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PAGE 9

Supervisors John Cook and Jeff McKay lead a discussion on Lake Accotink Park's future on Feb. 13 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

Discussing the Future Of Lake Accotink Park

NEWS, PAGE 3

Making Innovative
Hand Tools

PEOPLE, PAGE 4

Deal on Threshold for
Misdemeanor-Felony

COMMENTARY, PAGE 7



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PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

A crowd of 200 packs the cafeteria of Lake Braddock Secondary School.



Supervisors John Cook and Jeff McKay lead a discussion on Lake Accotink Park.

Discussing the Future of Lake Accotink Park

200 people attend meeting on silt and dredging options.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

About 200 people attended a meeting on the future of Lake Accotink Park sponsored by Supervisors John Cook (R-Braddock District) and Jeff McKay (D-Lee District) on Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018, at Lake Braddock Secondary. They discussed Lake Accotink filling up with sediment – a process that is accelerating – and dredging options to fix the problem.

The Supervisors wanted to make their presentation and hear feedback from the community. The first meeting on the topic was on March 14, 2016, with a total of six meetings thus far – and many more to come. Using a slide show, Cook presented six different options for the lake. Afterwards, they took questions from the audience.

To some residents, the lake is a true gem – it's their solace and Zen. They wanted to know what will happen to its paved trail and all of the sporting events that take place around the Marina. They asked which recreational options would still be available, and what would happen to the wildlife and ecosystem – especially the bald eagles. Still others wanted to know how the dredging would affect their property values.

Cook said the Park Authority had been going through a Master Plan Review for Lake Accotink Park over the past couple of years, which led to a one-year study of the lake itself. The first decision that needs to be made is to decide what to do with Lake Accotink, he said.

"The reason why Jeff and I are up here as opposed to the Park Authority is the Park Authority does not have the money in its budget to be able to handle the dredging recommendations which would be needed



Joe Robinson of Ravensworth asks a question at the meeting.

to preserve the lake," said Cook. "That would be something the County would have to take on in the general fund budget through a Bond Referendum. That's why it's in the hands of the Board of Supervisors to look at that funding. Before we make decisions on that, we like to hear from the community."

McKay said Lake Accotink is a regional park that brings in a regional draw from multiple magisterial districts. "For me personally, I'm emotionally attached to the lake. I grew up in that area; I went to the lake all the time as a child. I feel very strongly about it. However, we want to make sure we understand how the community feels because this is going to be a decision that is driven by community input. This is a major undertaking," he said.

Here is a synopsis of Cook's presentation on different options for the lake:

OPTION A: What if we do nothing? If we do nothing, the lake on its own will disappear by the year 2025, said Cook. That's how fast it's filling up with sediment. So, there is some timeliness to our decision making. We would need to spend about \$13,000 a year on dam maintenance, and every 30 years there would be \$4.7 million spent on dam repairs. That's the do-noth-

ing option.

OPTION B: What if we do what we have been doing, which is doing dredging every time it needs it. The last dredge in 2010 cost \$9 million. The next one will cost \$29 million. Dredging is a \$29 million item and the dredge would only last 15 years. Each dredge has a shorter and shorter time span. In my view, this option is a temporary fix only because it is no longer cost feasible, said Cook.

OPTION C: Dredging of the lake, which will be a large dredge. The dredge before was 350,000 cubic yards. But the full dredge is a 500,000-cubic yard dredge. It would last 30-35 years. We would build one or four forebays, a mini lake, and you put it at the beginning of the big lake. It catches sediment and every year you dredge the little lake. It's a relatively minor dredge. That captures most of the sediment so it doesn't go into the big lake. This option preserves the lake in its current form but costs \$45 million. Every year, there would be a \$770,000 maintenance expenditure to dredge out that forebay and those dam expenditures we had before, said Cook.

OPTION D: Is a temporary fix. The Park Authority has opined that it is not a good option but we keep it in here. It would in-

volve construction of beaver dams upstream that capture sediment so that it doesn't reach the lake. But the problem is they fill up in five years. This is a temporary five-year holding pattern, said Cook.

OPTION E: Taking the dam away, which takes the lake away and retains a stream and creates a stream valley. It would cost \$11 million to take down the dam. There's no annual expenditure anymore, except \$26,000 to take care of plant life. This would change permanently the topography. There would be no lake; it would be a stream and a forest. This would be a permanent change, said Cook.

OPTION F: Looking for a middle ground. In this option, the stream is retained separate from a smaller lake by building up a berm in the middle. There's a smaller lake of 20 acres, as opposed to 50-60 acres on the big lake. So, the idea is it wouldn't fill up with sediment because the main stream would not go through it. So, it would probably stay in stable condition a long time. It would be half the size of the current lake.

