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Session Brings Sea Change

Wave election swamps Richmond with freshman members eager to make their mark.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

This year's General Assembly will be like no other. For starters, the members walking the halls of the Capitol will not look the same. The crop of freshman includes the first transgender woman to serve in the Virginia General Assembly, the first lesbian, the first Asian-American woman and the first two Latinas. Gone are the 12 Republican members who were unseated, all white males. Also gone are the three members who got out before the bloodbath that flipped their seats from red to blue, also all white males. In their place is a diverse and young group of new members who are eager to make their mark on the commonwealth.

At the top of the agenda for the Democratic freshmen is expanding Medicaid to 400,000 people who would be eligible under the Affordable Care Act.

"I think what's really important for us, as Democrats, is to identify on the other side who we could have come over and join us," said Kathy Tran, who flipped a formerly Republican seat held by Del. Dave Albo (R-42) for more than 20 years. "We're going to have to reach out and basically identify who's really vulnerable and who's going to be in a position where they're going to have to be supporting the progressive values that were voted in as a wave across the commonwealth."

Even if they're successful navigating the diminished House Republican caucus, House Democrats will still have to deal with a Republican-controlled Senate. But the culture in the Senate is more moderate, and Republican senators have a history of supporting bills that have been routinely blocked in the House.

For example, Senate Republicans have a history of supporting the effort raising the threshold for grand larceny. That's an issue that Democrats have been pushing unsuccessfully for years that may now finally have a chance in 2018.

"We heard during the gubernatorial campaign, Ed Gillespie was supporting an increase so this is one of those issues that — especially with the outcome of the election — I think you can see some support behind," said Del. Patrick Hope (D-47), who is introducing a bill that raises the threshold from \$200 to \$500. "If someone makes a dumb mistake and walks out of a store with something small we shouldn't make a felon



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Republicans were unseated in 12 House districts, and Democrats flipped three seats where GOP incumbents decided against running in a year that ended up being a Democratic wave.

out of them."

THE WAVE ELECTION of 2017 was widely seen as a reacting to the Trump administration, and some of the bills that are now being crafted are also a reaction to the Republican agenda in Washington. State Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37) is putting together a tax reform plan as a Virginia answer to federal tax reform that gives tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations. Marsden wants to eliminate the food tax, reinstitute the inheritance tax and increase the gas tax. His tax-reform plan also taxes some services for the first time. For example lawn care and dry cleaning would be taxed but lawyers and doctors would not.

"Ever since I've been in the legislature I've heard complaints that we have a 19th century agriculture and manufacturing tax base but we're now a service economy. So this will start to tax some of those services," said Marsden. "We're trying to draw a distinction and get the discussion going around which services are optional for people and which ones are really necessary that we shouldn't burden them with taxes on."

Democrats are also eager to finally get some traction on gun control, which House Republicans have blocked for years. Back in 2015, Democratic Gov. Terry McAuliffe was able to forge a deal with Republicans to make state police available for voluntary background checks at gun shows. Now Democrats are hoping that newly reconstituted House committees and subcommittees might give them a chance to at least get gun control legislation on the floor rather than having it killed in subcommittee, a strategy Republicans used that allowed them to avoid being on the record voting

against banning assault weapons, for example. State Sen. George Barker (D-39) is introducing a bill that would allow judges to confiscate firearms from individuals they consider dangerous.

"It would have to go to court, and a judge would have to issue a ruling that there's probable cause and it's a serious situation and the gun should be temporarily removed," said Barker. "In some states, it allows police officers to confiscate it. But the bills that we are putting in do not. You would have to go to court."

MANY OF THE BILLS lawmakers are working on involve unfinished business from previous sessions. State Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36) is working on a bill that would force Dominion to clean up decades of pollution at several coal ash ponds throughout Virginia. Dominion Energy plans to seal the pollution in place and put a cap on the ponds, which is significantly cheaper than cleaning up the pollution. But Surovell wants to require that the utility recycle the coal ash into concrete or ceramics. And, Surovell adds, it won't actually be more expensive for Dominion at all because the utility will end up passing along the cost to people who are paying for electricity.

"You eliminate the possibility that this toxic gunk will continue to leak arsenic, lead and other chemicals into our groundwater forever," said Surovell. "Landfilling is the short-term cheap solution. But long-term it has the worst potential effects because the stuff continues to leach out chemicals and give people cancer and poison fish and birds and ruin our groundwater."

State Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-30) is also returning to a familiar theme: decriminaliz-

ing marijuana. Several states across the country have already done this, and now that California has legalized pot for recreational use many feel that the tide may be turning on this issue. According to a recent report by the Virginia State Crime Commission, law enforcement officers have arrested more than 130,000 people for possession of marijuana in the last decade — 84 percent of them first-time offenders.

"I think people are realizing how inappropriate it is to give people a criminal penalty for a drug that so many people have tried and used and is arguably less significant and harmful than alcohol," said Ebbin. "It's still a tough fight. But we've got Senate Majority Leader Tommy Norment supporting it generally. And we've got Governor-elect Ralph Northam supporting it, generally."

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL last year, Republicans and Democrats both supported several key agenda items — an indication that members from both sides of the aisle may end up working together this year on certain issues. One of those is ethics reform, a hot topic in Virginia since former Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell was convicted of corruption then cleared of wrongdoing by the U.S. Supreme Court. During the campaign last year, Republican candidate for governor Ed Gillespie and Republican candidate for lieutenant governor Jill Vogel both talked about closing a loophole that allows candidates to use campaign money for personal use. That's an issue that already has support among Democrats, although drawing a distinction between official use and personal use can be a gray area.

"I think we've got a consensus that we need to do something," said Del. Marcus Simon (D-53). "Whether we make it a weak ban or a strong ban — a civil violation or a criminal act — I think we're going to outlaw it one way or another."

Another issue where Republicans and Democrats are in agreement is expanding broadband to rural areas. Of course the details of how to make that happen and who benefits are where lawmakers get divided, although this is one of those issues where party ideology is less important than regional ties. Last year, for example, Republicans were divided about whether to create new hurdles for local governments to set up broadband networks in places where that might create competition for private providers. This year, the issue of broadband will once again be an important topic of conversation.

"I'm looking at ways to reduce regulatory burdens," said Del. Jennifer Boysko (D-86). "So I'm talking about including broadband in your municipal comprehensive plan, setting up a dig-once policy and creating a data governance board for smart communities."

SEE ASSEMBLY, PAGE 11

OPINION

2018 A Happy New Year? At least some cause for hope

Virginia's election last November, just two months ago, was the first in the nation since the current administration took over in Washington.

Here in Virginia there was some anxiety and uncertainty rolling into Election Day. First, at least one race will not be decided until later this week. Second, the Democrats swept the statewide races, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Attorney General.

EDITORIAL

Democrats hoped to make gains in the House of Delegates. It's fair to say no one anticipated the Democrats taking the House. After all, Republicans held a 66-34 majority, a nearly insurmountable advantage.

Democrats gained at least 15 seats in a turn-about that could leave the House split 50-50.

New members include the first transgender woman to serve in the Virginia General Assembly, the first lesbian delegate, the first Asian-American woman delegate and the first two Latina delegates.

Virginia's success has generated buzz about pursuing sweeping change in other state legislatures around the country.

Del. Marcus Simon said it well recently (on Facebook): "If someone had told me on Jan. 1, 2017 that one year later Democrats would have picked up no fewer than 15 and probably as many as 17 seats in the Virginia House of Delegates I would have said, 'Love your optimism, but don't get carried away.'"

"My advice to anyone running for office or thinking about running for office, or working for people running for office in 2018: Get carried away."

The new look and balance in the General Assembly could provide progress on some long stalled issues. (More Democrats in office do not equate to progress in all of these areas, it's important to note.)

❖ Expanding Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act to cover hundreds of thousands of poor people without coverage

❖ Nonpartisan redistricting and use of national best practices when it comes to drawing

political district boundaries after the next census.

❖ Progress in transparency, and making public information public. This includes lawmakers killing most proposed legislation with unrecorded voice votes in subcommittee, with no accountability or record of how members voted. It should also include rolling back some of the many exemptions to the Freedom of Information Act passed by the General Assembly.

❖ Ethics reform, campaign finance reform.
❖ Making it easier, not harder, to vote.
❖ More control over utility rates and pollution.

❖ Criminal justice reform, including raising the threshold for a felony from \$200 to \$500.
❖ Tax reform.

A "wish list" could go on at some length. The 2018 session of the Virginia General Assembly begins Jan. 10.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Looking Ahead at Challenges of 2018

Among priorities: revitalizing Springfield and Route 1.

