

# McLean CONNECTION

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department,  
Tysons Corner Station 29, gave Santa a  
ride up the Express Lanes to celebrate the  
important transportation project milestone.

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

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NOVEMBER 29-DECEMBER 5, 2017

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# Protesting Gun Violence

## Universal background checks tops the list for NRA protesters.

BY MARTI MOORE  
THE CONNECTION

**M**ore 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 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



**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.**

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 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 Assem-

bly 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 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."



**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.**

PHOTOS BY  
MARTI MOORE  
THE CONNECTION



## Tips for Creating An In-law Suite



It's always a good idea to start thinking about the future of your parents and in-laws, and even your own, now, rather than when you really need to. In-law suites can be ideal for relatives who want to keep their privacy and maintain some independence while also feeling included in the rest of the household. When creating an in-law suite, there are certain things to keep in mind.

### Think about location

There are often many options for where to build your in-law suite depending on your home and lot. You can transform your garage or porch area into an enclosed space. You can design an addition onto your home. You can combine existing rooms in your home such as a living room and dining room.

### Think about functionality

Keep in mind who will be using your new space and anticipate the needs they will have now and in the future. Will they need wider doors and hallways? Could they use assisted baths with lever handles and stylish guardrails? How about no-slip flooring and no-curb showers? The possibilities are virtually endless.

### Think about decor

If your relatives aren't planning to move in permanently or they won't move in for a while, it's important to keep everyone in mind with the decor of your addition. Keeping things neutral, from flooring, to curtains, to wall color, will allow personal touches to be added by those that use the space.



Russ Glickman, founder of Glickman Design Build, is a Master Certified Remodeler and Certified Aging in Place Specialist. The award-winning Glickman Design Build team has completed thousands of general remodeling and accessible design projects in the Metro DC area and is passionate about the work they do. Their work has been featured in a variety of publications.

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## NEWS

# Could Empty Office Buildings Be Transformed?

The equivalent of 308 football fields of office space are vacant in Fairfax County.

BY KEN MOORE  
THE CONNECTION

There are a lot of empty office buildings around Fairfax County — the equivalent of more than 400 acres of floor space.

More than 18.4 million square feet of office space remains vacant, according to the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA), which reported a 15.8 percent direct vacancy rate in 2016 and a double-digit percentage since 2007.

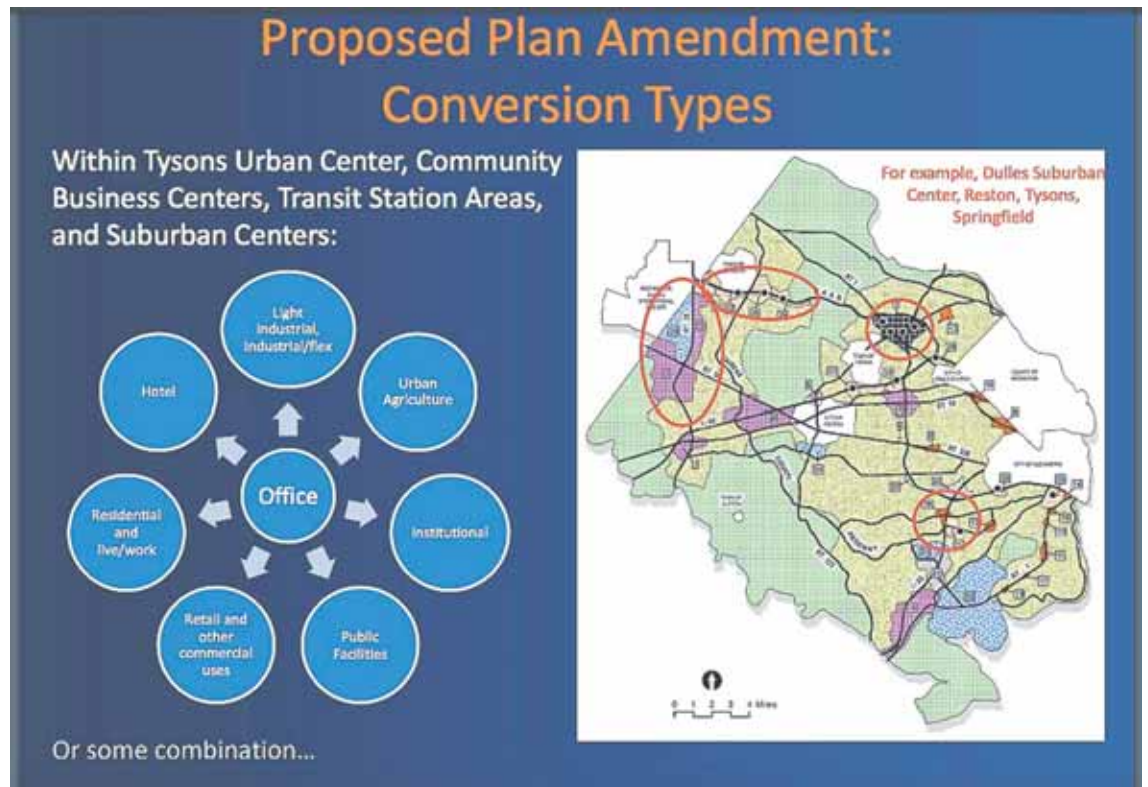
The Planning Commission on Thursday, Nov. 16, recommended approval of a plan amendment that would pave the way for using vacant office buildings for other purposes, such as residential or schools.

"I think there is a pent-up demand that is out there and we've been approached by a number of people that are waiting for this amendment to go through," said Scott Adams, land use attorney with McGuire Woods.

"The flexibility offered, we think, is going to incentivize revitalization in Fairfax County," he said.

The Board of Supervisors will hold its own public hearing before voting on the proposal on Tuesday, Dec. 5.

**"IS THERE POTENTIAL** here for public private partnerships for converting and repurposing some of these buildings?" asked Dranesville Planning Commissioner John W. Ulfelder, during an hour-long public hearing the Plan-



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**"The flexibility offered, we think, is going to incentivize revitalization in Fairfax County."**

— Scott Adams, land use attorney

ning Commission held on Nov. 2.

"The answer to that has to be yes, whether that's schools or other facilities," said attorney Gregory Riegler, who chairs the Tysons Partnership. "I'm certainly encouraged in seeing the county be more creative in terms of those solutions."

Opportunities could include converting office buildings to uses such as makerspaces, food incubators, urban farming or flexible live/work units, schools and e-lofts, which can accommodate work or residential uses, or both.

The repurposing of existing buildings is frequently more sustainable than the demolition and replacement of structures and can shorten the time of bringing the

building to market, according to county documents and planner Sophia Fisher.

Changes to these uses have often required an authorization of an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan by the Board of Supervisors if the proposed use is not consistent with the planned use.

"There's no short-circuiting of the public process?" asked Providence Commissioner Phillip Niedzielski-Eichner.

The amendment would bypass the necessity for a site specific comprehensive plan amendment, Fisher said, but the remaining steps in the zoning process would still require public hearings and a vote by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

"You're doing all of this with the trust in your own process and all the procedural protections that case by case review in this building allows," said Riegler.

**RESTON ASSOCIATION** requested to be exempt from the plan amendment.

Reston advocates said that they have just been through a transit area planning process, and that the mix of residential and commercial is a more delicate balance in Reston.

Commissioner Ellen "Nell" Hurley (Braddock) who made a motion to exclude the exemption, said it would be unworkable to have the option to convert vacant office space to other uses in all but one part of the county.

