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WELLBEING
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From left -- Afomiya Alemay, Maraki Fanuil, Sophia Powell, Brittany Peng and Rachel Friedman display international foods at the Burke Centre Library International Day.

Burke
CONNECTION

Embracing Diversity In Burke Centre Library

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**'Celebrating the
Magic of Giving Back'**

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**Darcy, Miller-Green Lead
Lake Braddock Past Robinson**

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MAY 3-9, 2018

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NEWS



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS

Almost 2,000 people, plus 900 singers, packed Hayfield Secondary School for the 46th annual All-County Chorale Festival.

Do-Re-Me SING!

Voices ring for All County Choral Festival.

The young singers have been honing their voices for months, singing in large and small groups every week since January.

On Saturday, they finally got the chance to showcase their work, as nearly 900 sixth-grade singers — hand-picked by their elementary school music teachers for their vocal talent — sang together at Hayfield Secondary School for the 46th annual All-County Choral Festival.

“It is truly an honor for the students performing today to be a member of this select group of vocalists,” said Kelly M. Harbison, president of the Fairfax General Music Educators Association and a music educator at Canterbury Woods Elementary School.

Led by guest conductor Dr. Jamie Hillman, the students sang a variety of music — from George Handel’s classic “Sing for Joy!” to Joan Varner’s “When I Am Silent,” a tribute to young Holocaust victims.

The song, and the voices of 900 sopranos, moved many in the audience to tears.

“These young singers were truly amazing,”

said Hillman, who previously taught music at Phillips Academy and Boston University.

“They’ve only had one day to practice as a complete group, and they came together flawlessly. Their energy and enthusiasm was inspiring.”

In addition to the 900 singers, Hayfield’s auditorium was packed with twice as many family members, including School Board members, school principals and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Scott Brabrand.

“I told parents ‘prepare to be wowed by these singers.’ I think we were all blown away by the talent and organization it took to accomplish this,” Brabrand said.

Organization was key as music teachers used songs and audience sing-offs to quickly reunite singers with their families and move 2,000 people out of the auditorium in under 15 minutes.

“The festival was a rousing success at every level. We’re all proud of these students and our music teachers for this festival,” Brabrand said.

— VICTORIA ROSS



Nearly 900 sixth-grade singers — hand-picked by their elementary school music teachers for their vocal talent — sang together at Hayfield Secondary School.

‘Celebrating the Magic of Giving Back’

Some 144 individuals and groups honored at Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

About 400 people attended the 26th annual Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards on Friday, April 27, at the Waterford in Springfield where some 144 individuals and groups were honored. With the theme “Once Upon a Volunteer, Celebrating the Magic of Giving Back,” the breakfast included the “Who’s Who” of Fairfax County’s leaders in business, education, government and nonprofits. It was sponsored by Volunteer Fairfax, members of the Board of Su-

pervisors and Chairman Sharon Bulova. The volunteers, who do everything from helping with technology mentoring, supporting at-risk seniors and working to combat homelessness, gave a total of 328,760 hours of service worth \$7.9 million in support of the Fairfax County community. Peggy Fox, Virginia Bureau Chief at WUSA9/CBS affiliate, served as event emcee.

Many different awards were given out, including 2018 Benchmark Awards for volunteering 100, 250, 500, or 1,000 hours; 2018 Community Champions who were selected by the Board of Supervisors honoring a volunteer in their districts who was

dedicated to improving life in the county and beyond; and 2018 Competitive Awards for youth, adult, and seniors in individuals and groups.

“Today is all about recognizing the wonderful volunteers we have in Fairfax County,” said Elise Neil Bengtson, CEO of Volunteer Fairfax. “We’re giving them a platform so the county can understand better where volunteers fill gaps and meet the needs of the community and nonprofits at the same time. Without volunteers, we could not get everything done that we do. We have a tremendous wealth of experience and education in this area so even when you’re older and retired, you can do amazing things and feel good and stay energized in this county and be an active participant.”

Added Rick Garza, Volunteer Fairfax board president: “This is a signature event

for Volunteer Fairfax and Fairfax County and the City of Fairfax to just honor so many people who devote their time outside of their working hours helping others, helping our community be a better place.”

Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova, who offered a Fairfax County Proclamation to Volunteer Fairfax, which was established in 1975, added: “Fairfax County has a unique culture and that includes volunteerism through the roof ... We would not be able to do as much as we do with volunteers if we didn’t have an organizational body pulling people together, connecting people and making volunteerism happen. Congratulations Volunteer Fairfax and thank you so much for everything you do for our community.”

For more on Volunteer Fairfax, visit www.volunteerfairfax.org.

County Residents Named Community Champion

The following citizen volunteers from the area were chosen by members of the Board of Supervisors from each of their districts as a Community Champion. This award recognizes volunteers who are committed to improving Fairfax County through service that fulfills or addresses a pressing community need.

Joanne Walton has been a Braddock District resident for over 20 years. Her first foray into volunteering was with the Burke MOMS Club where she sat on the board, served as president, and ran the Preschool Fair. She also co-chaired Braddock Dogs, a local group dedicated to bringing a dog park to Braddock District — the only district that did not have one. For several years, Walton attended meetings and rallied the community for funds to ensure this project came to fruition. As a result of her efforts, there will not only be a new dog park but a playground and skate park as well. Lately, she

For more than five years, **Ed Joseph** has been chair of the Lee District Land Use Advisory Council, a volunteer organization that hears land use cases and provides their opinion to the Lee District supervisor. Every resident of Lee District and Fairfax County has benefitted from the success of the revitalization efforts, and in turn from his work. His sense of community has been a driving force behind the district’s growth. In addition to the Land Use Advisory Board, he has given back directly to his neighborhood as the former president of the Mews Homeowner’s Association working on a variety of issues.

“Ed is an incredible volunteer,” said District Supervisor Jeff McKay. “His work benefits all of Lee District’s residents and is one of the reasons our revitalization efforts have succeeded as much as they have. His self-



Supervisor John Cook honors Joanne Walton, Braddock District.

has devoted many volunteer hours to helping start the Fairfax County Special Education PTA where she serves as the fundraising co-chair. In addition to that role, she is recruiting, training, and coordinating PTA specialist education liaisons for every Fairfax County School — over 180 schools.

District Supervisor John Cook said, “Joanne Walton’s generosity and dedication to service has made her an exemplary leader in the Braddock District. Her tireless efforts improve the lives of parents, students, and animals in our community.”



Supervisor Jeff McKay honors Ed Joseph, Lee District.

lessness and dedication to service are inspirational, and we are very fortunate to have him in our community.”

