Service ‘Stars’ Battle it Out On the Dance Floor

Dawn Devaney, MD, and Sevryn Shapiachan, owner of the Herndon-based Fred Astaire Dance Studio Reston win the Mirrorball Trophy after a night of dancing competition as local Service ‘Stars’ teamed up with professional dancer instructors and competed against each other during the benefit gala event in Herndon.

Protesting Gun Violence
Northwest Federal Celebrates 70th Anniversary
The Wonder of the Season:
Susie's Carols & Lullabies
Saturday, December 2
4:00 and 7:00 pm
Reston Community Center
Hunters Woods, Reston

Guest Artists:
Cristian Perez, Guitar
Isabelle Frouvelle, Harp
John Kilkenny, Marimba
and Vibraphone

Reston Sings!
Handel's Messiah
Tuesday, December 5
7:30 pm
Saint John Neumann
Catholic Church, Reston

Guest Artists:
Katie Baughman, Soprano
Linda Maguire, Mezzo
Dennys Moura, Tenor
Jason Widney, Bass

Tickets and Information: RestonChorale.org
Military and Youth 17 and Under Admitted Free (Youth with Adult or Senior)

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Protesting Gun Violence

By Marti Moore
The Connection

More than 70 people stood their ground on gun violence in Falls Church in November 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 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 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 consistently for sensible gun laws. “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 Assem-
Northwest Federal Credit Union Celebrates 70th Anniversary

Culture of service inspires an all-year giving program.

By Mercia Hobson
The Connection

Northwest Federal Credit Union (NWFCU) headquartered in Herndon, marked its 70th anniversary. The organization celebrated with a cake cutting by their executive team and board on Monday, Nov. 20, at its national headquarters located at 200 Spring St., Herndon.

NWFCU is centered on a culture of service and philanthropy, wherein it supports and participates in local events to benefit the communities they serve. This culture inspired an all-year giving initiative named "The 70 Acts of We," in honor of its 70th Anniversary. The 70 acts benefited not only the community where NWFCU is headquartered but occurred in cities and towns across the United States.

In the words of NWFCU, its employees, board, and their families performed its "70 Acts of We" as a celebration to the credit union's members who have made Northwest a great place to bank for the past 70 years.

At the cake cutting, NWFCU’s President and Chief Executive Officer, Jeff Bentley said, “Our anniversary comes during a time of the year where we are reminded of all we have to be thankful for and the many ways we can share our blessings with the community.”

Bentley’s comment referenced NWFCU’s ACT number 62 of their 70 Acts of We and the credit union’s recent participation and partnering with Project Giveback to provide Thanksgiving meals to 500 local families.

On Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 29-30, NWFCU Foundation has coordinated for its employees to volunteer at Embry Rucker Shelter in Reston, and on Friday, Dec. 1, NWFCU Foundation will be kicking off its "Help Our Kids in Crisis" drive, as the organization collects plush animals, toys, and 70 children's blankets to provide to local first responders.

Among NWFCU’s other 69 “Acts of We” were: Act 61 – loan payoff for a member in need; Act 54 – donation to the Humane Society of the United States with an auto lending program; Act 53 – NWFCU Foundation’s Night of Magic with INOVA Children’s Hospital; Act 33 – Herndon Festival sponsorship; Act 15 – Autism Society of Greater Orlando space walk and family fun night; and Act 8 – hats and glove donation for hypothermia prevention program.

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.

Jeff Bentley, president and CEO NWFCU and Victoria Gillespie, Senior Vice President Enterprise Outreach NWFCU cut the cake at the 70th Anniversary Celebration held Monday, Nov. 20, in Herndon.
**Herndon Woman’s Club Members Strut the Catwalk**

**By Mercia Hobson**
**The Connection**

The Herndon Woman’s Club held their 59th Annual Fall Fashion Show and luncheon on Saturday, Nov. 11 at the Hyatt Regency Dulles in Herndon. Proceeds from this year’s event benefited Luke’s Wings, a nonprofit organization that unites Wounded Warriors, Veterans, and Heroes with their loved ones when they need them the most.

