that by using "dynamic scoring" — a method of analysis that includes the potential feedback effect certain tax cuts can have, and that he said Republicans often advocate "because it provides more generous deficit projections for tax cuts" — the proposals actually increase the country's deficit to \$1.5 trillion over 10 years, "and somebody has to pay that bill."

An assessment of the tax plans by Congress' nonpartisan Joint Taxation Committee released on Monday, Nov. 20, seems to support the congressman's concerns. The committee's analysis projects that some 13.8 million moderate-income American households would actually see a tax increase as a result of the Senate plan by 2019. Households earning less than \$200,000 per year would face increases of \$100 to \$500. The tax liability rises even more for earners between \$75,000 and \$200,000. According to the analysis, tax increases would be felt by 21.4 million households by the year 2025.

Connolly likened the plans to previously failed "trickle-down" attempts at tax reform and economic stimulus.

"1981, 2001, 2003. The Reagan and Bush tax cuts. So disastrous that they had to enact tax increases in 1982, 1983, 1984, 1987 and 1990" to raise the needed funds. "Then in the early 2000s, President George W.



U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) meets with local leaders to discuss the consequences of the proposed Senate and House GOP Tax Reform Bills. Connolly admitted from the start that he wasn't there to "sing their praises."



Bob Adamson, chairman of the board of the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors, views the proposed legislation as "unfair to homeowners," and that they will have a negative "ripple effect" on the local economy and residents of the community.

Bush took the record surpluses of the Clinton era and created record deficits." Connolly added that the trickle-down theory is based on "the hope and the prayer that such tax cuts will someday pay for themselves," but that history has already proven "that assumption to be false."

TO DISCUSS THE IMPACT of the proposed legislation on the Northern Virginia region, Connolly convened a group of local business leaders, economists and financial experts, as well as participants representing social service providers, persons with long-term medical and care needs, economists, parents of students with significant student debt, and seniors.

Connolly set the stage for the discussion with a few more facts and figures, although he cautioned that "we still haven't seen the whole of either proposed legislation."

* The plans either repeal or limit several tax breaks that are crucial to Northern Virginians, including medical and dental expense deductions, premiums for long-term care insurance, in-home and nursing home care, and mortgage interest deductions.

* The state and local income tax (SALT) deductions would be limited or even repealed. In Connolly's 11th District, 50 percent of tax filers claim the SALT deduction,

with 75 percent of the claimants being in middle income tax brackets. The number of SALT claimants throughout Fairfax County is as high as 280,000 households.

* The plans call for the repeal of Estate Tax, which only applies to about the wealthiest 5,000 decedents each year, while cutting adoption tax credits and credits for small businesses that invest in accessibility improvements for persons with disabilities.

* According to the Tax Policy Center, after-tax income for the top 1 percent of earners would rise by about 2.6 percent by 2027, while those at the bottom 80 percent would see after-tax increase of between 0.0 percent and 0.6 percent.

After Connolly's remarks, Bob Adamson, chairman of the board of the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors, was the first of the gathering to offer comments.

Representing some 12,000 Realtors in the region, Adamson stated that the NVAR "wants to be part of the solution," but finds the proposed legislation to be "unfair to homeowners," disproportionately placing the burden of "filling in the financial gaps" directly on them.

NVAR Chair-elect Lorraine Arora agreed, adding that "real estate bolsters the economy" with so many related jobs and services, and that any plan that suppresses

home buying will cause a "ripple effect of harm."

The Realtors at the table also worried that the proposed tax reform will actually lower existing house values. NVAR CEO Ryan Conrad said that in the NoVa region, that decrease could be as much as \$30,000 lost in home equity.

ADDITIONALLY, THE REALTORS foresee a decrease in housing stock that is already an issue, and even see Fairfax County's successes toward ending and preventing homelessness, slip into reverse, as developers are less able than ever to profitably build affordable housing.

Continuing the "ripple effect" theme, JoAnne Carter, managing director of PFM Financial Advisors, LLC, said that the proposals threaten the means by which municipalities, nonprofits and other businesses fund their services and investments in improvements and expansion.

"Eliminating Private Activity Bonds and causing cuts to 'advance refinancing,'" said Carter is severely hampering the ability to finance the basics, like "schools, roads, hospitals, transportation, airports, sea ports, all of it." That in turn "increases the burden on the counties," said Adamson, while potentially depleting their main source of revenue. For municipalities like Fairfax County, that are, in essence, only able to raise funds through property taxation, the choices are dauntingly few. Either raise those taxes significantly, or reduce expenditure on infrastructure and public and social services.

"And if we damage our AAA Bond rating," added Carter, "it costs more for these municipalities and service providers to borrow." According to Carter, Fairfax County could save between \$3-12 million when re-financing with a Triple A Bond rating. "Losing that could mean that public structures just don't get built."

Nancy Mercer, a licensed clinical social worker and the former executive director of the ARC of Northern Virginia, and Ridge Multop, an economist, former AARP Congressional Affairs and former House Budget Committee staffer, both discussed the impact the proposed tax bills could have on seniors, those with long-term care and/or medical issues, and those most in need and most vulnerable in the community.

Multop "put a face" on the discussion, speaking about an economist friend. "He's 85 years old, on a fixed income, in assisted living. He looked at how these bills would impact him based on his 2016 tax filing and said it would raise his taxes by more than \$3,000. How do people like him cope with that?"

Eliminating tax deductions for medical expenses and long-term care would be harmful to seniors, Multop said, possibly forcing more into custodial care and placing an additional burden on municipalities and nonprofits. "We are cutting our social safety network, one strand at a time," said

SEE ROUNDTABLE, PAGE 15

Notice of Public Hearing

NOTICE OF BUDGET AND WATER RATE PUBLIC HEARING

December 14, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 14, 2017, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2018, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from \$4,100 to \$4,150¹
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$11,685 to \$13,420
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,240 to \$1,260¹
4. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$2.81 to \$2.94 per 1,000 gallons of water
5. An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$44 to \$45
6. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge
7. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$35 to \$36

¹ Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax County Water Authority (Fairfax Water) is proposing a \$178.7 million budget² for calendar year 2018. Revenues are expected to be \$178.7 million in 2018. Water sales are expected to provide \$155.8 million. Approximately \$22.9 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2017	2018
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 54,270	\$ 55,983
Power and Utilities	10,468	10,670
Chemicals	6,846	7,732
Purchased Water	7,677	6,540
Supplies and Materials	4,850	5,102
Insurance	1,186	1,200
Fuel	595	655
Postage	611	614
Contractual Services	11,252	11,610
Professional Services	990	1,025
Other	2,280	2,503
Sub-Total	101,025	103,634
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,991)	(10,248)
Total	\$ 91,034	\$ 93,386

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:	
Debt Payment	\$42,981,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$31,087,000

² Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes to the rates can be viewed on our website at www.fairfaxwater.org/rates. A copy of the proposed budget can be found at www.fairfaxwater.org. Those wishing to speak or receive a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Eva Catlin at 703-289-6017.

Interested parties may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 13, 2017 to be included in the record of the public hearing.

News



PHOTOS BY MARTI MOORE/THE CONNECTION

Activists against gun violence line the sidewalk Nov. 14 in front of the headquarters of the National Rifle Association at 11250 Waples Mill Road in Fairfax, where they hold protest signs for passing motorists as part of their awareness campaign. This regular gathering is an open-action protest and signs are provided to those who want to participate on the 14th of each month.