BY JEFFREY MCKAY
LEE DISTRICT
SUPERVISOR



The New Year presents a tremendous opportunity for us to continue the great momentum we've got going from 2017. I am particularly looking toward advancements in education and transportation, and already am preparing to work with my colleagues as we continue to bring residents the most modernized services available.

During my term as Chairman of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, I worked with a bipartisan group of local and state elected officials to create a plan for fixing the ongoing Metro funding, management, and governance issues. Our residents deserve a reliable and affordable means of transportation around the metropolitan area, and we need to see major improvements.

As always, I am pressing the General Assembly to approve more school funding. While I was proud to pass a budget that transferred \$2 billion dollars to FCPS, there is still a need for more state funding. Virginia is among the top 10 states in income and the bottom 10 in education funding. That has to change.

As Chairman of the Board of Supervisors' Budget Committee, I am already working on balancing our budget during another tough fiscal year. Especially as of late, I am looking



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

The TSA's future location is at 6601 Springfield Center Drive: TSA will be occupying a taxable property, bringing federal dollars into the County budget, while also generating jobs.

to balance being very mindful of federal cuts, our ability to maintain services, and the ability of our residents to afford them. Among my top budget priorities is the streamlining of service delivery in order to absorb state and federal cuts to human services. These services are being taken from some of our most vulnerable residents and I'm committed to finding a way to overcome these cuts.

I am also continuing our ongoing strategies to revitalize Springfield and Route 1, working with other local elected officials and business leaders to accomplish our shared goal. We'll soon be approving a decades-overdue overhaul of the entire comprehensive plan for Route 1 known as Embark, and securing state and/or federal money to advance the next phase of Route 1 improvements. The plan currently seeks to bring comprehensive improvements to the area on and around Route 1, easing travel, im-

proving safety, protecting our environment, revitalizing land use, and keeping affordable housing for residents.

We are also looking forward to the beginning of the Transportation Security Administration's move into Springfield, an announcement that made national news and symbolizes the continued advancement of the Springfield community. While the completion of the TSA move is still a few years away, the groundwork has already begun. I am especially pleased that the TSA will be occupying a taxable property, bringing federal dollars into the County budget, while also generating jobs. Additionally, the move is forecasted to change the commutes of many federal employees, who will now be ending their commute in Springfield and reducing congestion between here and the District.

I am also working to amend the County zoning ordinances, as part of a comprehensive program called zMOD. In doing so, the Board of Supervisors is aiming to make our ordinances more dynamic and responsive to the community's needs and make the experience more business and resident-friendly. County staff are already hard at work overhauling the entire system, and I am confident that we will soon see the benefits of doing so.

I expect 2018 to be just as fruitful as the past year was for us here in Lee District, and I hope to see you all at my Open House from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Jan. 20 at my office's community room, located at 6121 Franconia Road. My staff and I will be attending and we look forward to sitting down and talking Lee District with our neighbors and friends, while also enjoying refreshments and the works of the Springfield Art Guild. Happy New Year!

Springfield CONNECTION

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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NEWS



A Sweet Thank-you on Christmas Eve

A Shepherd's Run was conducted by members of Sydenstricker United Methodist Church in Springfield. Betty Flemming, a Green Springs resident, and LaRae Curry presented the staff at Inova Healthplex on the parkway with homemade cookies and candy late Christmas Eve to show gratitude for their sacrifice to serve the community on this special night. Fire stations, a police station and another healthplex received the cookie trays.

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Ready for the Cold

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Frigid temperatures and the chill of winter can usher in dangerous health conditions, particularly for those most vulnerable: the elderly and young children. Two of the most prevalent cold-weather ills are hypothermia and frostbite. For those who have to be outside when it is dangerously cold, knowing the warning signs and prevention techniques for these conditions are the keys to keeping them at bay, say health care providers.

"Even a typical winter in this area can be dangerous," said Amy Talbot, Ph.D. of George Mason University. "But extreme conditions can make it even worse for those most vulnerable."

Hypothermia, which occurs when one's body core temperature drops, can develop more quickly than many people realize, says Talbot. "Obviously feeling very cold is a warning sign, but also shivering and experiencing signs that the cold is affecting your brain, so feeling disoriented, stumbling or losing balance easily, unusual speech pattern or changes in personality."