Lisa Lombardozzi is president of the Herndon Woman’s Club. Lombardozzi reported the club sold approximately 280 tickets for the event. She explained Herndon Woman’s Club chose Luke’s Wings as its beneficiary this year since the fashion show happened on Veterans Day. “It seemed fitting that [the beneficiary] should be a military organization,” Lombardozzi said.

According to their website, Luke’s Wings provides families with the means to visit their loved ones during the service member’s hospitalization and rehabilitation. Many people are unaware that the government only offers three flights when service members are wounded. That is where Luke’s Wings steps in.

By purchasing travel agency services and tickets, Luke’s Wings provides an immediate and invaluable service to the families and encourages and motivates the service member’s recovery.

Beverly Davis, a long-time Woman’s Club member, said, “We are thrilled to be supporting Luke’s Wings... and continuing the tradition of supporting area charities and organizations.”

As in previous years, raffles and door prizes rounded out the fashion show that featured the “Lovely Ladies of the Herndon Woman’s Club” as models, including Linda Crawford, Joanne Emswiler, Kathy Herbert, Gabrielle O’Bryan, and Barbara Torrey.

For more information about Herndon Woman’s Club and their community programs – including their upcoming participation in Wreaths Across America as they coordinate the Chestnut Grove ceremony and wreath laying event for the fourth year or sponsor a wreath – visit www.herndonwomansclub.org.

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**School Notes**

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

Sarah Blanton, of Herndon, a student at Fairleigh Dickinson University’s Florham Campus, located in Madison, N.J., has graduated with a B.A. in film and animation.

Herndon High School student Elsa Arita is one of five students in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area recognized at the Children’s Defense Fund 2017 Beat the Odds celebration. The event is designed to highlight the achievements of local students who have overcome extraordinary adversity to excel academically and give back to their communities.

Arita, who has a 3.3 grade point average at Herndon, was born into poverty to a single mother. At an early age, she learned the importance of education and the meaning of hard work as she watched her mother finish sixth grade at the age of 32. She dedicated herself to studying, unsure if her family’s financial situation would require her to get a job and sideline her education. Today, she studies and works six days a week and aspires to become an attorney.

Students recognized will receive a $10,000 college scholarship, a laptop computer, and will become part of the CDF’s youth leadership and development program.

A recognition ceremony was scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 7, in the Annenberg Theater at the Newseum in Washington, D.C.
LINK Fulfills Record-Breaking Number of Requests for Food

Food and toys needed to support LINK’s December Holiday Program.

By Mercia Hobson
The Connection

LINK, an all-volunteer pantry serving Herndon, Sterling, and Ashburn hosted their annual Thanksgiving Holiday Program on Saturday, Nov. 18. Lisa Lombardozzi, LINK President reported more than 900 families signed up to receive food assistance this year, the largest number of people since the program began in 1985.

Lombardozzi reported operational changes in several other local organizations were responsible. For LINK’s Thanksgiving Food Program, clients were assigned to either Trinity Presbyterian Church in Herndon or Christ the Redeemer Church in Sterling. At both locations, beneficiaries received a grocery gift card and three days worth of food for their families – items donated by local businesses, churches, schools, individuals, and through drives such as “Scouting for Food.”

LINK invited beneficiaries to visit the Sterling United Methodist Church to select gently used coats and winter clothing. In all, LINK distributed more than 25,000 pounds of food, $25,000 worth of grocery gift cards, and 3,000 coats and other pieces of essential clothing.

Among the hundreds of volunteers who provided the workforce for the day were members of the Sigma Mu Mu Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. Incorporated located in Loudoun County. According to Reginald Parker, Chairman of Sigma Mu Mu Social Action Committee, all the Brothers value community service. “We are committed to actively demonstrating an ongoing commitment to serving our local community with a strong statement that, “We are here to help,” he wrote when reached for comment.