McKay said what he's trying to do is get a groundswell of community support for one of the options. "If we decide we don't want the lake anymore, if that's the decision that's made, it will shape this park indefinitely. If the decision is we keep the lake, then John and I are going to do everything we can to pay for that," he said.

He said the problem is that silt is coming in at a faster rate than it has in the past. "Clearly, development is contributing to it. Some of this problem has built up over time, it's been accelerated. It's the silt coming into the lake, that's the driver of it. If we could point to a source of where this is coming from, we would fix that source. But you have silt being collected from a lot of different areas. It's hard to pinpoint one source for this," he said.

IN TAKING QUESTIONS from the audience, Cook said dredging requires moving the dirt, and that's done with lot of trucks.

SEE LAKE ACCOTINK, PAGE 10

PEOPLE

SCHOOL NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416.

Wonhyeoung Choe, of Springfield, was named to the Iowa State University dean's list for fall 2017.

Tyler R. Ard, of Alexandria, graduated with a Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering from Clemson University (S.C.).

Thomas Harwood Meiller, of Springfield, who graduated with a Bachelor of Science in mathematical

sciences from Clemson University (S.C.).

Tyler Gregory, of Springfield, a marine science major, has made the president's list at Coastal Carolina University (Conway, S.C.) for the fall 2017 semester.

Sophia Meyer has been named to the dean's list for the fall 2017 semester at the University of Vermont. Meyer, from Alexandria, is majoring in environmental studies in the Rubenstein School of Environment & Natural Resources.

Making Innovative Hand Tools

Four generations in the business.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

A seven-month-old puppy from the shelter bounds to the wicker gate with a welcoming yap for the visitor at Auto-Grip at Alban Station Court in Springfield. Gerry Cooper, from Alexandria, is vice chairman of the company. He says he has partnered the last four years with David Heiby, current president and CEO, but has 52 years of history in tools. Auto-Grip specializes in innovative hand tools.

PEOPLE AT WORK

Cooper says after 20 years with Stanley Tools in the U.S., he spent 15 years with Stanley Tools in the Pacific Rim and then 17 years "with myself. My father and grandfather worked for Stanley Tools so I am a third generation." Now he says his son has taken over his Asia Tech Source business in Taiwan so there are four generations.

Cooper points to a display of pliers from 1921 to the development of the Auto-Grip in 2016. He says, "Tim Peterson, a blacksmith in Nebraska, tried to invent what we have in the Auto-Grip that would eliminate the screw but he died in 1962." Peterson left his drawings in a box and a man from Phoenix completed the work but he had to find someone who could market it worldwide. "So they found us in 2003."

He says the advantage is that the Auto-Grip is a groove joint plier that you use with one hand. Auto-Grip locking pliers have a patented locking mechanism allowing them to quickly self adjust and lock on to thick and thin objects without the need to turn a knob. "You can see the advantage for a plumber working in a dark space with a flashlight in one hand." And he adds that it works much faster which is important for auto mechanics, carpenters and plumbers who use it every day to make a living.

Copper and Heiby sit pouring through the March issue of Popular Mechanics looking at the competition and for ideas. For instance, he pulls out the auto blade which is an improved utility knife. "You know how the edges of the blade wear out? You just depress this little red button and out comes a new one." He says, "You can store five of these blades."

A small warehouse space is located in the back of the office where employees take the raw materials from China and use specially designed tooling to put the grip on the handle and insert the cable ties on



David Heiby, president and CEO of Auto-Grip with office dog, Blue.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION



Special tooling turns raw materials into market Auto-Grip pliers.



Gerry Cooper, vice-chair of Auto-Grip.

twice a month with his wife. He also spends Thursday mornings at Old Presbyterian Meeting House serving breakfast to about 70 homeless people. "I'm board chair of Senior Services of Alexandria. We raise funds from donors to provide free services to seniors such as transportation to doctor's appointments, friendly visitors who chat with people who request a visit, and groceries to go every two weeks."

It's time for lunch and Blue sits obediently by waiting for a bite of a turkey sandwich. "He's a mooch," Heiby's wife explains.

the back of the pliers. "Speed is important. She can finish one of these in 40 seconds." Heiby adds that some of their employees are brain injury survivors. "We like to give back to the community."

Cooper says he and Heiby have both turned up the music and worked in the backroom to help get out the orders when they had a deadline. "We just sold 90,000 to Auto Advantage and CarQuest including the 8-inch that most mechanics use, the 6-inch little one and the needlepoint. It was an excellent sale."

Cooper points out the difference between doing business in China and the U.S. Is "the business ethic, a huge difference." He says this is why when you pick up a newspaper and read there was a factory fire and 20 people jumped out of windows and the factory was destroyed, you ask how that could happen. "Up until 10 years ago it happened all the time. But U.S. companies didn't want to read about themselves so they started bringing about changes in air and water pollution, OSHA protections, fire safety."

