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The Santa display in front of
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Federal Tax Reform, Bad for Fairfax?

Supervisors split on effects of eliminating state and local tax deductions.

BY KEN MOORE

Most often, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors appears unified. But last week, discussion about the pending tax reform measure in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives sparked discord.

"My primary concern on the federal package is that we are emphasizing on page one opposition to federal tax reform and that is a position that I simply do not agree with," said Braddock Supervisor John Cook.

The board adopted its updated and revised strategies and principles for the 115th Congress on Tuesday, Dec. 5, despite objections voiced by Cook and Springfield Supervisor Pat Herrity, the two Republicans on the 10-person board.

"The concept of reducing tax rates and eliminating deductions is one needed for the national economy and I am disappointed that despite my requests and Supervisor Herrity's requests, the board is only looking at one side of the tax reform issue and that is the elimination of deductions, and not looking at the other side which is the economic growth potential that come with the other aspects of it," Cook said.

MAJOR TAX REFORM packages have passed both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and a reconciled bill is expected to affect almost every aspect of the economy. The measures differ, but both increase the standard deduction and eliminate or cap many itemized deductions, including the deduction for state and local taxes and the deduction for mortgage interest payments.

In Virginia, 1.5 million households claim \$16.5 billion in state and local tax deductions, according to U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11). Connolly said in a release that 280,000 households claim this deduction in Fairfax County, for an average deduction of \$16,535.

"As a matter of fact, that [federal tax] bill was structured in a way, in my opinion, to explicitly discriminate against more urban localities across the country which do have higher assessed values," said Lee Supervisor Jeff McKay, "and in a lot of cases higher tax rates because they believe morally that we must provide certain services for our population."

Page 1 of the Board of Supervisors Strategies and Principles for the 115th Congress expresses concern about changes in tax policy:

"Because revenue options for localities in Virginia are extremely limited, the County

"I'm failing to understand anyone who believes this tax bill was built and predicated on helping low income people."

— Lee Supervisor Jeff McKay



"We are emphasizing on page one opposition to federal tax reform and that is a position that I simply do not agree with."

— Braddock Supervisor John Cook

"Across the nation, local governments are going to suffer as a result of this tax package."

— Dranesville Supervisor John Foust



opposes actions that impact County revenue sources or programs, including eliminating or capping federal deductibility for state and local taxes, which are used to fund education, public safety, transportation, infrastructure and human services (current law allows taxpayers to deduct state and local taxes paid from their federally taxable income, preventing double taxation and allowing state and local governments to maintain authority over the tax structures supporting those services).

JOHN FOUST, Dranesville District supervisor, found Cook's opinion hard to take.

"I just have to say, I just cannot accept that the tax package that is before the federal government is anything but destructive to local government which is where things are actually getting done these days," Foust said.

"To support elimination of the real estate tax deduction as a member of a Board of Supervisors, the local government, to me is just unbelievable," he said. "We absolutely are going to suffer, not just our local government, but, across the nation, local governments are going to suffer as a result of this tax package. We have to do everything we can to stop this."

Herrity countered, "You can't talk about that piece of it while ignoring the fact you're doubling the standard deduction and the value that brings especially to our low income residents."

"I'm failing to understand anyone who believes this tax bill was built and predicated on helping low income people," said McKay, chair of the Board's legislative committee. "I'm surprised I'm hearing it here today."

"Over 60 percent of our budget is built on revenue from real estate. To mess with or tinker with our largest source of revenue in any way that can have an effect on what people can sell their property for, what people can afford to buy and what their

bottom line is and how that bottom line affects the county's revenue — to ignore that would be absurd," McKay said. "It absolutely will have an effect and local governments across the country see that."

"I was going to be silent, but I think it is hard to do so," said Catherine Hudgins, Hunter Mill District supervisor. "The tax package really sounds like something that is going to be very destructive in the long term."

"Essentially this is taxing taxes, taxing tax revenues and doubling taxation," said Chairman Sharon Bulova.

Cook did not budge.

"I have to disagree vehemently with the statement that the tax bill takes away from our local tax revenue. It's absolutely false. It's absolutely false," said Cook.

Read Strategies and Principles for the 115th Congress here: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/legislation/2018/adopted-federal-legislative-strategy-and-principles.pdf

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM WITH A SIDE OF OPTIMISM?

During the same board meeting on Dec. 5, supervisors formally adopted the 2018 Legislative Program for the General Assembly, with a note of optimism based on changes in the makeup of the House of Delegates because of last month's elections.

Dan Storck, Mount Vernon District supervisor, said: "With recent elections we have the opportunity to change some of the dynamics, and some of the focus, and some of the results that we get from Richmond. That's essential for this county, essential for the wellbeing of residents here and I would say particularly for schools."

Jeff McKay, chair of the board's legislative committee and Lee District supervisor reiterated the importance of schools as the county's top priority, citing particular concerns about state failure to provide any funds for teacher raises in FY17, and very

limited funds in FY18.

"Our [state legislative] program features state support for education as its top priority, and urges the state to fully meet its responsibility to adequately fund K-12," said McKay.

Virginia ranks 11th nationwide in per capita personal income, but 48th in state and local revenue as a percentage of personal income. Virginia ranks 38th nationwide in state per pupil funding. State K-12 spending per FCPS pupil was \$3,267 in FY 2016, while Fairfax County provided \$10,526.

TRANSPORTATION IS another priority.

"In this year's program, we've also elevated our WMATA position into its own priority statement which encourages the General Assembly to support dedicated funding and governance reforms for Washington Metrorail."

The region will have to work together to address Metro's critical funding needs, McKay said.

On other transportation issues, McKay emphasized the importance of transportation funding that is fair to Northern Virginia.