Frostbite is when the skin and underlying tissue are damaged by cold temperatures, says Beth Lowe, RN, a private-duty nurse in Arlington. "During the beginning



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Record cold temperatures can lead to frostbite and hypothermia.

stages of frostbite, you might see your skin turn red and you'll feel numb or tingling or stinging," she said. "The main thing to remember is not to try to re-warm your own skin, because you can do more damage. It's best to seek emergency medical treatment."

Preventing, recognizing and treating hypothermia and frostbite.

Dressing in layers and wearing shoes that are appropriate for extreme cold are keys to preventing hypothermia and frostbite, advises Carolyn Johnson, Ph.D. of Montgomery College. "When it's extremely cold you want to wear clothing that traps your body temperature and protects you from cold air and wind," she said. "A basic formula to keep in mind: a base layer that should be made from a fabric that wicks away moisture. The second layer should trap heat so it should be made of a polyester fleece over something similar. The top layer should be waterproof and windproof."

Lowe recommends avoiding cotton clothing during the extreme cold because if it gets wet, it can make you cold. "Many of these preventative measure are things that most people already know, but may not think about until it's too late," she said.

Another preventative component, says Talbot, is nutrition. Both food and liquids can help keep one's body warm. "Skipping a meal can make you more susceptible to hypothermia and frostbite," she said. "It's important to eat carbs and protein for energy when you're going to be outside for a prolonged period of time, like if you're hiking or playing sports."

If you believe that you are beginning to develop frostbite or hypothermia, Lowe says

LOCAL SHELTERS

For those who are not able to seek shelter, social service providers in Virginia and Maryland are ramping up efforts to provide shelter to those who need to get out of the cold. For more information:

Fairfax County
703-691-2131 or fairfaxcounty.gov

City of Alexandria
703-548-7500 or alexandriava.gov

Montgomery County
240-777-3289 or montgomerycountymd.gov

Arlington County
703-228-1300 or 703-228-1010
publicassistance.arlingtoncounty.gov

in order to avoid advancing the seriousness of the condition, move your body by doing jumping jacks or some other vigorous movement and get out of the frigid elements. "There's no set amount of time that it takes for [hypothermia or frostbite] to develop, so it's important to keep an eye on those who are most vulnerable. But once you notice the warning signs you can try to stop the conditions before they advance, by drinking plenty of fluids, eating carbs and getting inside to a warmer temperature."

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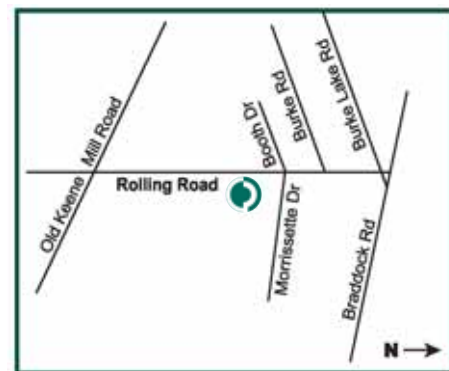
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Act. Honor. Hope.

Del. Filler-Corn receives award from Virginia Sexual and Domestic Action Alliance.

From her first election to the House of Delegates to preparing to start her eighth year as a Delegate, preventing and combating sexual assault has always been a priority for Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41). The bills she has put forth contain coalitions of stakeholders. On Friday, Dec. 8, one of these longtime partners, the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Action Alliance honored her with their, "Act. Honor. Hope." award.

The Alliance has been a longtime advocate of Del. Filler-Corn's legislation, from her bills that dealt with the reporting of a campus sexual assault investigation to the local commonwealth attorney to creating trauma informed training protocols for campus law enforcement. They were a crucial partner for her bill HB 659 in 2016, which requires any high school family life education curriculum offered by a local school division to incorporate age-appropriate elements of effective and evidence-based programs on the prevention of dating violence, domestic abuse, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. This bill, now a law, laid the groundwork for Del. Filler-Corn's bill from 2017, HB 2257, which also codifies the teaching of consent in Family Life Education.

"If the first time a student hears about dating violence, healthy relationships or consent is at college orientation, then it is too late," said Del. Filler-Corn. "This is why I advocated for teaching consent in Family Life Education. I am incredibly grateful for the counsel and efforts of the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance. Thanks for their support and efforts as well as other advocates, my bill is law today."

