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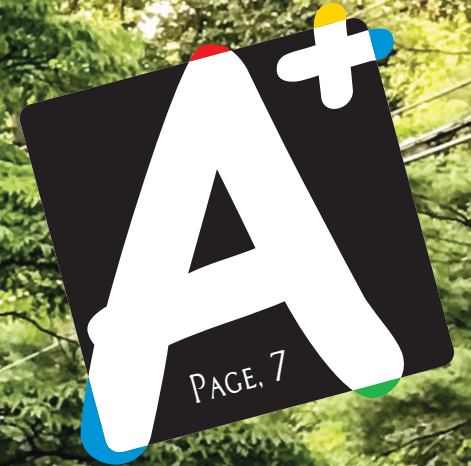
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PHOTO BY COLIN DIXON

**Burke
CONNECTION**



Deer Management Program Set to Start

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Deer by the roadside:
Saturday, Sept. 8, marks
the start of the Fairfax
County 2018-2019 Deer
Management Program.

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Cemetery in Burke**

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Deer Management Program Set to Start Sept. 8

Officials hold public information meetings ahead of program launch.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

Saturday, Sept. 8, marks the start of the Fairfax County 2018-2019 Deer Management Program.

There are probably very few county residents who can claim to have never seen a deer in their travels around our region. Sadly, quite a few can claim having experienced an up-close-and-personal whitetail encounter on the roadways.

In a 2016 study, Virginia was ranked 13th in the nation for the number of deer-vehicle collisions. The latest study by State Farm Insurance companies puts the Commonwealth in 11th place. Since 2010, the state has averaged 111 deer-vehicle collisions reported annually, but those numbers are probably underestimating the actual events according to Dr. Katherine Edwards, the county's wildlife management specialist.

"The real number could be three or four times higher than that," said Edwards, noting that the Virginia Department of Transportation is called to pick up 1,500-1,600 deer carcasses each year and that field work has also shown that probably only 25 percent of the deer who are hit actually die on the roadside.

Edwards, along with Sgt. Earit Powell of the Fairfax County Police Department, and Kristen Sinclair, an ecologist with the Fairfax County Park Authority, are the county officials charged with the supervision of the program and they have been hosting a series of public information meetings prior to the launch to explain the logistics and answer any questions or concerns from citizens. The trio have already hosted two meetings; one at Fairfax County Government Center, and a second at the North Government Center in Reston.

THE SESSIONS OPEN with a bit of history explaining that public safety was the impetus behind the development of the program. Following a fatal deer-vehicle collision in 1997, and public demand for local government to address the issue of deer population, the Board of Supervisors mandated that a strategy to control the deer population in the area be put in place. The strategy addressed public safety concerns and also the increasing damage being done by the deer to private property and ecosystems of public parklands,

Today, the deer management program is implemented by the Fairfax County Police Department in partnership with the Fairfax County Park Authority and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

Powell heads the deer harvest operations. Edwards is the wildlife management specialist, and Sinclair is the expert on all things related to the natural environment which the deer inhabit — and which they are in danger of permanently damaging.

The over-browsing of the parklands by



PHOTO BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

From left: Sgt. Earit Powell, Fairfax County Police Department; Dr. Katherine Edwards, county wildlife management specialist; and Kristen Sinclair, county Park Authority ecologist, meet with the public at the North Governmental Center in Reston to discuss the upcoming deer management program, slated to begin on Sept. 8.



PHOTO BY MARY KIMM

Deer by the roadside: Saturday, Sept. 8, marks the start of the Fairfax County 2018-2019 Deer Management Program.

deer is "hindering forest regeneration," said Sinclair, by their consumption of seedlings and saplings, shrubs and bushes, changing the very composition of the forest over time.

Gathering accurate data on the deer population and their ecological impact continues to be challenging, Sinclair admits, but efforts have been increased and scientifically improved over the last several years.

She oversees hundreds of "browsing plots" throughout the county's park system

and in conjunction with the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

The ecologist provided data showing that the impact of unchecked deer populations on parklands allows for the proliferation of non-native, invasive plant species and slowly erodes the biodiversity of these habitats.

"Over-browsing by deer can lead to a loss of ecosystem services," said Sinclair, "negatively affecting native plants, insects and

birds in the area."

THERE ARE THREE methods of deer harvesting that the county employs, all permitted under the Commonwealth's Department of Game and Inland Fisheries: archery, managed firearms hunts, and sharpshooting conducted at night by police personnel in closed-park situations.

❖ Archery is the number one management tool as it has been shown to harvest the most deer with the highest degree of safety for hunters and for the general public in such high-density areas as Fairfax County. The archery harvest will run from Sept. 8 through Feb. 23, 2019.

The hunters must complete a bow hunting education course, pass proficiency tests and criminal background checks before being assigned to a hunt cluster under the oversight of a cluster supervisor. Each hunter has a personal ID number and their equipment should be marked with that number. All activity by the hunters is logged into a database within 24 hours and are monitored.

"They are also required to field dress any deer they harvest, and to remove the carcass covered and as discreetly as possible," said Powell.

The hunts are conducted from 30 minutes prior to sunrise to 30 minutes past sunset. Parks remain open during the harvests, but Powell notes that every precaution to protect citizens is taken. Hunting can only be done from raised deer stands using the ground as the backdrop. Hunters must remain 100 feet from any private property line, and at least 50 feet from a trail. Entering private property is strictly prohibited without the consent of the property owner.

"We have had zero safety incidents," said Powell, "and we work diligently to keep things that way."

Questioned about "wounding rates" versus proven kills, Powell insists that every effort is made to track "unrecovered hits." Powell himself can take to the woods to try and find a wounded animal or determine if the deer died later from the hit. The wounding rate between 2014-2018 is between 4-to-7 percent. "But even that is too high," added Edwards, who vows that they will keep working to reduce that number.

❖ Managed firearms hunts have been scheduled in the Sully Woods area, on Wednesday, Nov. 28, Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2019, and Wednesday, Feb. 6, 2019. Again, strict control and supervision is employed to ensure hunter and public safety. Hunters are assigned tree stands by 6 a.m. and the hunt concludes with all participants vacating the stands by 1 p.m.

❖ Planned night time sharpshooting operations by specially-trained police personnel are scheduled for the Annandale Community Park, Bull Run Regional Park, Huntley Meadows/Dogue Creek Stream Valley, and Loftridge Park/Clermont Park. Officials are also considering sharpshooting at Fry-

SEE DEER MANAGEMENT, PAGE 9

Freedom of the Press, Friend of Democracy

Under attack, abroad and now at home.