When Cooper isn't at his office in Springfield or negotiating contracts in China, he is at home at Harbor Place in Alexandria or volunteering to deliver Meals on Wheels



Rolling Road Widening Fairfax County

Environmental Document Available for Review

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) plans to widen Rolling Road (Route 638) from two to four lanes between Viola Street and Old Keene Mill Road. The project, financed with federal, state, local and Northern Virginia Transportation Authority funds, also includes a shared-use path for bicyclists, pedestrians and other non-motorized users.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 23 CFR Part 771, a Categorical Exclusion (CE) was approved by the Federal Highway Administration for public availability at a previous Design Public Hearing (DPH) on June 12, 2008. In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 and 36 CFR 800, information concerning the potential effects of the proposed improvements on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places was included in the CE.

Pursuant to 23 CFR 771.129, a NEPA Reevaluation was conducted to determine what effects any changes in the project design, laws and regulations or the affected environment might have on the validity of the approved CE. The Reevaluation document, including the updated Preliminary Noise Study, is now available for public review and comment at the project website (www.virginiadot.org/projects) or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-259-2774 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions. The Reevaluation document will also be available at the DPH that is scheduled to be held Tuesday, February 27, 2018 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at Irving Middle School, 8100 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield, VA 22152.

Give your written comments at the DPH, or submit them by **March 9, 2018** to Mr. Bryan Campbell at the Northern Virginia District Office address above, or e-mail comments to meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "Rolling Road Widening – NEPA Reevaluation" in the subject line.

VDOT ensures non-discrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT's Civil Rights Division at 703-259-1775 or TTY/TDD 711.

State Project: 0638-029-156, P104, R204, C504
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OPINION

Send in Pet Photos Now

The Pet Connection, a twice-yearly special edition, will publish the last week of February, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by Friday, Feb. 23.

We invite you to send stories about your pets, photos of you and your family with your cats, dogs, llamas, alpacas, ponies, hamsters, snakes, lizards, frogs, rabbits, or whatever other creatures share your life with you.

Tell us the story of a special bond between a child and a dog, the story of how you came to adopt your pet, or examples of amazing feats of your creatures.

Do you volunteer at an animal shelter or therapeutic riding center or take your pet to visit people in a nursing home? Does your business have a managing pet? Is your business about pets? Have you helped to train an assis-

tance dog? Do you or someone in your family depend on an assistance dog?

Or take this opportunity to memorialize a beloved pet you have lost.

Just a cute photo is fine too. Our favorite pictures include both pets and humans.

Please tell us a little bit about your creature, identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description what is happening in the photo, and include address and phone number (we will not publish your address or phone number, just your town name).

Email to editors@connectionnewspapers.com or submit online at www.connectionnewspapers.com/pets.

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— MARY KIMM

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Maddie, the treasured pet of Sharon Lewis, Vienna, celebrated her 11th birthday in great style on July, 2016.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What Needs to Be Fixed?

To the Editor:

In your editorial ("What's Wrong with This Picture?" - Connection, Jan. 24-25, 2018) you wrote that the demographic disparity in enrollment this year at Thomas Jefferson High School (TJ) indicates something is wrong and needs to be fixed. To fix this wrong condition you noted that State Senator Surovell has proposed a bill that would consider economics and geography in the selection process.

Here is my concern: I thought that admission to TJ is open to any and all students and the administration strives to assist anyone interested in achieving admission to the school. Admission is based strictly on merit, academic ability and academic achievement.

Therefore, it begs the question, what is wrong and needs to be fixed?

If the demographics at TJ are wrong and the reason for this needs to be fixed, and the solution is to consider economics and geography in admissions, then the admissions standards will be compromised and no longer based on academic ability and academic achievement.

As a final thought, if demographic percentages are so important and are the reason for the needed fix, why was the percentage of Asian students enrolled at TJ omitted?

Dan McKim
Springfield

Respecting Differences

To the Editor:

The Danish Government recently proposed a ban on full-face veils worn by Muslim women. It is repulsive to see that such discussion has firmly taken root in yet another Western European country. When will these people understand that by forcing others to go against their beliefs only further creates agitation in society?

In light of these unfortunate trends, the love for my country deepens. I look around me and I see people who, despite their possibly colossal differences, respect each other and act positively towards each other. A Muslim woman wearing her spiritual clothing isn't disrespectful, contrary to what the Danish Government believes, however, forcing these women to do the opposite is.

Despite having to hear this horrible news, never for one second should we give up our beliefs or force others to give up theirs.

This is the definition of what it should mean to be an American, and I hope that we can spread this message of freedom to other countries around the world by continuing to be a model ourselves.

Haris Qamar
Clifton

Frustration Turned to Hope

To the Editor:

This is a story of frustration

turned to hope. In November last year I sent a check certified through the USPS, it was lost. A month later I stopped payment on it and sent another check certified, unbelievably the second check was also lost. After several phone calls and hours on hold with the USPS, I was told that they were not liable for the lost letters or for the \$70 that I had to pay to stop payment. The rep told me if I was unhappy to contact my congressman, so I did the next best thing.