The board recommended approval of the motion, with Hunter Mill Commissioner Frank de la Fe and at-large commissioner Tim Sargeant dissenting.

## WEEK IN McLEAN

### Public Meeting on Pedestrian Path Project Set for Dec. 6

Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) will hold a public meeting to discuss the Georgetown Pike at Dolley Madison Boulevard pedestrian path project on Wednesday, Dec. 6, 7 p.m., in the cafeteria of McLean High School, 1633 Davidson Road, McLean. This Dranesville District project will extend from Colonial Farm Road to just south of the Dolley Madison Boulevard intersection, and includes construction of approximately 330 feet of 5-foot sidewalk and 600 feet of 10-foot shared-use path.

Local residents and other interested parties are invited to the meeting to discuss the project with FCDOT staff. For more informa-

tion on the project, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/pedestrian/georgetown-dolley.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/pedestrian/georgetown-dolley.htm).

### McLean Historical Society to Meet Dec. 12

The McLean Historical Society will meet Tuesday, Dec. 12, at 7:30 p.m., at the McLean Governmental Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean. The program will feature noted author and historian Brian McEnany who will discuss "For Brotherhood and Duty: The Civil War history of the West Point Class of 1862." Everyone is welcome. For further information please contact Carole Herrick at 703-356-8223.



## FAITH

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community. Send to [vienna@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:vienna@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday at noon.

**During Advent**, Christ the King Lutheran Church, 10550 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, will present a series of three midweek Advent programs. The overarching theme of these evenings is "Peace for Our Time." Each evening's sub-theme will grow from a Reformation-era hymn. Each evening's program begins at 5:45 p.m. with supper followed by discussion, worship and the lighting of the Advent wreath. All are welcome. Visit [www.gflutheran.org](http://www.gflutheran.org) or call 703-759-6068.

❖ Thursday/Dec. 7 – Peace Between Nations, hymn: "Savior of the Nations Come" (ELW 263)

❖ Thursday/Dec. 14 – Peace in politics, hymn: "Now to the Holy Spirit Let us Pray" (ELW 743)

❖ Thursday/Dec. 21 – Peace in ourselves, hymn: "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" (ELW 268)

**Blue Christmas Service** – a non-traditional service of remembrance and hope – will be held at Katie's Coffee House 760 Walker Road, Great Falls on Sunday, Dec. 10 at 3:30 p.m. brought to you by Great Falls Area Ministries. For more information call Carol Wright 703-582-1640.

**St. Francis Episcopal Church**, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, has Sunday services at 8 – Holy Eucharist Rite I and 10 a.m. – Holy Eucharist Rite II with music. 703-759-2082.

SEE FAITH, PAGE 10


**Neighborhood Health**

# 20th ANNIVERSARY

## Celebrating Our Partnerships

### Meet Our Gala Committee

 <p><b>Alisa Valudes-Whyte</b> Chair, Anniversary Gala Committee Current NH Board Member Senior Partner, CEO, Merritt Group</p>	<p><b>Susan Abramson</b> Pathways to Lifelong Health NH Founding Member &amp; First Executive Director</p> <p><b>Becky Bostick</b> Previous NH Board President</p> <p><b>Carter Flemming</b> Current NH Board Member</p> <p><b>Tom Greeson</b> Reed Smith, LLP Current NH Board Member</p> <p><b>Danny Hawkins</b> Community Health Ventures, NACHC</p> <p><b>Keith Hearle</b> Verite Health Care Consulting Current NH Board President</p>	<p><b>Gene Kendall</b> Dexis Consulting Group, DC Previous NH Board President</p> <p><b>Garland Knott</b> MedStar Health, Previous NH Board Member</p> <p><b>Nora Partlow</b> Realtor, Coldwell Banker</p> <p><b>Rod Peredo</b> Community Health Ventures, NACHC</p> <p><b>Lauren Stack</b> ACT for Alexandria</p> <p><b>Dan Simonds</b> Contrary Investment Advisors</p> <p><b>Laura Yager</b> Fairfax County Executive Office</p>
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For information contact us at: [anniversary@neighborhoodhealthva.org](mailto:anniversary@neighborhoodhealthva.org) or to sponsor our Gala and make a reservation go to [www.501auctions.com/neighborhoodhealthgala](http://www.501auctions.com/neighborhoodhealthgala)

Let us know about an upcoming event  
[www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar)

## Santa Picture Day

Saturday December 2, 2017  
8 AM to 2PM



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Pamper your pets @ Posh Paws Boutique,  
your Holiday Headquarters.**

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# Winter Fest Parade

**McLean's Only  
Community Parade**

*When*  
**Sunday,  
December 3rd**

*Where*  
**Old Chain  
Bridge Road**

**Bring a gift card for  
Share of McLean  
to help your neighbors  
in need.**

Go to  
**[www.mcleanwinterfest.org](http://www.mcleanwinterfest.org)**  
for road closure times and parade details





# OPINION

## Careful What To Wish For

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

**W**hen 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.

**EDITORIAL** 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 fund-

ing 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

### Next Week: More Local Giving

Next week, we will publish our lists of local nonprofits for holiday giving. If you know of an organization that should be included or whose listing needs updating, please email [mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@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/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/) and scroll down to Children's Edition. Email submissions 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](mailto:kemal@connectionnewspapers.com).
- ❖ For Alexandria, Arlington, Centreville, Chantilly, Mount Vernon, or Potomac, Md., email to Steven Mauren at [smauren@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:smauren@connectionnewspapers.com).

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Time to Think of Spending Priorities

To the Editor:

Congress will be voting 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

### Caring for Each Other

To the Editor:

In response to the article recently written by Mary Kimm ("Give Locally in Fairfax County," Connection, Nov. 15-21), in regard to giving to those in need during the holidays, I think that it is important for articles like these to be written.

While it is obvious that we should give to the less fortunate, our society tends to forget about helping others because we are so consumed with ourselves. I really like the encouragement of donating locally because it allows people to start small and gives them a realistic goal. It also allows us to be more involved in the commu-

nity around us.

A thing to consider is that people may not be willing to help those who are poor because they believe it's their own fault. This goes to show how stereotypes are detrimental to our society and cause division rather than unity. It is important to realize that many homeless people and people who are struggling financially are in the situation that they are in due to no fault of their own.

I am not saying that you must help out or you are a bad person, however I believe that it is important for our society as a whole to be more caring to each other.

**Bryan Kim**  
Student, James Madison University

### Public's Role in Reducing Gun Violence

To the Editor:

Thanks for your article "Protesting Gun Violence," which focused on the persistent efforts of a num-

ber of groups to reduce gun violence. I applaud the author's recognition that these organizations focus on gun violence prevention rather than "gun control." How we talk about this problem is one key to solving it.

Just as the language and duration of media coverage of suicides influences subsequent copycat suicides, so does coverage of mass shootings. Unrelenting focus on the motive of the murderer, the body count, and weapons used only fuels the next murderer. The term "gun control" merely draws resistance from those who mistrust government in all its forms. Instead, we must be honest about the costs to our community and what is standing in the way of preventing future tragedies. Moreover, we must support legislators when they focus on proven, evidence-based measures to prevent future gun violence.