The press is protected in the U.S. Constitution by name in the First Amendment. The founders recognized the key role that newspapers would play as watchdogs for all layers of government, a key ingredient in a successful democracy. Newspapers have played that role well.

Newspapers have been under assault by technological and economic forces for years. Some of the harm done to government and the public good when newspapers close was documented in recent study, "Financing Dies in Darkness? The Impact of Newspaper Closures on Public Finance."

But now newspapers and other news outlets are facing for the first time a sustained attack from the 45th President of the United States.

It is the role of the President of the United States historically to inspire the American people by words and actions. This president has hammered away at the press in general and reporters specifically.

Today we join hundreds of other newspapers to identify the danger involved when the leader of the free world invokes the language of dictators and authoritarian rulers in attacking the credibility of the press, referring to it as "the enemy of the people." Calling our work "fake news." There are many nastier quotes that we

choose not to repeat here.

The editorial board of Boston Globe made a national call to action for all newspaper editorial boards — both large and small, rural, suburban and metro — across the country to publish a coordinated response to the president's "enemy of the people" rhetoric today, Aug. 16. "We propose to publish an editorial on Aug. 16 on the dangers of the administration's assault on the press and ask others to commit to publishing their own editorials on the same date," the Globe editorial board wrote.

Journalism is a dangerous occupation in many other countries, usually not here in the U.S.

But the fear local journalists feel increased close to home here after the murders of five in the newsroom of the Capital Gazette in Annapolis recently.

EDITORIAL

One member of Connection Newspapers staff is Kemal Kurspahic, who shares with us his first-hand experience of running a newspaper from a war zone when information was desperately needed by the besieged residents of Sarajevo. Kurspahic is managing editor for The Connection Newspapers. He was the editor-in-chief of the Bosnian daily Oslobodjenje in Sarajevo, Bosnia Herzegovina, 1988-94. Under his leadership the paper published every day from the atomic bomb shelter below Oslobodjenje's shelled skeleton of a building during the siege of Sarajevo.

He was critically injured himself when a vehicle taking him to his newsroom crashed as it traveled at high speed down "sniper alley." The International Press Institute named Kurspahic

First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

one of its first 50 World Press Freedom Heroes in 2000.

Here at Local Media Connection, we are unified in our mission to benefit the community. We are blessed to work in a place where we know violence is rare, and our efforts are more often appreciated than cursed. We won the 2016 Virginia Press Association Award for Journalistic Integrity and Community Service, the Virginia Press Association's highest award, for coverage and editorials leading to police reform in Fairfax County.

We last won the award in 2011 "for exhaustive coverage of homelessness in the newspaper's circulation area." First place for "in depth and investigative reporting" went to our series on teen sex trafficking. We've focused on efforts to feed hungry children right here. We feature good works by members of the community in our 15 papers every week. We're fighting the good fight in the face of devastating economic forces, changes in advertising patterns and huge newsprint increases.

We shouldn't have to fear thinly veiled calls for violence and hatred from the leader of our nation.

— MARY KIMM

Back to School

COMMENTARY

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)

Last week I had the opportunity to visit one of my grandsons' schools, and I was genuinely impressed. Parents were invited to come by last week to meet the teachers because his school started on Aug. 15. It was one of the friendliest environments I have experienced — smiles everywhere, genuinely warm greetings for all, and an obvious feeling of caring for all children and parents and grandparents coming into the school. My grandson was clearly eager to get back to school and to see his teachers. He has some special needs that require additional understanding and assistance, and he is clearly getting it in his school setting.

The teachers and administrators wore the school's special tee shirt and were giving high-fives all around.

As one who taught in the classroom for several years, many old memories came back to me. I remember the need to always be

"on" in the school day for students who needed help or attention. In most careers we can coast on a bad day and make up for it later; not so with teaching. You are always the center of attention and must be appropriately responsive to student needs whenever they occur. Students can learn as much about life from your body language and attitude as they can from the subject you are teaching them.

While teachers are assigned a grade level or a subject area, ultimately teachers are teaching children more than just content. I am convinced my son who teaches students in automotive technology is teaching as much about attitude, work habits, developing confidence and being a good citizen as he is about an automobile.

Our daughter who teaches multiply challenged children at the elementary level is demonstrating for parents, the school, and the community the inherent value and potential for every student regardless of the challenges they might face. My wife who was a preschool teacher and director demonstrated

how important it is that young children get off to a good start and is now teaching other teachers to do the same.

Increasingly school divisions are getting an exception to the "Kings Dominion Law" requiring that schools begin after Labor Day. Fairfax County Public Schools is one district now starting before Labor Day. I have always opposed the current law and have voted to repeal it many times. A bill carried over from the past session for further consideration would leave the decision of the starting date for schools up to the local school di-

vision based on the unique circumstances of the community.

The legislature can do much more to support education of our children than dabble in the starting date for schools. Pay for Virginia teachers lags below the national average by about \$4,000. Clearly teachers do not stay in the profession for the money, but they should not have to suffer with low pay because they chose to educate our children. At least in the community we can express appreciation and offer our thank you to our teachers for the important work they do!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Raising School Bus Insurance Policy

To the Editor:

Many thanks so Supervisor Cook for his excellent "Back to School Safety Tips" (Connection, Aug. 9-15, 2018). While many of the tips focused on what drivers can do around school busses, there is more work to be done by our local government to protect our school age children.

When school bus drivers cause accidents that injure students, Fairfax County will assert that both the county and its drivers are immune from claims for damages in excess \$50,000, which is the limit of the county's school bus insurance policy. This claim of immu-

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 11



NEWS

\$182 Million Sought for Public Safety

Voters to decide bond referendum to fund improvements to fire stations, criminal justice academy, and courthouse.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

The county will ask voters to approve \$182 million to renovate, expand and replace fire and police department and Circuit Court facilities on Election Day, Nov. 6.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors authorized the \$182 million public safety bond referendum at its July 31 and June 19 meetings.

\$73 million would be earmarked for improvements to four fire stations — Mount Vernon (\$16 million), Fairview (\$16 million), Gunston (\$13 million), and Seven Corners (\$13 million) — that are all 37 years or older.

The county fire stations require the replacement of major building subsystems, such as HVAC and electrical systems. And facility improvements would expand equipment bays to provide adequate space for apparatus and space for staffing requirements, as well as to enhance bunk-rooms and locker facilities for male and female personnel, according to county documents. There were few if any female fire and rescue personnel 37 years ago.