During her remarks at the awards ceremony, Filler-Corn also took the opportunity to tell the crowd about her recently introduced legislation. House Bill 44 would strengthen the legislation Del. Filler-Corn passed last year. It would ensure that every high school that offers Family Life Education will teach about consent in an age appropriate and evidence based manner — not allowing it as just an option.

Filler-Corn has also introduced, House Bill 45, which would require any family life education curriculum offered in any elementary school, middle school, or high school to include instruction on the importance of the personal privacy and boundaries of other individuals. Both bills will be heard during the 2018 General Assembly Session in Richmond.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Preventing and combating sexual assault has always been a priority for Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41).

WEEK IN SPRINGFIELD

Garden Apartment Fire Displaces 42

On Sunday, Dec. 31, at 12:52 p.m., units were dispatched to reported fire in a garden apartment located in the 7000 block of Rhoden Court in the North Springfield section of Fairfax County.

Units arrived on scene to find a three-story, garden apartment with smoke showing from the front and roof of the building. The building was in the process of being evacuated as fire department units arrived. A second alarm was requested. This brought additional resources to the scene, including units from the City of Alexandria Fire Department and Fort Belvoir Fire Department.

Crews located a large amount of fire on the third floor. Firefighters began an aggressive attack to extinguish the fire. Simultaneously, additional crews conducted search and rescue operations on all three levels of the apartment building to ensure all residents were safely out. As a result of the frigid weather conditions and the number of apartments involved, a welfare group was established by the Incident Commander to provide immediate shelter for those displaced by firefighting operations.

Fire Investigators determined the fire was accidental in nature and started in the attic space above one of the apartments. The cause of the fire was an event



PHOTO COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT

Units arrived on scene to find a three-story, garden apartment with smoke showing from the front and roof of the building.

involving the electrical service within the attic.

The fire was reported by a passer-by who saw smoke coming from the attic and called 9-1-1. A total of 42 occupants were displaced. Red Cross assistance was requested and accepted by all occupants. There were no reports of civilian or firefighter injuries. Damages as a result of the fire are approximately \$127,258.

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You can read any of this week's 15 papers digital editions here:
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Date: Saturday, January 13, 2018
Saturday, February 10, 2018
Saturday, March 10, 2018

No Fee
Pre-registration is recommended as space is limited.

Time: 9:00 a.m. – Registration
9:30-1:00 p.m. – Workshop

Online Registration:
www.secondsaturdaynova.com

Place: Duff Kronfeld & Marquardt P.C.
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ENTERTAINMENT



Chocolate Festival

A plate of cupcakes in the 2016 Chocolate Challenge. This year, the City of Fairfax will be all about chocolate on Feb. 2-4 in Old Town Fairfax.

FILE PHOTO BY
BONNIE HOBBS

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

ONGOING

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.

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.

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

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. 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 5-8 yrs. Call 703-250-6930.

THURSDAY/JAN. 4

Zumba Dance Party 2018. 6:30-8 p.m. at Green Acres, 4401 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. Meet new Zumba instructor Vanessa. \$10. Call 703-385-1703.

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.

SATURDAYS/JAN. 6-FEB. 17

Art Lessons for Youth. 9:15-10:30 a.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin drawing and watercolor. 8 years and older. Visit www.czartlessons.com. 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. 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.

MONDAYS/JAN. 8-MARCH 26

Exercise Classes. 9:30-10:30 a.m. at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. \$30. Call 703-323-4788 or visit www.scfbva.org.

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.

Springfield Christian Women's Luncheon.

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road. Speaker will be Ginger Lawrence, author of "Deeply Rooted – A US Marine shares a riveting story of how she came from the rags of war to finding peace, joy, and forgiveness." \$20. Call 703-455-6633.

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.

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.

Bonita Lestina in Concert. 8-10 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. National Brass Quintet, part of the Old Town Hall Performance Series. Free. Call 703-385-7858.

ENTERTAINMENT

SATURDAY/JAN. 13

Family Irish Country Dancing. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the Green Acres Center, 4401 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. Free coffee, tea, and Irish soda bread, music by Shepherd's Pi. \$15, families \$25, GMU students \$5. Second Saturday each month. Call 703-273-6090.

SUNDAY/JAN. 14

George Washington Lecture. 2-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St. Illustrated talk by Dr. Peter Henriques, professor emeritus from George Mason University, called "I Can Not Tell A Lie: Myths About George Washington That Should Be Discarded." Free admission. Call 703-385-8414.