Every Friday, **Shirley Steenstra** is at Lorton Community Action Center’s thrift store Lorton’s Attic, leading a team of volunteers. Lorton’s Attic serves a dual purpose in the community by providing vouchers for families to shop for free as well as raising revenue for Lorton Community Action Center (LCAC) to help assist families with food, rent, utilities, and other needs. For more than eight years, she has crossed paths with more than 1,000 individuals in the store helping LCAC families find what they need. Previously, Lorton’s Attic was only open Monday through Friday; but because of Steenstra’s commitment, the store is now able to open its doors on Saturdays with Steenstra serving as the lead volunteer.

Mount Vernon District Supervisor Daniel Storck said, “Shirley is a selfless volunteer and a true ‘behind the scenes’ champion.

The **Tysons Partnership** serves as a collaborative of stakeholders working together to transform Tysons into a new downtown by serving as a convener, a voice, and a catalyst for the people who work, live, and do business in Tysons. The Tysons Partnership through its Community Responsibility Council provides a forum for business, civic, and government leaders committed to improving the lives of underserved populations within the Tysons community. Officially launched in 2016, the council’s roster has grown to over 45 members, including representatives from local employers, residential entities, and the Fairfax County government. Its signature TysonsCares Season of Giving raised over \$90,000 for local initiatives providing food, clothing, and shelter with a specific focus on children and youth. They connected with eight Fairfax County Public Schools to distribute over 1,000 pairs of new athletic shoes to Title 1 students with a Shoes4Kids donation drive and partnered with Food for Others on a 5K charity run



Supervisor Daniel G. Storck honors Shirley Steenstra, Mount Vernon District.

The Mount Vernon District is fortunate to have a very active citizenry that is dedicated and devoted to helping others and connecting within the community.”

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION



Supervisor Linda Q. Smyth honors Tysons Partnership, Providence District.

at Tysons Corner Center.

As District Supervisor Linda Smyth said, “While we think of Tysons as our corporate and business center, the Tysons Partnership has looked beyond the new high rises to see the needs of the people who live and work there. Through its charitable efforts, the Partnership is pulling together all stakeholders to build a new community with a promising future for everyone.”

SEE VOLUNTEERS HONORED, PAGE XX

BURKE CONNECTION ♦ MAY 3-9, 2018 ♦ 3

STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

May 9 is Bike to School Day.
Here are some safety tips to remember.



Allow 3 feet when passing a cyclist. Motorists may legally cross the double yellow line if the oncoming lane is clear.



Be careful at intersections. Look both ways for people biking and walking before making your turn.



After parking, look over your left shoulder for approaching cyclists before opening your car door.

Join us for the National Bike Challenge - May 1-31
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fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/bike-walk



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9:30-1:00 p.m.-Workshop

Place: Duff & Kronfeld, P.C.
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NEWS



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

Irish dancers from the Boyle School do the Two Hand Soft Dance.

Embracing Diversity in Burke Centre Library

BY MIKE SALMON
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

The tables and the faces that filled the side room at Burke Centre Library International Day were representative of the diversity of Fairfax County, but the performances and smiles were something to be proud of by all that took part on Saturday, April 28, in Burke.

Haneen Junaid, a freshman from Hayfield Secondary School, was at a table with German cookies. Her father is Arab and her mother is of German descent. This event “helps represent the countries that people overlook,” she said.

International Day was an event put on with students from all around Fairfax County, featuring food, tools, flags and performances to reflect this diversity. Nancy Klein, the libraries’ youth services manager, supervises the teen advisory board at the library. “We’re engaging the community, learning about other cultures, encouraging leadership opportunities,” said Klein. “Basically we wanted to say we welcome diversity,” she said.

Many countries were represented at the various tables that lined the walls. There was a table full of items from Vietnam, Guatemala, Bangladesh, Korea, Germany, and one with food from all over the world.

Anusha Dasgupta sang and played a song on the harmonium, which is a boxed instrument similar to an autoharp. Dasgupta is a sophomore from Oakton and the song she sang, called Akash Phora Shurjo Tara is a “song about nature,” she said.

The Irish dance group from the Boyle Dance School did a “Two Hand Soft Dance” for the audience in outfits that were made for the school. “Each Irish dancing school designs their own dresses,” said Katie Francis, a school representative.

To complement the information being taught at the event, there was a trivia question sheet being handed out as a learning tool for everyone.



From left — Afomiya Alemay, Maraki Fanuil, Sophia Powell, Brittany Peng and Rachel Friedman display international foods at the event.



Anusha Dasgupta sings and plays the harmonium.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Beautifying Triangle Garden

In May 1981, in Burke, a tragic afternoon automobile accident took the life of a 17-year-old woman. The cause of the accident was lack of visibility at the intersection of Sydenstricker and Old Keene Mill Roads created by high weeds and grasses.

Saddened and inspired, the Laurel Garden Club of Springfield/Burke, Virginia (LGC), applied for and received permission from VDOT to adopt this triangular plot of land. Volunteer members of LGC cleared the land, planted low shrubs, and added perennials and bulbs to beautify the garden. Letters from community leaders and civic associations expressed appreciation to Laurel Garden Club for improving safety and beautifying the intersection plot.

Except in winter, each month three or four LGC members provide seasonal clean-up, clear leaves, and prune plants to spruce up the garden. However, after 38 years, some major rejuvenation is in order.

This year, the Laurel Garden Club received a grant from the National Garden Clubs of America to rejuvenate this garden. Plans are underway with the help of LGC members, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts to dig out the 38-year-old shrubs (barberries and junipers) and plantings, revitalize the soil, and replant the Triangle Garden.

The new design will add Northern Virginia native plants, hardy shrubs, flowers, and other long-flowering perennials. A new metal sign will announce the efforts of LGC members as we continue the caring, loving maintenance of this critical area.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Docents Needed. Sundays 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Greet museum visitors and tell them about the exhibits, the museum and the its railroad and Civil War history. Training and orientation provided. Other volunteer opportunities are gardening, publicity and exhibit planning. Call 703-945-7483.

Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed.

Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil at Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-4547.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Child turning 5 years old by Sept. 30? If so, contact your child's school to make arrangements for kindergarten enrollment. Visit www.fcps.edu/registration/kindergarten-registration.



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	5/9/2018.....McLean Day Pullout
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Small But Needed Step in the Right Direction

Why raising the felony larceny threshold to \$500 is an important step in Virginia?

BY EILEEN FILLER-CORN
STATE DELEGATE (D-41)

Recently, Governor Ralph Northam signed legislation to raise the felony larceny threshold from \$200 to \$500 in Virginia as part of a bipartisan compromise. While imperfect as many bills are, HB 1550, carried by Delegate Les Adams, is a small but necessary step in the right direction.

Raising the threshold is a key breakthrough for common sense criminal justice reform. I applaud Governor Northam for not only delivering on a top campaign promise within his first few months in office — but doing so by coming to a bipartisan compromise and working with his Republican partners across the aisle. I was privileged to carry the Governor's legislation the past two years to raise this



threshold. While my legislation did not move forward, I was honored to serve as a co-patron on HB 1550 and privileged to have the opportunity to finally help make this initiative the law.