An additional \$15 million would be used

to improve one of the eight volunteer station that is more than 40 years old.

“Staff is currently reviewing the various capital needs of these eight volunteer stations and would return to the board with the follow-on recommendation for station specific capital improvements,” according to county documents. “In addition, the bond includes temporary fire stations to maintain operations during construction.”

THE POLICE DEPARTMENT would receive \$59 million: \$18 million to renovate and expand the Mason District Station which was built in 1975; \$18 million to renovate and upgrade its Criminal Justice Academy used to train 2,300 officers, deputies, and police and sheriff’s recruits from the county police and sheriff offices as well as the towns of Herndon and Vienna; and \$18 million to renovate, expand or replace the Police Evidence Storage Building used to store evidence for court cases.

The Mason District Station, built in 1975, does not have adequate office, storage, workout, or interview spaces to support operations, according to county documents, and needs upgraded building systems and

infrastructure improvements.

The Police Evidence Storage Building also houses the warrant desk and the victim services section.

“Adequate climate controlled storage is needed to properly store this property in an organized manner. Strict accountability and oversight are also necessary to meet accreditation standards,” according to county documents. Currently, “the second and third floors are not able to adequately support high density storage, which limits storage above the first floor of the building.”

THE ADULT DETENTION Center needs \$45 million of improvements to three wings of the detention center, including plumbing, electrical, HVAC, elevator and fire protection systems as well as security and camera equipment. \$5 million would be used to improve the Jennings Judicial Center.

“The original Jennings Building was completed in the early 1980s and the courtrooms have been in constant use by the public since that time. To keep them operational and enhance their efficiency, these courtrooms require improved lighting, ductwork realignment, ADA upgrades, carpeting, wall and

BOND REFERENDUM VERBATIM

Shall Fairfax County, Virginia, contract a debt, borrow money, and issue bonds in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$182,000,000 to provide funds, in addition to funds from public safety facilities bonds previously authorized, to finance, including reimbursement to the County for temporary financing for, the costs of public safety facilities, including the construction, reconstruction, enlargement, renovation and equipment of civil and criminal justice facilities, police training and operational facilities and stations, fire and rescue training facilities and stations, including fire and rescue stations owned by volunteer organizations, and the acquisition of necessary land?

ceiling replacement/repairs, refinishing of the gallery benches, renovation of the jury rooms and technology upgrades,” according to county documents.

BY LAW, the money from the bonds may only be used for the purpose stated in the ballot question.

“While the project lists for the public safety bonds represent the current proposals regarding what projects to fund, the ballot question is phrased more generally, to allow the board flexibility as to precisely which projects to fund with the bond proceeds,” according to county documents.

The Office of Public Affairs traditionally prepares and distributes an informational pamphlet that is mailed to all county households to help inform the public about the referendum. The pamphlet will be translated into the most widely spoken non-English languages in the county, including Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Voters will be asked to vote “yes” or “no” on the public safety bond question. If ultimately approved, the county plans to sell \$182 million in general obligation bonds to make the renovations and improvements.



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PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

Springfield Supervisor Pat Herrity introduced the group.



The lawn at Burke Lake was sloped a little with the stage at the bottom which made viewing easier.

Playing on a Home Turf

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

Sleepy Clifton isn't known for putting out top-notch country rock musicians but then there's the Thompson family, who have lived there for years, bringing the town's musician status up a notch.

Dad Thompson has impacted the country rock genre for years, and his son Colin is climbing into the driver's seat on the music scene.

On Aug. 8, The Colin Thompson Band was the lead act at Burke Lake as part of the Fairfax County Summer Entertainment Series in the Park. "Crippled Creek," by 1980s band Little Feat was a hit on the second song of their 10-song set. "Here we'll keep it upbeat," he said of the upcoming set.

The family has roots in Robinson High School in the Burke-Fairfax area, where both Randy Thompson and his son Colin graduated before embarking on the country-rock scene.

"My parents met at Robinson," Colin said. Colin's high school band won a "battle of

the bands," competition at school before graduating in 2009. In Clifton, they've both played in the big barn, and "the whole town comes out," said Randy Thompson.

Since then, Colin has played at several Celebrate Fairfax events, Herndon Day festivals, and Clifton Day festivals. Randy still lives in town and uses the historic nature of the town for some of his song writing. One song, "Unknown Zone," is "about all the Civil War ghosts," said Colin.

Recently, Alternate Root Magazine named Colin one of the top 21 roots guitar players.

The Fairfax County Park Authority's "Summer Entertainment Series in the Parks, 2018," was funded "in partnership with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and generous contributions through the Fairfax County Park Foundation," it stated on the entertainment calendar. The only county contribution was



Lorton resident Gaye Stafford came with her Irish Setters Keegan, Bella and Flynn.

Clifton musician headlines the Park Entertainment Series at Burke

family, grab a lawn chair and enjoy the music," Herrity said.

To supply the refreshments for the evening, "2 Silos" brewing company from Manassas set up a beer tent, and their marketing rep Meredith Arnest made sure the tap didn't run dry.

She's a marketing graduate from George Mason University, and her evening was "talking about beer, that's what I do," she said. Their top sellers at 2 Silos are Virginia Cream Ale and Mason Pale Ale.

The Thompsons are about to head out on an 11-city European tour. "Europeans love American roots music," said

Colin Thompson.

Later in August at Burke Lake is a local music favorite "Johnny Artis," and Herrity knows them well. "They played at my wedding 29 years ago," he said. The band will play Aug. 22 at 7:30 p.m.



The band's style of music could be described as country-rock.



Colin Thompson and his father Randy sometimes play together.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TERRI'S TABLE

Cutting fresh produce into bite-sized pieces can make school lunches appealing to children, advises Terri Carr of Terri's Table.

Lunches That Make the Grade

Ideas for packing healthy foods that children won't want to trade.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

For many children, one of the exciting back-to-school rituals is selecting a new lunchbox. For parents, that means choosing midday fare to pack in those lunch-pails. While fresh ideas for healthy and satisfying meals may flow freely at the beginning of the school year, as the weeks pass, it can become easy to slip into a lunchtime rut of daily turkey sandwiches. Local nutritionists and culinary instructors offer ideas designed to serve up lunchbox love all year long.

"Making healthy lunches is just about parents educating themselves on the healthy food options that are available and then teaching their kids to make healthy food choices," said Mary Murray of Reston-based Teri Cochrane, Beyond Nutrition. "With my own kids, I just kept bad food choices out of the house so they didn't have those options."