This is where the story turns to one of hope, Tom Barton, the Clifton postmaster recognizing my frustration agreed to send the third check "overnight" at no cost to me. I dropped by my local delegate, Tim Hugo's office and met with his District Director, Michelle Baker, who took the information and said she would begin working on getting me compensation.

Michelle contacted Tom who informed her he would write a letter to my bank stating that the USPS had lost my letters and ask them to forgo the surcharge. Michelle also contacted the BB&T bank at Union Mill and spoke with Jackie, Karen, Nabila and Mo who agreed to waive the charges.

Michelle also followed up with a phone to me in the evening (way after working hours) to see how things were proceeding – above and beyond her duties.

While I am disappointed with the response I received from USPS, I have restored faith in our system due to the hard work of these individuals.

Karen Floyd
Clifton

Football Scholarships

To the Editor:

The National Capital Region Chapter of the National Football Foundation is accepting nominations for its 2018 Scholar-Athlete banquet. The Chapter awards five \$1,000 scholarships annually to deserving high school senior scholar athletes who played high school football. Nominees are evaluated on academic and athletic excellence, as well as contributions to their school and community. Nomination packets have been mailed to each high school head coach in the National Capital Region. Deadline for submission of nomination packets is April 6. The 12th Annual Awards Banquet will be held on April 22 at the Army-Navy Club in Arlington.

The National Football Foundation was founded in 1947 to promote and develop amateur American football on all levels. The National Football Foundation has more than 115 chapters nationwide. The National Capital Region Chapter has awarded over 65 scholarships and honored over 230 deserving student-athletes in the past 10 years.

The National Capital Region Chapter requests and urges participation from all high schools in the National Capital Region.

For additional information, contact your head football coach.

Bob Jarrell
Scholarship Selection Committee Chairman
NCR Chapter, NFF

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COMMENTARY

A Deal on Misdemeanor-Felony Threshold

BY SCOTT SUROVELL
STATE SENATOR (D-36)



The fifth week of the session brought a furious pace to legislating including some of the most contentious bills of the session as we approached “cross-over” – the day the Senate and House are required to complete action on legislation originating in each chamber. It was mostly a successful week for me. Twenty-one of my bills are now set to pass the Senate to be considered by the House of Delegates.

First, Governor Northam announced an agreement to raise Virginia’s threshold between misdemeanors and felonies from \$200 to \$500. Once enacted, Virginia’s threshold will still be the second lowest in the United States. I have introduced this legislation every year for nine sessions. I am pleased it is finally going to be enacted into law.

My legislation to place a 36 percent interest rate cap on all consumer finance loans was sent back to committee for “additional vetting” after the online lending industry retained a top Richmond lobbying firm. Luckily, my bill re-escaped the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee with only three “no” votes and I hope it will finally pass this week.

All six of my coal ash bills were heard this week. Ultimately, I mediated a compromise between Governor Northam, Dominion and environmental groups to continue the moratorium on closing coal ash ponds for 12 months, required Dominion to issue requests for proposal from coal ash recycling companies to recycle ash, and convene a joint committee of Sen-

ate and House members to investigate the coal ash problem over the next 12 months. My bill also allowed the closure of ponds where ash has already been removed so we do not continue to have open holes in the ground.

While I was disappointed that we did not completely resolve the issue this session, the ultimate disposition of these ponds will cost ratepayers billions of dollars and it is

important to proceed carefully to both build support and make sure the correct outcome is justified. I am hopeful that the information generated last year and over the coming months coupled with other legislators focused on resolution will help generate a consensus.

Unfortunately, my bill to impose a four-year moratorium on hydraulic fracturing or “fracking” for natural gas east of Interstate 95 was rereferred to the Senate Finance Committee where it died on a tie (8-8) vote. Some members were concerned it constituted a government “taking” although similar legislation has passed in numerous states and survived numerous litigation challenges. I will try again next year.

The Health and Education Committee passed my legislation to allow low-income high school students to take online classes without paying any fees and requiring schools to provide them with computers. I introduced the bill after I discovered Fairfax and Prince William counties charge free and reduced lunch families fees up to \$345 to take online classes and do not provide computers. The bill will be on

SEE SUROVELL, PAGE 11

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CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

“Uncommon Visions.” Through Feb. 25, various times at 2905 District Ave., Suite 115 (in the Mosaic District), Fairfax. The Torpedo Factory Artists' Association (TFAA) presents “Uncommon Visions,” the third exhibition at Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic. This mixed-media show features the work of more than 40 TFAA member artists. Each of the artists, through use of form, color, technique, or materials, aim to guide the audience into unexpected avenues and share their own personal perceptions.