The Protecting Domestic Violence and Stalking Victims Act/Zero Tolerance for Domestic Abusers Act (S.1539/ H.R.3207) seeks to close the outrageous loopholes

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McLean  
**CONNECTION**

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Sixty-seven people came to the Sheraton Tysons Hotel to help aid victims of the recent hurricanes.**

## Packaging Food for Hurricane Victims

More than 10,000 dry meals are on their way to hurricane victims thanks to a local company and volunteers. On Monday, Nov. 13 Crescent Hotels & Resorts, a hotel and resort management company based in Fairfax, held an event with international hunger relief organization Rise Against Hunger. Sixty-seven people came to the Sheraton Tysons Hotel to help aid victims of the recent hurricanes. Together, Crescent team members and local volunteers helped

package 10,584 nutritious meals to be served in emergency shelters.

Crescent Hotels and Rise Against Hunger hope to host another event in the area in 2018 and will also be hosting additional Rise Against Hunger events in various cities throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Crescent Hotels & Resorts manages more than 100 hotels across the country, including local properties such as Fairfax Marriott at Fair Oaks and Sheraton Tysons Hotel.



## PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN EDUCATIONAL EVENT.

**Hear from an MS expert and learn about an oral treatment option for relapsing MS.**

**Date and Time:**  
12/06/2017 at 12:00 PM

**Speaker:**  
**James Simsarian, MD**  
Neurology Center of Fairfax

**Location:**  
Ruth's Chris Steak House  
8521 Leesburg Pike  
Vienna, VA 22182

Event Code: TR447918 (1437487)

### PLEASE RSVP\*:

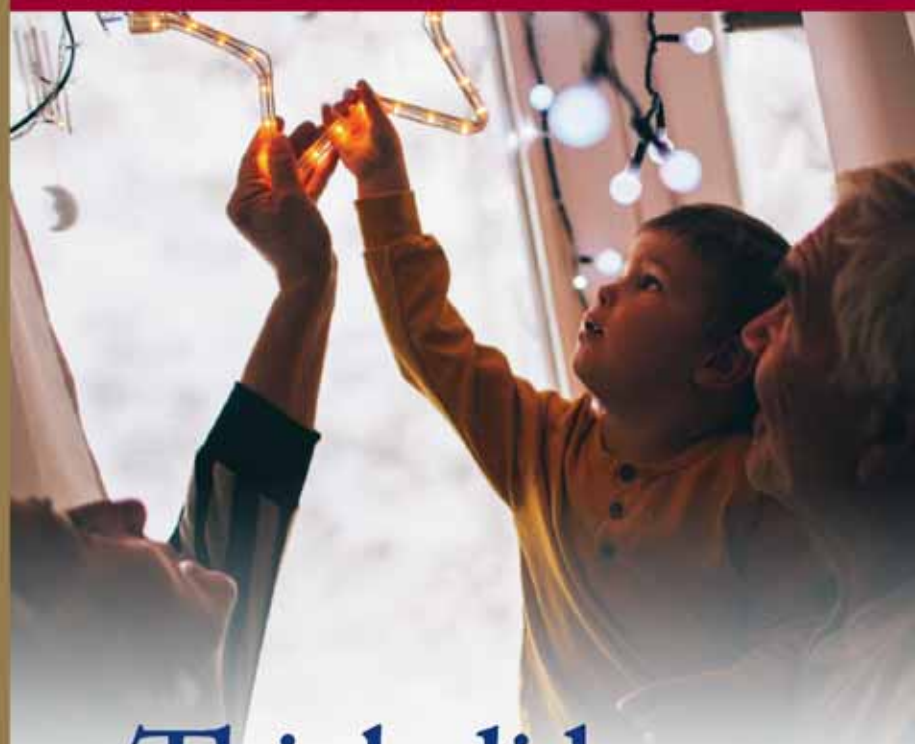
- [RelapsingMultipleSclerosisEvents.com](http://RelapsingMultipleSclerosisEvents.com)
- 1-866-703-6293
- [MSRSVP@ahmdirect.com](mailto:MSRSVP@ahmdirect.com)

\*Registration is limited to two people per RSVP.  
Photo ID may be requested at event entrance.

**Complimentary parking or valet available.**  
**A light meal or snack may be provided.**

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**Come enjoy a Sunday Brunch...on us**



**This holiday at  
The Kensington,  
there's always room  
for one more,  
or two...**

*— Couples welcome and encouraged —*

**W**hether a place under our roof, at our table or in our hearts, we have room. We are a family of families whose lives are more full and happy because we have each other. *Please join us!* Bring us your traditions and memories—we'll honor them. Share your hopes and dreams—we'll help realize them. Tell us how you want to live—we'll put our heads together and make a plan that feels right.

As the holidays unfold, visit The Kensington and soak in the magic of the season. Now, and always, new friendships are waiting to be made. Expert care and service are ready to deliver. Our team is anticipating your arrival. Stop by any time. We can't wait to meet.



**THE KENSINGTON**  
*An Assisted Living Community*  
**FALLS CHURCH**

703.992.9868 | 700 West Broad Street, Falls Church, VA 22046  
[www.TheKensingtonFallsChurch.com](http://www.TheKensingtonFallsChurch.com)







Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, Tysons Corner Station 29, gave Santa a ride up the Express Lanes to celebrate the important transportation project milestone.



Santa meets firefighters at Tysons Corner Station 29.

# Fifth Anniversary of 495 Express Lanes Celebrated

**T**ransurban, operator of the 495 and 95 Express Lanes, is celebrating the fifth anniversary of the 495 Express Lanes in Northern Virginia by launching a travel giveaway of \$5,000 in free travel prizes and a \$10,000 community grant. The 495 Express Lanes have provided a broad range of benefits to the region over the past five years of operations, as well as faster and more predictable travel for buses, carpoolers and drivers. Since year one, the 495 Express Lanes have attracted many area commuters, supporting a four-fold increase in carpool trips and 75 percent increase in bus trips. Travelers on the 495 Express Lanes today enjoy on average 23 minutes of time savings during rush hour commute, and drivers on the regular 495 lanes benefit as well — with northbound morning rush hour traffic travel times improving by 8 percent.

“Today we celebrate five years of helping our customers on the Beltway make it to a meeting on time, get home for dinner with family and travel to work without the anxiety that comes with hitting an unexpected traffic jam,” said Jennifer Aument, group general manager of Transurban North America. “Whether they pay tolls, ride in a bus or carpool, we value all our customers and look forward to working with our partners at VDOT to continually find new ways to provide them with a better Beltway in the years to come.”

Transurban commemorated the fifth anniversary of the 495 Express Lanes at Tysons Corner Center with the help of Santa and the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, Tysons Corner Station 29, which gave Santa a ride up the Express Lanes to celebrate the important transportation project milestone. Santa took one of the first rides on the 495 Express Lanes when they opened to the public in November 2012.

## Highlights of the First Five Years

Highlights of the benefits that the 495 Express Lanes project has provided to travelers and the entire community over the past five years include:

## About the Express Lanes

The 495 and 95 Express Lanes operate on I-495/Capital Beltway and I-95, providing drivers with faster and more predictable travel options in Northern Virginia. Together, the 495 and 95 Express Lanes create a region-wide network of free-flowing lanes for approximately 40 miles, from the Dulles Toll Road to Stafford County. Delivered through a public-private partnership between the Virginia Department of Transportation and Transurban, the Express Lanes give drivers travel choices on two of northern Virginia's most congested roadways. Visit [ExpressLanes.com](http://ExpressLanes.com).