In recent years, Virginia has been a leader in the nation when it comes to providing people second chances — which is why it is surprising that Virginia has held the lowest larceny threshold in the country alongside New Jersey at \$200. In my mind, this was simply unacceptable. Since 2000, at least 37 states have raised their felony thefts thresholds, and many of our neighboring states, including North Carolina and West Virginia, have their felony larceny threshold at \$1,000.

Raising the threshold will not only create a more just and fairer system — but it is fiscally responsible and will create a safer Commonwealth. According to the ACLU, larceny convictions accounted for one out of every four individuals incarcerated in 2012, at a cost of approximately \$25,000 a year per individual. The Virginia Department of Corrections found that the state could have saved between \$18.3 million and \$22.5 million just in prison costs between fiscal years 2009 and 2014 had the General Assembly raised the

threshold to \$500 or \$600 in 2008. And the savings could have been even higher if it was raised to \$1,000.

It is worth noting that people cannot contribute to our economy if they are incarcerated. Virginians who have paid their debt to society and strive to actively contribute to it, find themselves struggling to find employment because of a felony record, when it could have been a misdemeanor. Those convicted of larceny also face barriers to housing, healthcare or taking out a loan.

Raising the felony larceny threshold does not only pertain to adults; it impacts the Commonwealth's children too. Larceny was the top category for juvenile arrest in Virginia in 2017. This means that one can be carrying the weight of an adolescent mistake on their back for the rest of their life. We can and must do better.

I have been working on the issue of raising the felony larceny threshold for two years now. While I was proud to carry versions of this bill on behalf of Governor Ralph Northam and former Governor Terry McAuliffe, I kept thinking to myself during that time that we cannot let one's mistake ruin that person's entire life. Virginia's progress on this issue has been slow, but this breakthrough for criminal justice reform is a small and needed step in the right direction.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Missing Numbers

To the Editor:

County Chairman Sharon Bulova's April 25 opinion piece, "Budget Hits All the Right Notes," about the proposed FY2019 real estate tax hike, is misleading. When she says the proposed real estate tax rate is

\$1.15, she omits the stormwater rate. When that is included the FY2019 rate will be \$1.1825 instead of \$1.15.

She states that new budget includes a 2-cent increase in the real estate tax rate, but this omits the additional tax increase due to the 2.2 percent increase in average residential assessments. The effective rate increase when assessments and the additional stormwater rate increase (1/4 cent) are included is 4.7 cents, not 2 cents.

The typical Fairfax County homeowner's real estate tax bill will increase by \$258, a 4.2 percent increase. Loudoun County reduced its average tax bill by \$48, a 1 percent decrease.

Chairman Bulova states that the tax hike fully funds the Market Rate Adjustment, Performance, Merit and Longevity increases for county employees and states that the Market Rate Adjustment is

2.25 percent. She does not state the total salary increase resulting from the Performance, Merit and Longevity increases. When those are included county employees will see average increases ranging from 4.25 to 4.50 percent.

Likewise, the school board is funding a 2.3 percent step increase and other salary adjustments, but does not say what the total average raise will be when the other adjustments are included. It is likely to be 4 percent also.

The real estate tax hike will increase county revenues by about \$116 million. The cost of next year's county and school raises is \$139 million. Raises are the primary driver of the county's annual real estate tax hikes.

Since FY2000, the supervisors have increased real estate taxes 169 percent, more than three times faster than inflation, which increased 53 percent.

If Chairman Bulova felt that the voters who defeated the 2016 meals tax, which would have raised \$100 million, would support next year's 4.2 percent tax hike to raise \$116 million for 4 percent raises, why didn't she acknowledge those numbers in her statement?

Arthur Purves
President
Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance

Medicaid Expansion: It's Time

To the Editor:

The 2017 elections demonstrated that Virginians believe that individuals cannot work, take care of their families, or pursue happiness if they cannot see a doctor when they are sick. The candidates who heard this message and ran on expanding access to healthcare, won. Those advocating for expansion are more than willing to compromise with lawmakers who may have legitimate policy concerns.

We know that 33 other states have already opted to insure their working poor. It is time that our federal tax dollars stay here in Virginia to help cover approximately 400,000 hard-working families earning up to 138 percent of the

poverty level. Making health insurance available to more Virginians is the right thing to do and the sensible thing to do. The Federal government is offering to cover no less than 90 percent of the costs of insuring Virginia's working poor. Virginia's hospitals are committed to covering the remaining 10 percent of the costs. Additional money flowing to Virginia under Medicaid expansion will enable the state to increase funding for schools and other needed services. Another benefit of Medicaid expansion is the likelihood of smaller rate increases in our health insurance plans. Studies have shown that in states where more people are insured, the cost of uncompensated care drops. Yes, we will all benefit if more of us have access to healthcare. It is time to act!

Barbara Favola
State Sen. (D-31)

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

Letters to the Editor
The Connection
1606 King St.
Alexandria VA 22314
Call: 703-917-6444.

By e-mail: south@connectionnewspapers.com





PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION
A neighborhood group uses signs to gather support for Lake Accotink.

Even the freshwater mussels had supporters, such as Philip Latasa.

Campaign for Lake Accotink Goes On

Full house at Lake Braddock debates six options to save the lake.

MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The sediments filling up Lake Accotink have been focus of local officials before, so as development and natural erosion occur upstream and the lake depth decreases, options are being laid out on what to do with this local outdoors recreation spot.

Supervisors John Cook (R-Braddock) and Jeff McKay (D-Lee) held a public meeting on April 30 to discuss six plans for the lake, and the auditorium at Lake Braddock Secondary School was packed with nearly 300 people.

The options were prepared by the Fairfax County Park Authority, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, and a restoration science consultant.

"Whatever we're going to do, we need to be thinking of a permanent fix," said Cook. But a couple of the options, mainly option A and partially E and F, rely heavily on nature taking its course. It turns out though, the consequences of the sediments flowing down Accotink Creek and settling elsewhere will be costly too.

"All that sediment has to go somewhere," said Allan Robertson who is president of SaveLakeAccotink.org where volunteers can sign up to "spread the word about the danger to Lake Accotink," as stated on the website. Robertson sported a custom tee-shirt bearing that sentiment, and there are popsicle signs



Supervisors John Cook (R-Braddock) and Jeff McKay (D-Lee) addressed a cafeteria at Lake Braddock that was packed with about 300 Lake Accotink fans.

around Springfield with the same message. Robertson is for option C, which follows the theme of dredge it now and dredge it deep. A \$45 million price tag comes with that option too.

Gale Hooper, the project manager of the Lake Accotink Master Plan Revision with the Fairfax County Park Authority, discussed each plan.

Plan A would let nature take its course, and Hooper said the lake would lose its recreational value in 2025. That recreational value was the boating and fishing, but not the bike trails, bird watching or hiking that would come with an environment like that.