Trade junk food favorites like potato chips for healthy alternatives like plantain chips, advises Murray. "Plantain chips are actually very good and they're also good for you and still have the crunch. If kids were to bring some extra to share with their friends, more kids will see that they're actually delicious."

"Protein and vegetables are remarkably important, but underrepresented," said Sara Ducey, professor, Nutrition and Food at Montgomery College. "A lot of carbs or snacks, stuff like chips, end up in children's lunchboxes because they have a social value for kids who feel like they're open to being judged."

There is a social component to lunchbox fare that should not be overlooked, continues Ducey. "Lunches should be exciting and appealing, especially when children are feeling like they might be judged," she

said. "Cutting fruit into larger pieces for example, keeps them from turning brown as quickly. A Granny Smith apples for example is less likely to turn brown than a Red Delicious apple."

Packing a lunchbox with foods that are hearty and nutrient-dense is a key to maintaining a feeling of satiety throughout the day, advises Ducey. "You want your kids to have a stable blood sugar," she said. "Beans are good for protein and keeping their blood sugar stable. Try things like white bean hummus, chili and stews and soups that are made with beans."

Involving children in the process of selecting and preparing the items that go into their lunch boxes is a key to increasing the chances that those healthy items will actually be consumed, advises Terri Carr of Terri's Table, a cooking school in Potomac, Md. "Children love to cook and the desire for cooking classes in this area is tremendous. Carr offers classes on cooking with children.

"Many kids will eat fresh baby carrots, celery and cucumber, which are also hydrating," added Carr. "Crunchy dried fruit like blueberry, apples and mangos can go in their lunchboxes instead of chips and they're usually a hit."

Replacing fruit juice with natural fruit water by soaking fresh fruit in water to add a burst of flavor without added sugar is another option offered by Cochrane's firm. Stevia or monkfruit can also be added to sweeten the taste without increasing the sugar content.

"When it comes to beverages, children should only have whole milk and water in their lunchboxes," said Ducey. "Whole milk keeps the child fuller longer. Skim milk actually spikes sugar and they're full at first, but hungry soon after. And a hungry kid doesn't learn as well."

As important as the food that goes into a child's lunchbox are the containers that hold each dish, suggests Ducey. "Invest in good quality stainless steel containers and utensils rather than plastic," she said. "Plastic can transmit chemicals into your food, so stainless steel is a good alternative."

"Lunches should be exciting and appealing, especially when children are feeling like they might be judged."

— Sara Ducey, Professor, Nutrition and Food at Montgomery College



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ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

Art Exhibit. Through Sept. 5, Monday-Thursday, 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at The Fairfax Art League, Fairfax Old Town Hall – Upstairs Gallery, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Featured artist Yelena Svecharnik presents “My Journey - A Retrospective,” bringing together early watercolors, acrylics and mixed media paintings, linoleum block, printmaking, collages and more. Svecharnik will be in the gallery Wednesday Aug. 22, 29, and Sept. 5. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net.

THURSDAY/AUG. 16

Evenings on the Ellipse with Doc Scantlin and his Imperial Palms Orchestra. 5:30-7 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. The Evenings on the Ellipse summer concert series is a family-friendly event featuring a wide range of musical genres. Paradise Springs Winery and The Winery at Bull Run will be providing complimentary tastings; glasses of wine and full bottles available for purchase. A Farmers Market (2:30-6:30 p.m.) will also be on site selling fresh fruit and savory snacks. Rain or shine. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance.

Aviation and World War II. 7-8:30 p.m. at Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. World War II marked a new era in aviation technology, weaponry and strategy. Christian Godart of the National, Air and Space Museum’s Stephen F. Udvar-Hazy Center will discuss the important role aviation played in the Battle of Britain. Intended audience: adults and teens. Free. Call Kings Park Library Information at 703-978-5600 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/3545032.

FRIDAY/AUG. 17

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.

SATURDAY/AUG. 18

The Holy Yoga Experience. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Living Savior Lutheran Church, 5500 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. The half-day event includes Holy Yoga practice, instruction, Bible study, worship and fellowship. It’s an opportunity for people of all levels of yoga experience to engage with the local Holy Yoga community. \$15. Call 571-239-3416 or visit www.holyyoga.net.

Pet Adoption Event. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Pet Supplies Plus, 11054 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Find a new forever animal friend with the help of the City of Fairfax Animal Control and Animal Shelter. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/government/police/programs/animal-control/adopt-a-pet.

Storytelling Workshop and Book

Signing. Workshop, 11 a.m.; book signing, noon-2 p.m. at REI Fairfax, 11950 Grand Commons Ave, Fairfax. Author and journalist Danielle Nadler will teach a free on workshop on how to capture the stories that surround us every day through writing, photography and recordings — and why it’s worth the effort. She’ll also share highlights from her book “Without a Trace: The Life of Sierra Phantom.” Visit DanielleNadler.com or REI.com/stores/fairfax.html.

Mount Vernon Nights. 7 p.m. at Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Road, Lorton. This series of free, public concerts features a variety of musical performances reflecting Fairfax County’s diversity, culture and community spirit. Bring a picnic dinner and a blanket. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance/mt-vernon-nights.

SUNDAY/AUG. 19

Table Top N Gauge Model Train Display. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Table Top N Gauge Model Trains (TTRAK) will be on display and running. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, or call 703-425-9225.

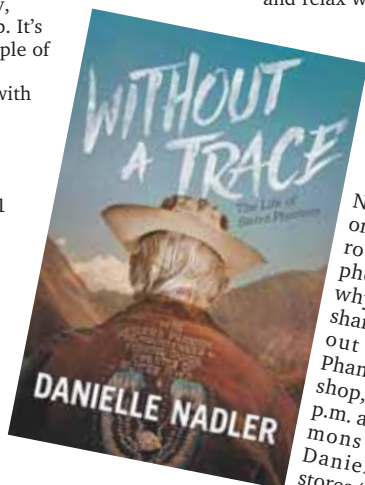
TUESDAY/AUG. 21

Farm to Fairfax Market. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Old Town Square, 10415 North St., Fairfax. The market, will be producers-only — meaning that all vendors at the market may only sell what they raise on their farms or make from scratch using local ingredients as much as possible. May-September, weather permitting. Call 703-385-7893.