The Human Services Issues paper, which accompanies the legislative program, includes three priorities, according to McKay. "The first is increased state resources for the Children's Services Act. The second relates to increasing waiver rates and slots for those with developmental disabilities. And the third is state support for diversion services for nonviolent offenders experiencing mental health crises; this is in line with the county's diversion first initiative."

Herrity, Springfield District supervisor, was the lone vote against the legislative program this year. The program was adopted, including the Human Services issue paper, on Tuesday, Dec. 5.

Read the legislative priorities here: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/legislation/2018/adopted-2018-legislative-program.pdf

Read the human services issue paper here: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/legislation/2018/adopted-2018-human-services-issue-paper.pdf

NEW BRIDGE OVER THE POTOMAC?

The Legislative Program asserts the importance of addressing capacity and congestion crossing the Potomac River.

"The American Legion Bridge, one of the most heavily used in the region, is also the most congested. Since the largest number of vehicles traversing the American Legion Bridge travel between Fairfax and Montgomery Counties, the chokepoint created by this bridge requires long-term solutions. ... The volume of commuters demonstrate that another crossing is essential to mobility in the area. ... It is vital that the capacity needs across the Potomac River be addressed, including at the American Legion Bridge and Rosslyn Tunnel, to alleviate the existing congestion."

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NEWS

Six Overdoses by Deadly Heroin

Police believe six overdose deaths last week, five from opioids in Alexandria, Fairfax Station, McLean, Clifton, and Fairfax, were caused by a deadly strain of heroin.

"In my 20 years in Narcotics, I have never seen anything like this," according to Second Lt. James Cox of the Organized Crime and Narcotics Division.

According to the Fairfax County Police Department, "Our detectives believe there are batches of heroin currently on our streets which could be laced with fentanyl and carfentanyl, synthetic opioids which can be lethal even in the smallest doses."

Police won't know conclusively until lab results are conducted and concluded.

"The opioid crisis is an epidemic affecting localities everywhere," according to Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay.

"We need to work together to end this tragic addiction by helping those using and their families," he said.

Since the start of 2017, there have been 102 fatal overdoses in Fairfax County; 70 percent have already been confirmed to be opioid related, according to police.

Symptoms of opioid overdose include: loss of consciousness, nausea or vomiting, pinpoint pupils, snore-like gurgling sounds, low, shallow or erratic breathing, bluish, purple or ashen skin color, and fingernails turning blue or close to black.

"We don't want to see anyone else die. Please have a plan in place. You may remain anonymous," said Cox.



A kit used to attempt to revive people who have succumbed to potential opioid overdose, used in training volunteers.

Police urge people to call 911 if someone has overdosed. Fairfax County Fire and Rescue personnel carry Narcan, a medicine that can reverse an overdose when used quickly and correctly.

Narcan is available without a prescription at local pharmacy stores in Virginia.

Free training on how to use Narcan is available through the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board.

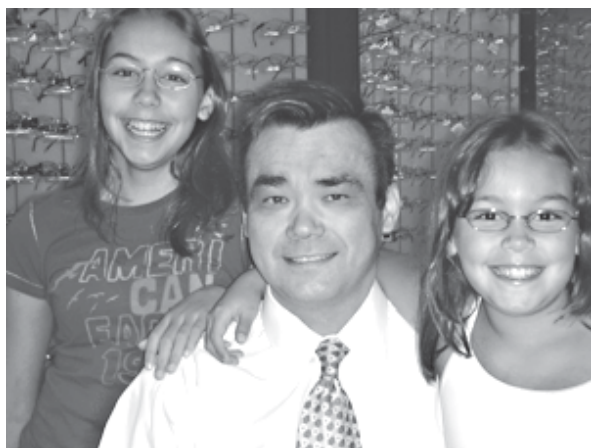
"If you or someone you know needs help to overcome drug dependence, please call the Community Services Board at Merrifield Center at 703-573-5679 to help find appropriate treatment and recovery services," according to police. "Walk-ins are also welcome Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m."

See www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/revive/.

— KEN MOORE

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

DAR Chapter Collects Gowns for Marine Corps Birthday Ball

Willie Jordan, Charitable Organization's Program Manager, Wounded Warrior Regiment, Marine Corps Base Quantico receiving evening gowns from members of Anna Maria Fitzhugh Chapter of Springfield. In anticipation of the Marine Corps Birthday Ball, members of Anna Maria Fitzhugh Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) in Springfield, collected more than 60 gently-used evening gowns and accessories for Wounded Warriors and their families. The evening gowns which were sent to Wounded Warrior Battalion-East at Camp Lejeune, N.C.