Lombardozzi said she was very appreciative and enthusiastic about all the volunteers and organizations that stepped forward for the Thanksgiving Holiday Program. “The community has been very supportive of the LINK holiday program. Every time we ask for volunteers, food, coats, or toys, we are blessed with a generous response,” she said.

Lombardozzi stated LINK would repeat a similar process at their Saturday, Dec. 16, Christmas Holiday Program. Instead of coats though, new toys would be offered to the 2,083 registered children. More than 4,100 new toys are needed to support requests for children ages newborn to 15 years of age.

Lombardozzi added that LINK’s food supplies are very low and must be replenished for the record number of people who signed up for help. “We need schools, churches, and businesses to host food drives,” she said.

Lombardozzi asked for help in getting the word out to any group willing to host a food or toy drive and requested those interested contact president@linkagainsthunger.org or visit www.linkagainsthunger.org for more information.

“What with your help, we can make the holidays a little better for these families in our community,” Lombardozzi said.

Santa, Motors, and Gifts for Kids in Hospitals

As Christmas approaches, children everywhere will be watching the skies for Santa Claus. Here in Fairfax County some very special children won’t have to wait until Christmas Eve. Since 1988, Santa and his elves have been rumbling down the streets of Fairfax County on motorcycles picking up and delivering toys to children in local hospitals.

Once again this year, Santa will temporarily trade in his sleigh and reindeer for a Harley-Davidson motorcycle and police escort. The Fairfax County Police Motor Squad, along with with the Fairfax County Sheriff’s Office, Virginia State Police, Fairfax City Police, the Town of Vienna Police, and the Herndon Police will escort Santa on his annual “Ride for Children” — according to FCPD Media Relations Bureau.

During the second week of December, Santa and his elves will collect donated toys from local police stations, other government facilities, and eight Fairfax County Schools. On Dec. 13 and 14 Santa and his helpers will deliver toys to children at INOVA Children’s Hospital Child Life Services Center and the Georgetown Hospital Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. Some of the toys that are not handed out on the day of Santa’s visit are left with the Child Life programs at each hospital. Those toys are used throughout the year to provide the children something to keep their mind off being in the hospital. Toys will also go to various local charities including Life with Cancer and the Herndon-Reston F.I.S.H. (Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help).

Anyone wishing to make a donation can bring a new, unwrapped toy, game, book, or other gift to any Fairfax County Police Station, Fairfax County Public Safety Headquarters, Fairfax County Print Shop at the Government Center, or the lobbies of the Pennino and Herity Office Buildings. All donations should be made before 9 a.m. Monday, Dec. 11.
As the holiday season begins, officers with the Herndon Police Department have already been giving back to the community in which they work, enriching the quality of life for many Town of Herndon citizens both young and old.

In mid-November, officers participated in the Project Hope Coat Distribution held at Hutchison Elementary School in Herndon. On Nov. 20, officers distributed turkeys at Paisano’s 2nd Annual Community Turkey Donation. Visiting schools and talking with children one on one is a good way to get to know the younger set, especially if food is involved as it was at Herndon Elementary Annual Thanksgiving Feast.

Reflecting on the value of service and its impact on the community, Herndon Police Chief Maggie DeBoard said, “Involvement in our community and community policing is extremely important to our department. Foster a positive relationship with our community lets our residents know that we are here to help them in any situation.” DeBoard added, “It’s a natural fit for us to work with great community partners like local businesses and our schools. Our goal is for all of Herndon’s residents to know that they can count on HPD to support them and keep them safe.”

— Mercia Hobson

Herndon Police Department partnered with Paisano’s Pizza located at 1141 Elen St., # 105, Herndon, on Nov. 20 to distribute turkey dinners to families in need. Pictured is Captain Brad Anzengruber and Sergeant Saa at Paisano’s 2nd Annual Community Turkey Donation.
Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING


Reston Farm Market. Saturdays, through Dec. 9 a.m.-noon, Lake Anne Village Center, 1401 North Shore Drive, SNAP accepted, bonus dollar program. (CLOSED for Multicultural Festival Sept. 23.)


