

Fairfax Station

CONNECTION Clifton & Lorton

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Lauren Metrocavage from Fairfax Station wanted the bow at the ribbon-cutting for a new pro shop at the Burke Lake golf course on Saturday, Dec. 2.



Saint Leo the Great Catholic School

Saint Leo the Great Catholic School community leads by the example of Jesus, with respect and compassion for all, to foster faith and academic growth.

Open Houses

Wed, December 13, 2017 10:00am
Sun, January 28, 2018 12:00pm
Thu, February 8, 2018 10:00am

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- Active Board technology is present in every classroom for hands on learning, which improves your child's cognitive abilities and critical thinking skills.
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- Three mobile labs and 15,000 volume media center assists with providing a multi-faceted learning approach to our science and social studies curriculum.
- Spanish is offered in Kindergarten through 8th Grade.
- St. Leo the Great offers a myriad of extracurricular activities, such as Robotic, Girls on the Run, Odyssey of the Mind, Art/Math Clubs
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- We have an award winning Band program and a beginning and advanced Strings program.



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www.saintleothegreatschool.org

News

Fairfax Station Temple, Burke Church Hold Joint Thanksgiving Service

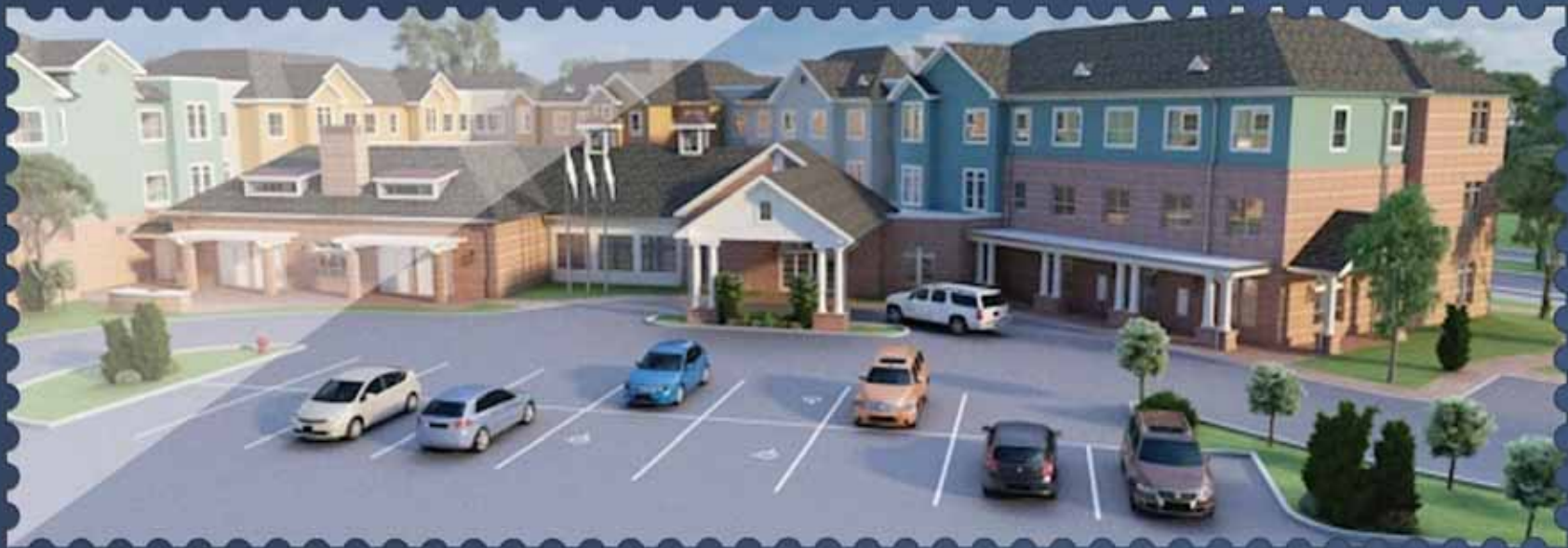
For the 31st consecutive year, Temple B'nai Shalom, Fairfax Station, and The Lutheran Church of the Abiding Presence, Burke, held a joint worship service on Thanksgiving Eve. This year's standing-room-only service at Abiding Presence was even more special since Senior Rabbi, Amy R. Perlin, D.D., was on the pulpit for her final Thanksgiving Eve sermon. Rabbi Perlin has announced her retirement from Temple B'nai Shalom effective July 1, 2018. Abiding Presence honored Rabbi Perlin by naming her their very own "Rabbi Emirita," gifting her with a tapestry, and contributing to Lorton Community Action Center enough money to buy 4,000 pounds of food for those in need in our area.