- Regional benefits during construction:
  - ❖ Generated \$3.5 billion in economic activity.
  - ❖ \$2 billion in transportation improvements.
  - ❖ \$548.3 million in contracts to DBE/SWaM companies.
  - ❖ Replacement of \$260 million in aging infrastructure.
  - ❖ 16,000 jobs.
- Traveler benefits:
  - ❖ Over the past five years, more area travelers have enjoyed the benefits of a faster, more reliable commute. The lanes have served more than 3,500,000 customers taking more than 67,000,000 trips.
  - ❖ 23 minutes is the average time savings on 495 Express Lanes during rush hour commute.
  - ❖ Travel times have improved by 8 percent on regular lanes during northbound morning rush hour.
  - ❖ Eight out of 10 drivers in the D.C. region believe the Express Lanes network benefits the area.
  - ❖ Five million hours of time were saved by 495 Express Lanes customers over the past five years.
- Community benefits:
  - ❖ \$450,000 in community grants awarded by Transurban to D.C. area organizations.
  - ❖ Supported community projects such as new bike racks, elementary school environmental programs, local neighborhood enhancements, homeless shelter programs and local park cleanups.



Santa took one of the first rides on the 495 Express Lanes when they opened to the public in November 2012.

- ❖ Nearly \$80,000 donated to local fire and rescue departments through the Drive to Donate program.
- ❖ Annual support of Bike to Work Day.
- ❖ Anti-distracted driving safety programs.
- ❖ Better transit service on the Beltway.
- ❖ Employee community volunteering programs.

## ‘A Better Beltway’ Giveaway

As a thank-you to customers, Transurban is giving away \$50 of free Express Lanes travel to each of 100 lucky customers. Customers can register for a chance to win online at [ExpressLanes.com/anniversary-contest](http://ExpressLanes.com/anniversary-contest). The contest will run until Dec. 1. Winners will be randomly chosen on Monday, Dec. 4, and will be notified by email within two days. The \$50 of free travel will be applied toward their future 495 and 95 Express Lanes trips.

## 495 Express Lanes Community Grant

Transurban will be announcing a \$10,000 community grant in honor of the project's five-year milestone and community engagement. In honor of the partnership it took to deliver the 495 Express Lanes project, two or more community organizations will need to apply together for the grant and showcase how they will work together on a specific project or initiative. Applications will be open from Dec. 1-Jan.31, with winning recipient(s) notified and announced in February. Application forms will be available on [ExpressLanes.com](http://ExpressLanes.com) starting Dec. 1.



Welcoming Santa at Tysons Corner Station 29.





PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

Led by Gov. Terry McAuliffe (D), center, delegates, county officials and transportation officials break ground on the I-66 express lanes project.

## Construction Set to Start on I-66 Express Lanes Outside the Beltway

A five-year road project to build express lanes on I-66 was kicked off on Monday, Nov. 20 as officials grabbed the golden shovels and smiled for the cameras in western Fairfax County. Gov. Terry McAuliffe (D) was there with officials from the Virginia Department of Transportation, Department of Rail and Public Transportation, federal, state and local partners, and the Commonwealth's private partner, I-66 Express Mobility Partners. "This project will reduce congestion, stimulate economic growth and improve the quality of life of commuters all over the Northern Virginia region," said McAuliffe, in a release issued by his office.

When completed, I-66 will have two express lanes in each direction stretching nearly 23 miles from I-495 to Gainesville,

and three regular travel lanes. These express lanes will be free for cars with at least three occupants, and a toll option for cars with one or two occupants. All tolling will be done with the EZ-Pass, or the EZ-Pass Flex for the carpool vehicles to avoid the toll.

Initial construction will begin on the project over the next few weeks, and by the spring of 2018, construction will be ramped up throughout the entire corridor. Regular construction-related updates will be available on Transform66.org as well as through news and social media channels.

For the portion of I-66 inside the beltway during rush hours, a toll option for single occupancy vehicles is beginning on Monday, Dec. 4. More details on this portion of I-66 is available on Transform66.org as well.

— MIKE SALMON



## Earning Girl Scout Way Badge

The Girl Scouts of Junior Troop 3027 were all smiles on Sunday, Nov. 3, holding the Troop's recent donation to The Jill's House, a place in Vienna where families with a child with intellectual disabilities can get short-term respite while their children are engaged in fun activities tailored to their interests and abilities. The baskets were filled with art supplies as the scouts endeavor to foster a more giving environment, as part of a community service project for the scouts to earn the Girl Scout Way Badge. The Girl Scout Junior Troop 3027 leader is Leili Bowers and the girls, from left, are Lissa, Roya, Julia, Aarohi, Sophia, Isabella, and Kai.

## Fairfax Water

### 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 \$4,150<sup>1</sup>
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 \$1,260<sup>1</sup>
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

<sup>1</sup> 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 budget<sup>2</sup> 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	6,340
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)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 91,034</b>	<b>\$ 93,386</b>

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

<sup>2</sup> 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](http://www.fairfaxwater.org/rates). A copy of the proposed budget can be found at [www.fairfaxwater.org](http://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.



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## FAITH

FROM PAGE 5

**The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA)** offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. [www.jssa.org/growth-learning](http://www.jssa.org/growth-learning).

**McLean Bible Church.** Fitness Class at Body and Soul Fitness. Gain balance, energy and strength at 10 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Free childcare for registered students. Email [bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org](mailto:bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org).

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

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax**, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton, offers the Religious Exploration program for all children, from pre-K toddlers through high school seniors, emphasizing exploration of all religious traditions while developing a personal spiritual path. The program offers classes on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings. 703-281-4230.

**Trinity United Methodist Church**, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Sunday worship services are at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday School for young adults follows the 10:30 a.m. worship services and for children at 9:30 a.m. Youth Group for grades 7-12 meets Sundays at 5 p.m. A 20-minute

service of Holy Communion is held each Wednesday at noon. 703-356-3312 or [umtrinity.org](http://umtrinity.org).

**Passages DivorceCare.** For those experiencing the pain of separation or divorce, the caring community at Vienna Presbyterian Church offers Passages DivorceCare. This 15-week program offers a path toward healing. Vienna Presbyterian Church is located on the corner of Maple Avenue (Rt. 123) and Park Street in Vienna. Cost to cover materials is \$20, scholarships available. For more information or to register call 703-938-9050, go to [www.viennapres.org](http://www.viennapres.org), or send an email to [Passages@ViennaPres.org](mailto:Passages@ViennaPres.org).

**The S.P.O.T for Youth**, Wednesday's at 7 p.m. A place where youth can come together and pray, ask questions about the faith and receive mentorship. The spot is a ministry of First Baptist Church of Vienna, 450 Orchard Street, NW Vienna.

**First Baptist Church of Vienna** located at 450 Orchard St., NW, Vienna. Sunday services are held at 7:45 and 10 a.m. weekly. Wednesday Night with the Family service is held at 6 p.m. followed by corporate singing at 7 p.m. Bible studies take place Tuesday's at noon.

For those struggling physically or spiritually, on the first Sunday of each month, **Christ the King Lutheran Church** offers a rite of healing as part of worship; the opportunity to be anointed with oil and prayed over. During the healing rite, the pastor or another person says a short prayer while two people lay hands on the recipient. Then the pastor or helper anoints them with oil as a sign of God's healing and

forgiveness. Christ the King Lutheran Church, 10550 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Call 703-759-6068 or visit [www.gflutheran.org](http://www.gflutheran.org).

**Wesley United Methodist Church** located at 711 Spring St., SE, Vienna, Virginia 22180, at the corner of Spring Street and Moore Avenue. 10:30 a.m. fellowship time in the fellowship hall; 11 a.m. traditional family worship in sanctuary. If you are seeking a church home which encourages: caring and supportive fellowship, an active and devoted prayer life and study of scripture, support for local and world missions, an open, responsive awareness to the presence and power of God's Holy Spirit.