All-comers' Group Fun Run at Broadway Park, in Herndon between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. played on Sundays at Bready Park in Herndon between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. if interested, email skedsmoandie.com for more.


Over 40 Softball Teams and a Fairfax-based league is looking for enough participants to use embroidery yarn, balls, and pipe cleaners and attach them to various repurposed and recycled objects often found around home. Call 703-437-9101 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

Mini-Train Rides. noon-4 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Pakistani-American fine artist and sculptor Asma Chaudhary will present an interactive yarn wrapping experience with participants to use embroidery yarn, balls, and pipe cleaners and attach them to various repurposed and recycled objects often found around home.

SUNDAY/DEC. 3

Run with Santa SK. 8:30 a.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. Jump into the season's spirit and wear the favorite holiday gear or costume. Free 4-1K fun run with finisher medals. Call 703-689-0999 or visit pricesonline.com/events.

Herndon's 39th Annual Holidays on the Farm and Arts & Craft Show. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Over 80 artisans and crafters will exhibit and sell their handmade works at this annual arts and crafts show sponsored by the Herndon Parks and Recreation Department. Call 703-435-6800, ext. 2109 or email john.walsh@herndon-va.gov.

SUNDAY/DEC. 7

Meet the Author. 7 p.m. at Scrawl Books, Reston Town Center, 11862 Market St. Suzanne Scurlock-Durana will be doing a storytime reading/book signing of her book "Reston A to Z." Visit www.nextstoptheatre.org.

Kids Yarn Workshop. 2-4 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Pakistani-American fine artist and sculptor Asma Chaudhary will present an interactive yarn wrapping experience with participants to use embroidery yarn, balls, and pipe cleaners and attach them to various repurposed and recycled objects often found around home.

SUNDAY/DEC. 9

Christmas Store Help Needed. Friday night for set up and Saturday for to escort shoppers at Viennas Peddler's Village, 7929 West Ox Rd., Herndon. Call 703-738-9213.

SATURDAY/DEC. 9

Winter Festival. 10 a.m.-noon at the Goddard School - Herndon, 2400 Dulles Town Blvd. Breakfast with Santa, Face painting, dancing with a princess, cookie decorating, raffle prize, festive crafts, and games. $5. Email herndon14@goddardschools.com or call 703-655-0337.

Meet the Author. 11 a.m. at Scrawl Books, Reston Town Center, 11862 Market St. Bowman Towne Drive. Family stories for all ages. Cosponsored by the Friends of the Reston Library. $1 ($10 members) Call 703-925-0990 or visit www.amphoragroup.org.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 13

Gingerbread Village. Various times at the Hyatt Regency Reston, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. See the annual display in the hotel lobby. Call 703-709-1234 or visit reston.hyatt.com.
Community Service ‘Stars’ Battle it Out on the Dance Floor

Thousands raised for local charities during benefit gala.

By Mercia Hobson
The Connection

The Fred Astaire Dance Studio-Reston, located at 585 Grove St., in Herndon, lit up the night as they presented a charity gala based on ABC’s number one entertainment show, Dancing with Stars. The event was held at the Hyatt Regency Dulles in Herndon on Veterans Day, Saturday, Nov. 11, 5:45-11:30 p.m. Tickets for the event sold out weeks before the date leaving the ballroom with a capacity crowd.

The night included a silent and live auction, celebrity guest judges, and dinner with wine service. Professional performances, complete with gorgeous costumes and a playlist of hot tracks, as well as the evening’s exceptional Dancing with the Services Show and Awards Presentation completed the evening.

Judges for the evening-long benefit gala featured local celebrities Lacy Schwimmer of Dancing with the Stars, Fox 5’s Emmy award-winning Chief Meteorologist Tucker Barnes, and John Booty, former NFL defensive back and winner of Dancing with the Stars D.C. The three critiqued the dance moves of the Service “Stars” competing for the first place Mirrorball Trophy.