PHOTO BY FRANK KOHN PHOTOGRAPHY

From left: Rev. Heidi Eickstadt, Rabbi Amy R. Perlin, D.D., Rev. Thomas Bailey, Rev. Meredith Lovell Keseley, Rabbi Laura Rappaport, D.D.

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Police To Add Body Cameras

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

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

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



Bryan Hill, new county executive



Stella Koch



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



John Cook, Braddock Supervisor

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/board-committees/meetings/2017/oct10-public-safety-body-worn-cameras-draft-policy.pdf

TWO BOARDS, ONE FAIRFAX

The Board of Supervisors and School Board adopted a joint social and racial equity policy called One Fairfax.

The Board of Supervisors joined the School Board by adopting the policy on Tuesday, Nov. 21, one day after the School Board.

"I dare say we've spent thousands of hours on this policy and I think it's reached a point when it is time to approve it," said Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay, adding that he judges this his most important action in the 10 years he has served on the board.

"This goes across all that we do," said Hunter Mill District Supervisor Cathy Hudgins.

The policy identifies 17 areas of focus including housing, education, community and economic development, environment and transportation.

"What we are doing here is not guaranteeing that everybody is going to be successful because that really goes to the individual, but what we can do is ensure that this board and Fairfax County ensure ... that everybody in Fairfax County has an opportunity to succeed," said Chairman Sharon Bulova.

"I believe philosophically at our core, we believe in equity and our community reflects that, and our community wants that," said McKay.

"Far too often, I have found that some people in my community aren't at the table,

but they rely on us to be there at the table for them. And they rely on us to make sure their county government represents them as individuals."

Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity had concerns how to measure the efforts or define success.

"From the very beginning of this policy discussion, I've asked several simple questions that I haven't been able to receive an answer for," Herrity said. "I support every one of our residents having equal opportunities to succeed and I believe our county and staff are committed to that as am I. But I can't support a new government bureaucracy for a problem that no one can quantify and for which there are too few definitions or measures of success or impact."

Read the resolution at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/2016/one-fairfax-resolution.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."

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 recommendations. 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.

To read the report, see www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/eqac/report2017/.

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. Pre

SEE COUNTY NEWS, PAGE 5



The ribbon is cut for the new clubhouse at Burke Lake Golf Course.



Supervisor Pat Herrity at the podium.

New Clubhouse and Snack Bar Greet Burke Golfers

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The golfing experience at Burke Lake was ratcheted up a notch when officials cut the ribbon on a new pro shop Saturday, Dec. 2. Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) didn't reminisce about riding his bike to the course as he was growing up in the area — a common opener for supervisors at ribbon cuttings lately — but praised the new addition nonetheless. "I think people are going to enjoy it for a long time to come," he said.

Gus Johnson was heading out for nine holes as the sun was sinking late in the day. One of the best things about the Burke Lake course is that it's a par-three course and can be played quickly compared to some longer courses around the county. "The other one [clubhouse] was pretty pathetic, the course itself is always nice," he said.

The opening of the clubhouse is the final part of the \$6.6 million redevelopment project that was funded by voter-approved park bonds in 2008 and 2012, according to county information. Inside the 4,000 square foot building there are four offices, a pro shop, a full kitchen, and a snack bar with

indoor and outdoor seating. Everything is Americans with Disabilities Act compliant.

"That's the one main reason we did this, to make it accessible," said Eric Inman of the Fairfax County Park Authority.