THURSDAY/JAN. 18

Lunch N' Life. noon-2 p.m. at the Fairfax Presbyterian Church, 10723 Main St. John Cox, who was a guide at the U.S. Capital Building will speak on the history of the building. \$10. Call 703-323-4788 or visit www.scfbva.org.

Friday Morning Music Club. noon-2 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Friday Morning Music Club, Inc. is a community of music lovers and musicians dedicated to promoting classical music throughout the metropolitan area. On the third Thursday of the month they host their performances at Old Town Hall. Visit www.fmmc.org.

Burke Toastmasters Open House. 6:30 p.m. at The Oaks Community Center, 5708 Oak Leather Drive, Burke. Improve public speaking and presentation skills. Email pmagnuson@hotmail.com.

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.

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.

Dance Fest 2018. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Harris Theatre at George Mason University, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. The Virginia Dance Coalition presents DanceFest 2018 Gala Performance highlighting 12 member companies. Visit www.virginiadancecoalition.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 20

African American Museum. 1-3 p.m. at Kings Park Library, Large Meeting Room, 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Dr. Johari Rashad will give an inside look at the new National Museum of African American History and Culture, located in Washington, D.C. Free. Visit <http://Sprann-va.aauw.net>.

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.

THURSDAY/JAN. 25

Fall for the Book. 5:30 p.m. at the Great American Bistro, 10427 North St., Fairfax. Fall for the Book's New Pop Up Lit Nights invite the community to happy hour appreciations of literature and storytelling. Visit fallforthebook.org.



Live Music

Guest vocalist Kim Scudera will be on stage with Dave Anderson and Mike Wingo: Anderson-Wingo Duo on Friday, Jan. 26 at 8 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxarts.org.

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.

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.

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.

FRIDAY/FEB. 2

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.

FEB. 2-4

Chocolate Lovers Festival. Various times in Historic Downtown Fairfax. Chocolate-oriented activities all weekend, including a Kiwanis Chocolate Chip Pancake Breakfast. The "love of chocolate" is the unifying theme. Visit www.chocolatefestival.net for a current schedule of activities or call 703-385-7858.

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 Bahá'í Community of Fairfax County Southwest offers Interfaith Devotions, Children's Classes, Junior Youth Groups and Study Circles, which are open to all. Visit www.bahai.us or call 571-320-5274.

St. Leo the Great in Fairfax hosts "Night of Praise" the first Saturday of

each month, featuring praise music and Eucharist adoration at 7 p.m. Located at 3704 Old Lee Highway in Fairfax.

St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, 8617 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, offers a traditional service on Sundays at 8:15 and 11:15 a.m. and a contemporary service on Sundays at 9:45 a.m. Call 703-978-3500 or visit www.stmatthewsumc.org.

The Immanuel Bible Church MOPS group meets on Mondays at 7 p.m. at Immanuel Bible Church, 6911

Braddock Road, Springfield. MOPS is for pregnant or parenting mothers of children from infancy to kindergarten. Call 703-922-4295 or visit www.MOPS.org.

First Baptist Church of Springfield, 7300 Gary St., Springfield, has traditional and contemporary Sunday services at 10:30 a.m., Sunday school at 9:15 a.m. Special worldwide services offered at special times throughout the year in English, Spanish and Ethiopian. The pastors are Jim Weaver and Jason Mitchell. Call 703-451-1500 or visit www.fbcspringfield.org.

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Announcements

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Announcements

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OBITUARY

Minna Larsen Hamner

Minna Larsen Hamner, 94, passed away Thursday, Dec. 21, 2017 from complications of stroke while a resident at the Sunrise Community of Leesburg. She was a longtime resident of Northern Virginia having lived in Falls Church, Annandale, Fairfax Station, and most recently in assisted living in Leesburg.

Born in Roskilde, Denmark on April 15, 1923, she is predeceased by her parents, Anton and Marie Larsen, four Danish siblings, her beloved husband of 36 years, Jack Hamner, as well as a granddaughter, Lindsay.

Minna and her brother, Holger, were valuable members of the Danish Resistance Movement against the Nazi occupation of her homeland during WWII, despite their young ages of 17 and 15, respectively. Minna shared her harrowing stories of bravery to middle schoolers for many years, especially Rocky Run Middle School's annual "latest generation meets the greatest generation" program. She was fluent in seven languages and worked as an interpreter for US Intelligence in Germany and Turkey after the war ended, when she met and married her husband, Jack, a US Navy Chief Petty Officer, on Oct. 2, 1950.