**St. Thomas' Episcopal Church**, at the intersection of Lewinsville and Brook roads in McLean, invites you for a casual Saturday Service at 5 p.m., followed by conversation and fellowship or for Sunday Services at 8 a.m. or 10 a.m. Sunday School for Youth and Children takes place during the 10 a.m. Service. Check [www.stthomasmcleanva.org](http://www.stthomasmcleanva.org) for special events and services through the year. St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, 8991 Brook Road, McLean, 703-442-0330.



**Church of the Holy Comforter**, 543 Beulah Road, NE, Vienna, offers a monthly Healing Eucharist with the Laying on of Hands and Anointing for Healing (first Sunday of the month, 5 p.m. at St. Mary's Chapel). The Healing Ministry is led by the Rev. Valerie Hayes and Alexandra MacCracken and includes a team of lay healers who have gone through intentional training and formation. Contact the Rev. Valerie Hayes at [vhayes@holyccomforter.com](mailto:vhayes@holyccomforter.com).

**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](mailto: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**

For Advertising, call 703.778.9431 or e-mail [sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com)

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**CALENDAR**

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**Let us know about an upcoming event**

[connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar](http://connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar)

**Saint Ann Catholic Church**


**SUNDAY LITURGY SCHEDULE:**  
Saturday Vigil: 5:30 PM  
Sunday: 7:30, 9:00, and 11:00 AM  
1:30 PM Spanish Liturgy

**DAILY EUCHARIST:**  
Weekdays  
Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM  
Saturday, 8:30 AM

5312 North 10th Street,  
Arlington, Virginia 22205  
Parish Office: 703-528-6276

**PARISH WEBSITE:**  
[www.stannchurch.org](http://www.stannchurch.org)

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## NEWS

### 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 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 Herrity Office Buildings. All donations should be made before 9 a.m. Monday, Dec. 11.

### Great Falls to Celebrate Annual Tree Lighting

The Great Falls traditional Celebration of Lights will be held Sunday, Dec. 3, 4-6:30 p.m. at the Great Falls Village Centre Hill. Celebrate the beginning of the season with the 27th Annual Christmas Tree Lighting. As always there will be holiday fun for the whole family.

Music provided by area students; children can enjoy a petting zoo and pony rides (4-6

p.m.); and Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in an antique fire truck to light the Great Falls Tree. Afterwards, Santa will be in his house to meet all children who wish to share their holiday wishes. Hot cider, hot chocolate, and cookies will be provided by community sponsors as visitors listen to holiday music. To close out the evening's events, Margaret Johnson will present a live nativity scene.




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or call 703-992-9868.**



# ENTERTAINMENT

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

## ONGOING

**Vienna-Wide Food Drive.** Through Dec. 31, bring food contributions to Vienna Town Hall - 127 Center St. S; Vienna Arts Society-115 Pleasant St. NW; Bikes@Vienna-128-A Church St. NW; Caffè Amouri-107 Church St., NE; Evolution Fitness- 216 Dominion Road, NE; Rexall Drug Store-150 Maple Ave. W; Drs. Covell, Stack and Henon- 120 Beulah Road, NE; Patrick Henry Library (co-sponsored by Supervisor Cathy Hudgins) and the Vienna Community Center. Girl Scout Troop 2684 will be helping NEVCA by picking up the food. Sponsored by Committee for Helping Others. Call 703-281-7614.

**Textures Exhibit.** Through Jan. 7, various times at the Vienna Arts Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW. Call 703-319-3971 or visit [www.ViennaArtsSociety.org](http://www.ViennaArtsSociety.org).

**Great Falls Farmers Market.** Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 778 Walker Road, Great Falls. Music, vendors, fresh produce, fresh prepared food, delightful bakery, spices from around the world, wild-caught fish, grass-fed, free-range meats, organic-fed poultry and eggs. Email [kathleen@greatfallsfarmersmarket.org](mailto:kathleen@greatfallsfarmersmarket.org).

**Fit for Life Classes.** Wednesdays through Nov. 22, 11 a.m.-noon at Bruen Chapel United Methodist Church, 3035 Cedar Lane, Fairfax. Sponsored by the Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna, to improve strength, balance and mobility for older adults, taught by instructor, Michele DeGarmo. \$5. Call 703-281-0538 or email [eileentarr1@verizon.net](mailto:eileentarr1@verizon.net)

**Free Tai Chi.** Every Saturday, from 7:55-9 a.m., Introduction and Beginners' Practice, meet on the outdoor basketball court located directly behind the Dolley Madison Public Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave. in McLean Central Park, McLean. Call 703-759-9141 or visit [www.FreeTaiChi.org](http://www.FreeTaiChi.org).

**The Freeman Store & Museum** Wednesday through Sunday noon-4 p.m. 131 Church St. NE, Vienna. The Freeman Store & Museum is dedicated to Preserving and promoting Vienna's heritage through the identification, preservation, and interpretation of history significant places, events, and persons. [Historicviennainc.org](http://Historicviennainc.org)

**Weekly Storytime.** Wednesday and Saturday. 11 a.m. Barnes & Noble, 7851 L Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Themes and titles vary. Free admission.

**Bingo Night.** Sundays. 4 p.m. Flame Room, Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center St. S, Vienna. \$10. [www.vvfd.org/bingo.html](http://www.vvfd.org/bingo.html).

**Gentle Yoga.** Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. Emmaus United Church of Christ, 900 E Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Gentle Kundalini Yoga, one free introductory session, senior discounts. Increase flexibility, improve breathing and health, reduce stress. Ravi Kaur has 15 years experience teaching yoga. \$15 per session. [www.edimprovement.org](http://www.edimprovement.org). 571-213-3192.

**Colvin Run Mill** open 11 - 4 p.m. daily, closed Tuesday. 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Fairfax County's operational 19th century water powered gristmill, offers recreational and educational activities for all ages through daily tours, school programs and special events. Fees: \$7/adult, \$6 students 16+ with ID, \$5 children & seniors.



## Langley Madrigals

**2017 Renaissance Feaste on Friday-Saturday, Dec. 1-2, 7 p.m. at Langley Halle at Langley High School, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Holiday celebration featuring costumed servers, jesters, minstrels, musicians, and the Langley Madrigals. Visit [www.langleychorus.com](http://www.langleychorus.com) for more.**

Admission to park is free except for some special events.

**Fundamentals of Watercolors.** Mondays 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at The Arts of Great Falls, 756 Walker Road, Great Falls. Artist Lorrie Herman will help students get comfortable working with watercolors and understanding this medium. Visit [www.greatfallsart.org](http://www.greatfallsart.org).

**Evening Painting.** Tuesdays 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. at The Arts of Great Falls, 756 Walker Road, Great Falls. Jill Banks focuses on oil painting fundamentals with two sessions each of still life, landscapes, and portrait/clothed figure from a live model. Visit [www.greatfallsart.org](http://www.greatfallsart.org).

## THROUGH DEC. 10

**Toys for Tots Drive.** Various times at Sheehy Infiniti of Tysons, 8527 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. Sheehy Auto Stores throughout Washington, D.C.; Richmond, Virginia; and Baltimore, Maryland areas 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 now through December 10. Visit [www.sheehyinfinitoftysons.com/](http://www.sheehyinfinitoftysons.com/).

## FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 1-2

**2017 Renaissance Feaste.** 7 p.m. at Langley Halle at Langley High School, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Holiday celebration featuring costumed servers, jesters, minstrels, musicians, and the Langley Madrigals. Visit [www.langleychorus.com](http://www.langleychorus.com).

**Orphie and the Book of Heroes.** Friday at 7 p.m. and Saturday at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. in the Oakton High School Robert "Skip" Bromley Auditorium, 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna. \$10. Visit [oaktondrama.org](http://oaktondrama.org).

## FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 1-3

**Tysons-Pimmit Library Book Sale.** Friday 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Library, 7584

Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Large selection of books and media for all ages and interests. Email [tysonslibraryfriends@gmail.com](mailto:tysonslibraryfriends@gmail.com) or call 703-790-4031 or 703-338-3307.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 2

**Breakfast With Santa.** 8:30-10:30 a.m. at St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Free community event open to all to benefit Housing Up and Samaritan Ministry. Suggested donation is a new unwrapped toy. Call 703-759-2082.

**Live Puppy Nativity.** 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist), 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. Bring dogs to dress up as part of the nativity. Costumes provided. Free. The church's youth group will be on hand to accept donations for Second Story. Visit [www.GoodShepherdVA.com](http://www.GoodShepherdVA.com).

**Home for the Holidays Musical.** 7:30 p.m. at The Falls Church Episcopal, 115 E. Fairfax St., Falls Church. Tysons McLean Orchestra performs with Melissa Mino. Call 703-893-8646.

**A Very Slambovian Christmas.** 8 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave E., Vienna. Call 703-255-1566 or visit [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

## SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 2-3

**Great Falls Studios Annual ArtFest.** 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at The Great Falls Grange and Old Schoolhouse, 9818 Georgetown Pike. Holiday gifts, paintings, photographs, pottery, jewelry, weaving and fabric arts, books, bonsai, art cards, ornaments and more. Visit [www.greatfallsstudios.com](http://www.greatfallsstudios.com).

## SUNDAY/DEC. 3

**First Sunday Hike.** 1-3 p.m. Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Wolf Trap National Park Rangers will kick off and Friends of Wolf Trap Volunteers will lead a guided hike for 1.5 hours throughout

the park. Call 703-255-1800 or visit [www.friendsowolftrap.org](http://www.friendsowolftrap.org).

**Victorian Christmas Fund Raiser.** 1-4:30 p.m. at the Historic Mount Hope mansion, Oak Street, Falls Church. The Victorian Society at Falls Church is hosting "The Spirit of Christmas Past" at the Historic Mount Hope mansion on Oak Street in Falls Church to benefit Creative Cauldron, a non-profit performance arts organization. Email [vicsofc@hotmail.com](mailto:vicsofc@hotmail.com) or [terryhooperknapp@aol.com](mailto:terryhooperknapp@aol.com).

**McLean WinterFest Parade.** Pre-parade entertainment begins at 2:30 p.m. and the parade will step off at 3:30 p.m. sharp. The parade route will be the same as previous years: Old Chain Bridge Road from Fleetwood Road to Elm Street. WinterFest 2017 will have food trucks again this year in the Langley Shopping Center. Visit [www.mcleanwinterfest.org](http://www.mcleanwinterfest.org).

**Christmas Concert.** 4 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. NE, Vienna. The Christmas portion of Handel's Messiah, presented by the Vienna Presbyterian Sanctuary Choir with soloists Leah Inger, soprano; Jennifer Matthews, alto; Tim Augustin, tenor; and Joshua Hong, bass. Commentary by Senior Pastor Pete James. Call 703-438-0718.

**Holiday Sing-A-Long.** 5 p.m. at L'Auberge Chez François, 332 Springvale Road, Great Falls. Featuring the Great Falls Difficult Run String Band. Call 703-759-3800.

**Jody Marshall's Annual Holiday Celebration.** Shows at 5 and 7 p.m. at The Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Traditional Celtic music. \$18 general admission, \$12 children. Visit [oldbrogue.com](http://oldbrogue.com) or call 703-759-3309.

## THURSDAY/DEC. 7

**The MarketPlace Fair.** 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Will feature over a dozen vendors, a silent auction of goods and services, gifts, jewelry, baked delicacies, drinks and

a lunch café. Parking and admission are free. Call 703-556-0197 or visit [www.mcleanwomansclub.org](http://www.mcleanwomansclub.org).

**51<sup>st</sup> annual Holiday Homes Tour and Fair.** 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Tour four large, decorated homes in the McLean neighborhoods of Franklin Park, central McLean, Spring Hill Farm and Woodlea Mill, all with ample street parking. Cost: \$25 before Dec. 7 at Mesmeralda's of McLean, Karin's Florist in Vienna and Great Dogs of Great Falls or \$30 on Dec. 7 at the tour houses and at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Call 703-556-0197 or visit [www.mcleanwomansclub.org](http://www.mcleanwomansclub.org).

## STARTING DEC. 8

**Watercolor Workshops with Joe Phillips.** 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Vienna Arts Society, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Class each Friday until Jan. 1. Call 703-319-3971 or visit [www.ViennaArtsSociety.org](http://www.ViennaArtsSociety.org).

## FRIDAY/DEC. 8

**Gift Collection.** 9:30 a.m.-noon at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. NE, Vienna. Collecting new, unwrapped gifts and gift cards for children and teens. The North East Vienna Citizens Association is sponsoring the event with help from Girl Scout Troop 2684. Visit [nevca.wordpress.com](http://nevca.wordpress.com).

**Cooking Demonstration and Luncheon.** 11 a.m. at L'Auberge Chez François, 332 Springvale Road, Great Falls. Chef Jacques will demonstrate how to cook French dishes. Call 703-759-3800.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 9

**Gift Wrapping Service and Christmas Bazaar.** 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Andrew Chapel United Methodist Women, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. Shop for hand-crafted holiday gifts, gorgeous fine art jewelry, nature photography, watercolors, homemade sweet treats. Gift wrapping is free. Visit [www.andrewchapelumc.org](http://www.andrewchapelumc.org).

## SUNDAY, DEC. 10

**Live Music.** 11 a.m. at L'Auberge Chez François, 332 Springvale Road, Great Falls. Guitarist Alexander Barnett plays a variety of acoustic music. Call 703-759-3800.

**Blue Christmas Service.** 3:30 p.m. at Katie's Coffee House 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. A non-traditional service of remembrance and hope, brought to you by Great Falls Area Ministries. Call Carol Wright 703-582-1640.

**McLean Youth Orchestra.** 4 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom of the Community Building of Vinson Hall, 1735 Kirby Road, McLean. Visit [www.tysonsmcleanorchestra.org](http://www.tysonsmcleanorchestra.org) or call 703-893-8646.

**Christmas Concert.** 4 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St., NE, Vienna. A Cathedral Brass Christmas, music from Monteverdi to Gordon Goodwin. Call 703-438-0718.

**Christmas Youth Concert.** 4 p.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The youth choir leads with Christmas hymns, followed by reception. Call 703-356-4902 or visit [www.stjohnsmclean.org](http://www.stjohnsmclean.org).

## MONDAY/DEC. 11

**Santa's Ride for Children.** Donate new and unwrapped toys, games, books and gifts to be distributed to children at Fairfax Hospital, Georgetown Lombardi Cancer Center. Email [Ruth.Rohr@viennava.gov](mailto:Ruth.Rohr@viennava.gov) or call 703-255-6324.





PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**New Dominion Women's Club awards over \$20,000 to its beneficiaries. From left: Paul Kohlenberger, Board Member, Friends of Historic Pleasant Grove; Lori Carbonneau, Executive Director, McLean Project for the Arts; Desi Woltman, President, New Dominion Women's Club; Paige Farrington-Himes, Vice President, Resource Allocation, New Dominion Women's Club; Midas Vogan, Development Director, Safe Community Coalition; Vic Kimm, Vice President, SHARE of McLean.**

## New Dominion Women's Club Supports Local Groups

New Dominion Women's Club (NDWC) has awarded beneficiaries funds raised this past club year totaling more than \$20,000. NDWC supports non-profit organizations in the community which promote the arts, assist lower income residents, preserve history, and help educate and engage healthy youth.

The club awarded checks to four local organizations at a recent NDWC meeting held at the McLean Community Center. Club President Desi Woltman presented funds raised during the 2016-17 club year to representatives from the following beneficiaries: Lori Carbonneau, Executive Director, McLean Project for the Arts; Paul Kohlenberger, Board Member, Friends of Historic Pleasant Grove; Midas Vogan, Development Director, Safe Community Coalition; and Vic Kimm, Vice President, SHARE of McLean.

Paige Farrington-Himes, VP of Resource Allocation for NDWC, said, "It is a pleasure for our Women's Club to donate the fruit of our efforts to these four beneficiaries who do so much for our community. We hope to have an even more successful year in

2018."

"Thanks to the enormous effort and dedication of our club members, broad support from the McLean community and the generosity of our sponsors, we had a banner fundraising year. The most gratifying aspect is being able to redirect all that goodwill to these deserving organizations which do so much to benefit our community," said club president Desi Woltman. "We owe a special thanks to our stalwart sponsors like BOWA, Keller Williams (Monica Gibson) and Giant Food; as well as to our new platinum sponsor, Bill Page Toyota and gold sponsors Bloomingdale's, Cerebrum MD, McLean Properties, The JBG Companies and Washington REIT."

Founded in 1968, NDWC is now celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The club plans several community fundraisers, service projects and activities throughout the coming year. Its next initiative is coordinating the Children's ArtWalk, an outdoor exhibition of student artwork from local elementary schools featured at the 11<sup>th</sup> annual MPAartfest.

## Redeemer Lutheran Church to Host Annual Living Nativity and Christmas Concert

All are welcome and invited to enjoy the sounds of the season and the excitement of live animals in the creche on Friday, Dec. 15, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., at Redeemer Lutheran Church, 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Children are invited to put on angel or shepherd costumes, and visit the live animals, maybe pet a bunny or baby lamb.

At 7:30 everyone is invited inside to experience a concert of many choirs with the adult, children and

bell choirs. The concert can be enjoyed by music lovers of all ages, children are welcome. Visitors can also sing along with favorite Christmas carols.

After the wonder of the starry night warm up inside with complimentary hot chocolate and a treat from the bake sale. There is no charge to attend, and it is open to the entire community. All are invited, so come one, come all, and help share the spirit of Christmas.

## SCHOOL NOTES

Send school notes to [north@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:north@connectionnewspapers.com) by noon on Friday.

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: **Grace Kurcina** and **Emma Mehigan** from Madison High School; **Grace Mead** from Oakton High School; and **Holly Waters, Tulsi Mehta, Sloane Kelly, and Adi Wineland** from Marshall High School.



**McLean Community Center**  
The Center of It All



### Here's What's Happening at MCC

**The Old Firehouse Family Event**  
**Unruly Theatre Project**  
Friday Dec. 1, 7-9 p.m.  
The Old Firehouse  
1440 Chain Bridge Rd.  
Free admission

 The area's hottest professional teen improv company brings you a hilarious night of comedy, and more!

**McLean Traveler Day Trip**  
**Celebrating the Holidays in Lewes, Del.**

Saturday Dec. 2,  
6:45 a.m.-8 p.m.  
\$153/\$138 MCC district residents



**Presented by The Alden**  
**HOME ALONE**  
**Quote-Along Movie** PG

Saturday, Dec. 2, 2 p.m.  
The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd.  
Admission and popcorn are free.  
Prop bags are \$5 each.

**Old Firehouse Family Movie Night**  
**"Captain Underpants: The First Epic Movie" (PG)**

Friday, Dec. 8, 7-9 p.m.  
The Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd.  
\$3 per person. Free popcorn!  
Preregistration is recommended.



**The Old Firehouse**  
**Winter Break Trips**

Monday, Dec. 18-Friday, Dec. 29  
8 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Destinations/prices vary



**The McLean Community Center**  
[www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org)  
**Home of the Alden Theatre**  
[www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org)

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6631 Old Dominion Dr.  
McLean, VA 22101  
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**Legals**

**ABC LICENSE**  
bloom salon llc trading as The Bloom Salon, Tysons Corner Office 1, Space #R001L, McLean, VA 22102. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Day Spa Wine and Beer On Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. A Landry, Managing Member authorizing advertisement. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at [www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or 800-552-3200.

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**Legals**

Doris Patricia Nolasco Portillo, the aunt of minor, Jessica Stefany Hernandez Nolasco, who is 16 years old, hereby gives notice to Maria Dolores Nolasco Portillo, the minor's biological mother, with regard to a legal action for third-party custody of the minor in Baltimore City Circuit Court, Maryland, United States, case #: 24-D-17-002909. Maria Dolores Nolasco Portillo should contact the attorney listed below by telephone, mail, or e-mail for further information:  
Mikhael H. Borgonos  
Catholic Charities of Baltimore  
430 S. Broadway  
Baltimore, Maryland 21231  
USA  
Phone: 667-600-2930  
E-mail: [mborgono@cc-md.org](mailto:mborgono@cc-md.org)

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[www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/contact/letter](http://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/contact/letter)

# LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

in federal law that allow stalkers and non-spouse romantic partners convicted of domestic abuse to buy and possess firearms. I strongly urge all readers to call Senators Kaine and Warner, and Representatives Beyer, Comstock, and Connelly and insist that they sign on as co-sponsors without delay.

Mass shootings gain national attention, but every life lost to gun violence is tragic. Statistics show that the holiday season is a particular time of increased risk for domestic violence involving guns. There are ways to reduce gun violence to make every season safer for families, but change won't happen until the public demands that it does.

Gun violence is a public health crisis, not a challenge for the next shooter, and we must begin to address it as such.

**Luci Cedrone**  
McLean

## Gun Violence and Domestic Abuse

To the Editor:

No one approves of gun violence. I think we can safely start with that assumption. The issue seems to be whether any government – state or federal – has a role to play in setting policy that would seek to reduce gun violence.

Clearly, this question raises a lot of angst on all sides of the issue. I sincerely hope that if we can take a practical approach and ask legislators on both side of the aisle to work together, perhaps we can find compromise.

What a novel idea in politics today, working together to find compromise! I, for one, am grateful for any politician willing to work with the other side to find common sense solutions.

Del. Kathleen Murphy has done this. In 2016, she worked with

Republican legislators in the Virginia House of Delegates to pass a bill that reduces the likelihood of a violent family member shooting someone in the household. Thanks to her, any person convicted of second domestic violence offense will be guilty of a felony and prohibited from possessing a firearm. This change in the law required the support of both parties in the Virginia General Assembly. The outcome is a textbook example of a common sense compromise.

In the past session, Del. Murphy introduced legislation that would further limit gun ownership by those convicted of domestic abuse. It is refreshing to see Murphy's continued commitment to the issue and her belief that people of good will can come together and get things done.