Ten active local service members from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Town of Herndon Police Department, Fairfax Police Department, DC National Guard and even the Vice Mayor of Herndon volunteered to dance as competitors.

“Twas so excited and honored to be asked to participate in this... event. It’s everything I could have imagined and more,” wrote Jennifer Baker, Vice Mayor of Herndon on the Fred Astaire Dance Studio-Reston website.

The 10 Dancing with the Services “Stars” included: Denise Randels, Herndon Police Department; Jennifer Baker, Vice Mayor of Herndon and the Fred Astaire Dance Studio-Reston website.

According to Susannah Moss, executive director of Fred Astaire Dance Studio-Reston, competitors had been paired with a certified Fred Astaire dance instructor. Each pair learned a choreographed dance routine for the judges to score. The competitors spent weeks practicing their steps.

“I feel so blessed and fortunate to be able to put on this exciting event, and uniquely adding the twist of promoting who our community celebrities should really be, all those men and women in uniform as they are today’s real stars,” wrote Susannah Moss, Studio Director Fred Astaire Dance Studio-Reston.

One hundred percent of all proceeds from auction items, white donation envelopes, and funds raised by the competitors benefited three local service organizations – the Police Unity Tour Chapter IV, The PINK FUND, and the Fraternal Order of Police Greater Herndon Lodge # 64.

At the end of the evening, although it was a challenging call, the judges awarded the Mirrorball Trophy to Dawn Devaney, M.D., and Tammy Russell, Fairfax Police Department.

“Tammy and I are very appreciative of the opportunity to participate in such a unique event,” said Tammy Russell, Fairfax Police Department, and Nathan Teixler, Fred Astaire Dance instructor, sizzle as they take to the dance floor wowing the audience and judges with their timing and technical skills.

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com
The Westfield Bulldogs hosted the 6A Region final against South Lakes on Nov. 25. The Bulldogs advanced to the final by defeating Battlefield, and Patriot. South Lakes defeated Yorktown and Madison to advance.

Westfield scored first when Bizzett Woodley caught the first of his two touchdown receptions with 8:09 to play in the first quarter. Gavin Kiley put Westfield up 14-0 with 10:26 to play in the second quarter. Later in the second quarter South Lakes scored when Joseph Dagbe caught a pass from QB Devin Miles and lunged into the end zone. In the third quarter, Bizzett Woodley caught his second TD pass from Noah Kim and the Bulldogs were up 21-7 with 4:45 remaining in the quarter. In the fourth quarter, Kim ran in from 5 yards out. A missed extra point would leave the score at 27-7.

For the game, Kim completed 10 of his 20 passes for 114 yards and three TDs. Eugene Asante would run for 139 yards on 19 carries and Woodley caught four passes for 60 yards and 2 TDs. South Lakes was led by Miles who completed 12 of 22 passes for 92 yards and a TD.

With the 27-7 win, the Westfield Bulldogs (13-0) will host the Woodbridge Vikings (12-1) who defeated Hylton 28-14 in the VHSL semifinal game. South Lakes (11-2) season ends for the third consecutive year to Westfield.

Battling for 6A Region Championship

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South Lakes QB Devin Miles # 3 hands the ball to South Lakes RB, Albert Mensah #24.

Spencer Alston #21 carries the ball for South Lakes.

Albert Mensah #24 carries the ball for South Lakes while Westfield’s Aaron Dishun #9 pursues.
THURSDAY/NOV. 30-SUNDAY/DEC. 3
Commemoration Weekend events will take place at Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation, 1441 Wiehle Ave., Reston. Call 703-437-7733 or visit nvhebrew.org.
❖ Thursday, Nov. 30, 8 a.m. – Pete Papeusak, president of the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic will speak on Czech Jewry today.
❖ Friday/Dec. 1 (evening) – A special reading from the Czech Torah by Herbert Schotten.
❖ Saturday/Dec. 2 (during services) – The b’nai b’rith of the families of Czech Jewish music from Kol Shirah and other music honoring the victims of the Holocaust. At this service, we will be chanting from this scroll as part of our service, and for the Ahavah would like to invite up anyone who is a Holocaust survivor or related to a survivor. Please be in touch with Cantor Caro directly if you would like to be called up for this honor.
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❖ Sunday/Dec. 3, 11 a.m. – Fifth, sixth, and seventh grade students, their families, and anyone else who may be interested, are invited to attend a presentation by Czech Holocaust survivor Marty Weiss, followed by a brief Q&A session.