Erin’s Epic Stories. 10:30 a.m. at Old Town Square, 10415 North St., Fairfax. A variety of children’s activities and entertainment in Old Town Square at the pergola, Tuesdays June-August. Weather permitting. Free. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/old-town-square.
Burke Lake 4.5 Mile Race. 6:45-8 p.m. at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Chip-timed 4.5 mile race around beautiful Burke Lake. Sponsored by D.C. Road Runners, this race will have awards and refreshments at the post-race celebration. \$10 in advance; \$15 on-site registration. Visit www.dcroadrunners.org/sign-up/thurston for more information.

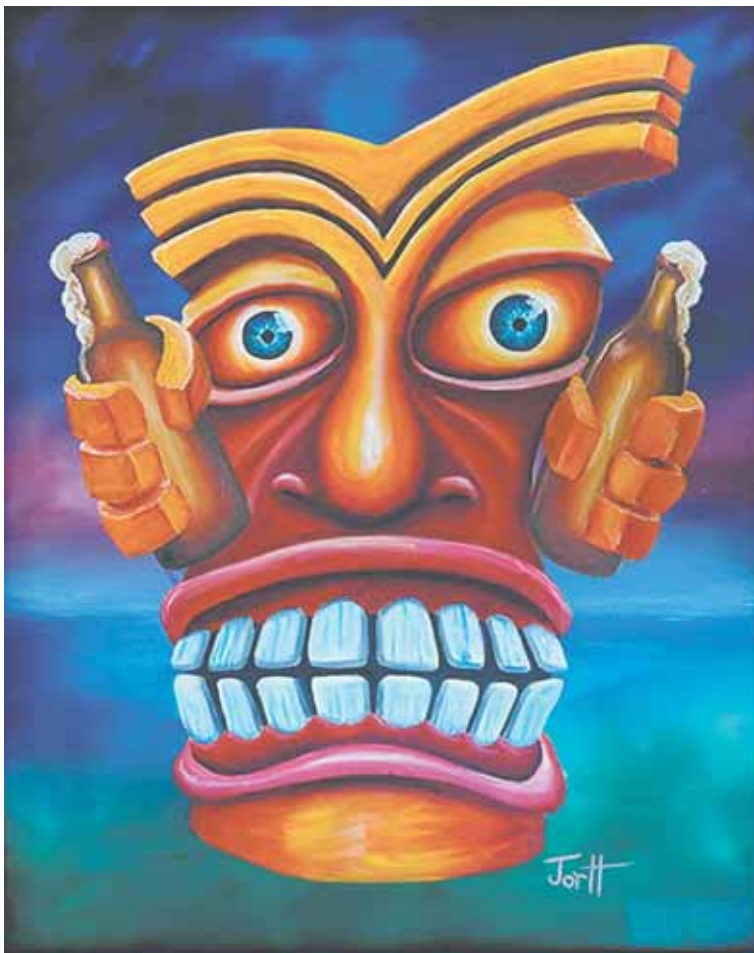
WEDNESDAY/AUG. 22

Springfield Nights. 7 p.m. at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Featuring: The Johnny Artis Band (R&B). Bring a picnic dinner, blankets, your dog, and lawn chairs and relax with friends and family. Beer and food



Storytelling Workshop

Author and journalist Danielle Nadler will teach a free on workshop on how to capture the stories that surround us every day through writing, photography and recordings — and why it’s worth the effort. She’ll also share highlights from her book “Without a Trace: The Life of Sierra Phantom.” Saturday, Aug. 18: workshop, 11 a.m.; book signing, noon-2 p.m. at REI Fairfax, 11950 Grand Commons Ave, Fairfax. Visit DanielleNadler.com or REI.com/stores/fairfax.html for more.



Tiki with Beer by John Hartt; media: Oil on Canvas.

Free Beer (and other lies)

Featuring works by John Hartt, who is known for his quirky oil paintings which have been described as strangely comforting. His latest kooky collection, “Free Beer (and other lies),” explores some of the concepts and stories surrounding beer, drunkenness and lies as only Hartt can interpret them. Through Sept. 2, at Arches Gallery at Workhouse Arts Center, Building 9, 9518 Workhouse Way., Lorton. Visit www.workhousearts.org. For more information about John Hartt, visit www.jortt.com.

will be available for purchase. Call 703-451-8873.

WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY/AUG. 22-23

Studio Ghibli: From Up On Poppy Hill. Wednesday, 7 p.m. (Japanese with English subtitles); Thursday, 11 a.m. (English dubbed) at Angelika Film Center – Mosaic, 2911 District Ave., Fairfax. The Angelika Mosaic will feature animated films from the celebrated Studio Ghibli praised for their originality, stunning animation, and ambitious storytelling. All tickets are regular admission. Visit www.AngleikaFilmCenter.com.

THURSDAY/AUG. 23

Evenings on the Ellipse with Russikeye Musikanti. 5:30-7 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. The Evenings on the Ellipse summer concert series is a family-friendly event featuring a wide range of musical genres. Paradise Springs Winery and The Winery at Bull Run will be providing complimentary tastings; glasses of wine and full bottles available for purchase. A Farmers Market (2:30-6:30 p.m.) will also be on site selling fresh fruit and savory snacks. Rain or shine. Free. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/

performances.

FRIDAY/AUG. 24

Rock the Block: The Darby Brothers. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Family-friendly free concert series, which features live bands, beer garden, and city restaurant vendor booths. Bring your own lawn chairs or blankets to sit on. Free. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/rocktheblock.
B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit fairfaxvfd.com or call 703-273-3638.
Family Movie Night: “Ferdinand.” 7 p.m. at Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Enjoy a free, family friendly (movies are PG) movie night. An adult must accompany anyone under the age of 14. “Britepaths” Food Drive at Family Fun Nights. Britepaths is a volunteer-based organization that identifies and addresses the unmet fundamental needs of Fairfax area residents. Call 703-385-7858.

SATURDAY/AUG. 25

Discover What’s Hiding at Burke Lake Park. 9-11 a.m. at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. During the “Geocaching Workshop,” students age 8 to adult learn to use hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS) units to locate hidden treasure caches in the park. Bring a GPS; a limited number are available to borrow. \$22 per person. Call 703-323-6600 or visit fairfaxcounty.gov/

parks/burke-lake.

Mount Vernon Nights. 7 p.m. at Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Road, Lorton. This series of free, public concerts features a variety of musical performances reflecting Fairfax County’s diversity, culture and community spirit. Bring a picnic dinner and a blanket. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance/mt-vernon-nights.