Visit www.torpedofactoryartists.com/event/uncommon-visions/.

“Mobile Views.” Through March 4, various times in W-9 in the Arches Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. In her show, “Mobile Views” Kathy Strauss explores the “fine art” of cellphone photography. Visit www.imagewerks.net or www.workhousearts.org.

FRIDAY/FEB. 16

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Enjoy free coffee, entertaining callers, a friendly atmosphere, \$1,000 guaranteed jackpot, treasure chest progressive raffles, and good food available for purchase. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit www.fairfaxvfd.com or call 703-273-3638 for more.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/FEB. 16-17

“Loyal Heart.” Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday, 1 p.m. at Woodson High School, 9525 Main St., Fairfax. Woodson High senior Paul Hardin has written a musical that tells the story of young King Henry VIII, who jostled under the name Sir Loyal Heart in 1511. Hardin composed 24 original songs, fully orchestrated for a 16-piece pit orchestra. The performances are free and open to the public. Contact Pam Hardin at 703-425-7896 or pamhardin@verizon.net or Joan Brown at jcbrown1@fcps.edu.

SATURDAY/FEB. 17

Country-Western Dance. 6:30-10 p.m. at Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a dance, with lessons: 6:30-7:30 p.m. and open dancing, 7:30-10 p.m. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Admission for NVCWDA members \$10; non-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. Visit www.nvcwda.org.

Valentine's Day Banquet. 6:30-11 p.m. at Waterford Receptions at Springfield, 6715 Commerce St., Springfield. The Family Ministry of the Greater Little Zion Baptist Church is sponsoring their Annual Valentine's Day Banquet. All couples and singles are invited to fellowship and enjoy an evening of fine dining, music, dancing and featured entertainment. \$60 per person (payment deadline is Feb. 10, 2018). Call Anthony or Terri Bazemore at the Church Administration Office – 703-239- 9111.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/FEB. 17-18

“A Midsummer Night's Dream.” At George Mason University's Center for



Hands On Day

The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum will hold a Hands On Day with crafts. Admission: museum members and age 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2; ages 16 and older, \$4. Craft supplies included with admission. Sunday, March 11, 1-4 p.m. at The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

the Arts. Virginia Opera presents its third production of the 2017-2018 season, “A Midsummer Night's Dream” by Benjamin Britten. For tickets and information visit vaopera.org or call 866-673-7282.

guaranteed jackpot, treasure chest progressive raffles, and good food available for purchase. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit www.fairfaxvfd.com or call 703-273-3638 for more.

SUNDAY/FEB. 18

NTRAK Scale Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold a N gauge model train show. Admission, Museum members and age 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2 and 16 and older, \$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR or call 703-425-9225.

MONDAY/FEB. 19

Winter Concert. 3.5 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Northern Virginia Youth Winds, the youth division of the City of Fairfax Band Association, presents their winter program. Free. Email info@fairfaxband.org or visit www.fairfaxband.org.

THURSDAY/FEB. 22

Gentle Yoga. 12:30-2 p.m. at Sentara Surgery Specialists Comprehensive Breast Center, 8988 Lorton Station Blvd., Suite 103, Lorton. This yoga protocol is facilitated by an instructor specifically trained to work with cancer patients. Pat will adapt traditional yoga practices to meet the physiological and psychological needs of cancer patients. No registration required. It is recommended that participants dress comfortably and bring a yoga mat, towel(s), and water. Visit www.sentara.com for more.

DIY Open House. 5-7:30 p.m. at Board and Brush, 7002 Spring Garden Drive, Springfield. Board and Brush offers a wide variety of hands-on, DIY art instructional workshops taking visitors through the steps to create a beautiful classic wooden piece. Visit boardandbrush.com/springfield/.

FRIDAY/FEB. 23

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Enjoy free coffee, entertaining callers, a friendly atmosphere, \$1,000

SUNDAY/FEB. 25

Burke Historical Society Meeting. 3:30-5 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library, 6550 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Guest speakers will be Heather Bollinger and Jeff Clark, who will bring back to life some of the lost towns of Fairfax County. Free. Visit www.burkehistoricalsociety.org.

I Remember When... Concert. 4-5:30 p.m. at Lanier Middle School, 3801 Jermantown Road, Fairfax. Join the Main Street Community Band for a musical stroll down memory lane. \$10 adult/\$5 seniors/students always free. Visit fairfaxband.org.

THURSDAY/MARCH 1

Orchestra Concert. 7-8:30 p.m. at South County High School Dale S. Rumberger Performing Arts Center Auditorium, 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. Come enjoy the South County High School Orchestra's program of classical and popular music celebrating spring. Free. Visit www.schsochestra.org/.

FRIDAY/MARCH 2

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Enjoy free coffee, entertaining callers, a friendly atmosphere, \$1,000 guaranteed jackpot, treasure chest progressive raffles, and good food available for purchase. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit www.fairfaxvfd.com or call 703-273-3638 for more.