The full kitchen expands their food choices and enables them to serve beer on tap, both of which can be accessed by patrons at the driving range as well, expanding the attraction for the whole facility. "This building helps support the driving range," added Inman. The driving range hours go until 11 p.m. now and new food choices include pizza, steak and cheese sandwiches and burgers.

The marketing department is getting the word out about the new facilities with ads, a video for the Golf Channel, and "a postcard to 50,000 residents," said Roberta Korzen, the golf marketing specialist.

As Herrity arrived to cut the ribbon, he looked at the spot where the old clubhouse was and there was nothing but a new field of grass and no sign of the 1970s-era clubhouse. "Unbelievable," Herrity said. That spot will be the new putting green and the old putting green will be turned into a practice chipping facility. The former clubhouse didn't offer some of the new features that



Lauren Metrocavage from Fairfax Station is handed the bow.



Fore!

could bring in people and money.

Michael Thompson, the Springfield representative on the Fairfax County Park Authority Board said it partly came down to

the "business realities we faced for parks and golf courses in the county," he said. "It's better for our users and the Park Authority as a whole," Thompson said.



County zoning official Pete Murphy listens to the speeches.



The snack bar is bigger and has more selections.

NEWS

County News Roundup

FROM PAGE 3

viously, 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.

He earned his master's degree in public administration from the University of Southern California and his bachelor's in public administration from Alfred University.

Bulova thanked Kirk Kincannon, who was the acting county executive since Long's retirement in September.

COUNTY'S FIRST TENANT RESIDENT CURATOR

The county extended its first lease through the Resident Curator program to a Coast Guard officer.

The county's Resident Curator Program is designed to preserve historic properties by offering long-term leases to qualified tenants who will rehabilitate and maintain the historic houses. A curator can be a private citizen, a nonprofit entity, or a for-profit entity, according to county documents.

"It is really a wonderful opportunity and a great pleasure to be the first of what I think will be a number of properties in Fairfax County ..." said Storck, "to bring back to life housing which is old and historic and meaningful to all of us."

The Board of Supervisors approved the lease of the historic Stempson House at 7520 Furnace Road in Lorton to Steven J.

McCullough for eight years and eight months to renovate the historic home.

"This is the first time we are doing this, you are our first tenant," said Bulova said to McCullough.

The Stempson House gets its historic significance from its association with the Occoquan Workhouse and Reformatory and the Women's Suffrage movement of the early 1900s, according to Resident Curator Program documents.

The United States purchased the land in 1910 to construct the prison. "In 1937, amongst the Lorton Reformatory orchard trees, prisoners constructed a residence for a prison officer. It is likely that prisoners constructed the house, under the direction of prison engineers, using bricks manufactured at the prison brick kiln. Ultimately, the residence was converted for use by the prison security office."

The 1,500 square-foot-house is described as a "vernacular style residence with Colonial Revival style elements."

Other applications are pending for the Turner Farm House, 10609 Georgetown Pike, in Great Falls and the Ellmore Farmhouse on West Ox Road in Herndon. The county intends to continue its programs at the Ash Grove in Tysons, Lahey Lost Valley in Vienna, and Hannah P. Clark (Enyedi) House in Lorton.

See www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/press/html/ir141-16.htm

Learn more about the Resident Curator program and other properties at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rcp.

FAITH NOTES

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

The Guhyasamaja Buddhist Center, 10875 Main St., Fairfax City provides free classes to both newcomers and advanced practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism. The center emphasizes working with the mind and learning how to understand the workings of the mind, overcoming inner causes of suffering, while cultivating causes of happiness. Under the direction of Lama Zopa Rinpoche, the center is a place of study, contemplation and meditation. Visit www.guhyasamaja.org for more information.

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church, 6720 Union Mill Road, Clifton, conducts Sunday masses at 7:30 a.m., 8:45 a.m., Latin mass at 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. It also offers a Saturday vigil at 5:30 p.m. and a Thursday Latin mass at 7 p.m. Additional mass offered Monday-Friday at 6:30 a.m. (except on Federal holidays) and 8:45 a.m. 703-

817-1770 or www.st-andrew.org.