Minna was a champion swimmer from an early age and was an honorary member of the 1940 Danish Olympic Swim Team. The water was always her home. In 1963 she achieved her aquatic instructor credentials by outswimming a stunned team of Navy seals at Navy Base Port Hueneme, Calif. She continued swimming in the U.S. Masters Swimming program, winning national and international competitions until age 90 where she won gold at the National Senior Games. She was a US Masters All-American, National Record-Holder, and 13-time national champion.

She was the consummate leader, teacher, coach, and mentor on the pool deck. Minna shared her passion for swimming by teaching and coaching competitive swimming to young children, developing hundreds if not thousands of excellent swimmers throughout her years. She was loved by all who knew her for her warmth, patience, generosity, and sharp wit. Her last coaching stint was 16 years at the Chase Club Sharks Swim Team in Fairfax, where her developmental program for ages 4-8 was affectionately known as "Minna's Minnows." She retired in 2008 but followed and delighted in her young pupils' success each week thereafter.

BEYOND HER SWIMMING, Minna was a woman of many talents and worked various jobs throughout her long life. She knew shorthand, was a speed typist, and provided language training to American officers being assigned to Scandinavian diplomatic posts. She also translated and prepared scientific



Minna Larsen Hamner

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

documents for the Navy. She taught Red Cross and water life safety courses resulting in many county lifeguards. She also retired as a librarian for Fairfax County Schools.

In California she endured the hardships of a Navy wife. Long separations from her husband during his Pacific deployments provided for arduous duty singly maintaining a home for four children, and awaiting the return of dad. She lovingly but sternly ran the house during those tough years as the lioness of her family.

After relocating to Washington, D.C., Minna and Jack Hamner eventually became longtime members of Immanuel Bible Church, Springfield. She loved church and fellowship. She loved Billy Graham, Lawrence Welk, The Price is Right, and The Old Time Gospel Hour on TV. She reveled with family during Sunday afternoon Redskins games over fried chicken and biscuits. Her citizens band radio name was Myna Bird. She consistently supported various charities including police and fire, animal support, missions, military/veterans, and pro life organizations. She liked eating out with family and always wanted her coffee hot and her soup steaming. Minna loved all animals, gave to their charities and loved her favorite pet dogs: shelties Alvin and Susan, and German Shepard Barron. She smiled and waved to all.

day afternoon Redskins games over fried chicken and biscuits. Her citizens band radio name was Myna Bird. She consistently supported various charities including police and fire, animal support, missions, military/veterans, and pro life organizations. She liked eating out with family and always wanted her coffee hot and her soup steaming. Minna loved all animals, gave to their charities and loved her favorite pet dogs: shelties Alvin and Susan, and German Shepard Barron. She smiled and waved to all.

MINNA was foremost a devoted Christian wife, mother, and grandmother – loving her family more than anything. She is survived by sons Richard (Margie), Michael, and Pete Hamner (Martha), and by daughter Linda Cunningham (Rob), and by eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, all of whom adored her.

Viewing, funeral/remembrance service, and reception will be held on Jan. 4, 2018 at Immanuel Bible Church, Braddock and Backlick roads, Springfield. Viewing 9:45-10:50 a.m., service 11-12, and a reception 12-2 p.m. with Pastor Steve Holley presiding. Burial at Arlington National Cemetery will occur at a yet to be determined date as cemetery schedules permit.

If desired, memorial contributions in Minna's honor can be made to Immanuel Bible Church or Immanuel Christian School, Springfield.

The family wishes to thank Minna's countless friends, her church family, swimming colleagues, and Danish family for their condolences and support. A special note of thanks goes to the Sunrise Community of Leesburg and Fairfax where Minna lived her last days under their warmth and compassion. She regarded Sunrise as a home.

As granddaughter Kristen said, "we will forever celebrate the life of this incredible, beautiful woman, who conquered the world over and over again." We love and miss you Mom.

The family added, "Be still and know that I am God," Psalm 46:10.

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News Assembly

FROM PAGE 3

IT MAY SEEM like the elections never cease in Virginia, where voters go to the polls multiple times every year. And although Washington is already focused on the 2018 campaign, Richmond is already preparing for an epic election in 2019. Not only will that election include all members of the House and the Senate, it will also set the scene for who controls the redistricting process. Both parties are eager to control as much of the process as possible, and Democrats have already won a major victory by electing a governor who will have veto power over the maps drawn by lawmakers.