FRIDAY/DEC. 1
Health and Senior Services Fair 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at Tall Oaks Assisted Living, 12052 North Shore Drive, Reston. Mammmography experts, ear, blood pressure and more. Call 703-834-9600 for more.

THROUGH DEC. 3
Coat and Blanket Drive. Through Dec. 3 Coat and Blanket Drive.
❖ Coat and Blanket Drive. Through Dec. 3 Coat and Blanket Drive.
❖ Coat and Blanket Drive. Through Dec. 3 Coat and Blanket Drive.
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WEDNESDAY/DEC. 6
Supervisor Hudgins Holiday Open House. 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the North County Government and Senior Community Room, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive. Email Susan@susant Rivers.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 16
Application Deadline. The Reston Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Committee is seeking volunteers to serve on the committee. All residents of Reston, over 18 years of age are eligible to serve. The committee consists of fifteen (15) members with five (5) positions expiring each year, and three (3) associate members that serve one year term. To apply, visit rpa.us/1nK87

By KENNETH L. LOURIE
Four hours up north with moderate basic first thing Thanksgiving-Thursday morning. Dinner and all the fixings with family and friends upon arrival, after a misty Brooklyn. Conversations and such with young, medium and old (with yours truly being the oldest of our generations) until 1:15 a.m. (a recent time record for many). Up at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast with more casual talk and nothing. Out the door at 10 a.m. for heading back for an immediate day-after return home schedule. Surviving Thanksgiving leftovers (turkey sandwiches in particular) to satiate the deprived. Dinner as soon as the groceries were unloaded and tired after our up-and-back. Turkey breast, mashed potatoes and peas for our own leftovers, off-and-on television, napping and then we both called it at 9:15 p.m. or so. Feeling groggy later, we were both awake. What a sleep! What a 24 hours! What a wonderful holiday! I wouldn’t characterize it as an ordeal. However, it was a bit of an undertaking giving my Friday afternoon commitment; my first-ever, post-holiday, having to rush backwards. I had been executed enough in previous years, we may have occasionally travelled up and back in the same day, when our route was two-hours to Pennsylvania. But all’s well that ends well, except for the pile of Thanksgiving day-after leftovers where we left saw them, miles away. Nevertheless, we are happy to have made the effort, despite the less-than-ideal timing. As difficult as this kind of schedule was/had to be, I can’t let, as much as possible anyway, my cancer stuff: infusions, 24-hour urine collection, pre-chemotherapy lab work, quarterly scans and yearly MRIs and scans, etc. My philosophy has been not to bucket list-type things, things that I would to 2/27/09. As challenging as that proved to be on many occasions, my goal has been to try and integrate my life around my chemo-therapy and vice versa, and not to let too much chips fall along the wayside. Moreover, my philosophy has been not to bucket list either, but rather to simply live my usual and customary life and not be affected by my “13-month to two-year prognosis.” If I was doing bucket list-type things, things that I would ordinarily not be doing, I felt that would be reinforcing a negative: that I was going to die prematurely. Rather than encouraging a positive: that I am going to live.

For me, maintaining the status quo and continuing to do the little things that characterize who I am and what I value seemed reinforcing a negative: that I was going to die prematurely. Rather than encouraging a positive: that I am going to live.

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Careful What To Wish For

Could changes in General Assembly mean some legislative requests from Northern Virginia might not be dead on arrival?

When the Virginia House of Representatives adjourned from its 2017 session, Republicans controlled the house by 66 to 34. The exact count following elections earlier in November is still unclear, but one party or the other could have a 51-49 majority, or even face a 50-50 split.