Option B was dredging some and redredging; C was a full dredge; D involved "beaver dams," upstream to catch the sediments; E was a dam reduction; and F was a modified dam with a side lake half the size. "Similar to the size of Lake Fairfax," Hooper said.

With each dredging option, there was the location of "forebays," to consider, which are places to dump the sediments af-

ter the water is removed, and the suggestions were all over the place. Open spaces beneath the power lines near Braddock Road and Wakefield Park were mentioned.

When it came time for comments from the audience, the line to the microphone was 20 people long. A resident of Kings Park wanted to save it, whatever the cost. "I can't believe one of the richest counties in the country would let our lake go," he said. Another Kings Park resident wanted the "slow dredge," and maintain it year by year. And with pricetags in the millions, another speaker wanted to know how the rest of the Board of Supervisors felt. "Whatever financial decision we choose is going to be a board decision," said McKay.

The comment period ends May 28, and the decision will be reached in fall 2018. "This is analysis time," said Cook.

Email Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov or go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks-planning-development/lakeaccotink to enter your comment.

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NEWS

Volunteers Honored

In May of 2011, **Tom Bash** was appointed by District Supervisor Pat Herrity to serve as Springfield's commissioner of the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging. Since then, Bash has been a tireless advocate for all 50-plus related needs working on various projects. Most noteworthy includes implementing the 50-plus Community Action Plan. This includes 31 initiatives regarding housing, transportation, community engagement, and other services. He has collaborated with local partners and staff on webpages, criminal exploitation awareness, and a real-time online

transit data portal. He has also worked on an alternative to Metro-Access that would provide on-demand, quality service to people with disabilities. His reach of service also includes volunteering on the Fairfax County Disability Services Board and with nine other local organizations.

"I am proud to call Tom Bash my 2018 Volunteer Fairfax Community Champion," said Herrity. "He does not take 'no' for an answer and continues to pursue all avenues to make Fairfax County the best place to live, work, and play."



Supervisor Pat Herrity honors Thomas Bash, Springfield District.

For the last quarter-century, **Charlie Fegan** has served on the Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees as a reliable source of guidance for both the board and the community. He has been an invaluable source of knowledge and voice for both the libraries and the community in his role on the board. He has put in hours of outreach, library advocacy, as well as

building and maintaining relationships with members of the Board of Supervisors to further serve the citizens of Fairfax County.

As Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova said, "Charlie has gone above and beyond the quality and quantity of service to the community as my appointee to the Library Board of Trustees for the last 25 years."



Chairman Sharon Bulova honors Charles Fegan, Fairfax County.

Ecumenical Community Helping Others, better known as ECHO, is an all-volunteer, charitable, nonprofit organization supported by 24 local faith groups which include Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and Baha'i faiths in the Springfield and Burke areas. Since its incorporation in 1969, ECHO has continued to be an all-volunteer organization that implements broad-based programs for families and individuals who suffer the effects of long-term poverty or are facing an emergency need. During 2017, ECHO counselors held over 4,400 client visits and provided nearly \$225,000 in financial support to families. Weekend food packs provided simple-to-prepare meals and snacks to 12 elementary schools and a middle school for students who face food insecurity at home over the weekends. ECHO client families with school-aged children received book bags filled with new school supplies and holiday gifts for more than 600 children. ECHO's administrative volunteers take leadership roles to ensure work is done and clients are served fairly all while making sure the building is kept in a safe, orderly condition. Support volunteers provide other necessary assistance such as



Volunteer Program: ECHO group with Board Chairman Sharon Bulova.

IT services, website maintenance, and grounds keeping.

As ECHO President Bob Diegelman said, "This is simply neighbors helping neighbors. Everything that ECHO does is possible only because of the tremendous generosity of its 24-member congregations, churches, and temples: its deeply committed volunteers, supporting groups and associations, and an active and committed business community."

The Fairfax County **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** program is a Citizen Corps volunteer program managed under the auspices of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. The CERT program prepares ordinary citizens to safely help themselves, their families, and their communities during emergencies. They also provide emergency preparedness and public safety related services on an ongoing basis. Over the last year, 694 active CERT volunteers improved the county's overall emergency response posture through a variety of trainings while also providing a multitude of emergency preparedness and public safety related services. In addition, hundreds of volunteers applied their skills to support community activities and events such as lost child assistance and traffic management. CERT members attended 47 outreach events across the county, informing approximately 7,653 residents about opportunities and activities to better equip themselves, their families, and their neighbors in the event of an emergency.



Fairfax County Government Volunteer Program: Fairfax County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) with Board Chairman Sharon Bulova.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Volunteer Liaison Jeffery Katz said, "Fairfax County's CERT program is a prime example of 'Neighbors helping Neighbors.' 2017 was another year of unprecedented growth and innovation during which our CERTs further improved our County's disaster preparedness."

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Erasing the Stigma

Mental Health advocates work to tear down barriers to treatment.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

It was during college when Laura Greenstein began to notice that something was not quite right. “I noticed that things that were creating anxiety on a daily basis, they weren’t just situational,” she said. “My anxiety was grabbing onto anything that it could. If I was running late, I would start to panic. Any small thing became a big issue.”

“My mother has always been supportive, but when [my anxiety] got to a certain point some close friends and family began to stigmatize it,” said Greenstein, who now works for the National Association for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) in Arlington. “They would say, ‘You’re not doing enough.’ It was difficult to feel that I wasn’t being fully accepted.”

After months of therapy and recent session with a psychiatrist who prescribed medication, Greenstein said that she is beginning to feel some relief. She even began blogging about her experience. “This was my first time sharing my story,” she said. “It’s been a really validating process. Being open can really improve your outlook.”

During May, Mental Health Awareness Month, Greenstein and other mental health advocates are sharing the ways in which negative perceptions about mental illnesses can impact those who suffer from it. NAMI

reports that approximately 1 in 5 adults and children in the United States are experiencing mental illness in a given year. Only 41 percent of those adults received mental health treatment, while slightly more than half of children aged 8-15 received those services. One of the roadblocks to treatment, say mental health professionals, is the stigma surrounding mental health.

“Micro-aggressions towards individuals with mental illness are very common, such as assuming that someone with a mental illness is inferior, stupid, or not in control of their own behaviors,” said Jessica McLaughlin, Ph.D., assistant professor of psychology at Montgomery College. “Because of our society’s misperceptions of mental illness, many individuals struggling with mental health problems feel ashamed and isolated. They may even feel like it is not appropriate to seek help. “[And] being on the receiving end of these hurtful comments and beliefs actually worsens symptoms.”

