

# Chantilly CONNECTION

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS

DECEMBER 6-12, 2017

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# NEWS

## ‘People with Disabilities Need Employment’

Chantilly High honors its special education business partners.

BY BONNIE HOBBS

Chantilly High’s special education business partners certainly don’t lend their support to the school because of the thank-you breakfast they receive each year. But everyone likes to be appreciated and, when it comes to this breakfast, it’s as heartfelt as it is delicious.

This year’s breakfast was no exception, and career and transition resource teacher Sue Collins gave the attendees a warm welcome.

“Your story is about making true connections that have a direct impact on our Chantilly students and families,” she told them. “You provide meaningful, work-based, learning opportunities and internships that build and enhance your students’ skills, confidence and self-respect.”

The school also acknowledged the breakfast’s sponsors. Pohanka Auto Group, Securis and Little Lords and Ladies provided financial support, and Bob Evans furnished the biscuits and gravy; Comfort Suites, paper goods and juice; First Watch, coffee, condiments, bananas and muffins; and Giant, a gift card to buy the fruit.

“Ten years ago, our budget was cut, and we thought our breakfast celebration would cease,” said Collins. “We reached out to our business partner, Debbie Mowery, then a Bob Evans employee. She [contacted] Bob Evans, and they provided biscuits and gravy. We approached Jeremy Farber from Securis, and he provided a generous donation.”

Recognized, as well, were three entities that have partnered with Chantilly’s special education career classes for 25 years: The Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development, the county Park Authority/E.C. Lawrence Park and Bob



Dishing up hash browns, sausage, pancakes and scrambled eggs are (from left) FCPS career and transition service specialists Sarah Blake, Sue Eaton and Maggie Contreras.

Evans. Honored for 20 years as partners were the county’s Therapeutic Recreation office and Fairfax County’s Office for Children, plus several businesses for 10 and five years.

Among those attending the recent breakfast was Deb Barrett of The Women’s Club in Chantilly. A fitness center and day spa for women, it’s been a Chantilly High business partner for seven years.

“Chantilly students come to us to learn work skills, assisting with childcare for our clients’ children,” said Barrett. “It’s a great program — great kids come out of this school. It’s important to be involved in the community and help children see what their

true skill set is and to empower them. Everyone needs an opportunity.”

Erica Cohen works for FCPS’ Career and Transition Services and is one of four teachers in the county who teaches education for employment for the office. She instructs two classes of 15 students each in computer, business and social skills.

“The kids come from Westfield, Centreville, Chantilly, South Lakes, Herndon and Mountain View high schools, and we place them in more office-related jobs,” said Cohen. “It’s a wonderful program, and Sue Collins has been phenomenal as a mentor for how to work with businesses.”

“We’re all starting to teach coding and



From left are Jeremy Farmer, Sue Collins and Ken Crum after the breakfast.

more intensive computer skills,” she continued. “It’s especially good for students on the autism spectrum because it’s a strength of theirs for which they can be appreciated. One of the businesses that has been very successful in growing job opportunities for my students is Quest Diagnostics of Chantilly. A whole team of students does data entry for them. Even a nonverbal kid worked there, and the amount of productive work he did was astounding. And now we’re expanding our program with them.”

Regina Mauren, employment transition representative at Herndon High, also helps place special ed students in jobs. “We can’t provide job experiences for our students without our business partners,” she said. “We’re grateful for them opening up their work environments so students can become responsible workers.”

Agreeing, Maggie Contreras, career and transition service specialist at Woodson High, said, “This is a really important program because it helps get our students out in the community and prepare them for real life.” She said some 25-30 Woodson students participate, and Fairfax High students take part, too.

Regarding the Chantilly breakfast, Contreras said, “It’s just a wonderful event. And it’s great to see so many people in the community supporting our students with disabilities. And for the students, it’s huge. It gives them that connection with real-life careers. They especially learn the soft skills necessary for success in any job — such as social, interpersonal and communication skills — and they’re able to practice and develop them.”

Community of Faith United Methodist Church in Herndon is participating in the

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Together at one of the tables are (from left) Chantilly freshman Chris Harmic, Allison Moser of Sundog Productions, Chantilly senior Anthony Phan and the Rev. Beth LaBella-Foster.



Helping serve breakfast are Herndon High employment transition representatives Annie Santee and Regina Mauren.



# Police To Add Body Cameras

BY KEN MOORE

Fairfax County police officers from the Mount Vernon and Mason district stations will soon wear body cameras in a three-month pilot program designed to determine if all Fairfax County police officers will wear the cameras in the future.

"We see this as a really wonderful opportunity to better connect our officers on the ground and our folks on the street and make sure that everybody has an opportunity to work together and see how that work goes," said Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck.

The Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission recommended in 2015 that officers be equipped with the cameras, and the Board of Supervisors approved the pilot program at its board meeting on Nov. 21. It will take another few months to get the three-to-six month pilot program up and running.

Braddock District Supervisor John Cook, chairman of the board's public safety committee, expressed concerns about upcoming constraints on the public safety budget. "We are going to have some tough decisions in public safety and we need good data," said Cook.

Fairfax County Police Department will partner with American University to initiate an academic study, which could be extended from 90 days to six months. "Community advocates will be at the table to help us monitor the deployment of the cameras and how the policy is working," said Col. Edwin C. Roessler Jr., Chief of Police.

"The pilot body worn program is designed to provide the department with the opportunity to review police-community member encounters as they occur, as well as provide an additional degree of safety for our officers as they patrol the streets," according to the Fairfax County Police Department.

The cost of the pilot program is \$684,000. Storck asked if all officers from the Mount

Vernon station could use the cameras.

"When it comes to evaluating the impacts of body worn cameras, we are still, as a field, in the early days," said Brad Bartholomew, professor at American University.

For studies to be effective, "we must ensure that a group of officers receives the camera and another group does not," he said. "The more you can control, the more you can model, the more believable your results may be."

The study analysis is expected to cover statistics and community member feedback to assess the impacts prior to, during and following the pilot program.

"Officers will be expected to activate the camera during any law enforcement-public encounter related to a call for service, law enforcement action, subject stop, traffic stop, search or police service," according to the police department.

Police and a variety of civic groups worked together on a proposed pilot body-worn camera policy to address personal privacy rights, transparency and accountability in police-community member contacts. The policy can be modified as needed based on the pilot.

Read the draft policy at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/boardcommittees/meetings/2017/oct10-public-safety-body-worn-cameras-draft-policy.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/boardcommittees/meetings/2017/oct10-public-safety-body-worn-cameras-draft-policy.pdf)

## ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

While addressing deer management and a lack of predators in Fairfax County, Stella Koch said, "They've changed the ecology in Yellowstone [National Park], but I don't think that it is an option here."

