
Burke Civic Ballet Presents ‘The Nutcracker’

‘Real Work of Advocacy Begins Again’

Pedestrian Bridge Meetings Narrow it Down
The Nutcracker
presented by
The Burke Civic Ballet
Come share in the magic of the holiday tradition! Featuring 3-year-old miniature dolls to professional dancers courtesy of Colorado Ballet, this production will enchant all ages. Be mesmerized by a growing tree, magic tricks, leaping mice, toy soldiers, falling snow, authentic costumes made in the Ukraine, seventy-five dancing flowers and delectable confections from the Kingdom of Sweets. Treat yourself and friends to a wonderful entrée to the spirit of the season. Makes a perfect holiday gift!

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Saturday, November 17th at 2:00 & 6:00 p.m.
& Sunday, November 18th at 1:00 & 5:00 p.m.
Ernst Community Cultural Center Theater • NVCC Annandale Campus
Adults – $28 • Children/Seniors – $20
For organized groups (10+) and handicapped seating, burkecivicballet@gmail.com

The Burke Civic Ballet

People

Eagle Scout Nathan Hanson, Troop 1346, Burke

Constructing Trail Stairway at Lake Royal Park

Eagle Scout Nathan Hanson of Troop 1346 at Burke Presbyterian Church is a senior at Robinson Secondary School. He is a member of Fairfax Community Church; donates time in the kitchen of the Lamb Center for assisting the homeless; plays varsity lacrosse at Robinson Secondary School. Nathan’s parents are Jennifer & Captain Kevin Hanson (USN). Nathan’s Eagle Scout Project was construction of trail stairway at Lake Royal Park.
County Remembers its Military Veterans

Fairfax County’s Veterans Day/100th Anniversary Commemoration of WWI Armistice ceremony was held Sunday, Nov. 11, at the Old Fairfax County Courthouse in the City of Fairfax.

Wreaths and a flag honor the 27 Fairfax County residents who died in WWI and whose names are engraved on this marker.

The Fairfax County Sheriff’s Office Color Guard.

From left, Noah Collins (Cub Scout Pack 41), Caleb Collins (Boy Scout Troop 1865), Grayson Bulova (Cub Scout Pack 41) and Sam Laikin (Boy Scout Troop 1865) pose in front of the WW1 marker, honoring the 27 Fairfax County residents killed in WW1. Outside the Old Fairfax County Courthouse in Fairfax, it was erected by the Fairfax County Chapter of the NSDAR in 1926. During Sunday’s WWI Armistice Commemoration, all 27 names were read aloud, and a wreath was laid at the memorial.

Comprising the event’s planning committee are (from left) Heather Bollinger, Fairfax Circuit Court Historic Records; Laura Wickstead, Virginia Room, Fairfax County Public Library; and Mary Lipsey and Gretchen Bulova, Fairfax County History Commission.

Photos Courtesy of Heather Bollinger
‘Real Work of Advocacy Begins Again’

Annual SALT conference celebrates 2018 achievements, outlines 2019 priorities.

By Andrea Worker

The Audience

The panel, representing faith-based social justice organizations and Virginia’s elected officials, address the attendees at the annual conference of Social Action Linking Together. The nuns organized or attended more than 50 events in 21 states from Oct. 7 until Nov. 2. They met with local lawmakers, attended Town Halls, and joined in rallies around the country, trying to show just how much, or little, different groups would benefit from the tax cuts.

Sister Quincy Howard tag-teamed with Sister Mary Ellen Lacy to provide the highlights of their recently completed participation in the “Nuns on a Bus” tour across America, from Oct. 7 – Nov. 2, starting in Santa Monica, Calif., and ending up with a “fitting drive-by at Mar-a-Lago,” the President’s frequently visited resort in Florida.

“We saw programs that were more collaborative, less competitive,” so that she says they achieved a greater outcome in the goal of bringing “dignity and economic mobility” to people and families.

“We voted. We won,” said Lacy, breaking for a moment with the non-partisan model when she urged the audience to “now support and educate and work with these new lawmakers and representatives.”

SALT made great strides towards the goals they set at last year’s conference. Having advocated for years for the expansion of Medicaid in Virginia, the group was ecstatic when Gov. Northam signed the new state budget that will bring health care coverage to up to 400,000Virginians starting Jan. 1, 2019. Funding is going on now.

Horejsi was also excited that he had been invited to attend the signing of the bill, sponsored by Del. Patrick Hope and Sen. Barbara Favola to “End School Lunch Shaming.”