Clifton Baptist Church, 7152 Main St. Clifton, is a small Bible-believing church offering worship service on Sunday at 11 a.m., with Bible Study on Wednesday at 12:30 p.m.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 8304 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield, offers casual worship services on Saturday evenings at 5:30 p.m. featuring contemporary music. More traditional services take place on Sunday mornings at 8:15 and 11 a.m. Sunday School is from 9:45-10:45 a.m. for children and adults. The church also offers discussion groups for adults. 703-451-5855 or www.popl.org.

Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria, offers traditional Sunday church services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. plus Sunday School classes for all ages at 9:45 a.m. Childcare is available 8:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. 703-971-5151 or admin@franconiaumc.org or www.franconiaumc.org.

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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. 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 for more info about Share.
- ❖ **Herndon-Reston FISH** (Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help), 336 Victory Drive, Herndon, 703-391-0105, 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. 703-437-1776 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
- ❖ **Northern Virginia Family Service**. 571-748-2500, 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. 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.
- ❖ **Touching Heart** in Herndon is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate children to have giving hearts. 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.
- ❖ **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 or 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.
- ❖ **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.
- ❖ **Lamb Center**, day center for homeless, Fairfax. 703-691-3178, 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 or www.foodforothers.org. Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
- ❖ **Ecumenical Community Helping Others** (ECHO). 703-569-9160, 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/. Volunteers

are needed for these events as well. Register online at lortonaction.org or call 703-339-5161, ext. 140 or email 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 or visit 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.
- ❖ **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/
- ❖ **Mount Vernon At Home**, 703-303-4060, 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, 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.
- ❖ **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; 703-237-2035 x125; 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, www.pathwayhomes.org, www.pathwayhomes.org/support-pathway/.

SEE GIVE LOCALLY. PAGE 15

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COMMENTARY

Don't Sponsor Parties With Alcohol for Minors

By JOHN C. COOK
SUPERVISOR (R-BRADDOCK DISTRICT)

The holidays are a time for celebration. And as our teenagers progress through high school, there are a series of celebratory events – prom, graduation, the last football game or track meet, etc. How families celebrate at home is their own business. But when others outside the home are involved, it can become the community's interest. That is the case with serving alcohol to minors.

If you are holding parties for youth outside of your family in your home, or allowing your children to do so, and alcohol is being served to youth under the age of 21, then you are breaking the law. More importantly, you are endangering young lives.

Please stop. If you don't, the county will stop you. At my motion, the Board of Supervisors unanimously directed our Police Department to arrest parents who host for minors parties where alcohol is served. We care about our kids.

The adolescent brain is still developing its ability to engage in reasoned thought. When alcohol is introduced, the brain's reasoning capability is further reduced. This is why youth who drink alcohol are even more susceptible to risky behaviors and peer pressure.

At its worst, teen drinking can result in drunk driving, assault, drug use, teen pregnancy, injury, or even death. When parents provide youth with alcohol, they are directly endangering the lives of those youth who drink.

Serving alcohol to youth is also a missed opportunity



nity to set a good example.

The 2016 Fairfax County Youth Survey shows that 93 percent of teens do not drink alcohol when their parents clearly conveyed their belief that it was very wrong to drink underage. But when teens thought their parents were ok with underage drinking, then 53 percent did drink.

Our kids may not listen to us, but they do watch us and learn from us. We should all be positive role models for the

youth in our community, both in our homes and outside.

Why do some parents serve alcohol to their children's friends? Some believe it strengthens their bonds to their own children. Others believe it will make their kids more popular. Some may believe it makes them (as parents) more popular with kids. Others believe that kids will drink anyway, so it would be better if they did so under some sort of supervision.

To be blunt, none of these reasons is a good reason. There are far more constructive ways to be popular than to serve alcohol, and adults, especially parents, have an additional responsibility to be good role models.

I strongly support the parents' organization "Parents Who Host Lost the Most." Parents who serve alcohol to other kids need to be held accountable.

Every year some youth in our county die needlessly, or are badly injured or otherwise subject to harmful results, due to drinking alcohol. Let's join together to help our kids stay safe. And for those who don't wish to join us, please know our police department will be out looking for you. Don't serve alcohol to minors.