The Environment Quality Advisory Council advocates for a full-time wildlife specialist position in Fairfax County to support the deer management program as well as the Canada Geese Management Program.

"That position has been needed for a long time," said Koch. "We have one person doing a significant amount of yeoman's work."

## In other business, board hires new county executive and updates environmental priorities.



**Col. Edwin C. Roessler Jr., Chief of Police**



**Bryan Hill, new county executive**

On Nov. 21, Koch presented the environmental quality annual report, highlighting major priorities for 2018, including the need to conduct a countywide survey on the public's view of the "cultural carrying capacity, how people are thinking about deer in this county."

The advisory council also says the Board of Supervisors needs to update its 2003 Outdoor Lighting Ordinance and needs to implement a lighting work group. "Since 2003 there have been a lot of changes in technology and also an increase in density in this county," said Koch.

"The increasing density of development in Fairfax County will invariably lead to more instances of 'light trespass,' where lights on one property affect another property," according to the environmental report.

Koch also advocated for increasing the Stormwater Service District rate by one-quarter penny, from a rate of 3 cents per \$100 assessed real estate value to 3.25 cents per \$100.

"As you know, there is an endless backlog of infrastructure that needs replacements," she said. "We're making great progress and it's slow and steady, but we definitely need more funding."

"I use this as a model for how we can track major issues," said Bulova, praising the structure and quality of the EQAC report.

"When you open the annual report, the first thing [you see] is the recommenda-

tions. We think that is important, it is what this annual report basically drives us toward," said Koch.

Other priorities include funding of \$263,000 required for the Fairfax County Park Authority's natural resource mapping efforts and additional technology.

The public will have an opportunity to give both EQAC and the Board of Supervisors feedback in a public hearing scheduled for Jan. 10, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway.

## THE \$250,000 MAN

Bryan Hill will be Fairfax County's next county executive, effective Jan. 2, 2018.

"Selecting a county executive is the most important hire the Board of Supervisors undertakes," said Penny Gross, vice chairman and Mason District supervisor. "Mr. Hill brings impressive leadership, management, communications and budget experience to Fairfax County."

"I believe this is the fifth county executive for me and the fourth search," said Gross.

Hill, currently the James City County, Va. administrator and clerk to its Board of Supervisors, will replace Fairfax County Executive Edward L. Long, who retired in September.

"While [James City County] is a smaller jurisdiction, many of the issues are the same," said Bulova. "We are very, very excited to welcome Bryan Hill to Team Fairfax."

Hill will earn \$250,000 per year.

Hill has been the James City County administrator since 2014, and previously served seven years as the deputy county administrator with Beaufort County, S.C. Previously, he was the vice chancellor for Finance and Operations at the University of South Carolina's Beaufort/Bluffton Campus and was director of finance for the University of Maryland's Office of Information and Technology.

# Stone Players To Bring 'Into the Woods, Jr.' to Stage

The Stone Players of Ormond Stone Middle School will be taking on the Tony Award-winning production by Stephen Sondheim and book by James Lapine this year in the annual school musical.

The group will perform "Into the Woods, Jr." from Thursday, Dec. 14 to Saturday, Dec. 16 in the Stone Middle School Theater. The musical is about a childless baker and his wife and their quest to build a family. A witch placed a curse on them and they interact with many storybook characters such as Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, and Jack and the Beanstalk on their journey. The show is about growing up, accepting responsibility, and the consequences of having one's wishes fulfilled.

Lois Stanziani directs and choreographs the production with the help of

## DETAILS

**What:** "Into the Woods, Jr." musical production by The Stone Players

**When:** Thursday Dec. 14 at 3 p.m.; Friday, Dec. 15 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 16 at 3 p.m. Thursday's performance is presale tickets only. Tickets are sold during lunch shifts Monday-Wednesday at Stone. Price: \$7 per ticket. General seating.

**Where:** Stone Middle School, 5500 Sully Park Dr. Centreville. Phone 703-631-5500

Assistant Directors John-Nicholas S. Walsh and Zack Walsh, Choral Director Charles Quinlan, and Production Assistant Guillermo Alleyne.

Stanziani, a performer and veteran director of productions at Stone, said,

The cast and crew of 31 seventh and eighth graders have been practicing since September. The roles of the Baker and his Wife are played by veteran eighth graders Nick Werderman, and Ariana Thomas who



**Stone Middle School Players will perform "Into the Woods, Jr." next week.**

were both in last year's production of "Guys and Dolls Jr." The Witch is played by Kayla Gadley and Jack's mother is brought to life by Emily Miller.

Tickets for the show will be available Mon-

day-Wednesday, Dec. 11-13 at Stone MS during all lunches. Tickets will also be available at the door for the Friday evening and Saturday performances; Thursday's performance is pre-sale tickets only.



# Officer Rochefort Honored

BY BONNIE HOBBS

**P**FC Brian G. Rochefort is the Sully District Police Station's Officer of the Month for October. And although he couldn't be present to receive his award, he was honored during the Nov. 8 meeting of the station's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC).

He's a member of the Traffic Enforcement Team and was the station's Officer of the Year in 2015. And Lt. Ryan Morgan, the assistant station commander, had high praise for Rochefort in his letter nominating him for the award.

"People who travel through the Centreville, Chantilly and Clifton areas understand traffic is a major concern in the Sully District," wrote Morgan. "We have all seen a number of motorists who are willing to drive impaired, distracted or simply drive in a manner which would be out of character for most of us."

"By total number of complaints, traffic-related concerns routinely outnumber other worries by a large margin. As such, officers like PFC Rochefort are needed and deployed to address those complaints and focus the majority of their efforts on traffic education and enforcement."

Rochefort has been with the Fairfax County Police Department for eight years. And, wrote Morgan, as the Sully District Station's primary traffic officer, "He has taken on the lion's share of community traffic concerns. These concerns reach the station by various means, and all are reviewed and verified."

In an effort to reach motorists and get them to drive the posted speed limit, residents may see

Rochefort programing the station's variable message boards in or adjacent to neighborhoods or setting up vehicle, speed-indicator signs where speeding has been reported.

However, when attempts to gain voluntary compliance have stalled, he is called upon for traffic enforcement. "Through Oct. 31, Rochefort issued nearly 2,400 traffic citations for various violations," wrote Morgan. "That equates to having a tough conversation with nearly 240 drivers a month about driving behavior."

Stressing that Rochefort knows the Sully District well and is very familiar with the major roads, Morgan said Rochefort is well aware of the particular roads where speeds can approach triple digits, as well as those secondary roads drivers use to quickly cut through local neighborhoods.