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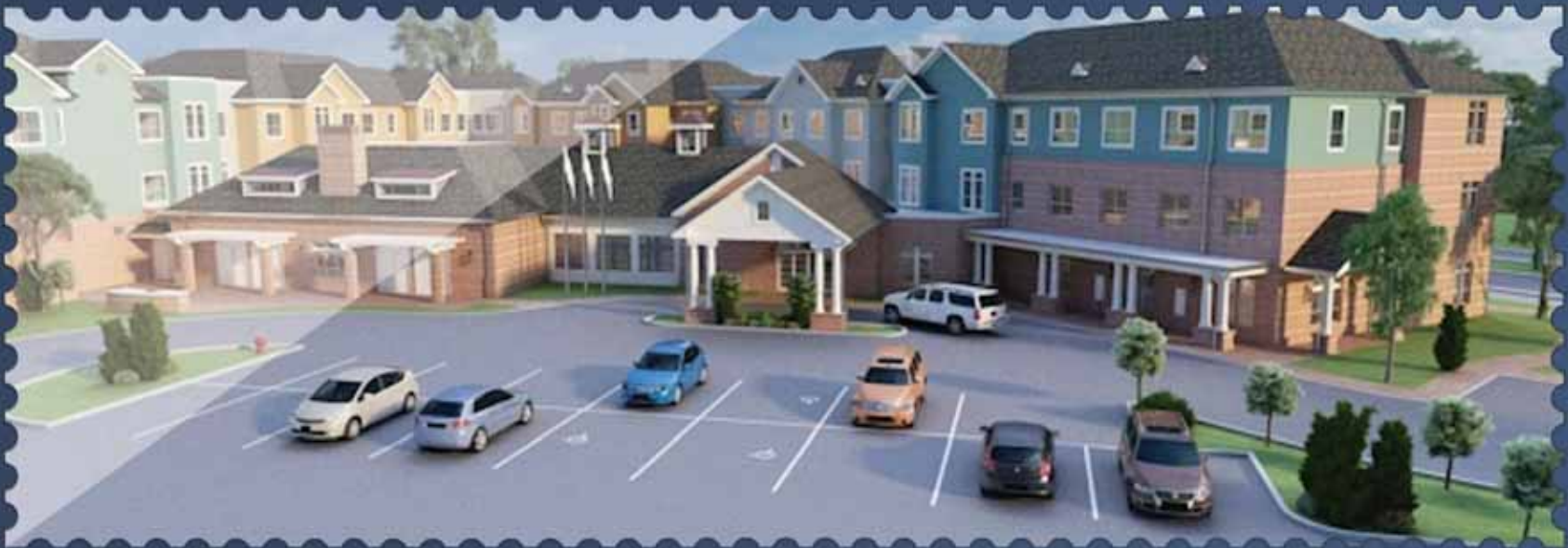
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OPINION

Save Healthcare for Children Right Now

If U.S. Senate fails to act soon, 69,000 children and pregnant women in Virginia, more than 8 million nationally, will lose health coverage.

The Children's Health Insurance Program, CHIP, provides health coverage to low-income, children with family incomes too high to qualify for Medicaid, up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level in Virginia, up to \$49,200 for a family of four. In Virginia, coverage under CHIP is called Family Access to Medical Insurance Security (FAMIS) and covers more than 69,000 children and pregnant women. More than 8.4 million children are covered nationally under CHIP.

Ironically, families with children covered under FAMIS (note that the S stands for "security") will receive letters this week letting them know that their medical insurance security ends in January unless the U.S. Senate acts to reauthorize (fund) CHIP by the end of the year. The House of Representatives passed a bill to reauthorize CHIP in November, funding it mostly through cuts to programs in the Affordable Care Act.

The letter to Virginia FAMIS participants reads:

"We are sending you this letter because these people in your family are enrolled in FAMIS or FAMIS MOMS:

"FAMIS and FAMIS MOMS are paid for by state and federal funds through the Children's Health Insurance Program known as CHIP. For

20 years CHIP has had the strong support of Congress and has been renewed many times. We are hopeful that Congress will once again provide the funding to continue this program. However, because Congress has not acted yet, we need to let you know that there is a chance the FAMIS programs may have to shut down.

"If Congress does not act soon, the FAMIS programs will end on Jan. 31, 2018."

Having tens of thousands of uninsured children is bad health policy for every Virginian. It's better for all children in school to have all children be able to access health care, both preventative care and care when they are sick.

According to a recent publication in the New England Journal of Medicine:

"The body of evidence summarized here indicates that coverage expansions significantly increase patients' access to care and use of preventive care, primary care, chronic illness treatment, medications, and surgery. These increases appear to produce significant, multifaceted, and nuanced benefits to health.

"Some benefits may manifest in earlier detection of disease, some in better medication adherence and management of chronic conditions, and some in the psychological well-being born of knowing one can afford care when one gets sick. ... Some of these changes will ultimately help tens of thousands of people live longer lives.

"Conversely, the data suggest that policies reducing coverage will produce significant harms to health, particularly among people with lower incomes and chronic conditions."

Also, having health coverage leads to greater financial security, and that helps the economy. "There is abundant evidence that having health insurance improves financial security," according to the same study.

Virginia's U.S. Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine have repeatedly called for a vote to reauthorize CHIP.

Yesterday, they said, "Today is a scary day for a lot of families in Virginia, and it was completely preventable. We asked Senator McConnell multiple times to help us support the 66,000 children and 1,100 pregnant women in Virginia who receive their health care through the CHIP program, but Republican leadership still hasn't brought it forward for a vote. There is a bipartisan bill on the table, and it's critical that we pass it before Congress leaves for the holidays so we can give some peace of mind to Virginia parents who are worried about whether their children will have health insurance in the new year."

We wish everyone peace of mind in the New Year.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

COMMENTARY

A Matter of Perspective

BY JEAN JIANOS

In Washington, D.C. it is common to see a tourist posing for a photo, trying to create the illusion that they are holding one of the monuments in the palm of their hand. A similar kind of photo was prominently displayed as a party gag at a birthday party for a friend. The man celebrating his birthday was shown in the photo talking with his hands. In the background of the photo was a bikini-clad friend, creating the illusion that he was cupping her breast in his hand, in effect groping her. Hilarious, right?

The man being roasted by his friends acted sheepishly, but he was not really embarrassed. After all, he was depicted as being in control and the dominant figure in the photo.

The female friend who was also present at the party was mortified and left the room angry and close to tears. Overreacting, right? No sense of humor.

Perhaps another person would have

laughed it off in an attempt to regain equal footing with all the other party guests, but then none of us would have recognized this for what it was — one of "those situations."

She purposely had not been consulted about the use of the photo because it was suspected she would object to her body being used as the brunt of a sexist joke. Her friends, a group of men and women, thought she shouldn't mind too much because she looked good in her bikini, but that was not our decision to make.

In that moment when the photo was revealed she went from being a peer to a prop. We were using someone else's body for our own entertainment and satisfaction at the expense of their dignity. We had put that other person in a position where they couldn't object before the fact and would feel bullied into not objecting after the fact. There is a right and a wrong. The only matter of perspective is whether we see it.