Songwriting Contest Finalists Perform. 7:30 p.m. at Bethesda Blues & Jazz Supper Club, 7719 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda. Six songwriters have been chosen as finalists and one will win the \$10,000 Grand Prize and 25 hours of complimentary recording studio time at Innovation Station Music. Three songwriters from the Young Songwriter category (including Skyler Foley of Burke) will also perform live and compete for \$2,500. Tickets will be \$15 and \$20 and available at www.bethesda.org.

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Styling a Coffee Table

Using décor to make a table pop.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

There's an art to designing a living room coffee table, says local interior designer Susan Tucker. In fact, when she's helping a client create a living room space, she pays particular attention to creating a stylish and functional table.

"It seems like such a small thing, but when designed the right way, a coffee table can become the focal point of a room and really make it pop," she said. "I believe that there's a right way and a wrong way to put together a coffee table, but it's not hard if you keep certain things in mind."

Vary the height and scale so that each item can shine on its own. "If everything is the same height, none of them will be noticed," said Tucker. "Think a pretty vase of flowers behind a small porcelain bowl."

Work to create balance between small and large items, says Alexandria, Virginia-based designer Steven Gambit. "For example, a smattering of small knick-knacks can look cluttered on a coffee table," he said. "Along the same lines, too many large items on a coffee table can be overpowering. Instead select a few items and group them together by size."

Change items as the seasons or holidays



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE NEST EGG

Books add visual interest and can provide topics of conversation when displayed on a coffee table.

change. "As spring approaches, consider adding a small bouquet of fresh or silk spring flowers," said Tucker. "If you celebrate Easter, consider Easter décor, like a bunny or a basket with eggs. I picked up some elegant Easter items at a local home accessories store last spring. One or two simple items can breathe fresh life in a table design."

Choose items with colors that are found in other places in a room's design. "If you



Consider placing coffee table items on a tray, like this one from the Nest Egg, says Interior Designer Susan Tucker.

have a painting with bright colors, for example, choose one of the colors and find an item in the same color to add to your coffee table. If you have throw pillows in interesting colors, considering using one of those colors on your coffee table."

Consider only decorating one section of the coffee table, especially if the table is large. "It's a good idea to leave some space free, especially if you entertain a lot," said

Gambit. "Your guests will need a place to put a drink. Don't feel compelled to fill every inch of space."

A serving tray can serve two purposes on a coffee table, says Gambit. "An elegant serving tray can make a dramatic statement on a coffee table, and can give a table some structure, especially if it's holding smaller items," he said. "If you need to clear the coffee table quickly, like if you're entertaining, a tray makes it easy."

Think about what the items on the coffee table will look from different places in the room, suggests Tucker. "Stand over your coffee table and get a sense of what the objects look like gazing down at it," she said. "Sit across the room from it. Can the items be seen fully or are the most appealing parts of an item obstructed? I generally discourage clients from putting picture frames on a coffee table because you can't see the main attraction — the photo — from behind."

Be practical and sentimental. "Because people tend to gather around coffee tables, don't put a breakable family heirloom or an expensive pieces on them," said Gambit. "Coffee table books are a good idea because they can be topics of conversation. You can use a coffee table to display things that represent a part of your personality, lifestyle or a hobby."

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NEWS

Lake Accotink Options Discussed

FROM PAGE 3

He said this would be a dry dredge. "We would have to empty the lake and dig it out dry. It would have to be shipped to King George County, or areas that can take fill dirt. We're talking about enough dirt to fill Fed Ex Field," he said. But before they would do anything like that, he said they would have many meetings with residents to talk about the details.

McKay said he's been through this dredging before. "We know the impacts that are out there. They are significant. If we were to choose a path of dredging, there would be many meetings to choose the best methods to do that."

Cook said if Option A is picked, the dam stays and the lake fills in and becomes swampy. "If the dam comes down and turns into a stream, that will be a meadow and a forest. So, the environment is different in each of these options. I suspect if the lake goes away, the birds will go too, and other animals will come in. You'll have a different ecosystem that will come in," he said.

Regarding the timing of the lake decision: "We don't have a final answer on a time frame but I think the decision needs to be made in this calendar year. If a funding action is needed, the bond needs to be on 2019 ballot," said Cook. "I'm thinking in terms of doing outreach throughout the spring and coming up with a decision in the next six months."



PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Supervisor John Cook leads a slide presentation on the dredging options at Lake Accotink Park.

McKay ended the meeting by saying: "This is about us gathering information from you to help guide the process. This is a step in the process. We will continue to have more meetings. You will be involved in the process."