I don’t recall anyone predicting this level of change.

Three very close races are likely headed for recount, including one in Fairfax County, and since this is the first time all voters have used paper ballots, it’s hard to predict how that will go. But one way or the other, Northern Virginia localities are likely to have more influence.

Fairfax County, along with Arlington and Alexandria, prepare a state legislative wish list each year, made all the more urgent because localities in Virginia have only the powers specifically given to them by the General Assembly. If there is any reasonable doubt whether a power has been conferred on a local government, then the locality does not have that power.

That has meant, for example, localities can only raise revenue from limited sources, can’t restrict where people carry guns, can’t set their own minimum wage, and can’t fully control land use within their boundaries. Some haven’t been able to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Not all of these restrictions are based on party affiliation.

Aside from more local authority, the top wish is for more funding.

Fairfax County’s draft on funding schools: “Public education funding in the Commonwealth is enshrined in the Virginia Constitution as a joint responsibility of both state and local governments, so it is essential that the state fully meet its Constitutional responsibility to adequately fund K-12 education. Unfortunately, the Commonwealth continues to allow critical gaps to persist between state funding and the actual costs of providing a high-quality education, placing more of the fiscal burden on localities while substantially limiting local revenue sources, creating a discrepancy that has become increasingly untenable.”

The one action that could produce significant funding and services with very low cost to state coffers: expanding Medicaid in Virginia under the Affordable Care Act. Virginia has turned away billions of dollars, plus the jobs and healthier citizenry that come with that.

— Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Add a Little Light

By Rabbi Leibel Fajnland
Director of Chabad of Reston-Herndon

The Chanukah story happened so long ago – yet carries a timely message for us, even today.

Science has given us the greatest technologies and conveniences, yet it has not freed us from the moral and social challenges of our day. From gun violence and simmering racial tension, to corruption and perversion in the halls and sanctums of power, we now witness that material pursuits and successes alone, do not necessarily lead to a happy and meaningful life.

Our children need a better diet than the one available to them. They need, nay, they want, inspiration, a noble cause to live for, a moral purpose that frames their pursuits and interests with meaning and direction.

Judaism teaches that every human being is created in the image of the Divine, charged with a mission.

Let’s make our children’s Chanukah night...come on there’s nothing better, Thursday, Dec. 14, 6-7 p.m.

Chanukah Bowl @ Bowl America

Join us Sunday, Dec. 17 for a special evening of bowling, grand chocolate gelt drop from high above in the bowling alley, hot chocolate sundaes, Chanukah fun for the entire family.

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.

Deadline Extended: Children’s Edition

Submissions of student art and writing are due by Friday, Dec. 8, an extended deadline. You can see last year’s editions by visiting www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/ and scroll down to Children’s Edition. Email submissions to the following editors:

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

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Executive Vice President
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor in Chief
Steve Martin
Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic
Art/Design:
Laurence Fong, John Heindy, Ali Khaliq
Production Manager:
Giovanni Flores
Special Assistant to the Publisher
Jeanne Thiesmann
606 King Street
Oak Hill & Herndon
1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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LETTERS

Time to Prioritize of Priorities

To the Editor:

Congratulations on being voted on the budget at the beginning of December. Now is a good time to think about our spending priorities and how to most efficiently spend our tax dollars. The House budget approved in October will increase military spending by between $35-50 billion to nearly $700 billion at a time when the State Department funding is being cut by 30 percent and key State Department positions are going unfilled.

Increasing the military budget while gutting the State Department is counterproductive at best and dangerous in the long run. As Secretary of Defense Mattis said at his confirmation hearings, “If you don’t fund the State Department fully, than ultimately I need to buy more ammunition.” (Washington Post, 2/27/17 “Retired Generals cite past comments from Mattis while opposing Trump’s proposed foreign aid cuts”).

Pentagon spending should not be increased at the expense of diplomacy, development and vital human needs program providing food, housing and health care assistance domestically.

Mary Brandon
Herndon

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