Jean Jianos is a local freelance writer.

LETTERS

Armed as For a War Zone

To the Editor:

I have followed the gun control correspondence with dismay. I hope nobody is under the misapprehension that a few tweaks like better gun purchase checks, closing some loopholes and clamping down on some fast fire gadgetry — all in themselves desirable — will somehow make a significant difference to America's national disgrace. While every gun death reduced is good, we are still not even in the right ballpark in dealing with the scale of the problem.

The reason Britain has negligible gun deaths compared to America is that gun ownership is very low, about 7 percent of America's figure, and guns are heavily regulated. As a result, there is no arms race between potential attacker and attacked and no arms race between criminal and police.

Most of the recent gun control proposals have been, frankly, marginal fiddling and a sop to our consciences. If enacted, they would barely inconvenience the NRA.

Without drastic reduction in the number of guns — by say 80 percent — alongside very tight gun type and use restrictions, we will continue to live in a country where deer get far better protection than humans and where daily slaughter of children and adults is normal.

Wringing our hands and pretending, almost weekly, that we are still trying to understand the reasons for this global anomaly — gun deaths at 45 times the UK — may make us feel better but it falls way short of solving the problem. If the number of guns is not drastically reduced then we had better just hunker down and get used to another century of this madness.

But please, let's not wring our hands and ask why it happens. We know the answer to that. Per hundred people, we have twice the number of guns in Yemen! We are armed as for a war zone.

Ridley Nelson
Great Falls

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LETTERS

Worried About Net Neutrality

To the Editor:

I am a lifelong resident of Fairfax County. I am deeply worried about the impending decision over net neutrality that the FCC wants to make. I am strongly opposed to changing the rules of net neutrality, and I stand to lose work stability if it is changed. I work in social media and marketing, as well as digital marketing. If the FCC's rules changed, though, I worry far

more about the less privileged than me.

What are our representatives doing specifically to ensure that our voices are heard over the voices of those who can pay to get their way in this administration? How are they going to fight for a free internet if the FCC succeeds?

Jessica Groves
Burke

Keep Kids Safe With Be SMART

To the Editor:

As children are spending more time at home during the holidays, there are simple steps adults can take to prevent unintentional and self-inflicted gun violence. The Be SMART guidelines can be used by parents, caretakers, gun owners, and non-gun owners by taking the following steps:

- ❖ Secure guns in homes and vehicles

- ❖ Model responsible behavior
- ❖ Ask about unsecured guns in other homes

- ❖ Recognize the risks of teen suicide

- ❖ Tell your peers to be SMART

A child discharges an unsecured gun, accidentally harming or killing someone every 34 hours in the United States. In Virginia during 2017, there have been four injuries and two deaths from children under 17 unintentionally discharging a weapon. As a parent of two

young children, I have incorporated asking about firearms in the home before play dates, just as I would discuss food allergies or other safety concerns. Kids are curious and it is our job as adults to protect them from gaining access to guns with safe storage.

Additionally, at least one child takes their own life every day in America, resulting in over 500 suicides from guns — 90 percent of suicide attempts using guns are fatal, and preventing access to a firearm can easily prevent these tragedies. U.S. children are 11 times more likely than their peers in other nations to die by gun suicide, but they're no more likely to die by any other suicide method.

Visit beSMARTforkids.org for more information on how to keep our kids safer.

Ashley Misitzis
McLean

Ten-Year-Old Gets It

To the Editor:

Last week you published a letter from a 10-year-old child, Jack Shinkman, who is capable of understanding that our national budget is immorally out of whack. He gets that the Defense department receives a huge amount of money every year, from us taxpayers, and they never have to ac-

count for how it is spent. He gets that this money could go for things that take care of people, like healthcare and education. If this is all so clear to a fifth grader, why is it so confounding for our elected officials?

Meg Wallace
Herndon

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* With coupon, not valid with any other offer, one per person per visit.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Long-Anticipated Home Remodel

Proves perfect for holiday entertaining.

BY JOHN BYRD

There's something quite satisfying about finally getting exactly what you want after years of anticipation, especially as the holidays roll around.

"I really saw this past Thanksgiving how well our re-designed home fulfills a whole host of plans," according to the couple, speaking of the completely re-furnished mid-century modern house on Lake Barcroft they recently occupied after extensive remodeling.

Looking back, the owners' far-reaching "wish list" was never assured. The couple had been looking for a lakeside house for years, but couldn't find anything suitable for a young family with two children just starting school.

Then last year the couple hired design consultant Roger Lataille of Sun Design Remodeling. The task: assess the rehabilitation possibilities of a circa 1950's mid-century modern actually situated on the lake.

Sun Design Remodeling had come with a considerable resume, having renovated some 30 Lake Barcroft residences. Still, at just over 2,000 square feet, the house under consideration seemed too small for the decades of occupancy that may lay ahead.

On the other hand, the waterside view was exceptional, and Sun Design Remodeling offered both an attractive design/build approach and a versatile creative team.

"They wanted a house that would work for them long into the future," Lataille recalls. "We saw our goal as not only adding usable new space, but enhancing a classic style."

The house "begged for a bold visual continuum," the designer said. For instance, the existing interior was formed around a "boxy" floor plan with an enclosed kitchen visually sequestered from the beautiful view, and a wall between the living room and dining room.

The contrast between the old plan and the emerging vision was a textbook case of how "space-use expectations have changed in the American home in the past 25 years" the designer said.

Perhaps not coincidentally, the couple had also gradually concluded that the traditional floorplans such as the one in the Arlington home the couple had previously owned wasted too much space. The front-facing living room was seldom used; ditto the formal dining room.