"The driving behavior we have all seen by careless motorists is unfortunate and puts others in danger," wrote Morgan. "It is imperative to have officers like PFC Rochefort who are committed to keeping the public safe."

Morgan further noted that Rochefort is "a very personable and respected officer who cares deeply for the safety of our Sully community and everyone passing through. If you happen to see him in your neighborhood, feel free to wave, but make sure you are buckled up and driving the speed limit. It is a pleasure having PFC Brian Rochefort serving in the Sully District, and he is well-deserving of the CAC's recognition as Officer of the Month."



**PFC Brian G. Rochefort**

## HANDMADE HOLIDAYS

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# OPINION

# Give Locally in Fairfax County

## Holidays are for giving; many choices to help.

The holidays are about giving, and giving thanks. The holidays are about children and family. The holidays are about sharing, about joy. The holidays are about being thankful and about faith and appreciation. The holidays are about alleviating suffering for others.

**EDITORIAL** Northern Virginia is among the wealthiest areas in the country. Many if not most of us go through our daily and seasonal routines without encoun-

tering evidence of the needy families among us.

In Fairfax County, more than 52,000 (28 percent) of FCPS students are are poor enough to receive free or subsidized meals.

The median family income in Fairfax County rose to \$129,800. But among families with children, 6 percent have income below the poverty level. That's \$20,420 for a family of three. That's about \$1,700 a month. Median rent in Fairfax County is \$1,747, meaning the cost for half the rentals is more than that.

These are children living in families who may be on the brink of homelessness, families who must choose between medical bills, car repair, heat and food. Some of these are children who

may not be sure that they will have a meal between the meals they get in school.

School holidays can bring uncertainty and hunger — a far cry from the celebrations, gifts and plenty that we associate with the holidays.

Hundreds of homeless students attend the public schools, and their needs are greater.

Many nonprofits in the county need your help to provide a holiday meal for Thanksgiving or Christmas, to provide children with gifts.

There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of ways to give locally this season. Here are a few ideas.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## GIVE LOCALLY

- ❖ **Cornerstones**, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, [www.cornerstonesva.org](http://www.cornerstonesva.org). Nonprofit providing support and advocacy for those in need of food, shelter, affordable housing, quality childcare, and other human services. Programs and services include the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, Emergency Food Pantry, Hypothermia Prevention Program, Thanksgiving Food Drive, Gifts for Kids and annual Coat Drive. Gifts will be collected at Cornerstones main office, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, VA 20190 on Thursday, Dec. 7 and Friday, Dec. 8, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 9, 9 a.m. – noon. Contact Nate King, Donations and Drives Coordinator, at 571-323-9569.
- ❖ **Share of McLean** operates a food pantry; provides assistance to families to avoid eviction, keep utilities on and meet other needs in a crisis. Share of McLean will provide holiday assistance to more than 250 needy families (630-plus people) this year. Help neighbors in need by donating money, fulfilling a wish or donating Walmart, Target, Giant, or Safeway gift cards. Share's Furniture Program is in major need of drivers and helpers. Visit the Furniture Program page. The Food Pantry is in major need of supplies; visit the Food Pantry page and check Facebook to see how to help the Food Pantry. Visit [www.shareofmclean.org](http://www.shareofmclean.org) for more info about Share.
- ❖ **Herndon-Reston FISH** (Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help), 336 Victory Drive, Herndon, 703-391-0105, [herndonrestonfish.org](http://herndonrestonfish.org). Herndon-Reston FISH has assisted local residents in short-term crises by since 1969. FISH provides Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help by responding to emergency requests for rent, transportation, utilities, medical prescriptions and other needs. FISH operates The Bargain Loft, a thrift store, which needs donations of good quality saleable items, accepting and selling art, furniture, jewelry, household linens, dishes, pots and pans, books, women's designer clothing (clean and on hangers), puzzles, games, collectibles, small electronics and more. If you have store questions, call 703-437-0600. Herndon-Reston FISH also provides Holiday Food & Gift Baskets during the November and December season.
- ❖ **LINK**, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more. Every year the goal is to provide each family with a week's worth of non-perishable food in November and again in December. When funds allow, grocery gift cards are also included. In November, clients also receive a voucher for coats and warm clothing. In December, children 16 and under receive gifts. [holiday@linkagainsthunger.org](mailto:holiday@linkagainsthunger.org). 703-437-1776 [www.linkagainsthunger.org](http://www.linkagainsthunger.org).
- ❖ **Committee for Helping Others** (CHO), Vienna, organized in 1969 by a group of churches and individuals in the Dunn Loring, Merrifield, Oakton, Vienna community to provide simple, loving charity to those in need. Last year 450 children had a special Christmas through the annual Christmas Store. 703-281-7614, [www.cho-va.com](http://www.cho-va.com)
- ❖ **Northern Virginia Family Service**. 571-748-2500, [www.nvfs.org](http://www.nvfs.org), Employment and job training, healthcare, housing, mental health, foster care and Healthy Families. 10455 White Granite, Drive, Suite 100, Oakton, VA 22124.
- ❖ **Second Story** — Abused and Homeless Children's Refuge, 2100 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA 22182. 703-506-9191, [second-story.org](http://second-story.org). Second Story

(formerly Alternative House) provides shelter and services for homeless, runaway or abused teenagers, unaccompanied youth, and young mothers and their children. Requests for food and clothing are up more than 50 percent.