Also in the “celebrate” column are bills to allow video visitations without replacing in-person family visits for prison inmates, and the Kinshipship Program, which allows guardians like grandparents to become registered Foster Parents, giving the children in their care “some six times more benefits,” said Horejsi, than they could receive otherwise.

ON THE AGENDA for the 2019 Virginia Legislative agenda:

❖ More improvements to TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), including a TANF scholarship pilot program to “give these young people a chance to become successfully employed.”

❖ Supporting the Governor’s mission to make Earned Income Tax Credits refundable for lower and moderate-income working families.

❖ Limiting and ending solitary confinement of the incarcerated. Speaker Gay Gardner with Interfaith Action for Human Rights is working to present a bill demanding transparency and accountability and real measurement by the Virginia Department of Corrections. “There are fewer inmates in solitary confinement today,” she said, but with no measurement, and simply changing the name of this action to “restrictive housing.” Gardner says that this is an advocacy that must continue and needs more attention.

❖ Continuing to oppose Block Grants for all human services programs, as grants are shown to typically shrink in funding over the years.

The issues discussed at the conference and on the SALT radar can be complex. The group welcomes questions and comments and any opportunity to educate and assist, providing factual, non-partisan information on their website at www.s-a-l-t.org or by contacting SALT coordinator and founder John Horejsi at jhorejsi@vizonet.com.

“Real Work of Advocacy Begins Again”

The elections are behind us. Now it’s time for the real work of advocacy to start again,” said Social Action Linking Together (SALT) founder John Horejsi as he welcomed the attendees to the SALT Fall advocacy conference at Virginia International University in Fairfax on Saturday, Nov. 10.

SALT is a faith-based network of organizations and individuals who join forces on a number of social issues, “trying to bring the social and economic justice teachings of their faith to bear on public policy and legislation, especially at the local and state levels.” The non-partisan group (“We focus on issues, not candidates”) formed some 20 years ago with a core of eight socially-conscious people and has grown over the years to a base of about 1,300.

Keynote speaker John “Jack” Calhoun, author of several books about social justice and engagement, brought considerable humor to his presentation, “Finding Hope and Joy in the Broken Places: Keepin’ on, Keepin’ on,” despite the often sobering stories and statistics that he has faced in his work and that he recounts, “Jesus liked a party,” he joked. “We need to find joy and fun in what we are about.”

Calhouns, a senior consultant with the U.S. Department of Justice and Development Service Group, Inc., for National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention has spent a lifetime working inside and out of government institutions to “improve the lives of those who live on society’s edges, fragile families and the neighborhoods from which they come” focusing heavily on vulnerable children and adolescents.

“We need to name and claim our kids,” said Calhoun, who helped write the landmark Child Welfare and Adoption Act of 1980, or “other negative influencers like gang wars do,”

Calhoun offered several tips on successful engagement, including “Policy Walking” and “Programs, Policy and the Personal” as the three essential elements for a template for “really getting something accomplished. It starts with walking, not fixing or talking.”

Bringing the work needed to be done to the local level was Virginia Del. Ken Plum (D-36), introduced by Horejsi as the longest serving delegate in the Virginia Legislature and “an advocate for social justice and civic engagement since day one.” Plum was joined on the dais by Karrie Delaney (D-67) who completed her first term this year. Plum’s illuminating presentation was aptly titled the “Uncommonwealth of Virginia.” To understand the work that needs to be done and how best to achieve it, says Plum, it is first necessary to understand the economic gaps and disparity in opportunity that exist between the regions of the Commonwealth. “We are a state of extremes,” said the delegate, with Northern Virginia being among the nation’s wealthiest in personal income and property value, while the South and the Southwest regions rank “the actual poorest, lower than the state of Mississippi in these economic indicators.” Plum acknowledged that there are many who resent the portion of their tax dollars being used to support other areas of the state, often hearing that “our money should be used to improve our schools, our services,” but he makes the case that not only is it the morally right thing to do to help our neighbors in need, but it makes sense that “we all do well when everyone does so.”

The changing demographics and shifts in population need to inform how we develop programs and allocate funds and “how we will improve the lives of all Virginians.”

The Audience was also treated to a snapshot of the daily doings of the “Nuns on a Bus” and their recently completed 2018 tour, which took them from Santa Monica, California, across the nation to the Trump resort Mar-a-Lago in Florida.