TO ACCOMMODATE master suite requirements, Lataille proposed adding a top level addition with a large master bath and walk-in closet. Truss joists calibrated to meet new load-bearing requirements reconcile the challenges of building on a bev-



PHOTOS BY GREG HADLEY

After years of searching unsuccessfully for a suitably-sized home on Lake Barcroft, the owners hired Sun Design's Roger Lataille to help them find property that could be adapted to their needs. Among other problems with the existing house, walls separating the kitchen, dining room and living room made the first-level seem boxy, dark and dated.



Sun Design Remodeling added a top-level master suite to a lakeside home designed in a classic mid-century modern architectural style, enabling new owners to obtain the square footage needed for their family of four. The 630-square-foot addition affords a "spot-on" view of the lake.



Before: Kitchen to dining room. Interior walls obstructed the lake-view and made the kitchen seem small and dysfunctional.

eled roof.

With the location of the master suite now resolved, the second floor gains re-deployable floor space, gaining a washer/dryer closet off the hallway.

Meanwhile, the most compelling feature in the primary living area is a steel moment frame which replaces the old window wall, and provides the tensile strength needed to support the new master suite.

By highlighting the elemental drama of woodland and lake, expansive wall-to-wall glazing invites an interior design treatment that explores textural surfaces, period furniture design and contrasting lights and darks.

Overhead, large-format structural beams wrapped in walnut-stained pine present a vivid contrast to the white tongue-and-groove ceiling. Waterfall Silestone counter surfaces and hardwood flooring neutralize, while the mid-century accents of the stools, chairs and even a bright turquoise sectional



By removing unneeded walls, the remodeler introduced an "open" floor plan that emphasizes visual continuum and lake-side sightlines. Large format structural beams wrapped in walnut-stained pine present a vivid contrast to the white tongue-and-groove ceiling. The center island surface is waterfall Silestone. The modular track pendant lights over the dining table can be moved as needed.

in the living room present eye-catching intimations of a resurgent American style.

Morgan Hutchinson, Sun Design's specialty designer, said, "Finding a balance that respects a classic style and [the couple's] personal tastes was the real nature of the assignment. The design explores unique rustic elements along with a new generation of kitchen innovations. The goal was to make a statement that can last, yet be

easily adapted."

Sun Design Remodeling frequently sponsors design and remodeling seminars as well as tours of recently remodeled homes. Headquartered in Burke, Sun Design also maintains an office in McLean. Visit www.SunDesignInc.com.

John Byrd (byrdmatx@gmail.com) has been writing about home improvement for 30 years.

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Creating a Free-Flowing Kitchen

Remodel yields brighter space.

When Alexis and Jason Sabloff decided it was time to remodel their kitchen, the Herndon homeowners set out with a goal of creating a modern space, improving the lighting and replacing appliances.

They enlisted the help of Winn Design + Build. The team, which consisted of owner Michael Winn, architect Amy Finch, designer Jennifer Hall and carpenter Diego Cabrera, was tasked with creating a free-flowing and aesthetically appealing space without changing the existing footprint.

The 302-square-foot kitchen was long, narrow, dark and accessorized with “too-tall soffits, a funky green tiled floor and insufficient lighting,” said Hall.

The family wanted to redesign the space so that it flowed seamlessly into the family room to allow for easy entertaining. Hall says that the homeowners also wanted to relocate the existing pantry, create a mudroom and generally improve the circulation,



PHOTO BY STACY ZARIN GOLDBERG

Black granite countertops and white cabinetry help modernize this Herndon kitchen by Winn Design + Build.

utility and aesthetics of the kitchen and surrounding areas.

The design team removed the soffits and replaced dark wood cabinets with Hanover door style cabinetry in Glacier White to create a light and airy feel. The Winn team replaced the green tile with a hardwood that matches the flooring in the rest of the home. They also rearranged the appliances and breakfast table to make the kitchen appear more spacious.

— MARILYN CAMPBELL

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A Kitchen for the Ages

When empty nesters Mike Rogan and Sue Shaffer decided to move out of the Arlington home where they had lived for 27 years, they embarked on a two-year search for a new abode. They were looking for a home where they could age in place and have space for live-in caretakers if needed.

They settled on a McLean home and hired Rill Architects to redesign it, creating an open floor plan that allowed for entertaining. The design team created a space that connects the kitchen to the family room, dining room, rear patio and garage.

The Rogans wanted the kitchen to have an island, multiple workstations, clean lines with Victorian detailing and enough space for multiple cooks.

The design team incorporated the Rogan's love of casual and modern. “The painted wood ceiling and traditional casing with an arched pass-through play off the more contemporary cabinets and glass tile backsplash, creating both a



PHOTO BY MICHAEL K. WILKINSON

This McLean kitchen by Rill Architects includes maplewood, furniture-style cabinets with brushed nickel hardware, classic millwork and granite countertops.

sleek and casual inviting space for family gathering and team cooking,” said Jim Rill.

— MARILYN CAMPBELL

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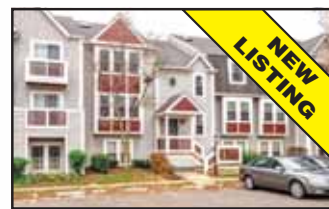
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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

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ONGOING

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

Smoke Free Bingo. 7 p.m. Every Friday. Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Free coffee, entertaining callers, \$1,000 jackpot (with breaks for smoking friends). www.fairfaxvd.com. 703-273-3638.

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

Funday Monday 10:30 a.m., every Monday at Old Town Hall, 3999



University Drive, Fairfax. There will be music, movement, storytelling, performances, crafts, and more. It is open to children of all ages, however especially for those who haven't yet started school. Programs are free and open to the public, donations are gratefully appreciated. There is ample free parking in the downtown area, and stroller access at the rear of Old Town Hall on Main St. 703-385-7858 www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts.

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.