SUNDAY/AUG. 26

First Responders Day. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Volunteer Fire and Rescue personnel as well as Fairfax County Police Officers will bring emergency vehicles for display and offer hands-on activities. Civil War Re-enactors will help visitors learn about medical and relief practices then and now. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, or call 703-425-9225.

Burke Historical Society Meeting. 3:30-5 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library, 6540 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Tales from the Trench: BHS President Jon Vrana presents stories and observations of life and death in the Great War. Free. Email slawski_brian@yahoo.com or visit www.burkehistoricalsociety.org.

TUESDAY/AUG. 28

Farm to Fairfax Market. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Old Town Square, 10415 North St., Fairfax. The market, will be producers-only — meaning that all vendors at the market may only sell what they raise on their farms or make from scratch using local ingredients as much as possible. May-September, weather permitting. Call 703-385-7893.

Erin’s Epic Stories. 10:30 a.m. at Old Town Square, 10415 North St., Fairfax. A variety of children’s activities and entertainment in Old Town Square at the pergola, Tuesdays June-August. Weather permitting. Free. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/old-town-square.

The Annual Springfield Bridge Walk. 7 p.m. at the FedEx office at the corner of Amherst Avenue and Bland Street. Hosted by the American Legion Post 176, this is an event to recognize the relationship between Springfield and Fort Belvoir. This family-friendly event is open to the entire community. As the lights begin to shine, the police will close the road and walkers will stroll across Veterans Bridge to American Legion Post 176, followed by a brief ceremony and community covenant signing with Fort Belvoir, followed by community time and food with friends and neighbors. Volunteers are needed. Email vapost176@vap.vacoxmail.com.

THURSDAY/AUG. 30

Evenings on the Ellipse with The United States Air Force ‘Celtic Aire.’ 5:30-7 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Family-friendly event featuring a wide range of musical genres. A Farmers Market (2:30-6:30 p.m.) will also be on site selling fresh fruit and savory snacks. Rain or shine. Free. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance.

Art and Poetry Event. 7-9 p.m. at The Fairfax Art League, Fairfax Old Town Hall – Upstairs Gallery, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Featured artist Yelena Svecharnik presents “My Journey - A Retrospective,” bringing together early watercolors, acrylics and mixed media paintings, linoleum block, printmaking, collages and more. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Vandals Hit the Marshall Cemetery in Burke

Remains of Burke residents lie in the historic cemetery that is now marred with spray paint.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

Prominent Burke founders John and Mary Marshall helped form the town of Burke, witnessed Civil War activity around the area and made their mark on the community. But vandals found their cemetery in the central wooded section of Burke, and left a mark on the memorial with spray paint.

John Marshall owned a general store in Burke and was the postmaster from 1852 to 1854, later managing the affairs of Mrs. Silas Burke, the sign on the cemetery states.

Upon discovery of this vandalism, an individual reported it in person to the Fairfax County Police Department, but when they tried to get her name, she was nowhere to be found. Then on Aug. 9 an officer visited the site and ran into a person who is taking care of the cemetery. There was a conversation, according to officer Michael Cole, a Fairfax County Police Department compliance manager, and they discussed cleaning the monument or coating it with a substance that would make graffiti easier to remove but the conversation did not go further than that. The official word is "it's under investigation," Cole said.

According to the police, vandalizing a cemetery is a Class 6 felony. Virginia law 18.2-127. "Any person who willfully or maliciously destroys, mutilates, defaces, injures, or removes any object or structure permanently attached or affixed within any church or on church property, any tomb, monument, grave-stone, or other structure placed within any cemetery, graveyard, or place of burial, or within any lot belonging to any memorial or monumental association, or any fence, railing, or other work for the protection or ornament of any tomb, monument, grave-stone, or other structure aforesaid, or of any cemetery lot within any cemetery is guilty of a Class 6 felony. A person convicted under this section who is required to pay restitution by the court shall be required to pay restitution to the church, if the property damaged is property of the church, or to the owner of a cemetery, if the property damaged is located within such cemetery regardless of whether



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

Vandals left their mark on the Marshall Cemetery, located in a wooded area near the old railroad.

the property damaged is owned by the cemetery or by another person."

Mary Lipsky, the head of the Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation Association, brought this vandalism to the attention of Pat Herrity, the Springfield District Supervisor. "I was saddened to hear about the vandalism of the historic cemetery and Fairfax County is doing what it can to catch the vandal," Herrity said.

An inquiry was made to the Burke Historical Society but they have not responded, although their website does mention the cemetery and the vandalism as well. "John and Mary Marshall, prominent 19th century citizens of Burke, are buried in this cemetery. Mr. Marshall owned a general merchandise store, and served as the postmaster of Burke's Station. Unfortunately, the cemetery has been vandalized," reads the website entry.

Gwyn Whittaker, CEO of GreenFare caf in Herndon, has a few questions for Sgt. Earit Powell who heads the deer harvest operations.

PHOTO BY
ANDREA WORKER/
THE CONNECTION



Deer Management Program Explained

FROM PAGE 3

ing Pan Farm Park. These operations will be conducted between November 2018 and March 2019, but no hunts will take place over the Thanksgiving holidays or during the winter holiday season between Dec. 19, 2018 and Jan. 2, 2019. The venison from the harvest is donated primarily to homeless shelters through the nonprofit "Hunters for the Hungry."

Hunting deer as a method of controlling their population is not always met with approval. Some residents object to destroying an animal that is just trying to survive in a vanishing wilderness. But as Edwards explained, other, non-lethal methods like tagging deer with birth control drugs or sterilization "just haven't proven effective or are cost prohibitive, although we continue to stay up to date with the latest research and will adjust our program accordingly."

THE DEER MANAGEMENT program is ultimately about public safety, said Edwards, "and the protection of the environment, and about helping sustain a population of healthy

deer as part of our natural surroundings."

There is one more public meeting scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 16, at 7 p.m. at the Mount Vernon District Police Station Community Room at 2511 Parkers Lane in Alexandria. A complete list of the parks where deer harvesting will take place, and the methods that will be employed at each, including dates for managed firearm and sharpshooting operations, is available on the county's website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/wild-life/deer-management-program. The site also provides historical data on the numbers of deer harvested in past operations by location, by method, and by sex and more information about the logistics, requirements, and frequently asked questions.

Edwards, Powell and Sinclair welcome comments and questions from residents of the county, and are more than willing to speak with local groups, HOAs and other organizations, or private citizens looking for advice on how to coexist with hooved neighbors. Their contact information can be found on the website.