- ❖ **Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna** providing services, personal enrichment, volunteer opportunities for adults 50 and over. Currently serving 3,000+ mature adults in the region. 703-281-0538, [www.scov.org](http://www.scov.org).
- ❖ **Touching Heart** in Herndon is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate children to have giving hearts. [www.touchingheart.com](http://www.touchingheart.com), 703-901-7355.
- ❖ **Western Fairfax Christian Ministries** — food pantry at 13981 Metrotech Drive in Chantilly. For more information or to sponsor a family, call 703-988-9656, ext. 105. To mail gift cards or send donations by check, add a note saying "food basket program" and send them to: WFCM, P.O. Box 220802, Chantilly, VA 20153.
- ❖ **HomeAid** builds and renovates facilities that house the homeless, and partners with many local organizations to do so. 3684 Centerview Drive, Suite 110B, Chantilly, VA 20151. [www.homeaidnova.org](http://www.homeaidnova.org).
- ❖ **FACETS** helps parents, their children and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty in the Fairfax area, a partner in efforts to end homelessness in Fairfax County. FACETS is always in need of volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities. 703-865-4251, [volunteer@facetscares.org](mailto:volunteer@facetscares.org) or [www.facetscares.org](http://www.facetscares.org). 10640 Page Ave., Suite 300, Fairfax, VA 22030.
- ❖ **Britepaths** will have 3,000 individuals and families in need of holiday assistance list this fall. Sponsor a family or donate to provide a family with a Thanksgiving meal, December holiday meal and/or gifts for their children. [britepaths.org](http://britepaths.org).
- ❖ **Fairfax City Area FISH** (For Immediate Sympathetic Help) helps local people who are in temporary need of life's basic necessities such as food, clothing, and financial assistance for rent, mortgage payments, utilities, and medical treatments. FISH also provides limited transportation for doctor appointments and food delivery. 703-222-0880, [fairfaxfish.org](http://fairfaxfish.org).
- ❖ **Lamb Center**, day center for homeless, Fairfax. 703-691-3178, [www.thelambcenter.org](http://www.thelambcenter.org).
- ❖ **Food for Others** provides a safety net for people who suddenly face unforeseen emergencies such as a family illness or the loss of a job or a spouse. Located at 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-207-9173, [info@foodforothers.org](mailto:info@foodforothers.org) or [www.foodforothers.org](http://www.foodforothers.org). Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
- ❖ **Ecumenical Community Helping Others** (ECHO). 703-569-9160, [www.foodforothers.org](http://www.foodforothers.org). Open to receive donations at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Provides food and financial assistance to those in short-term emergencies, and provides clothing and household goods to low income families, helping more than 5,000 people last year.
- ❖ **Lorton Community Action Center** (LCAC) will provide Thanksgiving and Holiday assistance to more than 450 families this year. Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets along with fulfilling gift wishes for more than 1,000 children and teens will help low-income families More information at [lortonaction.org/seasonal-assistance/](http://lortonaction.org/seasonal-assistance/). Volunteers

are needed for these events as well. Register online at [lortonaction.org](http://lortonaction.org) or call 703-339-5161, ext. 140 or email [Linda@LortonAction.org](mailto:Linda@LortonAction.org). Mailing address: LCAC, P.O. Box 154, Lorton, VA 22199-0154.

- ❖ **Assistance League of Northern Virginia** is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that feeds, clothes and educates children in need. Assistance League's philanthropic programs touch the lives of thousands of children at 11 Title I schools in Northern Virginia, serving children most in need at selected schools in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria. To learn more about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, email [alnorthernva@gmail.com](mailto:alnorthernva@gmail.com) or visit [www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org](http://www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org).
- ❖ **Comfort for America's Uniformed Services** (CAUSE) ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation for all that they have done. 1100 N Glebe Road, Suite 373, Arlington, VA 22201. 703-591-4968, [cause-usa.org](http://cause-usa.org).
- ❖ **Shelter House** provides crisis intervention, safe housing and supportive services to promote self-sufficiency for homeless families and victims of domestic violence in Fairfax County. [www.shelterhouse.org/](http://www.shelterhouse.org/)
- ❖ **Mount Vernon At Home**, 703-303-4060, [www.mountvernonathome.org](http://www.mountvernonathome.org). From practical help to social, wellness, educational and cultural activities, Mount Vernon At Home membership helps connect senior members of the community. Neighbors helping neighbors with volunteer support is the power of Mount Vernon At Home. Mount Vernon At Home is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working hard to meet the needs of older members. They fundraise all year to make this possible and count on the generosity of the community.
- ❖ **United Community Ministries**, Mount Vernon, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, VA 22306, 703-768-7106, [www.ucmagency.org](http://www.ucmagency.org), assists low-income families and individuals living along the Route 1 Corridor, UCM provides four different housing programs as well as a Workforce Development Center to help prepare people for moving forward with their jobs. For the holidays, donations of nearly 10,000 toys, books, games, clothing, and other gifts ensured a joy-filled holiday for more than 1,200 children in 600 families. Donations of cash/checks and gift cards are also welcome.
- ❖ **National Capital Food Bank**, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia. 703-541-3063, [www.capitalareafoodbank.org](http://www.capitalareafoodbank.org).
- ❖ **Homestretch** is the largest provider of transitional housing in Fairfax County and offers a services to help the homeless better their lives through education. Email [jhenderson@homestretchva.org](mailto:jhenderson@homestretchva.org); 703-237-2035 x125; [homestretchva.org/](http://homestretchva.org/).
- ❖ **Pathway Homes** focuses on providing housing and support services to individuals with serious mental illnesses, with the mission to help these individuals reach their full potential and lead stable lives. They offer both in-home programs, semi-independent houses and assisted living facilities. 10201 Fairfax Boulevard, Suite 200, Fairfax, VA 22030. 703-876-0390, [info@pathwayhomes.org](mailto:info@pathwayhomes.org), [www.pathwayhomes.org](http://www.pathwayhomes.org), [www.pathwayhomes.org/support-pathway/](http://www.pathwayhomes.org/support-pathway/).

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A Connection Newspaper

## OPINION

# Our Neighbor's Child Helps Local Families

**Volunteers, gifts needed to brighten holidays for so many.**

BY KELLY LAVIN  
ONC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**O**ur Neighbor's Child (ONC) volunteers are preparing for a 26th season of coordinating the collection and delivery of holiday gifts for children from nearly 700 financially struggling families in western Fairfax County – predominantly in Centreville and Chantilly.

It's a huge task, and the nonprofit ONC can't do it alone, so it needs members of the community – individuals, groups and businesses – to open their hearts and lend a hand. Several volunteer opportunities have been posted on ONC's Website, [www.ourneighborschild.org](http://www.ourneighborschild.org).

Our small, all-volunteer team has worked for months organizing things to include our whole community in this giving effort. There aren't words to adequately describe the feeling you get when you can make a difference and make life a little better for another person, and we love sharing that experience.

It is not always easy, but we have great, "unsung heroes" who return year after year. We could use a few more volunteers in our office, plus many volunteers on packaging and delivery days, for this effort to continue. And we really need people to bake cookies; each family will receive a mixed assortment and we'll be delivering thousands of cookies. ONC provides new toys, books and games, as well as warm coats, blankets and other clothing for children who've requested those items. Children's gift wishes have been distributed to Giving Trees at local churches, schools and businesses, and wishes are still available on trees at the Walmart stores in Chantilly and Fair Lakes.

## How to Help

❖ Whenever possible, ONC stretches its



**Stone Middle School students prepare to load donated gifts into a truck headed for ONC's warehouse after last year's Panther Drop-Off. This year's collection will be Saturday, Dec. 9, from 9 a.m.-noon.**

donation dollars by ordering some gifts from online sites that provide discounts to non-profit organizations.