Well done and a special tip of the fire helmet to (pictured, from left), Firefighter Arthur Claiborne, Technician Adam Bartman, Firefighter Kathryn Buist and Lt. Matthew Nacy.



PHOTO COURTESY OF
FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE &
RESCUE DEPARTMENT

Firefighters Demonstrate Holiday Spirit

Over the weekend, Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department crews were dispatched for a citizen who fell from a ladder while installing Christmas lights around the outside of the home. The citizen was transported to an area hospital for treatment of non-life threatening injuries received as a result of the fall.

After the patient was transported from the scene, the crew from Tower Ladder 440, Fairfax Center, decided to complete the task of placing the rest of the lights around the home. In the spirit of the holiday season, they felt it important that the patient and family not have to worry about trying to finish getting their Christmas lights up.

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WELLBEING

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 non-profit 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 up-lifted, 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 or

For More Information

Interfaith Works – www.iworksmc.org

SOME – some.org

HOPE Pregnancy Care Center – 703-536-2020

SEE ACTS OF KINDNESS, PAGE 14

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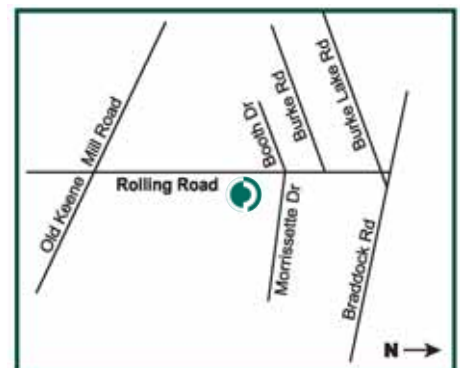
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Brand new Gingerbread Man House for the public to visit with Santa, just next to the Mini Golf area. “We want to keep all our visitors warm and dry. This helps break the wind and keeps the heat and it is really pretty and makes us all look more like the Holidays,” said Mrs. Claus

Feeling the Season at Burke Lake Park

Winter Wonderland: Invitation to celebrate the Christmas spirit.

You can start your visit with Santa or end it with Santa at Burke Lake Park’s Winter Wonderland. Either way, the elves will receive you with an ethereal glow, serving hot chocolate and candy canes. Mrs. Claus will make sure that you look your best when you take a photo with Santa.

On your way to get your tickets for a ride on the Holiday Express Train or the Caroler’s Carousel, you will be serenaded by

“Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” and invited by the warmth of the fire and the smell of the s’mores to get into the Christmas spirit.

Winter Wonderland at Burke Lake Park is open next weekend, Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 9 and 10, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and features Holiday Express Train Rides, Caroler’s Carousel, Gingerbread Man’s golf and visit with Santa, including hot chocolate and s’mores. Passes are \$15 through the day before the event: \$20 if purchased the day of the event. Pick up passes at the ice cream parlor the day of the event.

To learn more, call 703-323-6600 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burkelakepark.

— HANAN DAQQA



PHOTOS BY HANAN DAQQA/THE CONNECTION

The Elves with their magical candy canes welcome visitors to meet Santa Claus in the Gingerbread Man House.



Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus, volunteering for the third year at the Winter Wonderland at Burke Lake Park. They welcome visitors Saturday and Sunday, Dec 2,3,9, and 10 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Deron Benett, from Burke, an active duty Navy volunteering at Winter Wonderland at Burke Lake Park in a Christmas tree costume. Special things happening: “We are getting a real tree instead of a fake one, so we are going to enjoy picking that out, decorating it and putting it up in the house. It will be our first Christmas together, me and my fiancé,” said Benett.



Frank Vandenberg, a software engineer from Reston, with son Ian celebrating at Burke Lake Park. Ian is homeschooled and wishes for a nice and peaceful time this Christmas.



What is next for Rob McAllister from Burke and his children Ryan and Kelly after a ride on the train at the Winter Wonderland at Burke Lake Park? Hot chocolate and s’mores?