Protesting Gun Violence

Universal background checks tops the list for NRA protesters.

BY MARTI MOORE
THE CONNECTION

More than 70 people stood their ground on gun violence Nov. 14 and reminded the National Rifle Association of the need for tougher laws in the wake of another mass shooting two weeks ago in Texas — where 26 churchgoers were slain and 20 wounded in the sanctuary of the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs.

Northern Virginia residents held protest signs for motorists driving past the powerful lobby's national headquarters at 11250 Waples Mill Road in Fairfax.

Participants in these protests said they have seen cars speed past them in the turn lane during previous protests, and watched some drivers make other ill-mannered gestures.

"There are people coming into the NRA who don't like us," says Kris Gregory of the Concerned Citizens Against Gun Violence. Although she believes association employees are respectful, Gregory understands the NRA is open to the general public. She is aware visitors of the National Firearms Museum and firing range may not appreciate the sight of protesters.

GREGORY NOTES some motorists respond favorably to their public awareness campaign by shouting words of encouragement, beeping their car horns or giving a thumbs-up gesture in approval.

The presence of local law enforcement is low-key, she believes, "Because we are peaceful and nonviolent." Fairfax County



Kris Gregory of the Concerned Citizens Against Gun Violence in Falls Church stands on the sidewalk Nov. 14 at 11250 Waples Mill Road, and remembers victims of last week's mass shooting in the sanctuary of the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas.

Police keeps a watchful eye as cruisers patrol Waples Mill Road. Only joint-action protests, Gregory states, warrant a large police presence — such as the CodePink "die-in" demonstration held Tuesday, June 21, 2016.

Gregory says her grassroots organization in Falls Church formed after the Dec. 14, 2012 massacre in Newtown, Conn. — where 20 school children and six adults were fatally shot inside the Sandy Hook Elementary School. The 20-year-old gunman first shot and killed his 52-year-old mother, a gun enthusiast, at home. Online reports say among the firearms used by the gunman was the Bushmaster AR-15 military-style assault rifle.

The soft-spoken volunteer activist states Concerned Citizens Against Gun Violence and other advocacy groups in Northern Virginia meet in front of the NRA on the 14th of every month in memory of the lives lost in the Newtown slaying and to "raise awareness of gun violence and the toll it takes on all of us," Gregory says.

She points out "So many people here are unaware the NRA headquarters is in our backyard." Gregory believes the lobby has

SEE VICTIMS, PAGE 13

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

NEWS

VDOT Officials Plead Guilty to \$10.3 Million Bribe Scheme

Two Virginia Department of Transportation officials and three private contractors have pleaded guilty to their involvement in a bribery scheme involving the awarding of over \$10.3 million in snow removal contracts over the course of five years.

According to court documents, Anthony Willie and Kenneth Duane Adams were VDOT supervisors at the Burke Area Headquarters (AHQ) and secretly used their official positions to enrich themselves by soliciting and accepting cash bribes in exchange for various favorable official acts, such as awarding lucrative snow removal work to local trucking companies during winter snowstorms in the northern Virginia area.

According to court documents, Willie and Adams negotiated bribe agreements with several owners and operators of trucking and snow removal companies seeking snow removal work from the VDOT Burke AHQ, including Rolando Pineda Moran, Shaheen Sariri, and John Williamson. At their core, each agreement stated that the company owners would

provide a percentage or a flat rate of their hourly contracts as bribes in the form of cash payments to Willie and Adams, in exchange for being awarded snow removal work and having Willie and Adams sign off on their VDOT invoices. Beginning in the 2012 2013 snow season and continuing through the 2016 2017 snow season, Willie and Adams would often meet the snow plow contractors at local restaurants, grocery stores, and parking lots in Burke and Fairfax and received approximately \$440,000 in cash bribes.

According to court documents, from 2011 through 2016, Adams also conspired with Elmer Antonio Mejia by negotiating an unlawful bribery agreement whereby Mejia would sub-contract snow removal work out to Adams' nominee-owned company, Supreme Landscaping. During this period, Mejia paid Adams approximately \$160,000, frequently disguising the payments as pay for snow removal work allegedly performed by Adams' nominee-owned com

SEE GUILTY PLEA, PAGE 7



CALENDAR

Let us know about an upcoming event

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

\$1 OFF Admission

Present this AD to the SCHS Admission Booth at South County High School on Dec 2, 2017 for \$1 OFF one single \$3 Admission

Holiday Extravaganza & Craft Show

Saturday Dec 2 9a - 3p

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Candy Cane Kids Fun Run - 8:30a - Pre-Register www.SouthCountyPTSO.org
Cookies with Santa - 9:30a-12:00 noon FREE
Greeting For the Troops - 9a-3p FREE - Sponsored by PCSgrades.com
Child ID & Fingerprinting - Fairfax County Sheriff's Office FREE
Santa's Book Emporium - 9a-3p

Proceeds benefit PTSO & 2018 All Night Grad Party SCHSCraftShow@gmail.com Facebook.com/SCHSCraftShow

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OPINION

Shop Locally, Give Locally

Every day is for shopping small and shopping locally.

An effort to support locally owned businesses has resulted in the recognition of Small Business Saturday, the Saturday after Thanksgiving. This year that is Nov. 25. Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, is promoted as a day of national zeal for shopping. Presumably the next day shoppers can focus on local shopping.

EDITORIAL There is a joy to shopping in local stores at the holidays, to walking along a sidewalk with the streets decked out for the holidays, to being greeted by someone likely to be the owner of the store, to finding gifts that are not mass-produced.

We all benefit when local stores thrive, when local business districts beckon.

Locally owned retail shops, services, restaurants depend on vibrant local communities to thrive. Most small, locally owned businesses invest in community, helping to transform our towns and communities with a sense of place.

Supporting small businesses, locally owned businesses, has to be more than a one-day affair. And in this area, there doesn't have to be anything small about shopping locally.

But still, local families will shop and exchange gifts during the next month, spending tens of millions of dollars in a variety of

places.

One way to be sure holiday shopping comes with some holiday spirit is to do a portion of your shopping in some of the area's locally owned stores. There is special holiday ambiance available by shopping in the heart of a town that is decked out for the season. Small retail shops are part of defining any community. Their livelihood depends on the livability and quality of the neighborhoods around them. A small business owner pays attention to every detail in his or her business in a way that no chain can.

The small business owner is often the leader for fundraising for local charities, for fire and rescue service, for local schools and in organizing holiday events.

Local shoppers should be sure to save some shopping time and dollars for local stores. Spend some time shopping in your own community, and also plan an excursion to a nearby town to check out the holiday spirit there.

See Connection's Holiday Calendar for great celebrations near you.

❖ **Fairfax County:**

www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/16/holiday-calendar-2017/

❖ **Arlington:**

www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/15/arlington-holiday-calendar-2017/

❖ **Potomac:**

www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/15/potomac-almanac-holiday-calendar-2017/

❖ **Alexandria:**

www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/20/alexandria-holiday-calendar-2017/

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Short Deadline for Children's Edition

During the last week of each year, this newspaper devotes its pages to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families. Even readers without children of that age spend time admiring and chuckling over the issue. The annual Children's Connection (including Children's Gazette, Children's Almanac and Children's Centre View) is a tradition of well over a decade.