Art Opening Party. 4-10 p.m. at Art Studios, 5380-C Eisenhower Ave. Light refreshments, wine, beer, and soda. Visit the welding shop, woodshop, showroom, and gallery. Sculptural furniture, lighting and jewelry by Donna Reinsel; organic wooden boxes by Tom Darby; and paintings by Mike Darby. Near the Van Dorn Metro. Call 443-604-7478 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

Live Music

On Thursday, Jan. 28, it's the Birdland All-Stars with drummer Tommy Igoe in concert, 7 p.m. in the George Mason University Center for the Arts' Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Call 888-945-2468 or visit cfa.gmu.edu.

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.

TUESDAYS/JAN. 2-FEB. 13

Art Lessons for Youth. 5:15-6:15 p.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin drawing and watercolor. 8 years and older. Visit www.czartlessons.com for more. Call 703-250-6930.

TUESDAYS/JAN. 2-FEB. 13

Drawing Plus Color Class. 6:15-7 p.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin, drawing and watercolor. Visit www.czartlessons.com for more. For 5-8 yrs. Call 703-250-6930.

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.fairfaxvd.com for more.

SATURDAYS/JAN. 6-FEB. 17

Art Lessons for Youth. 9:15-10:30 a.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke.



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.



HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT



Visit the Studios

This silver necklace by Donna Reinsel will be featured Saturday, Dec. 16 at the Art Opening Party, 4-10 p.m. at Art Studios, 5380-C Eisenhower Ave. Light refreshments, wine, beer, and soda will be served. Visit the welding shop, woodshop, showroom, and gallery. Sculptural furniture, lighting and jewelry by Donna Reinsel; organic wooden boxes by Tom Darby; and paintings by Mike Darby. Call 443-604-7478 for more.

CALENDAR

Instructor Carol Zeitlin drawing and watercolor. 8 years and older. Visit www.czartlessons.com for more. Call 703-250-6930.

SATURDAYS/JAN. 6-FEB. 17

Art Workshop for Teens/Adults. 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin, drawing, watercolor, Chinese Brush & portfolio development. Visit www.czartlessons.com for more. Call 703-250-6930.

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.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 10

Earth Fare Opens. 7 a.m. at Fairfax Plaza, 11054 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Specialty organic and natural foods grocery store. Visit www.earthfare.com 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.

FRIDAY/JAN. 19

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.

Sherwood Family Movie. 7 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway. Featuring "Smurfs Lost Village." Participants may bring their own snacks. Britepaths will accept donations of non perishable food. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

MONDAY/JAN. 22

Funday Monday. 10:30 a.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Movement Monday-Kids Zumba. Free. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

FRIDAY/JAN. 26

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.

Old Town Hall Concert. 8 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Dave Anderson and Mike Wingo: Anderson-Wingo Duo with guest vocalist Kim Scudera. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxarts.org.

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 for more.

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GIFT IDEAS

Holiday Gift Ideas From Clifton Stores

Hydrangea of Clifton

Looking for some holiday gifts from local mom and pop shops in the community? Hydrangea of Clifton on Chapel Road in Clifton has just the answer. In business for four years, owner Jennifer Heilmann specializes in one-of-a-kind gifts that are carefully curated. The home boutique offers accent pieces and specialty gifts for very loyal customers who return to shop. The store is the former site of Baskets and Boughs. They also do gift wrapping. Hydrangea of Clifton is located at 12704 Chapel Road, Clifton.



Hydrangea offers recycled aluminum trays, picture frames, and candle sticks handmade by Mari-rosa, for weddings, hostess gifts, or house warmings. They are a nice alternative to silver because they don't tarnish. Priced from \$14 to \$179.



Hydrangea offers Corkcicle triple-insulated stemless tumblers, glasses and canteens, which are part of Oprah Winfrey's Favorite Things. They are perfect for holding wine, hot tea, coffee or any drink you want to take "on the go." Prices range from \$19.95 to \$49.95.



Horse Hippie offers repurposed military tent handbags that come in different sizes – from computer bag sizes to passport sizes. Priced at \$36 to \$62.

Horse Hippie

In business for only one month, Horse Hippie owner Laura Batts characterizes her store as Bohemia meets Equestrian. All of the items are either hand made or fair trade by women artisans for women. The store offers clothing, accessories, jewelry and home decor. Horse Hippie is located at 7144 Main St., Clifton.



Horse Hippie offers textured, embroidered vests, a fair trade source that comes from India; they add unique colors and styles to any wardrobe. Priced at \$78.



PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

For holiday gift-giving, The Wine Attic offers Beltway Brewing Company Stout from Sterling, Va.; Black Snake Imperial Stout from Sterling, Va.; Late Bloomer Grenache from Paso Robles, Calif., made by Herman Story, as well as a wine pourer and aerator dragon made of stainless steel.

The Wine Attic

In business for three months, The Wine Attic's owner Juan Navarro says they offer an eclectic collection of a few hundred wines from all over the world – plus Virginia craft beers. "I'm not a sommelier, I'm an end user, and I want to share the joy of wine and beer to everyone who

comes into my store," said Navarro. "We do have Virginia wine. We try to keep it accessible. We don't want to carry things that are in grocery stores; we carry boutique selections." The Wine Attic is located at 7145 Main Street, Clifton, on the second floor.

Belle Jar Design

In business for two years, Belle Jar Design of Clifton offers painted, restored furniture and vintage homegoods as well as custom orders on furniture. You'll find anything from China cabinets to dressers to vintage side tables, candles, wreaths, chairs, pillows and blankets, according to Charity Podsednik, owner at CPRevisions. The store is also co-owned by Laura Jane Cohen and Heather Taylor along with Jubilee Flea. Prior to opening, they previously did market shows around the area. "One-of-a-kind pieces are definitely our forte. We hardly ever have two of the same pieces," said Podsednik. Belle Jar Design is located at 7137 Main Street, Clifton.