Springfield resident Shane Shroeder, who spoke at the meeting, started a Facebook Group called Save Lake Accotink, which now has 1,600 signatures. He also started a Save Lake Accotink Instagram account and Save Accotink Twitter account. There's also a www.SaveLakeAccotink.org web domain. "We made flyers tonight and will be distributing them around the county and making yard signs. The whole point is to raise awareness on this issue," said Shroeder.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF G.C. 'GARY' BLACK, III

Discussing Communication Civility

Abdul Rashid Abdullah spoke on communication civility to the Rotary Club of Springfield. President-Elect Jim Hedrick gives a book certificate for a book donated to Garfield Elementary School's Library to Abdullah, who lives in Herndon and is an adult Boy Scout in the Patriot District (Burke & Fairfax Station), as well as working as a systems architect.

SCHOOL 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.

Andrew R. Cornes, of Burke, was named to the Baylor University (Waco, Texas) dean's list for fall 2017.

Ashley Ellis, of Springfield, majoring in history, was named the Coastal Carolina University (Conway, S.C.) fall 2017 dean's list.

Margeaux Gagnon, of Burke, was named to The University of Rhode Island dean's list for fall 2017.

The following students from Burke were named to the fall 2017 dean's list

at The College of William & Mary: **Katherine Avery, Timothy Chen, Alex Chung, Benjamin Clark, Leslie Davis, Cornelius Finnegan, Cory Huddleston, Chris Kim, Yoojin Kook, Yifan Li, Simran Mahan, Sarah Mehaffey, Colleen Mulrooney, Andrea Powers, Jonathan Russell, Robert Strain, Marcell Subert, Ruhao Tang, and Emma Wise.**

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/FEB. 15

Building Healthy Relationships. 10 a.m.-noon at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 - Room 100, Dunn Loring. Navigating the social world is hard. It can be extremely difficult for children and teenagers with disabilities. This workshop, for parents of middle and high school students with disabilities, will provide important information to help your child build healthy relationships in the social world. Register at bit.ly/2n15uCF.

Planning Commission Meeting. 7:30 p.m. at Government Center Auditorium, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Topic: Planning Commission Meeting on Proposed Consolidated Stormwater/Wastewater Facility. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock.

SATURDAY/FEB. 17

National Engineers Week Youth

Conference. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at the GMU Fairfax Campus. The conference will include workshop sessions on bioengineering, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, systems engineering, and cybersecurity. Networking opportunities and hands-on activities. Free. Register at ist.gmu.edu/EngineeringConference/; parent or guardian must register and accompany minors. Call 703-714-5581 or email smfarquharso@fcps.edu for more.

SUNDAY/FEB. 18

A View from Israel. 4:30 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Reuven Azar, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Israel will present: A View from Israel – an exploration of the current challenges and opportunities facing the region. Free. Register at jccnv.org/register.

Surovell

FROM PAGE 7

the floor of the Senate this week.

The Equifax data hack highlighted the vulnerability of personal information.

My legislation to require credit bureaus to freeze credit at no charge was amended to a \$5 fee and my legislation to clarify the process for freezing children's credit was passed. The bill passed committee and should pass the full Senate this week.

Finally, the Senate passed major legislation repealing the cap on electricity rates that the General Assembly enacted in 2015 due to uncertainty created by President Obama's Clean Power Plan that the current Administration has taken steps to repeal. While there were some parts of the bill I did not like, the legislation takes all of Dominion's over-earnings and reinvests it into necessary grid modernization, will increase Virginia's renewable energy production by ten-fold (500 MW to 5,000 MW), increases Dominion's shareholders' payments towards low-income energy assistance, directs Dominion's profits towards \$450 million of coal ash cleanup expenses, and expands Dominion's Strategic Undergrounding Program in ways that could lead to underground power lines on U.S. 1.

You can always reach me at scott@scottsurovell.org if you have any feedback.

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"AutoMadic"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I realize that given the growth and evolution of the world most of us live in, and how business is transacted, there are two words, a phrase actually, whose very existence is threatened: "Bill me." "C.O.D.," "Cash on delivery" is likely itself on the precipice of extinction, a dodo bird if there ever was one. However, since "Money makes the world go 'round," – or at least it made the hit musical "Cabaret" go 'round in 1966, credit and one's good name can only stretch the dollar so far. Bills have to be paid or else the world doesn't "go 'round" so far. Moreover, if the money is missing, there's less to sing about.

Ergo an idea/system was devised whereby people/entities to whom you owed money would have semi unfettered access to your money – without having to talk to you/ask permission. Once the consumer/"ower" had signed an authorization granting such access, the game was on and the money withdrawn (debited) regularly, as agreed to.

Occasionally, financial inducements were offered to entice the consumer to subject his money/accounts to such plundering. But eventually, the process became all the rage. Meaning, consumers couldn't transact business any other way, and despite any hesitations or objections (anger) to the contrary, it was either debit or die. And though this system didn't cause a revolution or become a motto on a license plate, it did change how we bank, buy and balance.