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent via email, dropbox or google drive or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg

format.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. To be published, we must have first and last name of the student. Please include the student's age and/or grade, school attended and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Provide submissions by Friday, Dec. 1.

Email submissions for the Children's Edition to the following editors:

❖ For Burke, Clifton, Fairfax, Fairfax Station, Great Falls, Herndon, Lorton, McLean, Reston, or Springfield, email to Kemal Kurspahic at kemal@connectionnewspapers.com.

❖ For Alexandria, Arlington, Centreville, Chantilly, Mount Vernon, or Potomac, Md., email to Steven Mauren at smauren@connectionnewspapers.com.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Focus on Community Policing, Positive Outreach

To the Editor:

In response to: www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/08/commentary-independent-progressive-doublespeak-imm/

Fairfax County police officers do not conduct immigration enforcement sweeps or stop individuals solely to inquire about immigration status. Fairfax County police officers follow General Order 601 and cannot arrest someone unless there is reasonable suspicion that a crime was committed or is being committed.

Operation and policy decisions regarding the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center fall under the authority of the Sheriff, an elected constitutional officer, independent

of the Board of Supervisors. Per Code of Virginia 19.2-83.2, when individuals are arrested and booked into the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center, their computerized fingerprints are automatically transmitted to the Virginia State Police's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS), regardless of their immigration status. The Virginia State Police forwards the information to other state and federal databases per their guidelines. From there, it is up to ICE to determine who is a priority for deportation. Before 2016, ICE operated under the Priority Enforcement Program and focused its efforts on deporting undocumented immigrants with serious criminal records. Under

the Trump Administration, the Priority Enforcement Program no longer exists, and any immigrant who is in the country illegally may be selected by ICE for deportation.

If ICE places an arrest warrant and an order to detain on an inmate in the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center, the Sheriff's Office will hold that inmate for up to 48 hours (not counting weekends and holidays) past his or her scheduled release date. If ICE does not take custody of the inmate within that time frame, the inmate will be released.

The Board of Supervisors, the Police Department, the Sheriff's Office and all Fairfax County government agencies comply with state and federal laws, and immi-

gration is a federal matter. Any changes regarding deportations or the focus and direction of ICE must come from the federal level. On the local level, we continue to focus on community policing through positive outreach and building trust with the residents we serve. All residents of Fairfax County should know that Fairfax County police officers are here to protect and serve any and all community members, regardless of citizenship. No person should be afraid to call the police out of fear of deportation — our police officers are not in that business.

Sharon Bulova

Chairman,
Board of Supervisors

Burke
CONNECTION

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NEWS

Guilty Plea in Bribery Case

FROM PAGE 5
pany.

Additionally, Adams also pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute cocaine. According to court records, while executing a search warrant in November 2015, law enforcement recovered approximately 129 grams of cocaine and related drug

paraphernalia at Adams' residence. Adams also admitted to previously distributing cocaine to others, including several of his colleagues at VDOT, and to obtaining cocaine from a relative of one of his VDOT co-workers.

A sixth indicted defendant in this case is scheduled for trial on Jan. 29, 2018.

FAITH NOTES

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

Burke Presbyterian Church, 5690 Oak Leather Drive in Burke, worship services are Sundays at 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m., and 6 p.m. www.BurkePresChurch.org.

One God Ministry Church, 4280/4282 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, offers Early Morning Service at 8 a.m., Sunday School at 10 a.m., Sunday Worship Service at 11 a.m., and Wednesday Bible Study at 7 p.m. Women, Men, and Youth Bible Studies are on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. A Spiritual Gifts Service is the first Friday of every month at 7 p.m. One God Ministry has ministries for youth, men, women, couples, music and singles. 703-591-6161 or onegodministry.org.

The Bahá'í Community of Fairfax County Southwest offers Interfaith Devotions, Children's Classes, Junior Youth Groups and Study Circles, which are open to all. For more information on these or to know more about the Bahá'í Faith, go to www.bahai.us or 571-320-5274.

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

St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, 8617 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, offers a traditional service on Sundays at 8:15 and 11:15 a.m. and

Faith Communities in Action

SEE FAITH, PAGE 11

"The Fairfax is like a cruise ship."

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

"There are many reasons that we moved to The Fairfax. The beautiful and spacious grounds, the activities, medical care, not having to cook anymore... The Fairfax is like a cruise ship—you have everything available to you. Most important was the true financial value of the LifeCare program as well as the potential tax advantages available to us. It was the smartest lifestyle and financial decision we ever made."

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GIFT GUIDE



Judy Ryan of Fairfax offers light-weight Resin Necklaces that make a statement, priced from \$29 to \$49.95.



Judy Ryan of Fairfax offers light-weight Resin Necklaces that make a statement, priced from \$29 to \$49.95.



Judy Ryan of Fairfax offers cropped cotton v-neck sweaters layered over a tank top with winter accessories of hats, gloves, and scarves, from \$29 to \$99.



Judy Ryan of Fairfax offers sleepwear and loungewear made of natural fiber bamboo, so it sleeps and wears like a dream; priced from \$39 to \$64.

Holiday Gift Ideas from Local Merchants

Judy Ryan of Fairfax: Everything is 30 to 70 percent off.

Looking for some holiday gifts from local mom and pop shops in the community? Judy Ryan of Fairfax in the Twinbrooke Centre Shopping Center has just the answer. The store is a lifestyles shop where savvy shoppers

get dressed, decorate their homes and select the best gifts. Having been in business for 30 years at the same location, Ryan decided it's time to retire and close shop, which is what she'll be doing in mid-December, so for now everything is 30 to 70

percent off price.

"These final weeks are bittersweet," she said. "We have been supported so well by the local community and we will miss all of our interaction with them. There's so many changes in the retail mode that all the signs

are saying it's a good time to retire."

Ryan said her next plans are to have an in-person consulting business called "Styled!," which will be part-time as opposed to a full-time endeavor.

Judy Ryan of Fairfax is located at 9565 Braddock Road in Fairfax, in the Twinbrooke Centre Shopping Center. Call 703-425-1855. Visit www.judyryanooffairfax.net.

The Wild Bird Center of Burke offers bird nesting boxes made out of cypress wood, which range from \$40 to \$120. The boxes are where cavity nesting birds raise their young.



Wild Bird Center of Burke: Everything for the Birder

The Wild Bird Center of Burke offers everything for the birder – from bird houses to backyard bird seed. According to owner Steve Pyne, "We cater to backyard birders with all levels of expertise but also carry a selection of items to help bring nature into your backyard."

Pyne offered up a few holiday gift ideas including bird nesting boxes made out of cypress wood and priced from \$40 to \$120. He said they are perfect for cavity nesting birds to raise their young. The birds will have two or three broods over the course of the summer and the houses will last multiple years and don't require a lot of maintenance. They make the perfect gift for somebody who doesn't want to have to repeatedly fill a bird feeder.

Wild Bird Center of Burke is located at 5765-I Burke Centre Parkway, Burke, in the Burke Centre Shopping Center. Call 703-250-0090 or visit www.wildbird.com/burke.



The Wild Bird Center of Burke offers hummingbird feeders priced between \$15 and \$50. Pyne said Ruby-throated hummingbirds migrate to Northern Virginia from April through September. He said they're fun to watch and bring a lot of color to a backyard without making a mess.