Helmets from Helmets R Us and books from Firstbook are just a few examples of the resources used by ONC to stretch every donation dollar.

❖ Donations are still greatly needed so ONC may purchase the needed items to fulfill children's wishes. People may contribute via PayPal and Venmo links on ONC's Website, or mail checks payable to ONC to: Our Neighbor's Child, P.O. Box 276, Centreville, VA 20120.

❖ Drop off new toys, games, books, coats or other clothing at Stone Middle School, 5500 Sully Park Drive in Centreville, next Saturday, Dec. 9, from 9 a.m.-noon. Members of the National Junior Honor Society will be out front to collect them.

❖ Choose wishes from any Giving Tree, purchase the items and then turn them in by Tuesday, Dec. 12.

❖ Adult Volunteers are needed to help set up the ONC packaging warehouse on Dec. 11, 12 and 13, from 3-7 p.m.

❖ Volunteers are needed to work two-



**Giving Tree ornaments were made again this year by Jennifer McGee's students at Stone Middle School and were labeled by Jay Rennyson (in white shirt) and his friends from Virginia Run Elementary.**

hour shifts on packaging day, Dec. 14, from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Talk your boss into making it an office tradition.

❖ Many people are needed to bake homemade cookies that get distributed with each family's huge bag of gifts. Sign up on our Website and our coordinator will send details.

❖ Delivery day volunteers are also needed

on Sunday, Dec. 17, from 1-4 p.m. We can collect and package the gifts, but we can only deliver to 700 homes if many volunteers are willing to help.

ONC's volunteers have been busy since late summer to prepare for new challenges to its efforts. These included communicating with and training more than 80 individual, referring agents from 27 schools in the Centreville, Chantilly and Westfield pyramids. Receiving gifts from ONC will be students in the following schools:

### Centreville Pyramid

Bull Run Elementary School  
Centre Ridge Elementary School  
Centreville Elementary School  
Powell Elementary School  
Union Mill Elementary School  
Willow Springs Elementary School  
Liberty Middle School  
Mountain View Alternative Learning Center  
Mountain View High School  
Centreville High School

### Chantilly Pyramid

Brookfield Elementary School  
Greenbriar East Elementary School  
Greenbriar West Elementary School  
Lees Corner Elementary School  
Oak Hill Elementary School  
Poplar Tree Elementary School  
Rocky Run Middle School  
Franklin Middle School  
Chantilly Academy  
Chantilly High School

### Westfield Pyramid

Cub Run Elementary School  
Virginia Run Elementary School  
Deer Park Elementary School  
Floris Elementary School  
London Towne Elementary School  
Lewis Coates Elementary School  
McNair Elementary School  
Stone Middle School  
Westfield High School

We hope people will visit our Website and share the information there with others. And hopefully, we can make this holiday season a joyous one for everyone in our area.

## Remember Those Serving

To the Editor:

Holidays, festivals, and celebrations are times to be spent with family. Seldom do people serving in the Armed Forces get time off for this basic need. These extraordinary men and women sacrifice their family life and all the simple pleasures just so we can be safe. No matter the country or where they are serving, the lives of soldiers are all the same. Their families share the same fears, anxiety, sorrow, and pride. The sacrifice of these brave soldiers and their families can never be repaid. The least we can do is pray for their safe return.

— ANITA R. MOHAN, CHANTILLY

## An Army Child's Wish

My family is like any other  
Dad, mom, brother, sister  
Grandma, grandpa, uncles,  
aunts, cousins, friends.  
We gather together, celebrate  
holidays, anniversary, birthdays  
Pray, eat, play, have fun  
But dad is always missing

Mom gives our presents  
She keeps dad's aside  
drying her silent tears  
I really wish dad could  
join in every celebration  
But he is away serving  
protecting, sacrificing,  
keeping our country safe

During this holiday season  
please say a little prayer  
for my dad and for all other  
dads and moms who  
wish they could be with  
their loved ones and families  
but could not, as duty calls  
and pray for their safe return.

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# Ballet Arts Ensemble of Fairfax

Presents

## Nutcracker In A Nutshell



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Sunday, Dec. 17th  
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# HOLIDAY FUN & ENTERTAINMENT

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

### ONGOING

**Toy Collection.** Through Dec. 10, Sheehy Infiniti of Chantilly, 4145 Auto Park Circle, Chantilly will collect new and unwrapped toys as part of the company's annual Sheehy Cares Toy Collection to benefit the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program, which will distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to less fortunate children in the community in which the campaign is conducted.

**Bull Run Festival of Lights.** Through Jan. 7, Monday-Thursday, 5:30-9:30 p.m., \$15 per car; Fridays-Sundays and holidays, 5:30-10 p.m., \$20 per car. Bull Run Regional Park, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. The Bull Run Festival of Lights is more than just a light show. After enjoying two and a half miles of light displays, stop at the Holiday Village, complete with bonfires, s'mores, holiday merchandise and free activities, the Holiday Village is fun for the whole family. Have a photo taken with Santa. Call 703-631-0550 or visit [www.novaparks.com/events/bull-run-festival-of-lights](http://www.novaparks.com/events/bull-run-festival-of-lights).

### FRIDAY/DEC. 8

**Sugarloaf Crafts Festival.** 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. \$8 online, \$10 at the door. Visit [sugarloafinfo@sugarloaffest.com](mailto:sugarloafinfo@sugarloaffest.com).

**Indian Dance Class.** 10:30 a.m. at the Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. Artistic dance and exercise every Friday in December. Call 703-380-0660 for more.

**Ryan Angello in Concert.** 4:30-8:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

**Sipping and Painting.** 6:30-9 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Instructors from Creative Mankind will be on hand to give a step by step instructions on creating a canvas masterpiece of an abstract Christmas tree. \$45. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

### SATURDAY/DEC. 9

**Sugarloaf Crafts Festival.** 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. \$8 online, \$10 at the door. Visit [sugarloafinfo@sugarloaffest.com](mailto:sugarloafinfo@sugarloaffest.com).

**Holidays at Walney Farm.** 1-4 p.m. at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Learn about the holiday traditions of past eras. Take a tour with a historian, make historic ornaments and drink hot cider around the campfire as you listen to our volunteer bagpiper play holiday tunes. End your day with a holiday wagon ride. \$10. Call 703-631-0013 for more.

**Ryan Forrester Band in Concert.** 1-5 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

### SUNDAY/DEC. 10

**Sugarloaf Crafts Festival.** 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. \$8 online, \$10 at the door. Visit [sugarloafinfo@sugarloaffest.com](mailto:sugarloafinfo@sugarloaffest.com) for more.