Within the last few weeks I've added two more automatic monthly debits. Payments which I was given no other realistic choice/method to pay other than all at once (not happening,) or once a month, automatically from my bank. And not that I felt held up by the process, but I did feel as if the highway awaited if I didn't pay their way.

So now I have six monthly debits drafting on five different but recurring days, save for holidays and weekends of course. In addition, I have granted additional bank access to retailers, service providers, Internet-only companies, Amazon, pharmaceutical warehouses and on and on and on; all of whom have keys – so to speak – to my kingdom, such as it is.

Still, I think I know what's being debited at any given time, but in the context of and conjunction with, all the other transactions that I or my wife make, sometimes I don't know if I do know, actually, whether my money is coming in or going out or finding a new home somewhere – and one not in this country and likely irretrievable, or disappearing altogether with any other money I may have accumulated.

All of those worst case, possibly everyday scenarios, notwithstanding, what can I do? If I don't play and in turn, don't pay, then I am likely having to fend for myself. I may still have plenty places to go to, but what am I going to do when I get there? My wallet (unlike George Costanza's) isn't big enough to hold all the cash I'd need to conclude just a few of my transactions. I don't like ceding control this way, but the joke may already be on me: I don't have any control. It was taken away a long time ago when the first authorization was signed allowing a second/third party to withdraw money – automatically, and regularly, from the "signee's" bank account. From that point on, it was, as we say in New England: "Katie bar the door," meaning: bad news, among a variety of other "unpleasantries."

Regardless of how I fear all of these companies/"withdrawers" having a way into my bank account in order to get my money out, the reality is, there isn't a damn thing I can do about it. I just have to pay attention, literally – and figuratively. Otherwise, I'll be a victim of their circumstance.

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

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IN THE NATION TO
RECEIVE THIS HONOR

SERVICE & PARTS DEPT HOURS:

Monday - Friday, 7:00am to 7:00pm

Saturday, 8:00am to 5:00pm

**YOU HAVE SATURDAY OFF.
THAT'S EXACTLY WHY WE DON'T!**



**ToyotaCare
Customers**

Don't Forget Your **FREE** Service.
5,000 • 10,000 • 15,000 • 20,000 • 25,000

Now Available Mile Services
Call your ASM for details

ToyotaCare Plus \$329⁰⁰

Covers up to 4 years/45,000 miles

LUBE, OIL, & FILTER SPECIAL**\$29⁹⁵**

NON-SYNTHETIC

Includes: Change oil (up to 5 qts.), install Genuine Toyota oil filter, inspect & adjust all fluid levels and complimentary multi-point inspection with print out.

NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF PURCHASE. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. OFFER EXPIRES 2/28/18.

\$44⁹⁵

SYNTHETIC

COMPLIMENTARY

15 MINUTE
**ALIGNMENT
CHECK**

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ALIGNMENT SPECIAL**\$79⁹⁵**

Your car's alignment suffers, and can
cause uneven tire wear and steering problems.
INCLUDES: Inspect suspension, ball joints, struts
& shocks, tire condition and set tire pressure.

NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF PURCHASE. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. OFFER EXPIRES 2/28/18.

BRAKE SPECIAL**\$99⁹⁵**

Includes: Install Genuine Toyota front brake pads, inspect
front & rear rotors & drums, check tire condition and inspect all
hardware. TCMC pads only.

MACHINE ROTORS AN ADDITIONAL \$199.95.

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SIGHT LINE WIPER BLADES**\$10 OFF**

Sight Line only.

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**30,000 MILES FACTORY
RECOMMENDED SERVICE**

\$159⁹⁵

SYNTHETIC \$10 MORE

Includes: Change engine oil & filter (up to 5 qts), rotate tires, inspect wear
and adjust pressure, measure brake pad thickness & rotor runout, replace
cabin air filter (if equipped), replace engine air filter, reset maintenance
reminder light (if applicable) and multi-point vehicle inspection.

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VARIABLE DISCOUNT**\$5.00 OFF** when you spend \$35.00 - \$49.99**\$10.00 OFF** when you spend \$50.00 - \$99.99**\$15.00 OFF** when you spend \$100.00 - \$199.99**\$20.00 OFF** when you spend \$200.00 - \$499.99**\$50.00 OFF** when you spend \$500.00 or more

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Jack Taylor's

ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA

**TRUESTART™
BATTERY SPECIAL**

\$99⁹⁵

INCLUDES BATTERY INSTALLATION

Includes: 84 month warranty,
24 month **FREE** replacement,
24 month **FREE** roadside assistance.
Does not apply to hybrid batteries.

NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF PURCHASE. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. OFFER EXPIRES 2/28/18.

CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT AT **703-684-0710** OR SCHEDULE ONLINE AT **ALEXANDRIATOYOTA.COM**