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Employment

Saint Bernadette Catholic School and Church is seeking a Facilities Assistant to join our team. Responsibilities include maintenance, upkeep and repair of the parish/school buildings and grounds. The full-time position requires 3 yrs. experience with electrical, plumbing, HVAC, carpentry, painting and drywall work. May perform janitorial duties on days cleaning service is not available and must be able to regularly move equipment/stock items up to 50lbs. Please send resume to rcaporal@stbernpar.org

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BOOKKEEPING POSITION
Bookkeeping position open in Pediatric office Monday - Friday, occasional Saturdays.
For more information, call Erika at 703-691-4700 ext. 205

Yard Sale

Lake Braddock's Cross Country team is hosting a yard sale on Saturday, August 18th, at Burke School (on the corner of Burke Centre Parkway and Burke Lake Road), Burke, VA, from 8 am to 1 pm. Furniture, clothes, dishes, toys, and more... Come support the Bruins!

Employment

Saint Bernadette School is seeking a Cafeteria / Food Service Manager to operate our school lunch program. Qualified applicants will be responsible for total operation of the kitchen as it relates to school lunches and serves as the coordinator of the use of the kitchen at other times. The position is for a full time, 11-month employee. Responsibilities include menu planning, ordering and receiving, food preparation, scheduling and supervision of kitchen staff, maintenance of kitchen and equipment, inventory management and cost control, documentation and reporting as required for participation in the USDA National School Lunch Program, including production logs, log sheets for HCCAP compliance and renewal. Applicant must be familiar with point of sale software. It is understood that this position requires personal initiative, good problem-solving skills and love for providing nutritious meals for children. Please send resume and references to rcaporal@stbernpar.org.

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Employment

CUSTOM COMBINE OPERATORS (6) Temp/Full-time positions (9/25/18 to 11/5/18) @ Hanover Foods Delaware, Inc. Inspect field: identify harvesting conditions, locate electrical lines & obstacles, & perform adjustments. Adjust height, speed & other functions of harvesters for max operations & ensure safety. Harvest lima beans using specialized machinery or other farm equip according to soil conditions & supervisor's instructions. May drive custom combine harvester from site to site, up to 30 mi. Responsible for maintenance & repair of combine harvester incl perform inspections before & after each shift, verify oil, mobile pieces, & others. Perform routine maintenance & emergency repairs of harvester. Type of machinery used: specialized combine harvester. Compensation: \$13.54/hr or highest of AEWR, prevailing hrly wage or piece rate, or Fed or State min wage. Reqs: 6 mos prior exp; Sat & Sun work reqd, when nec; 40 hrs/wk (Mon-Fri: 7am-3pm) at no less than hrly rates mentioned. OT hrs vary @ \$20.31/hr. Employer will make all deducts from wkr's payck reqd by law. Employer doesn't envision other wkforce-wide payroll deducts. Work locations: Kent & Sussex Counties, DE; Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's & Caroline Counties, MD. Daily transport provided to/from wksites from central designated pickup place. Use of transport is vol. Incidental transport provided betwn wksites. Lodging facilities equally available to foreign & non-local wkrs from outside normal commuting distance at no charge to wkrs. Jobs may req overnight stays at job location. Three daily meals provided at no charge. Employer provides without charge, all tools, supplies & equip required to perform job. For wkrs outside reasonable commuting distances, transport (incl meals and, to extent nec lodging) to place of empl will be provided, or its cost to wkrs reimbursed, if wkr completes ½ empl period. Return transport will be provided or pd for to same wkr if wkr completes empl period or is dismissed early by employer. Employer guarantees to offer work for a total number of work hrs equal to at least ¾ of workdays in each 12-wk period of total empl period. If wkr separation is due to voluntary abandonment, employer won't be responsible for providing or paying return transport & subsistence exp's of wkr and wkr is not entitled to full ¾ pd guarantee described above. APPLY at nearest SWA Local Office and speak to Employment Specialist. Job order# DE368012. Referrals apply only if they meet qualifications of job & to be familiarized with job spec's & terms & conditions of empl, who are able, willing & qualified to perform work, who are eligible for empl in US, and who will be available at time & place needed. Fwd Resume to FLC Unit. Then contact employer. Employer will accept referrals from all sources & applicants who apply directly to Employer Contact, via email: Justin Prystajko, Hanover Foods Delaware, Inc. Field Mgr, 7000 Millington Rd, Clayton, DE 19938; Email: jprystajko@hanoverfoods.com

NEWS

Apply for Citizens Fire Academy

An eight-week Citizens Fire & Rescue Academy (CFRA) program will show participants what firefighters and paramedics do every day. The CFRA is open to county residents 18 and older. Each session will cover different aspects of the organization, providing an overview of the department and its uniformed and civilian workforce. Program topics include: fire suppression, emergency medical services, training, recruitment, special operations, and other interesting topics. CFRA applications will be accepted until Aug. 31. The Academy will begin Sept. 20 and will meet for eight consecutive Thursdays, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and ending on Nov. 8. See <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire-ems/cfra>.

FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT PHOTO



Nonprofits Initiate 5k Home Run for the Homeless

Combined effort to raise funds.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

Three non-profit organizations have banded together to sponsor the first Home Run for the Homeless 5k run on Saturday, Sept. 15. Community Lodgings, Home-stretch and Bridges to Independence are all organizations which provide housing, employment, youth education and outreach and child care to parents and children as they move toward self sufficiency in the City of Alexandria, and Arlington and Fairfax counties.

Mark Riley, volunteer coordinator of the event, says this is rare if not unprecedented, that nonprofits come together in this kind of effort.

In an area known for its wealth, the 2018 Point in Time survey identified 1,434 individuals as homeless in Northern Virginia. "The Home Run is a great opportunity for people to support not just one, but three organizations working to help Northern Virginia families overcome homelessness," according to Sam Kelly, chief executive officer, Bridges to Independence.

Lynn Thomas, executive director of Community Lodgings, said, "The primary goal of the race is to inform community members about homelessness and encourage them to become involved."

Riley said, "It would be nice to net, say, ten grand but this isn't about the money; it's about the visibility for the good work of these organizations." Riley said their goal is to get 250 participants, the maximum allowed. "But it is difficult to go to 250 the first year from scratch."

Riley says the race is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. at Bluemoont Park shelter on Manchester

Street in Arlington. It will follow the W&OD trail almost to Falls Church and end back at Bluemoont Park.

Riley says he has organized other races such as the Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot. His role for this race is to be the coordinator go-to guy. He says this race involves getting three permits: for the trail, the shelter and the overall special events permit. "You have to make sure it is on the county calendar."