**Holiday Ornament Craft Day.** 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; 5-15, \$2; 16 and older, \$4. Visit [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org) for more.



## Sip & Paint

It's all about Sipping and Painting on Friday, Dec. 8 at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Instructors from Creative Mankind will be on hand to give a step by step instructions on creating a canvas masterpiece of an abstract Christmas tree. \$45. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

[www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org) for more.  
**Lexi Jackson in Concert.** 1-5 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

**Brian Franke in Concert.** 1-5 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

### TUESDAY/DEC. 12

**Tai Chi Tuesdays.** 12:30 p.m. at the Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. A gentle movements class to develop strength and balance, class every Tuesday. Call 703-380-0660 for more.

### FRIDAY/DEC. 15

**Indian Dance Class.** 10:30 a.m. at the Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. Artistic dance and exercise every Friday in December. Call 703-380-0660 for more.

**Levi Stephens in Concert.** 4:30-8:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

### SUNDAY/DEC. 16

**Ken Fischer in Concert.** 1-5 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

### SUNDAY/DEC. 17

**Victorian Tea.** 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road. Museum members and under 4, free; ages 5-15, \$2; 16 and older, \$4. Visit [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org) for more.

### TUESDAY/DEC. 19

**Tai Chi Tuesdays.** 12:30 p.m. at the Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. A gentle movements class to develop strength and balance, class every Tuesday. Call 703-380-0660 for more.

### FRIDAY/DEC. 22

**Phil Selz in Concert.** 4:30-8:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

### SATURDAY/DEC. 23

**Britton James in Concert.** 1-5 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

### SUNDAY/DEC. 24

**David Thong in Concert.** 1-5 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Call 703-815-2233 or visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com).

### TUESDAY/DEC. 26

**Music Sing and Dance.** 12:30 p.m. at the Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. Sing and Swing w Chris Edwards. Call 703-380-0660 for more.

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## Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Concession Payment Projects

### Public Hearing

Thursday, Jan. 4, 2018  
Open house at 6 p.m.; hearing begins at 6:30 p.m.

VDOT Northern Virginia District Office  
4975 Alliance Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22030

If cancelled for inclement weather, the alternate date will be Friday, Jan. 5, 2018.

The Commonwealth Transportation Board invites you to comment on projects to be funded by a concession fee to the Commonwealth as part of the financial agreement with Express Mobility Partners for the I-66 Express Lanes Outside the Beltway project. At a future meeting, the CTB will vote to amend these projects in the Commonwealth's Six-Year Improvement Program.

Information related to the following projects will be available:

- Rt. 234/Balls Ford Road interchange and relocation in Prince William
- Virginia Railway Express Manassas Line upgrade - Phase I
- Balls Ford Road widening from Groveton Road to Route 234 Business (Sudley Road) in Prince William
- I-66 median widening at Route 29 for WMATA in Fairfax
- Commuter parking garage at Fairfax Corner
- George Synder Trail in Fairfax City
- Widen Jermantown Road bridge to four lanes over I-66 in Fairfax
- Western bus maintenance facility in Prince William
- East Falls Church Metro Bus bay expansion in Arlington
- Monument Drive bridge pedestrian improvements in Fairfax
- Rt. 50/Waples Mill Road intersection improvements in Fairfax
- Construct Poplar Tree Road bridge to four lanes over Route 28 in Fairfax
- Lee Highway pedestrian improvements in Fairfax
- Nutley Street SW multi-use trail to Metro in Vienna

If you cannot attend the hearing, email comments to [meetingcomments@vdot.virginia.gov](mailto:meetingcomments@vdot.virginia.gov) and reference "I-66 Concession Projects" in the subject line, or mail them to Maria Sinner at VDOT's District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 through Jan. 8, 2018.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF INTERFAITH WORKS

Charitable activities, such as this toy drive by Interfaith Works, can improve one's overall well-being.

# Season of Giving, Healing

Acts of kindness can boost wellbeing.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL

As Terrance Puller surveys boxes wrapped in holiday paper and filled with tubes of toothpaste, sticks of deodorant and other self-care toiletries, he says he can feel his heart well up with gratitude. The packages were part of a donation drive to benefit So Others Might Eat (SOME), a local nonprofit organization with a mission to provide services to the poor and homeless. Puller, who is now both a SOME employee and volunteer, reminisces about a period in his life when he was a recipient of such generosity.

Five years ago, Puller says he was alone, homeless and deep in an alcohol and crack cocaine-induced haze. He would later recall that he was so staggeringly intoxicated one holiday season that he would miss an opportunity to say goodbye to his dying mother. What he did receive that year however, was life changing.

"I was able to come into the shelter and get treatment, food and eventually a job," said Puller. "I volunteer my time because ... being here reminds me of my story and makes me grateful. It keeps me uplifted, less depressed and clean and sober."

Mounting research validates Puller's assertion. "Giving of our talents and time is an important way to improve our well-being," said Carolyn Lorente, professor of psychology at Northern Virginia Community College. "What many of my colleagues are looking into is the connection between volunteerism and sense of self. It turns out that when we give to others, it not only helps those we are assisting but also boosts our sense of agency, gives us a sense of purpose and belonging and informs our sense of identity."

During the holidays, which are often emotionally charged, a focus on helping others can lead to feelings of gratitude and happiness, says psychologist Jerome Short, Ph.D. In fact, he points to a 2010 study published in the journal *Clinical Psychology Review*, which shows a link between benevolence and contentment.

"Kind acts increase personal happiness because we naturally empathize with others and take pride in our ability to make others smile and feel good," he

said.

Even for those who haven't experienced levels of need such as Puller's, acts of altruism can have a positive effect on one's mood. An example is Jennifer Carter, a senior at Marymount University in Arlington, who spent last weekend in the center of a crowded auditorium on the university's campus frantically tying strips of fleece cloth. Along with nearly 300 other volunteers, she was making blankets for newborn babies for an organization called HOPE, a nondenominational crisis pregnancy center in Fairfax County.

"When these new mothers leave the hospitals it's usually with a thin cotton blanket," she said. "A lot of times, the things that they're missing are warm blankets for the babies. It feels good to be able to give these mothers something that many people take for granted. It makes you realize how fortunate you are."

Short points to a 2016 study from the University of California at Riverside which shows that volunteerism can lead to gratitude and happiness.

"Grateful people pay more attention to the cost, effort, and value of helping acts than the average person does," he said. "They are better at coping with life stress because they trust others to help them and then reach out and accept help."