“A fitting place to do an ending drive-by” said Sister Quincy Howard who was one of the bus “riders,” since the main objective of this year’s bus trip was “firstly to learn and listen, secondly to educate and inform on the impacts of the 2017 Republican Tax Cuts and Job Acts.”

The nuns organized or attended more than 50 events in 21 states from Oct. 7 until Nov. 2. They met with local lawmakers, attended Town Halls, and joined in rallies around the country, trying to show just how much, or little, different groups would benefit from the tax cuts. According to their organization, NETWORK, Advocates for Justice, Inspired by Catholic Sisters, the wealthiest and corporations would be the real recipients of any positive effect from the tax laws, while the less fortunate and the struggling middle classes would actually “take steps backwards from the days of the Reagan tax cuts” because of threats to the programs that many of them depend on, like Social Security, SNAP and CHIP programs, Medicare and Medicaid, and “even infrastructure and emergency recovery resources.”

Sister Mary Ellen Lacy, who was Sister Howard’s “bus mate,” detailed events on the tour, describing some of the “touching and inspiring site visits” the group made, where “we saw the direct, positive outcomes of people helping each other.” Lacy said they were particularly impressed by programs that employed a holistic approach, rather than focusing on just one piece of the puzzle.

“We voted. We won,” said Lacy, breaking for a moment with the non-partisan model when she urged the audience to “now support and educate and work with these new lawmakers and representatives. SALT made great strides towards the goals they set at last year’s conference. Having advocated for years for the expansion of Medicaid in Virginia, the group was ecstatic when Gov. Northam signed the new state budget that will bring health care coverage to up to 400,000Virginians starting Jan. 1, 2019. Funding is going on now.

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“The Audience”

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HOLIDAY DONATIONS

Food Collection. Through Friday, Nov. 16. PenFed is collecting boxed and canned foods at all of its DC area branch locations. PenFed, NOVA, Telemed Nine44 and The Boys and Girls Club of Greater Washington will collect the boxes and assemble over 4,000 turkey baskets to be distributed to local families, seniors, veterans and others in need. Visit PenFed.org. PenFed branch locations collecting donation items include:
- Kingstowne – 5775 Barclay Drive, Alexandria
- Fort Belvoir – 9651 Gunston Road, Bldg 1152, Fort Belvoir
- National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency – 7500 Geoint Drive, Springfield

Blanket and Coat Drive. Through Dec. 8. Organized by NOVA Relief Center, blankets and coats will be sent to refugees in three camps in Jordan this winter. Blankets and coats should be new or gently worn. Monetary donations are also needed and can be made to NOVA Relief Center online and at some drop-off locations. For drop-off sites or to make a tax-deductible donation, visit novareliefcenter.org.

Holiday Basket Donation. Thanksgiving basket donations by Nov. 19 and Christmas baskets by Dec. 17. Preparing a special holiday meal and joining one’s family around the table to give thanks are visions that come to mind when we think of Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner. For many families and individuals, enjoying a special holiday meal when finances are tight is just not possible. Visit www.koinoniacares.org/holiday-baskets.html for suggestions and to sign up to donate a basket.

Food for Fines. Nov. 1-30. Fairfax County Public Library will be hosting a food drive called “Food for Fines.” Canned goods and other non-perishable items collected during the drive will be donated to Food for Others, a not-for-profit food pantry and food rescue operation that serves Fairfax County. Each item donated will erase $1 from a patron’s overdue fines up to a maximum of $15. Customers may donate even if there are no fines accrued. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/food-fines for more.

Toys for Tots Drive. Nov. 19-Dec. 10. Area Sheehy Auto Stores will collect new and unwrapped toys to benefit the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program, which will distribute those toys as gifts to less fortunate children in the community in which the campaign is conducted. Sheehy’s Toys for Tots drop-off locations include:
- Sheehy Volkswagen of Springfield, 6601 Backlick Road, Springfield
- Sheehy Ford of Springfield, 6727 Loisdale Road, Springfield
- Sheehy Subaru of Springfield, 6571 Backlick Road, Springfield
- Patriot Harley-Davidson, 9739 Fairfax Boulevard, Fairfax

Christmas Wish Donations and Volunteers. Koinonia is now accepting donations of unwrapped Christmas gifts so that their clients can pick our gifts for their families. This year Christmas wishes will be held at Franconia United Methodist Church from Dec. 10-12. Donations will be accepted through Dec. 10. Visit www.koinoniacares.org for a list of suggested toys and gift cards. Volunteers needed Dec. 9-12, call 703-971-1991.