"Then you get your people lined up" — the host beneficiaries and leadership group and the sponsors. "I help with the parking, the food and the music. It sets a mood." Two other essential pieces are the race management company to help time the race and provide the cones and barrels and other necessary equipment. And, of course, the T-shirts for people and this year "really nifty medals. The children love the medals more."

Riley says County Board member John Vihstadt probably inspired the impetus for this event. "Two years ago he contacted me to find out about Home-stretch because they were doing a fundraiser for their childcare." One thing led to another and these three groups got together.

Register for the race at <https://goo.gl/GtrFqe>. Registration fees are \$40 for 18-years and older and \$25 for 6-17 years. Online registration ends Sept. 13 unless it has already sold out. Packet pick up will be Friday, Sept. 14 at Christ Church in Arlington from 5-7p.m. And on Saturday before the race starting at 7 a.m.

Is Riley running the 5k? "Those days are over, but I did sign up."



BULLETIN

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

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is looking to expand its team of volunteers for the upcoming tax season. Tax-Aide, now in its 51st year, offers free in-person preparation and assistance to anyone, especially those 50 and older, who can't afford a tax preparation service. Volunteers make a difference in their communities by assisting many older, lower-income taxpayers, and their families, who might otherwise miss out on the tax credits and deductions they've earned. To learn about volunteer opportunities, visit aarpfoundation.org/taxaide or call 1-888-OUR-AARP (1-888-687-2277).

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. Ideal for those interested in railroads, the Civil War and Northern Virginia history. Training and orientation provided. Other volunteer opportunities are gardening, publicity and exhibit planning. Call 703-945-7483.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board's Merrifield Center offers a new stand-up information kiosk. Part of a pilot project, the new feature aims to improve the customer service experience and decrease wait times for individuals who are seeking mental (behavioral) health services. To check in, individuals respond to five simple questions, then the CSB's Patient Track software alerts staff. Based on clinicians' schedules and availability, as well as the needs of the client, individuals are triaged and seen by the next available staff member. For more information on available services, call the CSB at 703-383-8500 (Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.). In an emergency 24/7, call CSB Emergency Services at 703-573-5679 or the Fairfax Detox Center at 703-502-7000 (TTY 703-322-9080).

THURSDAY/AUG. 16

Macy's Hiring Event. 11 a.m.- 7 p.m. Job candidates may visit the following Macy's stores to be considered for full- or part-time positions: Macy's Fair Oaks, Macy's Tysons Corner Center, Macy's Westfield Montgomery, Macy's Tysons Galleria and Macy's Fashion Center At Pentagon City. Candidates should apply in advance at macysJOBS.com.

Clean Energy Rally. 4:30-5 p.m. at Merten Hall Lawn at 4441 George Mason Blvd., Fairfax. Clean energy supporters will gather to show support for transitioning to clean renewable energy sources like wind and solar in Virginia. Visit www.sierraclub.org/virginia for more.

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 4

nity, coupled with this very low amount of insurance, can leave those insured with devastating medical bills. To make matters worse, Fairfax County will require anyone settling a claim to agree to keep the settlement confidential, thus ensuring that parents who are putting their children on busses each morning, never discover the risk involved.

If Fairfax Country really cares about children it should bring its school bus insurance policy up to date with coverage to \$1 million per claimant, at a minimum, and waive its immunity up to that amount.

Benjamin W. Glass, III
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Progressing, But So Am I



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

"Slow progression" does not mean we are now progressing slowly. Quite the opposite in fact. During this past Monday's "Phoning It In" appointment when the three semi-amigos – me, my wife Dina, and my oncologist – discussed/assessed my most recent CT scan results, a decision was made to fight potential cancer fire with treatment fire.

In effect, we are doubling down, decreasing my present every-seven-week infusion schedule back down to every three weeks and likewise reducing my three-month CT scan interval to two months. All of which changes my "manageable" life to one more cancer centric. Not all appealing but as the South Korean woman driving the white Cadillac told "Hawkeye" in a long-ago M*A*S*H episode: "That's where the water is."

And so we are returning to the scene of the crime (three week intervals) so to speak, and hoping we can nip this tumor growth in the bud thereby enabling yours truly to live longer and hopefully prosper (and live long enough as well to see the new Star Trek series with Patrick Stewart returning as Jean Luc Picard).

I don't want to be totally naive and presume that since the same medication has worked for five years, there's no reason to think, with a little tweaking, it can't continue to work for another five years. However, my oncologist did say he's had patients where a similar approach worked to slow/stop the growth (after an unspecified period of stability like me) so to quote my late father: "The idea has merit."

Ergo, the honeymoon is over. Now the hard part begins, again. One week not feeling well, two weeks feeling pretty well. Then waiting for scan results as if my life depended on it (duh!).

It's nothing my family and I haven't experienced off and on going on nine and half years since my diagnosis/prognosis. Still, after the last five years of relative calm (since I was hospitalized and began the "miracle" drug alimta), life has been normal-ish with infusion intervals widening and scan results indicating some initial shrinkage ("like a frightened turtle"), followed by nearly five years of "stable" CT scans.

But so what else is new in the cancer-patient world? (That's a rhetorical question.)

Cancer returning with or without a vengeance to patients who perhaps had expected otherwise. Cancer is not exactly a disease you forget you had or one that you presume you'll never see or worry about again. Nothing could be further from the truth. The truth being: you are scarred for life – sort of. You become a life-long member of the biggest club in the world. A club, as Groucho Marx might joke, you'd rather not join, especially if they'd have you as a member.

"Cancer Sucks" as a meme is the most insincere form of flattery – for a reason: people die. Cancer leaves a wake and in its path devastation and destruction. Its swath cuts across generations, cultures, demographics, ethnic backgrounds and gender identifications.

If there's any fear we share collectively it is a diagnosis of cancer. Living with it and trying not to die from it has been the bane of my existence – and millions more, many of whom have already succumbed to its ravages. Continuing research into the cause and effect has given me years my oncologist told me I probably didn't have. ("13 months to two years" was my original prognosis.)

How lucky am I. (Not a rhetorical question.)

Now I face another hurdle. Or rather, more of the same hurdle I've managed to jump over for nine-plus years. Whether the 10 percent-ish tumor growth is the real deal or merely just a blip on the cancer radar, only time and treatment will tell. This is the uncertainty all of us cancer patients endure. It's not ideal, but ideal left the building on Feb. 27, 2009.

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



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