With a theme of “Cure Stigma,” NAMI activists are encouraging people to educate themselves and eradicate the stigma which can be a roadblock to those who suffer from mental illness to get the treatment they need. They were afraid of being labeled, so they suffered in silence. This is particularly true with teenagers and preteens, advises Stacie Isenberg, Psy.D., a child psychologist

who specializes in anxiety disorders. “A mental illness stigma may cause a teen or pre-teen to be hesitant to admit to her or himself that they are having a mental health problem, to share with a parent, teacher, or pediatrician about their problem, and to seek mental health treatment,” she said.

The stigma surrounding mental illness is an important issue that often goes unrecognized, says McLaughlin. “Individuals with mental illness face both overt and covert discrimination,” she said. “For example, there is an assumption that people with mental illness are violent or crazy, which is not true. However, our belief in these myths can affect someone’s ability to find employment or obtain housing.”

“Education is a powerful tool in combating mental health stigma, and community-wide, mental health awareness campaigns are helpful,” added Isenberg. “Individually, kids often search online to check out what their symptoms mean. Education from credible websites, and those of mental health organizations often provide clarity and guidance for those seeking help.”

Allowing those who might be experiencing symptoms of a mental illness to speak freely about their condition without fear of judgment can remove barriers to treatment advises McLaughlin. “That means asking how we can help, listening with an open mind, and being nonjudgmental,” she said.

Sometimes it can be a tremendous help just to let someone know that they have someone to lean on and that they are not alone.”

People can also fight the stigma of mental illness by being accepting and supportive of people who are experiencing mental health issues, and by modeling this acceptance for their children, suggests Isenberg. “Employers can encourage employees to use mental health days as needed, and to permit longer lunch hours or flexible dismissal or arrival at times to accommodate therapy appointments,” she said. “Similarly, schools can work with families to allow kids to use free periods, lunch periods, etc. to attend therapy when an after-school time is not available and the need for treatment is significant.”

A family’s attitude about the mentally ill can affect a child’s willingness to ask for help, advises Isenberg. “A child who comes from a family that does not consider mental health issues to be real or problematic may be reluctant to share with her or his parents,” she said. “Similarly, kids whose friends stigmatize mental health issues, or kids who don’t talk much about personal issues with friends, are often unsure about sharing with their friends. On the contrary, kids who believe their families and friends will be sensitive and supportive to them are more likely to be open with them about any concerns they are having.”

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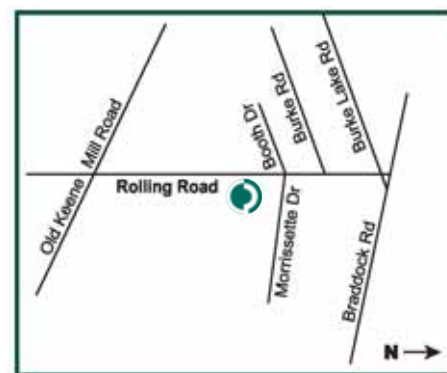
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CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Art Exhibit: The Scenic Route. Through May 6, gallery hours at Warrior Way Gallery (W-16), Lorton Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Chester Kasnowski, a veteran of the United States Air Force, is a multi-disciplinary artist who believes in the power of tradition and history. www.workhousearts.org/event/chester-kasnowski-scenic-route/ for more.

Art Exhibit: This and That. Through May 7, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. daily at The Artists' Undertaking Gallery, 309 Mill St. in Historic Occoquan. "This and That." an features copper work by Anne Jordan of Fairfax; oil paintings by Steve Myles of Reston; and turned wood by Greg Wandless of Fairfax. Call 703-494-0584 or visit www.theartistsundertaking.com.

Art Exhibit: To the Ends of the Earth. Through May 13, gallery hours at Vulcan Gallery, 1st Floor, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Workhouse Arts Center presents To the Ends of the Earth Visit www.workhousearts.org.

Rock of Ages – The Musical. Through May 20, Fridays-Saturdays, 8 p.m.; Sundays, 2 p.m. at Workhouse Arts Center, Building W-3 (Theatre), 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. This Tony-Award winning musical takes the audience back to the 1980s era of big: big bands, big egos big guitar solos and big hair. Parental discretion advised. \$20-\$35. Visit www.workhousearts.org.

Second Saturdays. 6-9 p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Road, Lorton. The Second Saturday Art Walk is the perfect time to meet nearly 85 Resident and Associate Artists, creating art in the studios or exhibiting in our galleries. Visit www.workhousearts.org/.

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.

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

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

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/MAY 3-5

"The Little Mermaid." Thursday-Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday, 1 and 7 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Based on one of Hans Christian Andersen's most beloved stories and the classic animated film, Disney's "The Little Mermaid" This fishy fable will capture your heart with its irresistible songs, including "Under the Sea," "Kiss the Girl" and "Part of Your World." Tickets available at fxplayers.org.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/MAY 3-6

"Orson the Magnificent." Thursday-Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 3 p.m. at City of Fairfax Theatre Company, Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Direct from its extended run at the 2017 Capital Fringe Festival, "Orson the Magnificent" explores a little-known side of cinema legend Orson Welles: his lifelong love of magic. Half magic show and half dramatic biography. Visit www.fairfaxcitytheatre.org.

FRIDAY/MAY 4

Pinko De Mayo. 6-11 p.m. at Brion's Grille, 8815 Cromwell Drive, Springfield. Pinko De Mayo is a fundraiser event for The Breast Cancer Box. The Breast Cancer Box delivers recovery supplies to women in hospitals and ships them nationwide at no cost to the patient. Call 703-966-2759 or visit www.thebreastcancerbox.com.

Viva La Musica. 8-10 p.m. at Richard J. Ernst Community Cultural Center Theater, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. A night in celebration of Hispanic music and culture. Presented by the Reunion Music Society, Inc.



PHOTO BY GINNY AX

The Gaffney home is one of four Clifton homes featured on the Clifton Homes Tour for Charity on May 18.

46th Annual Clifton Homes Tour

Guided tours of four Clifton homes and a silent auction at Clifton Presbyterian Church. Free events include tours of two historic Clifton churches, a silent auction, wreath sale, and Trinkets and Treasures at Clifton Presbyterian Church. Proceeds benefit local scholarships and charities through the Clifton Community Woman's Club 501(c)(3) Charitable Trust. Tour tickets: \$25-30; free admission to silent auction. Friday, May 18, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., meets at Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton. Visit www.cliftoncwc.org.



PHOTO BY CFBA

Fairfax Band

All-American Music

The City of Fairfax Band presents an evening of All-American music by Aaron Copland, Paul Creston, Alfred Reed, John Philip Sousa and John Williams, plus a tribute to Stephen Foster featuring the Fairfax Saxophone Quartet. Adding to the celebration is the presentation of the winner of the 2018 City of Fairfax Band Young Artist Competition in performance with the band. Saturday, May 19, 7:30-9 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. \$10-\$15; students free. Call 571-336-2322 or visit www.fairfaxband.org.

and the NVCC-Annandale Campus, under the direction of Christopher Johnston. \$15, adults; \$10, students with ID; free, NOVA students with ID and children 12 & younger. Call 703-569-0973 or visit www.eventbrite.com/e/viva-la-musica-celebrating-hispanic-music-culture-tickets-44657057461.