Edible Arrangements of Burke offers this Delicious Celebration fruit basket in three sizes starting at \$49. It includes decorative pineapple, honeydew, cantaloupe, strawberries and grapes. You can also do an upgrade with chocolate strawberries for an additional charge.



Edible Arrangements of Burke offers Holiday SwizzleBerries (strawberries) in two sizes, starting at \$59.

Edible Arrangements of Burke: Thoughtful and Unique

Edible Arrangements of Burke offers gift ideas for everyone on your list. According to store owner Sora Yoon, they sell thoughtful and unique gift baskets, fruit bouquets and fruit arrangements for every occasion. Yoon said what's popular this holiday season are the Christmas Tree Bouquets with Holiday Swizzle Berries starting at \$126; the 2018

Fruit Festival, which comes in three sizes, starting at \$88; and different fruit bouquets including the Seasons Greetings Party, in six sizes, starting at \$109. The store offers a lot of specials before the holidays targeting Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Edible Arrangements is located at 9570 Burke Road, Unit O, in Burke. Call 703-323-5555.

Hallmark Creations of Burke Town Plaza

For all of your holiday needs, Hallmark Creations of Burke Town Plaza offers a broad selection of gifts and cards for holidays like Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year's, birthdays, anniversaries, Valentine's Day, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, the 4th



Hallmark Creations of Burke offers the Willow Tree Nativity Collection, which is a full assembly of figurines including Mary, Joseph, Shepherds, and farm animals with a wooden crèche display; priced from \$10.99 to \$99.95 for each separate piece.

SEE GIFT GUIDE, PAGE 9

VIEWPOINTS

What are you thankful for this Thanksgiving?

Interviews conducted by Steve Hibbard at Pohick Regional Library.

Jamila Ahmadi of Springfield (with son Adam)

"I'm thankful for my son that he's doing well after six days of fever that we were so worried that something big might be wrong with him. We had to go to the hospital in Baltimore and we found out there is nothing wrong with him; he just had probably a virus but it lasted so long so I'm very, very thankful."



Namira Meghla of Burke

"I'm thankful for food; I'm thankful for my family; I'm thankful for my school and my friends."



Adriana Reavis of Burke

"Friends and family; I'm thankful for being able to play soccer and running."



Margaret Dominy of Springfield

"I'm thankful for my good health and my two sons and my wonderful husband."



Theo Ouzhinski of Springfield

"I'm thankful for my family, the community and the opportunity to learn."



Grace Saunders of Springfield

"I'm thankful for my family; I'm thankful for my teachers and all the education that's given to me."



Ashton Saunders of Springfield

"I'm thankful for my Nana and Grandpa; I'm thankful for my friends and teacher too."

Gift Guide

FROM PAGE 3

of July, Halloween and more.

According to store manager Jeanine Stevens, you can find any gift for anyone on your Christmas list – from the easiest to the hardest to please. They offer Classic Hallmark gifts that include the "Snoopy Continuity Band" as well as classic traditional Christmas ornaments and Christmas cards sealed with the famous Hallmark Gold Crown seal.

Hallmark of Burke is located in the Burke Town Plaza, 9598 Old Keene Mill Road, Burke.



Hallmark Creations of Burke offers the Mud Pie Collection, an assortment of Country Christmas gift ideas – from pillows to blankets and handbags in muted reds, creams, and browns. Priced from \$9.99 to \$49.95.



Hallmark Creations of Burke offers Simply Southern Sherpa vests in pink and sea foam green, in sizes small to extra large; priced at \$44.99.

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION



FINAL WEEKS!

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The Children's CONNECTION 2017

This keepsake, award-winning issue will be filled with the artwork and writings of local children starring their families, friends, pets, schools and more. Our family readers are your best customers, who take time to savor this edition during the holidays and beyond.

Be Part of the Children's Connection

During the last week of each year, The Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

The edition has won many awards. We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens, or other creative efforts. To submit material, identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school if applicable, name of teacher and town of school location. E-mail to editors@connectionnewspapers.com. To send CDs or flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail the CD to Children's Connection, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please send all submissions by December 27.

Publishes December 27 | Ads Due December 15

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

ONGOING

Santa's Flight Academy. Through Dec. 24, at various times at at Fair Oaks Mall, 11750 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. Santa surrounded by a space motif. Visit www.santaexpresslane.com.

Toy Collection. Through Dec. 10, Sheehy Auto Stores throughout the Washington, D.C.-metro area will collect new and unwrapped toys as part of the company's annual Sheehy Cares Toy Collection to benefit the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program, which will distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to less fortunate children in the community in which the campaign is conducted. Sheehy's Toys for Tots drop-off locations include:

- ❖ Sheehy Volkswagen of Springfield, 6601 Backlick Road, Springfield
- ❖ Sheehy Ford of Springfield, 6727 Loisdale Road, Springfield
- ❖ Sheehy Subaru of Springfield, 6571 Backlick Road, Springfield
- ❖ Patriot Harley-Davidson, 9739 Fairfax Boulevard, Fairfax

NOV. 25-26

Fairfax Ballet Company's Nutcracker. Nov. 25, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., and Nov. 26, 2 p.m. at W.T. Woodson High School, 9525 Main St., Fairfax. Fairfax Ballet Senior company member Ana Victoria Smith of Clifton, dances the role of Clara. Company members, along with students from the Russell School of Ballet and professional guest artists. Email events@fairfaxballet.com or call 703-665-9427.

NOV. 30-DEC. 2

Holiday Book Sale. various times at the Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St., Springfield. Over 10,000 like new books in all categories both rare and popular most at \$2 or less, plus loads of CDs, DVDs and special gift offerings. Over 3,000 children's books. Funds raised will pay for library children's programs and more. Email rbfriends@gmail.com or call 703-451-8055.

FRIDAY/DEC. 1

Guitarist Peter Griggs Holiday Concert. 7 p.m. at Grace Presbyterian Church, 7434 Bath St., Springfield. Show is called "Music For An Old English Christmas." Visit www.gracepresby.org or call 703-451-2900.

Dinner Theatre. 7 p.m. at Truro Anglican Church, 10520 Main St., Fairfax. The City of Fairfax Theatre Company and the Truro Anglican Church present "The Little Match Girl" and "The Velveteen Rabbit." Visit fairfaxva.gov/.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Pancake Breakfast with Santa. 8-11 a.m. at Fire Station # 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. \$10, ages 3-12 \$5; and, under 3 free. All proceeds benefit the FVFD. Visit fairfaxva.gov.

Christmas Traditions Concert. 9:30-11 a.m. at St. Stephens United Methodist Church, 9203 Braddock Road, Burke. The St. Stephen's United Methodist Women Maranatha Singers will present a morning of holiday music. Free. Call 703-250-5013.

Holiday Sing-A-Long Luncheon. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. \$20. Call 703-

Ring in the Holidays with 'Peekaboo! A Nativity Play'

Fairfax's Hub Theatre brings cheerful musical for Christmas season.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Local playwright Anne M. McCaw has created her own cheerful, musical vision for the Christmas season. It is a contemporary retelling of the Biblical Nativity story titled "Peekaboo! A Nativity Play." The play is having its world premiere at the Hub Theatre

"Peekaboo! A Nativity Play" is hilarious and also honest and heartfelt," said Hub artistic director Helen Murray. "The Hub is producing the show because it is everything Hub is about – hope, love, family, music, comedy and magical moments.