Christabel Sampson experienced this metamorphosis first hand when she relocated to the Washington, D.C. area and was unable to find a job. She had mounting bills, but no income. Her financial outlook spiraled further downward and she became homeless. She moved into a shelter run by Interfaith Works, a nonprofit organization in Montgomery County Maryland that works to meet the needs of the poor. Through the organization's job training program, she was able to gain skills training, clothing and shelter. As a result of the services she received, Sampson says she found a job. Now she volunteers her time to helping others at Interfaith Works and has even become a member of the organization's board of directors.

"The experience of being homeless and now helping other women definitely made me stronger," said Sampson. "Sometimes even a spoken word can be said to help someone to a better place. I have empathy because I have been there."

## For More Information

Interfaith Works – [www.iworksmc.org](http://www.iworksmc.org)

SOME – [some.org](http://some.org)

HOPE Pregnancy Care Center – 703-536-2020



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**NEWS**

**Next: State Final**

**T**he Westfield Bulldogs (14-0) are headed back to Hampton for the Virginia 6A State Championship on 12-9 after a 18-7 win on Dec. 2 over the Woodbridge Vikings (12-2). Their opponent will be Oscar Smith (12-2) winners in overtime over Colonial Forge (12-1).

Westfield took an early 6-0 lead with 7:42 to play in the 1st quarter when QB Noah Kim hit Taylor Morin on a 35 yard pass for a TD.

In the 2nd quarter, Woodbridge's Antevius Jackson connected with Andrew Hardin for a 73 yard TD.

With 6:19 left to play in the 3rd quarter, Eugene Asante scored the first of his two rushing TD's, to give the Bulldogs a 12-7 advantage.

Asante scored his second TD when he leaped over the goal line and gave Westfield a 18-7 lead with :56 to play in the game essentially putting the game away.

For the game Asante carried the ball 23 times for 140 yards and two touchdowns. Noah Kim completed 7 of his 12 passes for 132 yards and a TD to Taylor Morin. Morin would catch 3 passes for 96 yards and a TD. Morin also intercepted Woodbridge QB Antevius Jackson. Defensively Westfield was led by



**Westfield center Bryan Jewell #69 blocks for teammate Eugene Asante #8.**

Nolan Cockrill, Saadiq Hinton and Taylor Morin.

The Bulldogs face a familiar foe, Oscar Smith, while seeking their third consecutive 6A State Championship. In 2015 Westfield defeated Oscar Smith 49-42; last year in 2016 Westfield defeated Oscar Smith 34-28. The game will be played Saturday Dec. 9 at 4:30 p.m. on the campus of Hampton University at Armstrong Stadium.



**Taylor Morin #2 explodes by a Woodbridge defender on one of his four receptions.**



**Eugene Asante # 8 rushed for 140 yards on 23 carries and 2 TDs.**



**Matt Cirillo #88 leaps over one of his linemen.**



**Joe Clancy # 36 powers his way down the field after pulling in a Noah Kim pass.**

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PHOTOS BY WILL PALENSCAR



# OPINION

FROM PAGE 6

- ❖ **Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services**, 8305-17B Richmond Highway, PO Box 15096, Alexandria, VA, 22309. 703-768-9419, [www.goodhousing.org/](http://www.goodhousing.org/). The mission of Good Shepherd Housing (GSH) is to reduce homelessness, increase community support, and promote self-sufficiency. GSH housing manages more than 70 housing units.
- ❖ **Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington Fairfax Area** operates clubs in two of the neediest areas of the county, Culmore and Mount Vernon/ Route 1 corridor, focusing on character and academic success. [www.bgcgw.org/fairfax](http://www.bgcgw.org/fairfax).
- ❖ **Christian Relief Services**, 8301 Richmond Highway, Suite 900, Alexandria, VA 22309, 703-317-9086, 703-317-9690, [christianrelief.org/](http://christianrelief.org/)
- ❖ **Friends of Guest House Northern Virginia** offers structure, supervision, support and assistance to female ex-offenders who want to improve their lives and break the cycle of incarceration. Friends of Guest House offers the only program for women of its kind in Northern Virginia. One East Luray Ave., Alexandria, VA 22301-2025, 703-549-8072, [info@friendsofguesthouse.org](mailto:info@friendsofguesthouse.org), [friendsofguesthouse.org/](http://friendsofguesthouse.org/)
- ❖ **Wright to Read** 703-299-9854, [www.wrighttoread.org](http://www.wrighttoread.org). Provides volunteer-based, one-to-one tutoring and mentoring to City of Alexandria public elementary school children in need. Funds are needed to provide field trips and enrichment activities, books and other resources. For more information about Wright to Read and becoming a "Tutor/Mentor" see website.
- ❖ **Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia** transforms the lives of lower-income families in need by providing affordable homeownership opportunities in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax and Falls Church. Learn more at [www.habitatnova.org](http://www.habitatnova.org).
- ❖ **Alice's Kids** (@alicewillhelp), [aliceskids.org](http://aliceskids.org), P.O. Box 60, Mount Vernon, VA 22121. When a child is raised in poverty they suffer both publicly and privately. When there is no food in the refrigerator, no electricity nor heat, these are hardships that they can keep hidden from their peers. But, when that same child can't afford to pay for the band field trip, a pair of glasses, a chorus outfit or a new pair of shoes, these are indignities that are evident to their classmates. Alice's Kids pays for these relatively inexpensive items in the hopes of preserving the dignity of the child. Alice's Kids helps children from all over the Mount Vernon area through small acts of kindness.
- ❖ **The Community Foundation of Northern Virginia** has launched its Permanent Fund campaign, a community endowment which is a forever source to provide critical support for those in need in the Northern Virginia region; Consider leaving a legacy through a current or planned gift to the Permanent Fund at the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia. [www.cfnova.org/permanentfund](http://www.cfnova.org/permanentfund).
- ❖ **The Historic Pohick Church Foundation**, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton, VA 22079, 703-339-6572. The Historic Pohick Church, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, has played a central role in the history of our country, founded by George Washington, George Mason, and others. The Historic Pohick Church Foundation is a nonprofit, charitable corporation that was established in 1983 for the maintenance, upkeep, and preservation of the historic colonial-era Pohick Church building and the surrounding churchyard.
- ❖ **Rising Hope**, 8220 Russell Road, Alexandria, VA 22309, [risinghopeumc.org](http://risinghopeumc.org). Supports poor and homeless people along the Route 1 Corridor. To volunteer, donate in-kind contributions or partner with Rising Hope in other ways, contact Kat Roman at [kroman@risinghopeumc.org](mailto:kroman@risinghopeumc.org) or 703-360-1976.
- ❖ **The Literacy Council of Northern Virginia**, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church, Virginia 22042, 703-237-0866, [lcnv.org](http://lcnv.org), teaches adults to speak, read, write and understand English at the most basic level. The organization has been around for 55 years, and serves Fairfax and Arlington Counties and the cities of Falls Church and Alexandria. Most of the students are immigrants, and they are mostly women, and low income.
- ❖ **Neighborhood Health Clinics**, [www.neighborhoodhealthva.org](http://www.neighborhoodhealthva.org), Improving health and advance health equity in Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax by providing access to high quality care regardless of ability to pay.