FRIDAY/MAY 4-SATURDAY/MAY 12

"Into the Woods." At West Springfield High School, 6100 Rolling Road, Door 4, Springfield. Dates/times: Friday, May 4 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, May 5 at 7 p.m.; Sunday, May 6 at 2 p.m.; Thursday, May 10 at 7 p.m.; Friday, May 11 at 7 p.m.; and Saturday, May 12 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$8/students and seniors; \$12/adults. Tickets on sale at www.spartantheatre.com/ticketsales. There will be a Spartan Theatre Homecoming on Saturday, May 12, noon-4 p.m. to give tours of the new space. Visit www.spartantheatre.com.

Civil War fortifications in the Clifton area as well as Centreville's Confederate Military Railroad, Saint John's Church and cemetery, Mount Gilead and several other preserved Civil War fortifications. \$20 for Museum members, \$30 for non-members. Visit www.fairfax-station.org/tours.html or call 703-425-9225.

Celebrate Communication. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Springfield Town Center Mall, Springfield. Celebrate Communication is an information fair for anyone with an interest in or connection to hearing loss. Some 30 vendors will provide current technology, resource information, crafts and family friendly events including face painting and appearance of mascot Yellow Dog. Free event. Near Starbucks. www.nvrc.org. Call 703-352-9055 (voice); 571-350-8656 (VP).

Gospel Concert. 5-8 p.m. at Mount Calvary Baptist Church, 4325 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. The Fairfax County Alumnae Chapter will host a free Gospel Concert in honor of its 25th Anniversary. Free. RSVP required at info@fcacdst.org.

Monica Rizzio Concert. 6-7 p.m. at Living Savior Lutheran Church, 5500 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Monica Rizzio, Independent Music Award "Country Album of the Year" nominee and Radio Crystal Blue "Best New Artist" of the year will perform live in concert. Family friendly. Free, donations accepted. Call 703-618-3074 or visit www.livingsaviorlutheran.org.

Cinco de Mayo Driving Range Social. 7-10 p.m. at Burke Lake Golf Complex, 6915 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. This event welcomes golfers of all levels, adults looking for a fun, social experience and taco enthusiasts alike. Festivities include unlimited range balls, taco bar, soft drinks, water, music, games, contests, prizes, giveaways and more. \$30. Advance registration required, only 50 people. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/golf/burke-lake/range-social/may2018.

Casino Night. 7-11 p.m. at Country Club of Fairfax, 5110 Ox Road, Fairfax. A Forever Home Rescue Foundation is holding a casino night fundraiser. Purchase tickets and bid on auction items at one.bidpal.net/afhcasinowelcome.

MONDAY/MAY 7

FCAC Golf Tournament. 7 a.m. at Reston National Golf Club, 11875 Sunrise Valley Drive Reston. FCAC will host its 9th Annual Spring Tee Golf Tournament. Golf Clinic. Tax-deductible sponsorship opportunities are available. Email Golf@fcacdst.org or visit www.fcacgolf.info/.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 9

Investigating the Attempted Assassination of President Reagan. 7:30-9 p.m. at Workhouse W-3 Theater, Workhouse Arts Foundation, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Join for a lecture by Thomas Baker, retired FBI Special Agent, who will share his experiences as one of the first agents on the scene of President Reagan's shooting. Free, donations welcom. Visit www.workhousearts.org.

FRIDAY/MAY 11

Welcome Home Concert 2018. 7 p.m. at Ernst Theater, Northern Virginia Community College - Annandale, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Tickets \$10 for adults, students enter free. www.vamusicadventures.org/.

Friday Night Campfires. 7:30-9 p.m. at Hidden Pond Nature Center is located at 8511 Greeley Boulevard, Springfield. Learn about animals, insects, plants and more. End the evening with s'mores by the campfire. \$8 per person. Call 703-451-9588 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hidden-pond.

SATURDAY/MAY 12

Eagle Festival. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Mason Neck State Park, 7301 High Point Road, Lorton. Live raptor and reptile shows, environmental organization, outdoor recreation clinics, boating bonanza, eagle cam, photo exhibit, hay and pony rides, food trucks, live music. Pre-opening bird walk at 8 a.m. led by Audubon Society Northern Virginia. Park in the picnic area. Visit www.masonneckstateparkfriends.org/

Fundraiser and Book Fair. At Barnes and Noble Store, 12193 Fair Lakes Promenade Drive, Fairfax. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum volunteers will introduce visitors to life in Fairfax Country during the 1800s. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, or www.facebook.com/FFXSRR. Call 703-425-9225.

Hoedown for Harmony. 7-10 p.m. at Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke. Over 18 \$25; 13-18 \$15; under 13 free. Call 703-968-2971.

SPORTS

Darcy, Miller-Green Lead Lake Braddock Past Robinson

Glynn pitches five scoreless innings for Bruins.

BY JON ROETMAN
FOR THE CONNECTION

Robinson starting pitcher Hugh O'Hara had his way with the Lake Braddock lineup early in Monday's Patriot District matchup, no-hitting the Bruins through the first three innings.

In the top of the fourth, however, Lyle Miller-Green and Jack Darcy reminded onlookers why Lake Braddock is a state championship contender.

Miller-Green drove in the game's first run with a double and Darcy followed with a three-run homer, propelling the Bruins to an 8-1 victory over the rival Rams on April 30 at Robinson Secondary School.

The left-handed O'Hara struck out the side in the second and pitched a 1-2-3 third inning before running into trouble in the fourth. After back-to-back walks, Miller-



Lake Braddock's Jack Darcy hit a home run and drove in four runs against Robinson on April 30.

Green doubled to deep left before Darcy launched a 1-2 pitch over the right-field fence.

"We made some adjustments the second time through" the lineup, Lake Braddock head coach Jody Rutherford said. "We've done a good job of that this year."

Darcy said it was a curveball that he deposited over the fence.

"I definitely think it was a big momentum swing," said Darcy, who will play football at Shepherd University next year.

Darcy drove in a run in the fifth inning with a sacrifice fly. He fin-

ished 1-for-3 with a home run and four RBIs.

With Lake Braddock leading 5-1 in the top of the seventh, Miller-Green launched a three-run homer of his own. The junior went 2-for-4 with a home run and four RBIs. Miller-Green, who is committed

"We made some adjustments the second time through" [the lineup] ... We've done a good job of that this year."

—Lake Braddock head coach Jody Rutherford

to Virginia Tech, also pitched two innings of relief. He allowed one run on one hit and struck out three after battling an arm injury earlier in the season.

Lake Braddock starting pitcher Connor Glynn earned the victory, tossing five shutout innings.

"Connor did a really good job pitching," Miller-Green said. "Since he kept [Robinson scoreless], we had his back."