**Kate Phillips**  
Vienna

## Fact-checking on Immigration

To the Editor:

The article "Independent Progressive: Doublespeak on Immigrants — Fairfax County in League with Trump?" (Reston Connection, Nov. 8-14, 2017) should have mentioned the surprisingly low crime rates that immigrants have compared to regular American citizens. There are significant barriers for immigrants when it comes to police enforcement because of the Trump administration.

According to the New York Times and census data from 1980-2010 among men ages 18-49, immigrants were one-half to one-fifth as likely to be incarcerated as those born in the United States. The Fairfax County police shouldn't be in cooperation with the Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Fairfax County law enforcement should keep on trying to pledge resolutions on not cooperating with the federal government especially now that Trump and his immigration plan are in effect.

The fact that our county is making money off the suffering of our immigrant communities is terrible. Most immigrants do not commit as many crimes as citizens because they are in such a close-knit society and Trump should check his facts before he goes and calls immigrants just a bunch of "rapists and murderers."

**Colin Stone**  
Fairfax

## 10 Year Old Asks: Audit the Pentagon

To the Editor:

My name is Jack Shinkman, I am 10 years old, and I am a member of an Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) Advocacy Team in Herndon, focusing on the need to rein in Pentagon spending. Our team of 15-20 Quakers and other friends is one of more than 60 such teams around the country trying to educate the public and our representatives on these issues.

The Audit the Pentagon act, an act to make the Pentagon open up about what their money is

really being used for, should unquestionably be passed. More is being spent on the military now than at the height of the Cold War; a lot of the money the military uses is probably being wasted on weapons that are rarely used for any necessary purpose.

The \$601 billion spent on the military could have been used to provide wind power to 595.33 million households. Also, \$1 billion dollars spent in the military creates 6,800 jobs, much less than the 15,300 that education would create with the same amount of money. Another reason to cut down the spending is the waste. \$125 billion has been wasted by the military in the past 5 years. Think about all the things \$125 billion can do!

**Jack Shinkman**  
Oakton

## BULLETIN BOARD

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

### SATURDAY/DEC. 2

**Recycling Day.** 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Northside Property Yard at 600 Mill St. The Town's final 2017 Quarterly Recycling Day will be held at the Northside Property Yard. Waste vehicle products, including oil, antifreeze, and batteries, will be accepted as will most electronics, basically anything with a plug except CRT-style or "big backside" television

and computer screens. Hazardous waste products such as insecticides, paint, and other chemicals are not accepted. Visit [www.viennava.gov](http://www.viennava.gov) for more.

**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](http://www.futurequestgmu.org) to register or email [futurequestnova@gmail.com](mailto:futurequestnova@gmail.com).

**School Open House.** 10 a.m. at BASIS Independent School, 8000 Jones Branch Drive, McLean. Meet subject expert teachers and school leadership, to learn more about the school's liberal arts and STEM program. This event features an information presentation, and a question and answer period. Visit [info.basisindependent.com/december-open-house](http://info.basisindependent.com/december-open-house) for more.

### THROUGH DEC. 3

**Coat and Blanket Drive.** Nova Relief Center is holding a blanket and coat drive for Syrian and Iraqi refugees

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15



# BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 14

who have fled their homest 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](http://www.NOVAReliefCenter.org)

- ❖ Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2719 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton
- ❖ Office of Supervisor John Foust, McLean Governmental Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean

## THURSDAY/DEC. 7

**Caregivers Support Group.** 10-11:30 a.m. at UUCF Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna Caregivers Support Group is held the first and third Thursdays of every month, year round. Call 703-821-6838 or email [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net) for more.

## MONDAY/DEC. 11

**FCPS Community Conversations.** 6:30-8 p.m. at Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Road, Falls Church, Cafeteria (Region 2). Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand will host Community Conversations to hear what students, parents, employees, and members of the community are thinking about and what issues are important to them. Brabrand welcomes citizens to attend and take part in any of the upcoming sessions that are convenient for them. Citizens needing a translator can make a request for services online. Visit [www.fcps.edu/news/superintendent-brabrand-schedules-five-community-conversations-fall](http://www.fcps.edu/news/superintendent-brabrand-schedules-five-community-conversations-fall).

## THURSDAY/DEC. 21

**Caregivers Support Group.** 10-11:30 a.m. at UUCF Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna Caregivers Support Group is held the first and third Thursdays of every month, year round. Call 703-821-6838 or email [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net) for more.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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

**Caregivers Support Group.** 10-11:30 a.m. at UUCF Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna Caregivers Support Group is held the first and third Thursdays of every month, year round. Call 703-821-6838 or email [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net) for more.

## SUPPORT GROUPS

**Are You A Caregiver? Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna Caregivers' Support Group** takes place first & third Thursday of each month. February 2nd and 16th, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Join us at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax (UUCF) - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Rd, Oakton, VA. For more info contact facilitator, Jack Tarr, 703-821-6838 [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net).

**Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group.** 703-941-7000, [www.havenofnova.org](http://www.havenofnova.org) or [havenofnova@verizon.net](mailto:havenofnova@verizon.net).

**Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group** Meets from 1:30 - 3 p.m. the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

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## Giving Thanks for the Going



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Four hours up north with moderate hassle first thing Thanksgiving-Thursdays morning. Dinner and all the fixings with family and friends upon arrival, after a midday break. Conversations and such with young, medium and old (with yours truly being the oldest of our generation) until 1:15 a.m., (a recent time record for many). Up at 7:30 a.m. for breakfast with more casual talk and noshing. Out the door at 9:15-ish heading back for an immediate day-after return trip home scheduled to make an early Friday afternoon chemotherapy infusion. Infusion completed and on the final way home, a stop at the supermarket at 4 p.m. - since we had no Thanksgiving leftovers (turkey sandwiches in particular) to satiate the deprived. Dinner as soon as possible since we were both hungry and tired after our up-and-back. Turkey breast, mashed potatoes and peas for our own leftovers, off-and-on television and napping and then we both called it at 9:15 p.m. or so.

Twelve hours 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 given my Friday afternoon commitment; my first-ever, post-holiday, having-to-rush-back-from-out-of-town excursion. Though in previous years, we may have occasionally travelled up and back in the same day, when our route was two-hours to Pennsylvania where the in-laws lived, we are older and presumably wiser now and somewhat less able and inclined to travel with as little margin and rest.

Compounded of course with Kenny-with-cancer being mostly behind the wheel, a permanent designated driver since I don't drink and still see pretty well at night. Still, I'm hardly the driver I used to be and the affect of the holiday festivities on my fellow drivers is always cause for concern.

But all's well that ends well, except for the piles of Thanksgiving day-afters left where we last 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 quarterly appointments with my oncologist impact my semi-normal life. In fact, my oncologist has been a major proponent of my "quality of life," an advisory he has regularly encouraged.

I've always felt, from the beginning of my diagnosis/prognosis, that I was not going to live my life any differently than I had previous 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 chemotherapy - and vice versa, and to not let too many chips fall along the wayside. Moreover, my philosophy has been not to bucket a 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 more appropriate and more Kenny-like. Not sharing Thanksgiving dinner with relatives with whom I've shared a table going on nearly 40 years wouldn't have helped at all. Not now, or ever.

Finding balance - and sanity in the midst of a battle royal - vs a "terminal" diagnosis, stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer, is all it's cracked up to be. A little fun, make that a lot of fun, never hurt anyone, especially those of us fighting for our lives.

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





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