"I want people to feel closer to each other when they walk away from Peekaboo!. I want them to hold their families and friends close, to celebrate the season, and to be filled with hope," added Murray, who is also directing "Peekaboo! A Nativity Play."

With its focus on how to protect a newborn the whole world has been pinning its hopes on, "Peekaboo! A Nativity Play" follows the Bible quite closely in its modernized comic tale with music under the direction of Jonatan Feuer. A diverse ensemble will portray Mary, Joseph, the Angel Gabriel, Herod and the Wise Men.

Hub veteran Katie Jeffries Zelonka plays Mary. "The opportunity to retell the Christmas story in a way that is fresh, funny, but still carrying a powerful message of hope is very appealing to me.

"Mary is a determined, resourceful, funny, hopeful girl with your typical teenaged flair for the dramatic and a bit of a temper," added Zelonka.



PHOTO BY HELEN MURRAY/THE HUB THEATRE

Katie Jeffries Zelonka as Mary and Anderson Wells as Gabriel in "Peekaboo! A Nativity Play."

"At the core of it all, she has a big heart and loves completely, which is the driving force behind most of her actions."

"We know the story and the characters of the Nativity. Or do we?" asked Jacob Yeh, who portrays Herod. "Have we really ever stepped into the shoes of Mary, Joseph, or Gabriel? What about the drummer boy? How would they tell or even sing the story of what happened?"

When asked about the Herod character, Yeh described him as "a loud, despot, boorish, vain, misogynistic man who sends his goonish sons to do the dirty work in his desperate attempt to hold on to power."

"Peekaboo! A Nativity Play" is for those especially interested in "a new perspective on the Nativity story without compromising the beauty of the story of Christmas," said Murray. "It will kindle the sense of hope and wonder of Christmas." And jolliness is included.

Where & When

The Hub Theatre presents "Peekaboo! A Nativity Play" at The John Swayze Theatre, New School of Northern Virginia, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. Performances: Dec. 1 to Dec. 24, 2017, Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets \$32 and \$22 (students and seniors). Call 703-674-3177 or visit www.thehubtheatre.org. Note: There is construction occurring next to The New School of Northern Virginia parking lot. There is plenty of parking, but be careful of changing lanes.

922- 6438 or email Springwmconn@yahoo.com.

Velveteen Rabbit. 2 p.m. at Truro Anglican Church, 10520 Main St., Fairfax. The City of Fairfax Theatre Company and the Truro Anglican Church present "The Velveteen Rabbit." Visit fairfaxva.gov/.

Festival of Lights and Carols. 2-7 p.m. at 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Children ages 12 and under can enjoy lunch with Santa at Sherwood Community Center. Lunch seatings will be offered at 11:30 a.m., and 12:30 p.m., must pre-register. Listen to live holiday music and enjoy s'mores and hot cider at Old Town Square from 2-7 p.m. Enjoy caroling and lighting of the Christmas Tree at Old Town Square at 6 p.m. Visit fairfaxva.gov/about-us/special-events/festival-of-lights-and-carols.

Christmas in Brass. 3 p.m. at

Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, 8336 Carleigh Parkway, Springfield. Featuring the Barclay Brass Quintet. This ensemble will present a program of secular and sacred seasonal music that will appeal to a broad audience of all ages. Visit www.kirkwoodpres.com, or call the church office at 703-451-5320.

Little Match Girl. 4 p.m. at Truro Anglican Church, 10520 Main St., Fairfax. The City of Fairfax Theatre Company and the Truro Anglican Church present "Little Match Girl" Visit fairfaxva.gov/.

Town of Clifton Holiday Homes Tour. 4-7 p.m. at 7140 Main St., Clifton. Five homes in Town and a bonus home outside of Town, in addition to the caboose and two historic churches that will be open to the public. \$25 adult pre-sale, \$30 on Dec. 2; \$5 child; credit cards are more. Visit clifton-va.com or email

melissa.milne9@gmail.com.

Dinner Theatre. 7 p.m. at Truro Anglican Church, 10520 Main St., Fairfax. The City of Fairfax Theatre Company and the Truro Anglican Church present "The Little Match Girl" and "The Velveteen Rabbit." Visit fairfaxva.gov/.

Art Show and Reception. 7-10 p.m. at Fairfax Art League Village Gallery, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. Stories by Michael Edwards, painter, sculptor and mixed media artist. Enjoy the exhibit, music by Dj Master Renegade, wine, food, and an original poetry reading by Deb Wright. Email ssreichbart@verizon.net.

DEC. 2-3

Arts and Crafts Show. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday; 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Sunday at the Audrey Moore RECenter, 8100

Braddock Road, Annandale. Call 703-321-7081.

SUNDAY/DEC. 3

"Hansel and Gretel" Opera. 2 and 5 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Mason Opera will present Engelbert Humperdinck's take on the Brothers Grimm fairytale "Hansel and Gretel." Tickets: \$12, \$8, \$5. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts.

Home for the Holidays Concert. 4-6 p.m. at Lanier Middle School, 3801 Jermentown Road, Fairfax. Main Street Community Band plays a mix of seasonal favorites. Visit www.fairfaxband.org.

MONDAY/DEC. 4

Funday Monday. 10:30 a.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Fun with Mr. Skip. Free. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts.

FRIDAY/DEC. 8

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Smoke free, all proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit www.fairfaxvfd.com or call 703-273-3638.

Flutist in Concert. 8 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Celebrate the Sounds of the Season with the Columbia Flute Choir in the Christmas Concert. Free. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts.

SATURDAY/DEC. 9

Christmas at George Mason's Gunston Hall. 10-7 p.m. at George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. A full day of holiday activities starts with a visit from Santa and games and crafts for all ages. Call 703-550- 9220 ext. 240 or email mkcraver@gunstonhall.org.
Lunch with Santa. 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway. Call 703-385-7858.

Lunch with Santa. 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Children ages 10 and under can enjoy lunch with Santa. \$6. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts.

DEC. 9-10

James and the Giant Peach. Shows at 12:30, 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. at the GMU Harris Theatre, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. When James is sent by his conniving aunts to chop down their old fruit tree, he discovers a magic potion that grows a tremendous peach that rolls into the ocean and launches a journey of enormous proportions. Visit afyp.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 10

Holiday Ornament Craft Day. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; 5-15, \$2; 16 and older, \$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 16

James and the Giant Peach. Shows at 12:30, 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. at the GMU Harris Theatre, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. See Dec. 9-10 description. Visit www.afyp.org.

Frosty Follies Show. 6 p.m. at Springfield Town Center, Spring Mall Drive, Springfield. Metropolitan School of the Arts will present their annual Frosty Follies shows in the Springfield Town Center in the Main Court. Visit metropolitanarts.org/.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Supervisors Expand Options for NVTC Site

Land around the now-closed training center to get plan amendment ahead of sale to Erickson Living.