“The one piece of this that I’m interested in doing is having a factor of competitiveness and competition being part of the equation,” said Del. Mark Keam (D-35). “Right now all the standards that they use for redistricting are things like partisanship, demographics and minority status. But there’s nothing that talks about whether a district is competitive or not.”

BULLETIN BOARD

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

TUESDAY/JAN. 9

NARFE Fairfax Chapter 737 Meeting. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. Presentation on “Advanced preparation and arrangement for funeral/memorial” by Peter Hause, Fairfax Memorial Funeral Home. \$11. Call 703-280-2356 for more.

JAN. 9-APRIL 3

GriefShare Program. 7-9 p.m. at Redeeming Grace Church, 5200 Ox Road, Fairfax. A 13-week curriculum program meeting the needs of those adults in the grieving process. Meeting weekly, supporting one another through discussion, video education and homework. \$20 for workbook. Visit www.rgcfairfax.org or call 703-691-0600.

SATURDAY/JAN. 13

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.

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.

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I'm Very Seldom Wrong, But This Time I'm Write



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Since I don't have to write for a deadline this week (12/27/17 papers have already gone to press), maybe I'll write for pleasure. Not that writing this column is ever not my pleasure, but it is time-sensitive, at least on a weekly basis. And though that “weekliness” can occasionally induce some pressure, mostly I can manage it. Besides, it contributes to what you read and my feelings about having written. As such, my columns are rarely about the past, well, only in so far as it gives the present and future concerns some context. Generally speaking however, I am writing about extremely-current events. It's not exactly real time, but the timing is exceptionally real.

This sort of holiday break occurs at The Connection every year as we condense our publication schedule and finish/publish three weeks of newspapers in nine business days. And even though this “condensation” is nothing new for any of us long-sitting employees, it does present its own unique set of challenges, yet it is a schedule which has stood the test of time. Time which eventually leads to pleasure.

And time off is part of what drives this mid-to-late December rush. Because in the newspaper business, especially considering the 24/7 news cycle, with which we are all familiar, even for a weekly publication – for both editorial and sales, you are mostly on. So getting a chance to publish and then pause, gives us all an opportunity to refresh and recharge. And since I'm honeymooning, so to speak, (see column dated 12/13/17 titled “As Good As It Gets”), I have nothing particularly cancer-centric to write about and/or worry about, well, top of mind anyway. There's plenty of cancer stuff bottom of mind though. The difficulty is keeping it there.

The problem/reality is, even when you're meandering around in your head, in order to write, there is a cancer section which inevitably fights its way to the top. It's not as if I have a multiple personality disorder: Kenny-without-cancer and Kenny-with-cancer (my website, by the way: www.KennyWithCancer.com), but sometimes I think I must. Thinking one could totally compartmentalize the facts and fissures that a “terminal” lung cancer diagnosis/“13 month to two year” prognosis imposes is an admirable, much talked about goal but in truth, it's probably unrealistic and likely leads to that dual personality. But who's kidding whom? It's hard/IMPOSSIBLE to know.

So for the moment, I can pretend/presume that Kenny-without-cancer is front and center, top of mind and in control, free to wander aimlessly in print and ponder his fate as if nothing much – other than one's own mortality, is effecting his judgment. Ah, one can dream. And oddly enough, I have been dreaming more, and sleeping longer and deeper, too. I'm sure it's simply a coincidence that having five weeks off from any cancer-related activities/obligations, and likewise having nine days off from any newspaper-related activities has contributed to this semi peace and quiet. A quiet which will soon end when we leave for two days in Pennsylvania to spend Christmas with my wife Dina's cousins, which, along with the cheesesteak I plan on eating, provides it's own sort of comfort and joy.

Still, any port in the cancer storm provides a welcome respite from the – with apologies to Shakespeare – slings and arrows of outrageous misfortune (Shakespeare's quote was “fortune”), however real or imagined. To be sure, cancer is no joke, neither is being diagnosed with a “terminal” form of it: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV, at age 54 and a half. But making fun of it and the circumstances surrounding it, has been my stock and trade since I first went public – in print, in June 2009. The means I've justified to prevent my premature end. So far, so good.

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



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