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## Context of Having Written



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I don't want to self-indulge too much about last week's column but, sometimes in my unexpressed desire to fulfill my writing obligation/not let me cancer/cancer treatment affect my schedule, I write my column under less-than-ideal circumstances.

Post chemotherapy/(last week) – the immediate week after, is about as challenging as it gets for me. I'm a bit irritable. I'm a bit out of sync/unable to focus. I'm somewhat impatient. My hands are shaky. My eyes are "squinty." I'm hungry yet I can't eat. My self-editing skills are below average – more than usual. And finally, my reading comprehension is mostly lost in the toxic haze. Still, I'm determined to make my deadline.

Not that any of the preceding paragraph is an excuse. It's more of an explanation as to why a column written with the best of intentions may have missed the mark in tone and substance. Though I've not received any feedback as yet confirming my sense of what I had written last week; nevertheless, my feeling upon submitting it to editorial was that I had wavered a bit. Unfortunately, I didn't have the balance emotionally or the ability physically to assess its content. I apologize in arrears for attempting to maintain its regularity.

And to that point, specifically to that word, that's what my attitude as a cancer patient has been about: regularity. Doing the things that I regularly/normally/typically do without deviating from my norm. Because for me, deviating from my norm, living/doing outside of my box – within reason, would be – to me anyway, reinforcing the negative that is most definitely a cancer diagnosis. A diagnosis with which I have long ago made my peace, made my choices and moreover, made my it goal to face the present/future with a positive attitude infused with as much self-effacing good humor as possible. It's nothing I really did intentionally, it is simply who I am: my father's son, with inherited sensibilities to live my life thinking the glass is half full, until it's not.

And so far, nearly nine years into a "13 month to two-year" prognosis, I'm living proof that either whatever I'm doing is working (and there's a bit more to the story) or I'm an incredibly lucky act of kindness for which there's no quantifiable explanation. Regardless, I'm not the least bit inclined to look a gift horse in the mouth and/or deny the possibility that my tumors are necrotic (dead). I'm very happy to accept the inexplicable fact that, statistically speaking, I'm an official anomaly: a stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer survivor.

However, since I'm not one to presume facts not yet in evidence, I'm still infused every six weeks, scanned quarterly and seen by my oncologist every three months. I don't for a second believe that somehow, after being diagnosed with a "terminal disease" in late February 2009, that life goes merrily along without consequences. Not that I'm a fatalist – Rebecca, I'm merely evaluating/introspecting/compartmentalizing and allocating precious emotional resources so I can live my life as I'm accustomed to doing.

And what I'm most accustomed to doing, especially dating back to December 1997, is writing a weekly column for Connection Newspapers. Though the columns published previous to June '09 were not "cancer" columns, as we call them, they were nonetheless written with the same passion and nonsensical prose as my "cancer" columns are. So, generally speaking, I am able, as my brother Richard says, "to churn out the dribble."

Still, writing is not like reading. Though a similar commitment is needed, writing requires a bit more effort. And it's been an effort I've sustained before, after and during my lung cancer diagnosis. Some weeks are harder than others. Last week was difficult. This week not so much.

Perhaps you agree?

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



# Special Education Business Partners Honored

FROM PAGE 3

program this year for the first time. “We’ll be getting our student intern soon,” said the Rev. Beth LaBella-Foster. “We have a large, food-pantry ministry serving over 20,000 people a year in western Fairfax County,” she said. “Our intern will help organize the donations that come in from our corporate and business partners. That person will also interact with the volunteers bringing in the food. We have a lot of student volunteers who get service hours, so this seemed like a natural fit — and it’s a mutual benefit for them, too.”

Another first-time participant is Fairfax City’s Sundog Productions, which manufactures and prints T-shirts. Owner Allison Moser has a Chantilly High student named Ryan helping in the print-shop area. “He helps clean the ink off our screens so they can be reused,” she said. “And he also helps in quality control, looking for any problems with the shirts. He works five days a week, and we’re hoping he’ll be a long-term for us — he’s a really nice kid.”

Telling why her company partnered with the school, Moser said, “We’re part of the community — this is what we do — and we need a lot of work done.” As for the breakfast, she said, “It’s fantastic. The food was wonderful, and I got to meet two other students who’ll straighten our inventory shelves. We’ll have four students all to-



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS

Attendees listen to the speakers before the breakfast begins.

gether, each working one hour a day.”

“Chantilly appreciates what we’re doing,” she continued. “And because we’re such an unusual factory — where people often do the same things each day — it’s often the right fit for these kids. And it helps with their self-confidence, too. Every job is important, and all our employees are, too. If they work hard, we’re happy to have them. We’re a big team and it takes everybody.”

Ken Crum is regional executive director of ServiceSource, which offers support services for people with disabilities, and this

business has partnered with the school for the past couple years. “We provide job coaching and communication skills, supporting the skills the students learn in their [career and transition classes], so they can achieve employment in the community,” he said. “This program [with Chantilly High] helps connect students with community employers and become successful in those jobs.” Crum said the breakfast is a wonderful idea. “It’s exciting to see all these community agencies come together to support a program like this,” he said.

Securis of Chantilly recycles electronics and shreds data and has partnered with the school for 10 years. “We receive seven or eight kids a year,” said CEO Jeremy Farber. “They tear own computers and we treat them like employees. We have training sessions and do evaluations. We want them to get the experience of what it’s like to be in the workplace.” “It’s also to help them get the confidence that they can be in the workforce,” continued Farber. “A lot of kids question how they can work in the real world. But the type of work we do is very conducive to people with disabilities. It’s repetitive, and we’re not worrying about damaging anything, so they have a lot of flexibility. And it’s just a good way to give back to the community.”

Furthermore, said Farber, “FCPS is a great outlet for that. In my opinion, the teachers who work in this program are amazing — they’re the best. Over the past 10 years, we’ve developed good relationships with the schools and students, and four of our student interns have even transitioned into full-time employment with us.”

Basically, he said, “Businesses have a responsibility to provide opportunities for people with disabilities. They need employment and are struggling finding places to work. So businesses should look within themselves and see where there are opportunities to hire people with disabilities.”

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### FRIDAY/DEC. 8

**Academy Open House.** 9:30-11:30  
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