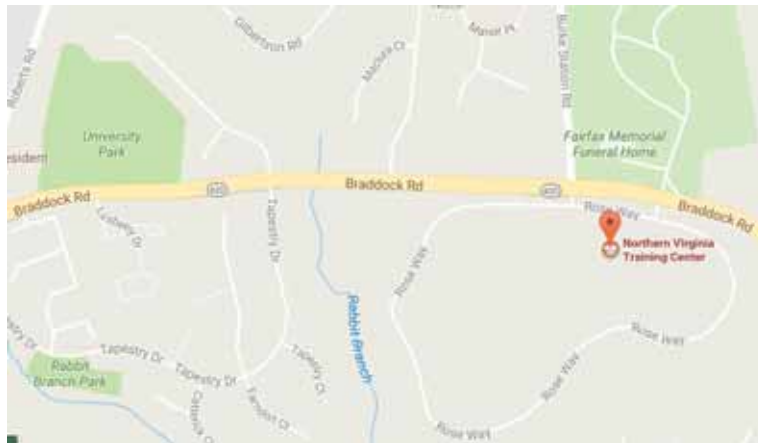
KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Erickson Living proposes to build a continuing-care community at the 82-acre property of the former Northern Virginia Training Center at 9911 Braddock Road, according to county documents.

“However, this land has never gone through a Comprehensive Plan Review process because planning efforts just noted the current use as a state institution,” said Supervisor John Cook in the Nov. 2 Board meeting.

“I believe this is the time to engage the community in a planning process to identify future land uses for the site,” he said.

The Board approved Supervisor Cook’s motion to authorize staff to consider a Plan amendment for the property.



Map showing location of Northern Virginia Training Center site.

“I believe this is the time to engage the community in a planning process to identify future land uses for the site.”

— John Cook, Braddock District Supervisor

“The Plan amendment process should be an open one, considering all potential uses, not just the prospective owner’s,” said Cook.

The approximately 82-acre property is owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia and is in the process of being sold to Erickson Living according to county documents. Erickson builds and manages continuing care retirement communities in 11 states, including Greenspring in Springfield.

The site is currently planned for public facilities, government, and institutional uses according to the Comprehensive Plan, but that is a designation that reflects the former use of the property, according to county documents.

Cook also proposed to include the 9-acre property adjacent to the training center that is currently used by the State Police in this review.

“That property also has never been planned and some planning effort now could help inform any future changes in ownership of that parcel,” he said.

FAITH NOTES

FROM PAGE 7

a contemporary service on Sundays at 9:45 a.m. www.stmatthewsumc.org or 703-978-3500.

The Immanuel Bible Church MOPS group meets on Mondays at 7 p.m. at Immanuel Bible Church, 6911 Braddock Road, Springfield. MOPS is for pregnant or parenting mothers of children from infancy to kindergarten. 703-922-4295 or www.MOPS.org.

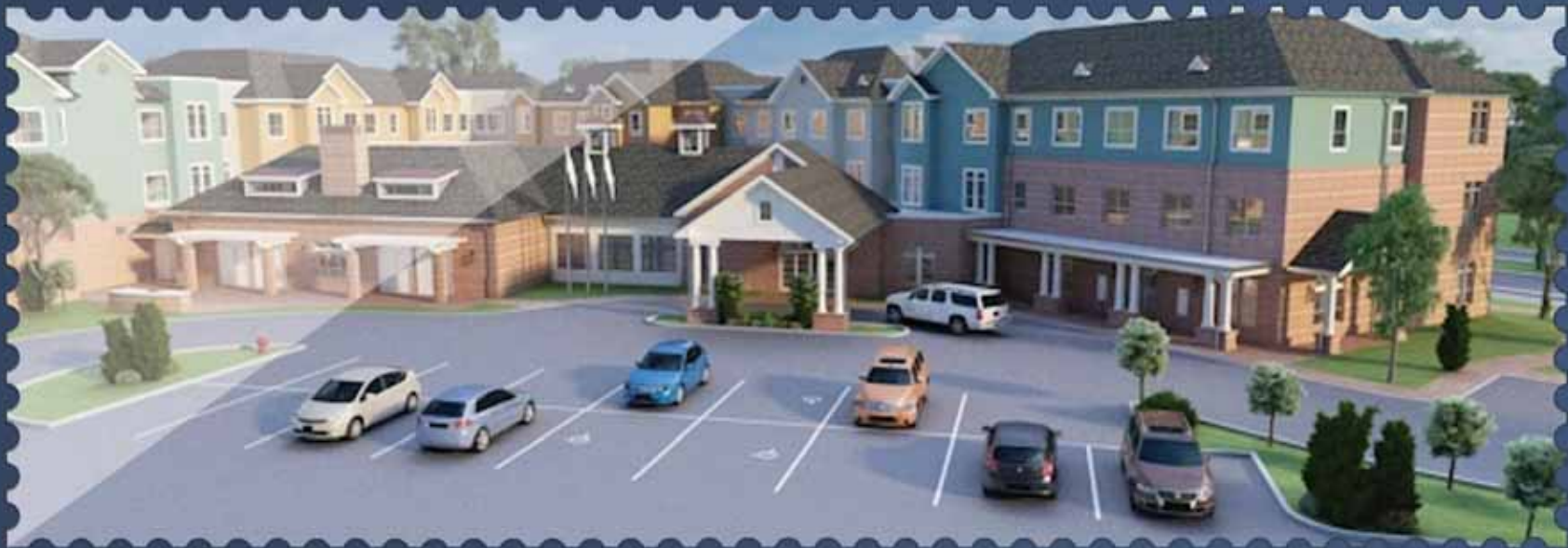
First Baptist Church of Springfield, 7300 Gary St., Springfield, has traditional and contemporary Sunday services at 10:30 a.m., Sunday school at 9:15 a.m. Special worldwide services offered at special times throughout the year in English, Spanish and Ethiopian. The pastors are Jim Weaver and Jason Mitchell. 703-451-1500 or www.fbcspRINGfield.org.

The following is a list of events at **Mount Calvary Baptist Church**, 4325 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax:

- ❖ Adult Bible Study every Wednesday starting at 7 p.m., Youth Bible Study at 7:15 p.m.
- ❖ Full Praise and Baptism Service at 7 p.m., the last Wednesday

SEE FAITH, PAGE 13

Get A New Lease on LifeSM with Harmony.



Come get a glimpse of Lorton’s newest Assisted Living and Memory Care Community, The Crossings at Spring Hill. Opening soon, The Crossings at Spring Hill offers no large buy-ins and is accepting reservation deposits. We are convenient to I-95 and Fairfax County Parkway, adjacent to Workhouse Arts Center, and within a secured gated community with amenities such as a pool and clubhouse. Enjoy outstanding care, farm to table dining, on-site physical therapy, a movie theater, and more!

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PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

The starting line for the Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk at Fairfax Presbyterian Church on Sunday, Nov. 19, 2017 in the City of Fairfax.



Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk volunteers (from left): Jean Buffardi, Barbara Enos, Janet Smith, Amy Stidham, Tami Stein, Jane Curtis and Marcy Stennes.

Walking and Working Against Hunger

About 300 participants of the Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk help fundraising goal of \$45,000.

The 25th annual Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk took place on Sunday, Nov. 19, 2017, at Fairfax Presbyterian Church. The goal of this year's walk was to raise \$45,000 with the help of about 300 participants from 20 churches, synagogues and a mosque, said organizer Janet Smith. Last year's 2.8 mile walk raised \$42,000.