On Tuesday, the Bruins defeated Fairfax 7-6 to improve their record to 14-3, including 8-0 in the district. Lake Braddock will travel to face West Springfield at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, May 4.

PHOTO BY JON ROETMAN

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Evenings of Laughter and Standing Ovations

Rambunctious Theatre Company at Robinson presents 'Monty Python's Spamalot.'

BY NATALIA MEGAS
THE CONNECTION

"Monty Python's Spamalot," the musical comedy performed by Rambunctious Theatre Company at Robinson Secondary High School is a must-see this week.

"Spamalot," the multiple Tony award-winning musical by Eric Idle based on the 1975 motion picture "Monty Python and the Holy Grail," is an irreverent parody of the Arthurian legend with a few twists and hilarious ones at that.

When high school director Megan Thrift chose the school edition of "Spamalot" for Robinson students, she did so with the intention of giving everyone an opportunity.

"The show is so full," she said. "It's full of moments and opportunities for everyone to shine. We have 70 kids in this cast and they are fully immersed on stage and off." This show also provided a lot of unique challenges for the 40 student designers and technicians to work through collaboratively. And their work truly shines, and in some cases, steals the show."

Having auditioned 89 high schoolers and 32 elementary and middle schoolers, the final cast and crew's two months of rehearsals paid off.

ON OPENING NIGHT, Friday, April 27, a packed theatre gave way to an engaged audience in non-stop laughter and standing ovations for performances that wowed.

High school actor Daniel Williams' standout performance as King Arthur coupled with Claire Burton's soulful and agile vocal range as Lady of the Lake Godiva were the icing on the cake.

But everyone's perfected performance impressed the audience equally as much from the pit orchestra to the makeup and costume designers to the tap dancers to the Frenchies with their precise accents to the Wee Knights Who Say Ni, including its youngest cast member, middle school drama department chair Amy Hard's three year old daughter.

"I loved the show," said audience member Shelly Persil. "I had a smile on my face the entire time and I was very impressed with the talent. The voices were amazing and I especially loved Steven Eckloff as Prince Herbert. Beautiful vocals and a rich character filled with emotion."

Collaboration among students is vital, said Thrift. "I'm in constant awe of these students who choose to work collaboratively and give of themselves, realizing that the show is about the ensemble and support-



PHOTO BY KHUYEN DINH

'Spamalot' runs May 3 to May 5, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Robinson High School.



PHOTO BY JULIA MACINNIS

Lady of the Lake Godiva (Claire Burton) and Sir Galahad (David Ingle).



PHOTO BY JULIA MACINNIS

Lady of the Lake Guinevere (Anna Maria Shockey)



PHOTO BY RICH CONDIT

Patsy (Nico Ochao) and King Arthur (Daniel Williams)

ing each other."

"That consistent process through rehearsals and tech is what creates such an incredible product that the kids can be proud of because they know they added to it every step of the way," said Thrift.

Hard, who only recently began collaborating with the high school theatre said it was a fulfilling experience to see her former middle school students perform.

"Ms. Thrift's leadership and inspiring spirit is the key to these huge productions. She trusts her students, and sets the bar higher than many a professional theatre. The sky is the limit, and her students jump, strive, and reach for what many would view

as impossible 'for high school.' She has built a theatre program that is beyond most people's expectations, except for hers," said Hard, who choreographed for the production along with students Izzy Guzzano and Maria Gleason.

"Incorporating local elementary school students is another way she has reached out to the community to include all," Hard added.

Anna Maria Shockey who played Lady of the Lake Guinevere said the Monty Python quest is a classic nobody forgets.

"There is something so magical about the audience already loving the story so that the actors onstage are actually living and

enjoying the adventure right along with them. It makes our job easy and fun!" she said.

"People should definitely come see the show because the level of performance is so much higher than what you'd expect from your average high school presentation," said Alexa Mitchell, who is a freshman and played the viola in the pit orchestra. "I couldn't stop laughing the first time I saw it, and everyone should have that experience."

"SPAMALOT" runs from May 3 to May 5, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Robinson High School. For tickets, visit <https://rambunctious-theatre-company.ticketleap.com/spamalot/>

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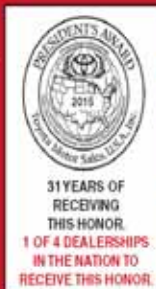
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NEWS

Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity (center), with (from left): Sam Donnelly Jonsson, Emily Butters, Connor Brooks, and Laura Moritz at the Teen Job Fair last Saturday.



Teen Job Fair Held in Springfield

About 400 people attend event sponsored by Supervisor Pat Herrity.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

About 400 people attended a Teen Job Fair featuring more than 40 businesses on Saturday, April 28, at West Springfield High School in Springfield.

The event sponsored by Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity and The Connection Newspapers included representatives from lifeguard and pool companies, stores like Target, and military recruiters, among others. Herrity said the job fairs have grown in size from about 250 visitors when they first started four years ago, and expanded from one job fair at West Springfield to six job fairs at high schools around the county.

"This is our sixth job fair this year, which has grown from four years ago when this was the only job fair that we did in Fairfax County. So, I'm excited about providing the opportunity for all our youth and so happy that we've grown from one job fair to six job fairs throughout Fairfax County," he said.

He added: "This is one of the favorite things I do as a supervisor. I absolutely love seeing our kids come out and talk with employers and get their jobs because there's dignity in work and first jobs are important," he said.

Scoping out a new job was Springfield resident Alan Brown, 16, a sophomore at West Springfield

High School. "I am here to get information about different jobs and have a plan after I leave high school," said Brown through his computer.

Lake Braddock Secondary Junior Charles Pritz, 16, of Burke, who was also looking, said: "I'm here at the job fair looking to find an opportunity for a summer job or internship to really gain real-world experience — hopefully in the field that I'd be interested in."

Jessie Chen, 16, a Woodson High School sophomore from Fairfax, added: "The reason why I'm here is to do something over the summer and to do something fun, that's why I'm here — to find something that I like."

Samuel Dade, 18, who attends Mount Vernon High School, said: "I came to the job fair to get a job so when I'm going through school I can pay for school and not be broke. So that's basically why I came here today." Kyle Vanderlaan, 16, of Springfield, who attends West Springfield High, said: "I'm just looking for a job. It's a really good opportunity to meet people and companies so you can just choose where ever you want to go and find out whatever you want to do."

Ivan Ramirez, 14, of Falls Church, who attends Corpus Christi School, added: "I came to the job fair to look for a job at a young age. I want to work with kids younger than me to help them do something in life and also get money."

West Springfield resident Ben Anderson, 15, who attends West Springfield High, said: "I'm just looking for a job this summer. I'm trying to get some money to pay for whatever I need. I think it's great that there are these places around here that are coming to the fair."