Belle Jar Design of Clifton offers this large Mercury Glass Christmas Tree for a mantle or side table. Priced at \$48.



PHOTOS BY
STEVE HIBBARD/
THE CONNECTION

Belle Jar Design of Clifton offers vintage, turn-of-the-century ornaments for \$8 each.

AREA ROUNDUPS

Seminars on Keeping Your Faith-Based Organization Safe

Back by popular demand, FCPD Crime Prevention Unit is hosting two free Worship Watch seminars in the coming weeks. Implemented in 2015, Worship Watch is a program similar to Neighborhood Watch, but catered towards houses of worship and keeping them safe. The seminars open a line of communication between congregants and officers, and attendees receive crime prevention tips and training specific to protecting their places of worship.

The first seminar is on Saturday, Dec. 16 from 9 a.m. until noon at the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Springfield and the second seminar is on Wednesday, Jan. 3 at the new Public Safety Headquarters in Fairfax from 6 to 9 p.m. Due to space limitations, registration is required for each seminar. See below for exact addresses and a registration link for each.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Saturday, Dec. 16, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, 8304 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. worship-watch-workshop-princeofpeace.eventbrite.com

Public Safety Headquarters (Note: New address), Wednesday, January 3, 2018 from 6 to 9 p.m., 12099 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax.

worship-watch-workshop-fcpublicsafetyhq.eventbrite.com.

The seminars are the same. Register for one workshop to allow others the opportunity to attend as well.

Filler-Corn Appointed Co-Chair Commerce and Trade Policy Council

Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41) was appointed as Co-Chair of the Commerce and Trade policy council of Governor-Elect Northam's transition committee along with the President of George Mason, Angel Cabrera. "I consider it an honor and privilege to serve in this capacity on the transition committee and appreciate the trust that the Governor-Elect has put in our Council," said Filler-Corn. She also mentioned that she looks forward to ensuring the new administration continues Governor McAuliffe's legacy to bring jobs and businesses to our Commonwealth.

Filler-Corn, herself, is a veteran of the gubernatorial administrations of former Governors and current U.S. Sens. Mark Warner and Tim Kaine. She also served on the transition committee of current Gov. Terry McAuliffe.

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Notice is hereby given that the following watercraft has been abandoned for more than 60 DAYS on the property of: Sharon Seipel, 6718 Newman Rd Clifton VA 20124, 703-915-9320. Maroon 1998 Yamaha wave runner labeled as a terminator, hull number: YAMA3646B999

Application for Watercraft Registration/Title will be made in accordance with Section 29.1-733.25 of the Code of Virginia if this watercraft is not claimed and removed within 30 days of the first publication of this notice. Please contact the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries with questions.

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Announcements

News

Mental Health Services for Youth Expanded in 2017

The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB) began offering same-day, in-person screening for adults with mental health/and or substance use concerns in July 2015 and extended same-day access service to youth in late 2016. More than 500 youth and families have been served this year.

According to a recent national survey, "The State of Mental Health in America 2018," Virginia is ranked high in several categories concerning the mental health of today's youth: 12th in youth with alcohol dependence and illicit drug use, seventh in youth alcohol dependence, 10th in illicit youth marijuana use and eighth in youth cocaine use. More than half of people who took the online depressive screening (in Virginia) had thoughts of self-harm or suicide nearly every day. According to the report, youth are at risk – 62 percent of female youth and 52 percent of male youth scored as having moderately severe or severe depression.

Same-day access is considered a best practice in behavioral health, and the CSB staff has worked to make this system change. Fairfax County Public Schools, the county's Department of Family Services and other agencies began referring families and youth to the CSB for same-day walk-in services on Nov. 1, 2016, as a "soft launch" for the service. Since that date, more than 500 young people have sought screenings and/or assessments. If a family and/or individual prefers to schedule an appointment for a screening or assessment, they may still do so by calling 703-383-8500.

In August, CSB's youth walk-in screening staff became a referral source to the Short-Term Behavioral Health Service Program (STBHS). Young people with mental health needs, such as depression and anxiety, can receive 6-8 sessions of outpatient counseling using evidence-based approaches. The STBHS is a program of Healthy Minds Fairfax, the county's initiative to coordinate a full range of mental health and substance abuse services for children and youth across multiple county agencies, the school system



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Individuals of any age seeking help for a mental health and/or substance use concern, may walk in, without appointment, to the CSB's Merrifield Center and speak with a staff member in person.

and private treatment providers.

Jim Gillespie, LCSW, MPA, Healthy Minds Fairfax director, said, "We're working hard to provide services and support to youth and families who need them, while reducing the stigma surrounding mental illness and help-seeking."

Often when people recognize that they need help, there may be a brief window of time when they are willing to look for and receive help. If a person has to wait too long for services, the chance to help may be lost.

Individuals of any age seeking help for a mental health and/or substance use concern, may walk in, without appointment, to the CSB's Merrifield Center and speak with a staff member in person, rather than initiating contact over the phone. If the individual appears to qualify for CSB services, they may be able to receive a more in-depth assessment for services that same day. Each CSB assessment clinician is trained to assess for substance use disorders as well as mental health and co-occurring disorders.

For more information, contact the CSB at 703-383-8500 (Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., extended hours for youth until 7 p.m. on Tuesdays). In an emergency, call CSB Emergency Services at 703-573-5679 (answered 24/7).

Holiday Cancer Program Fundraiser Underway

Jim Chesley, Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative (NOVEC) board vice chairman, is a long-time supporter of INOVA Health System's "Life with Cancer" program. For 18 years, he and his Dominion Cruisers group, the Clifton Lions Club, and the City of Fairfax have organized a popular Labor Day weekend car show to raise money for the program.

For many years, they ran the show in Clifton, where Chesley lives. But when it grew too large for the tiny town, the City of Fairfax began hosting the event.