"This is very much an interfaith event and it's wonderful to see so many different faiths coming together with a common purpose to help impoverished people around the world and in our own community to help them survive and to live in better conditions," said Smith.

Seventy-five percent of the money raised will go to Church World Service, an organization that works with hunger and disaster relief around the world as well as refugee



The registration table for the Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk.

assistance. The remaining 25 percent of the funds stay in the Burke, Springfield, Fairfax, Fairfax Station, Clifton areas to benefit Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO) and Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM).

"Hunger knows no faith, no language, no gender, no age and we all are part of an



Walkers at the beginning of the Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk at Fairfax Presbyterian Church in the City of Fairfax on Sunday, Nov. 19, 2017.

effort to address hunger globally and locally," said David Meyer, Mayor of the City of Fairfax.

"In 1969, the first CROP Walk for Hunger occurred in North Dakota and since then has grown to be an interfaith initiative

across the country to address the issues of hunger both in this country and around the world. There's a lot of people in this country who quietly struggle to find food every day. It's right in our community and we need to get all of the churches and faith communities to address the issue," said Meyer.

Added State Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37): "Walking and working to relieve hunger in the Commonwealth is something that the McAuliffe administration has focused on through Dorothy McAuliffe's work for making sure that young people have something to eat."

An earlier fundraiser held at SweetFrog Burke, Brion's Grille, Chipotle Burke, and Chipotle Fairfax helped raise \$880 for the cause. In the past 24 years, more than 6,200 Burke CROP Walkers raised over \$450,000 to relieve hunger globally through Church World Service, and over \$113,000 to help hungry people in our own community.

Five local churches have participated in the Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk all 25 years. They include: Abiding Presence Lutheran, Burke Presbyterian, Clifton Presbyterian, Living Savior Lutheran, and St. Andrew's Episcopal.

— STEVE HIBBARD



The Delaney Hall Band performs (from left): Steve Delaney, Kathy Mancini, Mark Hall, Eric Atwell and Steve Keister.



The ribbon-cutting ceremony of the Burke/Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk with City of Fairfax Mayor David Meyer, State Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37), and Henry Brinton, Pastor of Fairfax Presbyterian Church.

FAITH

FROM PAGE 7

of every month

- ❖ Sunday School at 9 a.m.
- ❖ Sunday morning service at 10 a.m., the 4th Sunday of every month
- ❖ Men's Ministry Bible Class, the Saturday before the 4th Sunday of every month
- ❖ Commonwealth Care Center ministry every first and third Thursday night. 703-273-1455.

Beth El Hebrew Congregation, 3830 Seminary Road, Alexandria, has services on Fridays, 7:30 p.m. with a pre-service wine and cheese social at 6:30 p.m., and Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. with a pre-service Torah study at 9 a.m. Religious school is on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. Adult learning opportunities take place throughout the year. Tot Shabbat is on the first and third Saturdays at 11 a.m. Kolot Shabbat, a musical service, is the first Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m. 703-370-9400 or www.bethelhebrew.org.

The Cranford United Methodist Church, located at 9912 Old Colchester Road, Lorton, hosts prayer and healing services on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Worship service is at 11 a.m., and fellowship is at 12:30 p.m.

Fairfax Baptist Temple, at the corner of Fairfax County Parkway and Burke Lake Roads, holds a bible study fellowship at 9 a.m. Sundays followed by a 10 a.m. worship service. Nursery care and children's church also provided. 6401 Missionary Lane, Fairfax Station, 703-323-8100 or www.fbtministries.org.

Victims Remembered

FROM PAGE 4

done a very good job of confusing people with claims that gun safety laws undermine the Second Amendment rights of citizens under the U.S. Constitution.

For example, most Americans understand people who purchase firearms are screened by the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, run by the FBI since 1998. Gregory claims the process is voluntary in Virginia, and retailers and private dealers aren't required to conduct background checks. She adds local gun safety advocates are calling for "universal background checks at the federal and state levels for all sales and transfers of firearms."

Gregory isn't opposed to the lawful ownership of weapons under the Bill of Rights. "A convicted felon or domestic abuser should not have the same gun rights as law-abiding citizens," she maintains.

Gregory points out state legislator Del. Kenneth "Ken" R. Plum (D-36) of Reston is the lawmaker who has stood con-

sistently with gun safety advocates each month, since their first protest Jan. 14, 2013.

"I find these mass shootings to be so offensive," said Plum. The retired school teacher hasn't forgotten about the souls lost at Virginia Tech and Sandy Hook.

"And the list grows longer and still nothing is done," he explains Nov. 20.

The theme of the regular vigil at the NRA — "we are never going to forget the need for sensible gun laws" — is what propels Plum to attend as often as he can. He and other participants of the protest feel the urgency to keep reminding folks the killings are still going on. The state lawmaker emphasizes "We need to take action."

"Nobody is proposing taking away everyone's guns," Plum maintains, "but we can take action on enacting sensible gun safety measures." In January, the delegate will make his fourth try at General Assembly to introduce a statewide universal background check bill to remove loopholes in the purchase of guns.

Plum — the longest-serving member of the Virginia House of



PHOTO BY MARTI MOORE/THE CONNECTION

Carol P. Luten of Falls Church shows a proposed state license plate Nov. 14, she says is designed as a "moving billboard from city-to-city and state-to-state to help create awareness and a movement for change." Learn more online about the new vehicle tag at www.stopgunviolence.info, and visit www.csgv.org and www.concernedcitizensva.org for details about their movement to stop gun violence.

Delegates — is encouraged by recent winners of the Nov. 7 General Election, led by executive branch team Gov.-elect Ralph S. Northam, Lt. Gov.-elect Justin E. Fairfax and the re-elected Attorney General Mark R. Herring. Plum states in his recent written opinion a more evenly split partisan composition in the legislative branch has worked out in the past to help state lawmakers focus on problem solving versus "simply getting credit."

NEXT MONTH'S PROTEST at the NRA headquarters marks five

years since the killing spree at Sandy Hook Elementary School. An interfaith prayer vigil, led by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, is planned for Dec. 14 from 10 a.m. to noon by the Concerned Citizens Against Gun Violence, the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America.

"We have been here without fail since Jan. 14, 2013," Gregory said, "for all victims and survivors of gun violence."

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In observance of the **Thanksgiving Holiday**, Fairfax Connector will

operate Sunday Service on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 23 and holiday weekday service on Friday, Nov. 24, 2017.

❖ Thanksgiving Day — The following routes will operate Sunday service: 101, 109, 151, 152, 161, 162, 171, 310, 321, 322, 371, 401, 402, 423, 463, 505, 551, 558, 559, 574, 605, 630, 640, 650, 721, 937, 950, 981, 983, RIBS 1, RIBS 2, RIBS 3, RIBS 4 and RIBS 5. Routes not listed above do not operate on Sundays and therefore will not operate on Thanksgiving Day.

❖ Day after Thanksgiving — The following routes will not operate: 231, 232, 335, 393, 394, 395, 422, 432, 461, 494, 495, 556, 585, 599, 624, 634, 644, 724 and 985. Route 980 will run every 12-15 minutes instead of every 6-8 minutes.

All other routes will operate regular weekday service. For schedules and more, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/connector/routes/holiday.htm.

THURSDAY/NOV. 30

Rolling Road Widening Project

Public Information Meeting.