Kellen Furry and daughter Hazel, “almost 3 years old,” from Alexandria on the train at Burke Lake Park. Hazel wants a ride in the carousel next and a pink horse for Christmas. Children age 10 and younger must be accompanied by an adult registered for the same ride package. Children, younger than 2, ride free but must pay for other activities.

lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known



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HOLIDAYS 2017

Connor, 17, Dillan, 11, and Ashton Burke, 13, of Burke with Santa.

PHOTOS BY
STEVE HIBBARD/
THE CONNECTION



Sensory Friendly Santa Event at Springfield Town Center

50 people with all spectrums of special needs have their photos taken with Santa.

For the first time, Springfield Town Center hosted a Sensory Friendly Santa event for about 50 people with sensory, physical, and developmental needs on Sunday, Dec. 3, 2017. This event allowed families with children with all spectrums of special needs to experience a Santa visit in a comforting environment prior to regular mall hours. There were also tables set up for coloring and playing with Play-Doh.

"We've just made some small changes like dimming the lights, turning off the mall music and eliminating the wait in line in order to make it easier for these children to enjoy their visit with Santa," said Kimberly Baldy, Marketing Director with Springfield Town Center.

Baldy said the target audience is children with autism and Down Syndrome or any child who has a limited attention span, doesn't do well in crowds, or has some behavioral disabilities. She added that this week alone there are 375 Sensory Friendly Santa events throughout the country. The mall partnered with Autism Speaks and Cherry Hill Programs, which executed the photos and provided the Santa during the holiday season.

Added Fay Painter, Executive Director, National Capital Chapter of Autism Speaks: "Children with autism have challenges with social skills, communication, and repetitive behaviors and many have sensory issues; they want to dart from large crowds, loud noises, bright lights, and so we are providing this experience to enable magic to happen for children and their families."

— STEVE HIBBARD



Elizabeth Dulac, 8 months, of Franconia with Santa during the Sensory Friendly Santa Event at Springfield Town Center on Sunday, Dec. 3, 2017.



Gerald and Grant Santiago, 7, of Burke do some coloring.

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Delphine and Monty Baker of Springfield with Santa during the Sensory Friendly Santa Event at Springfield Town Center on Sunday, Dec. 3, 2017.

PHOTOS BY
STEVE HIBBARD/
THE CONNECTION



Aiden George of Lorton visits Santa with mom Rachel.

Joseph Zelnis, 11, and his dad Chuck of Springfield admire the Christmas tree.



CALENDAR

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HOLIDAY FUN & ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

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

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

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

"Peekaboo! A Nativity Play." Through Dec. 24, 8 p.m. at The John Swayze Theatre, New School of Northern Virginia, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. The Hub Theatre presents "Peekaboo! A Nativity Play." Call 703-674-3177 or visit www.thehubtheatre.org.

Senior Line Dancing. Mondays, 1 p.m.; Fridays, 10-11:30 a.m. at Little River Glen Senior Center, 4001 Barker Court, Fairfax. Line Dancing is a gentle, social form of aerobic activity. Studies have shown it aids in warding off Alzheimer's disease. No previous experience needed. Cost: \$5 per 8-week session. Email barbriba@hotmail.com or call 703-524-3739.

Fairfax Pets on Wheels New Volunteer Orientation. An orientation for new volunteers interested in visiting residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities with their approved pets through the Fairfax Pets On Wheels program is held the first Wednesday of every month starting at 7:30 p.m. Visit www.fpow.org for each month's location. Prior to attending, please complete the online application found at www.fpow.org/volunteer. www.fpow.org, 703-324-5424 or dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Carolina Shag. Wednesdays, 6:30-10 p.m. at Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m. No partners needed. Dinner menu. \$8. Under 21 free. nvshag.org.

FUN-Exercise Thursdays, noon-12:50 p.m. at Grace Presbyterian Church Family Room, 7434 Bath St., Springfield. Inova certified exercise instructor leads a moderate level exercise class with music and current events conversation. Muscle, Balance, Strength Training using stretch bands and weights both standing and seated exercises. Instructor donation is \$5. moorefitt@yahoo.com or 703-499-6133.

Exercise Program Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 a.m. year-round at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. The exercises are for strength, balance and maintaining limberness. Contact SCFB office at 703-426-2824 for more information.