Chesley says, "Life with Cancer" has been an integral part of the healthcare community since 1986. It helps those facing cancer by providing information, education and support free of charge to patients, their relatives and their friends, regardless of where treatment is received."

Chesley has taken on a new fundraising challenge in time for the holidays: He is offering the VMD co-op family the opportunity to purchase a limited-edition collectible, the #23 Life with Cancer race car, for \$10 each.

"These are 1/64 die-cast replicas of the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race car driven by David Ragan during the Oct. 16, 2016, Citizen Soldier 400 in Dover," Chesley says.

The cars are available at INOVA hospital gift shops or directly through Chesley. All payments are tax-deductible and 100 percent of the proceeds will benefit Life with Cancer. Chesley notes that the model cars "make great stocking stuffers."

For more information, contact Chesley at 703-830-2129 or jchesley@aol.com.

— PRISCILLA KNIGHT
NOVEC SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

BULLETIN

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

THURSDAY/DEC. 14

Frontier Drive Extension Meeting. 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the cafeteria at Lee High School, 6540 Franconia Road. The public is invited to stop by to view displays and learn more about the project that would extend Frontier Dr. past the metro station and connect to Loisdale Road. Visit VirginiaDOT.org for more.

MONDAY/DEC. 18

Contemplative Service for Advent. 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Providence Presbyterian Church, 9019 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. "Music and Reflections for Advent" is an ecumenical service anticipating Christmas. Be inspired by readings, live music, and silence. Visit www.providencechurch.org/ for more.

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 for more.

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.

Positive Parenting Strategies Course. At PHILLIPS, 7010 Braddock Road, Annandale. A series of classes and in home consultations taught by PHILLIPS' counselors. Open to all local families. Call Stacy Stryjewski at 703-658-9054.

Thermal Camera Loan Program. Learn where the energy is leaking out of the home with a special attachment for the iPhone or Android. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/energy or call 703-324-5955 for more.

Master Gardener Training. The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit fairfaxgardening.org or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

Fairfax Rotary Club Meeting 12:15-1:30 p.m. Mondays. American Legion, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. Meetings with luncheon and program. fairfaxrotary.org.

NARFE Monthly Meeting Every Second Tuesday 11:30 a.m. American Legion Post 177 located at 3939 Oak Street, Fairfax. NARFE Fairfax 737 monthly luncheon meeting. Enjoy lunch accompanied by a special program. Lunch at noon. Cost: \$11 Speaker/Program-12:45PM. rrharney2@cox.net 703-501-0020

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As Good As It Gets



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Five weeks of blissful ignorance. (Speak for yourself. I am.) No 24-hour urine collection. No pre-chemotherapy lab work. No chemotherapy infusion. No CT scan. No follow-up appointment with my oncologist – or any other doctor for that matter. No brain MRI. No fasting. No emailing. No prescription-drug refilling. No vitals. No weight check. No taste/eating side effects. No anything. Other than pretending and presuming that all is not wrong in my “whirled” (my underlying diagnosis), life is for the living, and I’m living proof, random though it may be, that an incredibly grim/surreal prognosis: “13 months to two years,” was not all it was cracked up to be.

Forgive me if I unleash my pent-up inner demons. As a cancer patient, there’s just so much to worry about; daily, weekly, monthly and always, that when you get a break/brake in the action, it becomes a moment in time to celebrate and cherish.

Good things may come in small packages, but great things come in five-week intervals. And though the minor deficits I have as a result of nearly nine years of chemotherapy have not dissipated; in the scheme of things, in the midst of two-fortnights-and-a-half of “uncumbrances,” to quote my late father, I am “untethered,” to once again quote my father. This time however, quoting the late, great Sid Caesar for a skit he performed (involving “an elephant,” my father always said) on “The Show of Shows” back in the early 50s.

And so for the next month and change, I am almost normal (or a reasonable facsimile thereof); other than following my daily anti-cancer, non-Western routine which I have long ago assimilated into my dos and don’ts, that is. A routine which, though it can always be enhanced, is a direct result of the advice I’ve received from my certified Holistic Health Coach. And despite the fact that I may not exactly be on the straight and narrow – more like the squiggly and wiggly, I certainly am not on the path I was when my cancer cells activated after I slid into my first PET scan back in early February 2009, and “lit it up like a Christmas tree,” according to my thoracic surgeon. An indication/confirmation which led to a surgical biopsy a week or so later which then led to the last nine years of my life.

Still, it’s been a life worth living and one for which I have few regrets. I have lived so far beyond my original prognosis, it’s not even funny; it’s ridiculous. Sure, I’m doing more of the right things than I ever did, but hardly am I the poster boy for “see what happens when you” If I’m the poster boy for anything, it’s more likely “how to maintain and even increase your weight while being treated for stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer.”

Not that I won’t savor the moments ahead, but I am mindful, which led to the substance of this column, of what happens after this semi-party is over: Jan. 2, 2018 – 24-hour urine collection; Jan. 3, 2018 – pre-chemotherapy lab work; Jan. 5, 2018 – chemotherapy infusion; Jan. 17, 2018 – CT scan; and finally, Jan. 26. 2018 – follow-up appointment with my oncologist to discuss the results of my scan, and then maybe another emotional honeymoon or, God forbid, a nightmare that diagnosis to date has rarely raised its ugly head.

That possibility roams my head, constantly; compartmentalized – yes; “in the vault” – yes, but unfortunately, “the cancer,” (as “Forrest, Forrest Gump” said) still in my body and, medically speaking, not yet something one can flush out with treatment. But there’s always hope.

In the past few years, the FDA has approved half-a-dozen new lung cancer drugs, more than during the preceding decade. I don’t think medical professionals would say they have lung cancer on the run; they might say however, they have it on the trot. Which is good for me because I can’t run, but I can trot.

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

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