6:30-8:30 p.m. at Rolling Valley Elementary School located at 6703 Barnack Drive, Springfield. Visit VirginiaDOT.org for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2

Future Quest. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. at GMU's Johnson Center, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. College and career conference for area middle and high school students with disabilities, as well as their parents, teachers and other professionals. Featuring more than 40 workshops and exhibits related to successful life after high school. Free. There is free parking in Lot K, or in the Mason Pond Parking Garage for \$8. Visit www.futurequestgmu.org to register or email futurequestnova@gmail.com.

Coffee with Del. David Bulova. 9-11 a.m. at Main Street Bagel, 10268 Main St., City of Fairfax. Del. David Bulova (D-37) will continue a tradition started in 2006 by holding informal office hours, constituents are invited to talk about issues of interest and to ask questions about legislation affecting the community. Visit www.davidbulova.com.

THROUGH DEC. 3

Coat and Blanket Drive.

Nova Relief Center is holding a blanket and coat drive for Syrian and Iraqi refugees who have fled their homelands to escape the violence from the civil war in Syria. Paxton Van Lines and Maersk are donating their services this year. Donated blankets and coats should be new or gently worn, and may be dropped off at any designated drop-off location below. To make a tax-deductible donation, visit NOVA Relief Center's website at www.NOVAReliefCenter.org

- ❖ City of Fairfax — City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax
- ❖ Northern Virginia Community College, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale,
- ❖ Virginia International University, 4401 Village Drive, Fairfax
- ❖ Paxton Van Lines, 5300 Port Royal Road, Springfield
- ❖ Merrifield VA CITGO, 8318 Lee Highway, Fairfax
- ❖ American Turkish Friendship Association, 11200 Waples Mill Road, Suite 360, Fairfax

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Roundtable

FROM PAGE 3
Mercer.

Multop donned his economist's hat once more to also note that so far he had heard no mention from the GOP plan makers of the debt service on the increasing deficit. "That's another \$200 billion in interest costs that I don't hear them having accounted for." Multop's concern is that Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security benefits will become the targets to shore up the financial levee in the wake of these tax cuts and the domino effect of their implementation.

Another personalized example of the the proposed reforms was offered by attendee Edythe Kelleher. The executive director of Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation, Kelleher could have spoken about impacts to development in that region, but instead, told how cuts to student loan interest deductions and a proposal to tax teacher's assistant stipends would affect her graduate-school son.

"He works, he goes to school, he lives frugally. We provided him with a cheap car." Kelleher says that if a tax on the modest teacher's assistant stipend is adopted, "that's \$6,000 more each year, and he doesn't know where that money will come from."

Connolly responded to this story by saying the need to educate for competitiveness in the world's marketplace is greater than ever. The congressman said that making getting an education even more difficult means "some will have to leave school. That's hardly 'making America great again.'"

As the session came to a close, NVAR CEO Conrad asked Connolly, "What's your advice? What do we do next?"

In addition to the rally call to NVAR membership and AARP members, Connolly replied, "Run, don't walk and immediately express your concerns to your representatives" at every level of government, and "tell everyone you know. This plan does not reflect our values and priorities. We can and should do better than this."

SCHOOL NOTES

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

Students from six Fairfax County public schools have been named to the 2017 All-Virginia Jazz Band and Ensemble. Students named to the 2017 All-Virginia Jazz Band and Ensemble include **Luke Mrini**, **Eugene Song**, and **Aiden Rodeschin** from Lake Braddock Secondary School.

Vocal musicians from 14 Fairfax County public schools have been named to the Virginia Honors Choir for 2017. Thirty-four Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students were selected for the choir, and five students were named as alternates. This select choir is open to the top 125 singers from around the Commonwealth of Virginia, and is the highest honor a choir student can attain during his or her high school career. FCPS students named to the 2017 Virginia Honors Choir include: **Beatrice Thurgood** from Lake Braddock Secondary School and **Morgan Freeman**, **Mackenna Gordon**, **Olivia Brennan**, **Shelby Kaufman**, **Mia Peri**, **Sofie Peri**, **Jack Hopewell**, **Paul Hardin**, **Hunter Browning**, and **Luke Brennan** from Woodson High School.

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Welcome to the Club



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

"Some club," as my late mother would likely scoff. And the club to which I refer is, to spin an old Groucho Marx joke: a club you'd rather not join especially if they'd have you as a member. This is of course, the cancer club, a club whose membership continues to grow despite worldwide efforts to the contrary. According to Medscope.com, one in two men and one in three women will be affected by cancer in their lifetime. Hardly a statistic to be ignored. And so, even though I had a rather uneventful/healthy upbringing and further on into adulthood, in late middle age, 54 and five months, Feb. 27, 2009, I was impacted and rudely awakened with a non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV diagnosis – out of the blue, and given a "13 month to two-year" prognosis to boot. As a life long non-smoker with no immediate family history of cancer, whose parents both lived well into their 80s, I was more inclined to worry about the Boston Red Sox pitching depth than I was about cancer.

But cancer, for the past nearly nine years has been my life and amazingly, so far anyway, not the cause of my premature death (what death isn't 'premature?'). And what brightens my day and lifts my spirits more than anything else (other than a Red Sox World Series Championship) is when I meet a newly-diagnosed lung cancer patient who exhibits the can/will do positive-type attitude necessary to endure the inevitable ups and downs to follow. To be selfish, it empowers me and strengthens my own resolve to live life to the fullest (it's not as simple as saying it) and damn the torpedoes.

Within the last few months, I have met, over the phone, two such individuals. The first man, Lee, I met before he even had his first infusion. The second man, Mark, a bit more experienced, I met a year and a half after his first infusion. Each man was engaging, outgoing, confident, enthusiastic and quite frankly, happy to make my acquaintance. You see, after being given a less-than-desirable prognosis, it's helpful to meet someone who, despite having received a similar diagnosis, has nevertheless managed to live almost nine years post diagnosis. (If he can do it, I can do it kind of feeling.)

As for me, the nearly nine-year survivor, meeting cancer patients who are at the beginning of their respective cancer journeys, helps me to reconnect with my roots, so to speak, and share and share alike some memorable experiences, both cancer-related and not. In a way, we get to live vicariously through one another which for me reinforces how lucky I've been to survive for as long as I have.

And not that I need reminding, but it's easy to take for granted one's good fortune and forget – occasionally, the seriousness of my situation and the cloud that hangs over my head. The sword of Damocles has got nothing on me, literally or figuratively. Living with cancer is akin to nothing really. The chance that you'll survive beyond your prognosis, maybe even have your tumors shrink, or see your scans show "no evidence of disease," creates a kind of tease that cause your emotions to run the gamut. The possibility of living after being told you're dying – and vice versa, perhaps more than once, over your abbreviated – or not, life expectancy, is simply too much to handle/absorb sometimes. It's a roller coaster for sure, but one that rarely comes to a complete stop and never allows you to get off. Moreover, it's not multiple rides, it's one long, endless ride with no guarantees about what happens next – or where it even happens.

Meeting people who are ready, willing and able to confront their cancer future is just as important and stimulating as meeting someone like me who hasn't succumbed to this terrible disease. It's a win-win situation. Particularly significant when at date of diagnosis, it appeared to be a lose-lose. I'm proud to be a member of the cancer club, especially so when I meet people like Lee and Mark.

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

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