Cafe Ivrit (Hebrew Cafe). Wednesdays. 8:15-9:15 a.m. Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Shalom (hello) Did you always want to converse in Hebrew? Join Na'ama each week for conversational Hebrew. You will



Holiday Play

The Hub Theatre presents "Peekaboo! A Nativity Play" through Dec. 24, 8 p.m. at The John Swayze Theatre, New School of Northern Virginia, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. Call 703-674-3177 or visit www.thehubtheatre.org.

learn and practice Hebrew in a fun and interactive way while learning more about Israel. Free, however we ask that you try to attend regularly. RSVP Naama.Gold@jccnv.org.

English Conversation Groups weekly at George Mason, Burke Centre, and Lorton Libraries Practice and improve your English. Day and start times vary. Visit: va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/eventcalendar.asp

FRIDAY/DEC. 8

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

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

SATURDAY/DEC. 9

Christmas at George Mason's Gunston Hall. 10-7 p.m. at George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. A full day of holiday activities starts with a visit from Santa and games and crafts for all ages. Call 703-550-9220 ext. 240 or email mkcraver@gunstonhall.org for more.

Lunch with Santa. 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

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

The Messiah - The Northern Virginia Chorale. 8 p.m. at St. Mark's Church, 5800 Backlick Road, Springfield. Orchestra and professional vocal soloists will perform an evening of selections from Handel's Messiah. \$25 for Adults; \$10 for students (12-24); Children under 12 free. Visit www.northernvirginiachorale.org.

Carolers and Stage Performers. 8

p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Performers from the Workhouse Cabaret and Theatre series take the stage to perform the most loved music of the season. \$15 adults; \$10 student. Visit workhousearts.org.

DEC. 9-10

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

SUNDAY/DEC. 10

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

Unveiling Eagle Sculpture. 2 p.m. at Mason Neck Park, Mason Neck State Park Visitor Center, 7301 High Point Road, Lorton. The sculpture is named "Spirit of America" by the nationally renowned artist, Mike Curtis of Sagle, Idaho, and is part of a multi-year renovation of the park's visitor center. Visit masonneckstateparkfriends.org.

FRIDAY/DEC. 15

Fairfax Art League Art and Lunch. 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. at City Hall Annex, 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax. Call 703-385-7855 for more.

Sherwood Family Movie. 7 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway. Featuring "Beauty and the Beast" (2017). participants may bring their own snacks. Britepaths will accept donations of non perishable food. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 16

James and the Giant Peach. Shows at 12:30, 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. at the

GMU Harris Theatre, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. When James is sent by his conniving aunts to chop down their old fruit tree, he discovers a magic potion that grows a tremendous peach that rolls into the ocean and launches a journey of enormous proportions. Visit www.afyp.org for more.

Boy Scout Anniversary

Celebration. 5-8 p.m. at Clifton Presbyterian Church, Main St., Clifton. BSA Troop 1104 50th Anniversary Celebration, those who belong or belonged to the troop or Venture Crew 99 members to come and join the celebration. Email BSATroop1104VentureCrew99@gmail.com or call 703-867-2707 for more.

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

Christmas in Fairfax. 7 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run. Theater production. Call 703-219-2200 for more.

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 for more.

Nativity Play. 2 p.m. at Swayze Theater, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. HUB Theatre: Peekaboo! A Nativity Play. Call 703-219-2200 for more.

MONDAY/DEC. 18

Bob Brown Puppets Holiday Show. 10:30 a.m. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts.

THURSDAY/DEC. 21

Friday Morning Music Club. noon-1 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Sponsored

by the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fmmc.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 24

Celtic Carols by Candlelight. 9:30-10 p.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Hear Celtic instruments and sing Christmas carols featuring the hammered dulcimer, Irish flute, pennywhistle; harp-guitar, cittern, mandolin, fiddle and Celtic harp. Donations go to FACETS and ECHO. Christmas Vigil Service will follow. Visit www.standrews.net for more.