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BULLETIN

THURSDAY/MAY 3

College Applications Essays. 7-8 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Practical strategies and writing tips will help yours shine, revealing something that your grades and test scores can't. Free. Age 13-Adult. Call 703-644-7333 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library.

Community Meeting - New Location. 7:30-9 p.m. at the Moose Lodge, 9612 Fernedge Lane, Lorton. Learn about the planning and design of the new Lorton Community Center. Fairfax County staff will present the project and answer questions from the community. Contact Maria Franco-Nativi at 703-704-6700, TTY 711, or maria.franco-nativi@fairfaxcounty.gov.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/MAY 4-6

Volunteers Needed to Pack Meals. Friday, 9:30 a.m.-10 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-10 p.m.; and Sunday, 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. at Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. Community members will fight world hunger by packing food for starving children through a partnership between New Hope Church (Lorton) and nonprofit Feed My Starving Children. Visit www.2018foodfight.com.

SATURDAY/MAY 5

Workshop for Siblings of Children with Special Needs. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at Key Middle School, 6402 Franconia Road, Springfield. Sibshop workshop for 8-13-year-old siblings of children with special needs enrolled in Fairfax County Public Schools. A pizza lunch will be provided. Visit www.fcps.edu/spedconference2018.

Ramadan Food Pack-Out Sessions. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. or 2-6 p.m. at 6820 Commercial Dr., Suite F, Springfield. Islamic Relief USA will hold its annual Ramadan Food Box Pack-Out sessions. The goal is to create some 5,000 packaged meals at each location. All food will go to residents in the U.S. Visit irusa.org.

37th Annual Derby Day. 4:30 p.m. at Kilroy's Restaurant & Sports Bar, Ravensworth Shopping Center, 5250A Port Royal Road, Springfield. Sponsored by Fairfax Democrats. In celebration of the 144th running of the Kentucky Derby, wear the best Derby hat for the hat contest. Cost is \$40 per person, or \$100 for a family. Visit www.Braddockdems.org/derbyday.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/MAY 5-6

Free Sober Rides. Saturday, May 5, 7 p.m. through Sunday, May 6, 4 a.m. Area residents, 21 and older, may download Lyft to their phones, then enter a code in the app's "Promo" section to receive a no cost (up to \$15) safe ride home. www.SoberRide.com. The SoberRide code is valid for the first 1,500 Lyft users who enter the code.

TUESDAY/MAY 8

NARFE Fairfax 737 Meeting. 11:30-1:30 p.m. at American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) Fairfax 737 luncheon meeting. Del. David Bulova, Virginia House of Delegates, will provide an update. Lunch at 12 noon; cost-\$11, or bring a lunch. Call 703-280-2356, or email: rrharney2@gmail.com by Friday May 4, 2018, for lunch reservation.

Dementia Caregiver Support Groups. Noon-1:30 p.m. Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke sponsors a monthly meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month for caregivers. Before attending, contact the facilitator, Eileen Thompson at 703-451-8626 or Eileen.thompson1@gmail.com.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 9

NARFE Chapter Meeting. 12:30 p.m. at Springfield United Methodist Church, 7047 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. NARFE Springfield Chapter 893 Meeting, Hospitality Room SUMC. Registration 12:30 p.m., business meeting 1 p.m.; speaker: Supervisor Jeff McKay. No cost. Contact Joseph Bush at jjmeh@msn.com.

THURSDAY/MAY 10

Open House and Public Hearing. 5:30 p.m. at NVTA Office, 3040 Williams Drive, Suite 200, Fairfax. The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority has released 60 candidate projects and related information for its inaugural FY 2018-2023 Six Year Program for public comment. The open house will start at 5:30 p.m. and the public hearing will commence following a 7 p.m. Pre-registration is open for those who would like to speak, phone: 703-642-4652 or in person on May 10, 2018 from 5:30-7 p.m. or email: TheAuthority@TheNoVaAuthority.org; Visit www.TheNoVaAuthority.org.

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You Mean Next Week Tuesday?

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Today, Sunday, April 22, I am not on any real – or imagined, deadline pressure, quite different than my previous column (“You Mean Tomorrow Tuesday?”), published April 25. This column isn’t due until nine days from now, since my copy editor returns from vacation that Tuesday. And of course, since there’s no abbreviated/immediate-type deadline, and it’s a relatively quiet weekend at home (as opposed to the “triple threat” Tuesday I wrote about last week), Chino, in addition to any of our other four cats, are nowhere to be found. Certainly, they’re all sleeping. I mean, it is 12:30 pm. In fact, as I get up to investigate, Chino is sleeping on the very same chair he ended up on last week. This week however, when I have minimal deadline pressure, Chino has minimal Kenny interest. At present, he is not the least bit involved in the creative process, other than as a point of reference, that is.

And just as Chino is minding his own business – for now, I am able to mind mine and stay on task. It is so much easier to do so when my writing pad is not the exact midpoint and/or crossroads for where Chino is and for where he wants to be. Therefore, I have no excuses for not maintaining a creative flow as pen is put to paper. No cat interruptions or interference whatsoever. To quote my late father, I have no “encumbrances” – at the moment.

More so even than Chino walking right to left across my desk (and back of course). I just received an email from my oncologist, yes on the weekend, telling me that my two scans taken on Wednesday, April 18, continue to show “stable.” News, with which I’m extremely fond of writing – properly, I can live. As much as I could likewise live with tumor “shrinkage” as well, I am ALWAYS pleased when I see my new favorite word: “stable,” in any communication from my doctor. For a cancer patient still undergoing treatment – as I am, or for any cancer patient in remission, a “stable” result is hardly the problem. The problem is growth and/or movement or appearance elsewhere in the body. (For lung cancer patients, movement to the brain, which occurs in approximately 30 percent of patients, is the predominant worry. As such, I get a brain MRI regularly.)

So, no scan-result pressure. No post-chemo side-effect pressure. No newspaper and/or deadline pressure. And no cat-related pressure compounding any of the aforementioned pressures. Ergo, the ‘pressure’ is officially off. And when the ‘pressure’ is off, my creativeness is on. Though this may not be the best column I’ve ever written, it’s certainly been one with the least amount of ‘encumbrances.’

And speaking of my father, Barry, who died in in 2006, and now my mother, Celia, who died two years later, almost to the day, what I am particularly grateful for is the timing of my diagnosis/prognosis: it all happened after they had died. They never knew. My first symptom manifested four weeks after my widowed mother was laid to rest. They both know now though as I regularly update them when I visit their gravesites at the cemetery. And though the conversations are mostly one-sided, still, it brings me comfort and a peculiar sort of joy to share the details of my treatment and the miscellaneous pressures I experience, some of which I’ve mentioned and some of which I haven’t. Many of those my parents knew about, and were often topics of discussion – while they were alive.

I was lucky then and I continue to be lucky now. Great parents before and an amazingly fortunate post-cancer-diagnosis after. Whoever I have to thank: thank you.

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



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