FRIDAY/DEC. 29

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Call 703-219-2200 for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 30

Art and Lunch. noon-3 p.m. at Village Gallery, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. Bring lunch and enjoy the company of other artists. Free and open to the public. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net or call 703-587-9481.

SUNDAY/DEC. 31

Fairfax 4 Miler. 6 p.m. at Pacers Running Fairfax, 10427 North St., Fairfax. Celebrating their ninth year, the Fairfax Four is a favorite for its post-race pizza party and sweatshirt premium. Call 703-537-0630 for more.

FRIDAY/JAN. 5

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Call 703-273-3638 or visit www.fairfaxvfd.com for more.

MONDAY/JAN. 8

Funday Monday. 10:30 a.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts. Funday Monday will offer a variety of children's activities and entertainment in Old Town Hall. Free. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

THURSDAY/JAN. 11

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

FRIDAY/JAN. 12

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Call 703-273-3638 or visit www.fairfaxvfd.com for more.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 27

Irish Dancing Show. 7 p.m. in the George Mason University Center for the Arts' Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. "Stepping Out" by Dublin Irish Dance, an exploration of the Celtic experience through the fast footwork of Irish step-dancers and an eight-member traditional Irish band. Call calling 888-945-2468, or visit cfa.gmu.edu for more.

THURSDAY/JAN. 28

Birdland All-Stars Concert. 7 p.m. in the George Mason University Center for the Arts' Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. With drummer Tommy Igoe for a high-energy performance. Call 888-945-2468 or visit cfa.gmu.edu.

12

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WELLBEING

Acts of Kindness Can Boost Wellbeing

FROM PAGE 8

ganization 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."

BULLETIN BOARD

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

SATURDAY/DEC. 9

Office Hours. Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck will host Saturday office hours. Email mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov.
❖ 9-11:30 a.m. at Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton.
❖ 12:30-3 p.m. at the Mount Vernon district office, 2511 Parkers Lane, Mount Vernon.

MONDAY/DEC. 11

Blue Christmas. 7 p.m. at King of Kings Lutheran Church, 4025 Kings Way, Fairfax. Christmas can be a painful time for some. King of Kings Lutheran Church offers a special Blue Christmas service with prayers, scripture, candle lighting and music acknowledging that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle. Everyone is welcome. Visit www.kofk.org/ or call 703-378-7272.

Community Meetings. 7:30 p.m. at Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Braddock District Supervisor John Cook and the Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) will host a community meetings focused on specific sections of Braddock Road this fall. This meeting is on the Burke Lake intersection. The goal of the Braddock Road Multimodal Study is to develop commuting improvements for the corridor from Guinea Road to

I-495 to Ravensworth Road. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/braddockroadmstudy/.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 13

Annual Taste of Braddock. 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Braddock Hall in the Kings Park Library, 9002 Burke Lake Road. Supervisor John C. Cook invites the Braddock District residents to join with their friends and neighbors at annual Open House to mark the start of the holiday season. Enjoy food donated by Braddock area businesses and share in the spirit provided by area residents. RSVP at 703-425-9300 or email to braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

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.

ONGOING

Volunteers needed at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Museum offers a variety of exciting volunteer opportunities in Museum events, programs and administration. Contact volunteers@fairfax-station.org or 703-945-7483 to explore services that will fit your schedule and interests. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, or call 703-425-9225.

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 or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke serves those 50 and older who no longer drive. Volunteer drivers are needed for trips (Monday-Friday) to medical appointments and companion shopping within the Fairfax/Burke area. Office workers are needed to answer phones in the SCFB office (Monday-Friday) to match drivers and those who need rides. Call 703-323-4788.

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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/. 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.
- ❖ **Christian Relief Services**, 8301 Richmond Highway, Suite 900, Alexandria, VA 22309, 703-317-9086, 703-317-9690, 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, friendsofguesthouse.org/
- ❖ **Wright to Read** 703-299-9854, 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.
- ❖ **Alice's Kids** (@alicewillhelp), 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.
- ❖ **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. 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 or 703-360-1976.
- ❖ **The Literacy Council of Northern Virginia**, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church, Virginia 22042, 703-237-0866, 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, 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.

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