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.
Amazon’s “second headquarters” in Arlington will bring benefits to Fairfax County.

Amazon this week announced that it would split its much-discussed “second headquarters” between New York City and Crystal City in Arlington.

Amazon will invest $5 billion and create more than 50,000 jobs across the two new locations, with more than 25,000 employees each in New York City and Arlington. The new locations will join Seattle as the company’s three headquarters in North America.

Amazon’s investments in each new headquarters will spur the creation of tens of thousands of additional jobs in the surrounding communities. Hiring at both the new headquarters will begin in 2019.

“Two of these locations will allow us to attract world-class talent that will help us to continue inventing for customers for years to come,” said Jeff Bezos, founder and CEO of Amazon, called the world’s wealthiest human. “The team did a great job selecting these sites, and we look forward to becoming an even bigger part of these communities.”

“This is fantastic news for our region,” said Sharon Bulova, chair of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. “We look forward to welcoming Amazon as our newest corporate neighbor.”

There are no companies in Northern Virginia with close to as many employees as Amazon will have over the next 5-10 years. Inova Health Systems is the only company with more than 10,000 employees.

But the Pentagon, likely one of Amazon’s closest neighbors in Arlington, has 26,000 employees. Fairfax County Public Schools has 24,137 full-time employees, dispersed around the county. Fairfax County government employs more than 12,000.

The 25,000 Amazon jobs in Arlington will pay better on average than most local government jobs, with an average wage of more than $150,000. Those employees will live with their families all over the Northern Virginia and DC area.

Amazon will receive performance-based direct incentives of $573 million based on the company creating 25,000 jobs from an average wage of over $150,000 in Arlington. This includes a workforce cash grant from the Commonwealth of Virginia of up to $550 million based on $22,000 for each job created over the next 12 years. (Amazon will only receive this incentive if it creates the forecasted high-paying jobs.) The company will also receive a cash grant from Arlington of $23 million over 15 years based on the incremental growth of the existing local Transient Occupancy Tax, a tax on hotel rooms.

Amazon will invest in 4 million square feet of office space, with the opportunity to expand to 8 million.

Fairfax County and the Commonwealth were very cautious in the incentives packages that were offered to Amazon. "The couple billion, said Gerald L. Gordon, Ph.D., president and CEO of the Economic Development Authority in Fairfax County.

“The clear conclusion was that, over time, the returns in terms of tax base would more than offset the offering,” Gordon said. “These discussions were based on assumptions about the increased demand for public education and other public services versus the returns to the tax base.” Amazon’s choice will enhance the reputation of Northern Virginia as a great place to live and work, Gordon said. The Commonwealth of Virginia will benefit in terms of income tax generation because of the much higher-than-average income levels that Amazon will attract. Localities do not collect income tax in Virginia.

But, “local governments will benefit from the increases in the real estate tax base and taxes on the businesses’ equipment,” Gordon said. “Historically, companies have contributed far more to the tax base than they take in from the form of public services and that helps to reduce the tax burden for residents.”

I personally will resist the “rebranding” of Crystal City to “National Landing.” It’s still National Airport, and it’s still Crystal City.

— Mary Kimm

We Need Answers

A year after McLean resident Bijan Ghaisar was shot and killed neither the Park Police nor the FBI has released a report on what happened.

By Scott Surovell

State Senator (D-38)

On Nov. 17, 2017, coming home from work around 10 p.m., I saw police lights at the end of Alexandria Avenue where it intersects with Fort Hunt Road in the Mount Vernon area near my home. I assumed there was an accident.

The next morning, I learned that an accountant from McLean, Bijan Ghaisar, had been shot by two U.S. Park Police officers after he drove away after being rear-ended by an Uber driver on the George Washington Memorial Parkway near Slater’s Lane. Very little about the Park Police’s official story made sense to me the next morning.

About two weeks later, I sent a letter to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) asking a series of questions. I received a cursory response.

About two months after the incident, the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) released a dash cam video of the incident starting near Dyke Overlook on the George Washington Memorial Parkway. The video showed Ghaisar driving down the Parkway slightly over the speed limit trailed by two U.S. Park Police cruisers. Anyone who drives the Parkway knows that without adequate shoulders there are few places to pull over.

Mr. Ghaisar stopped his car on the hill up to Morningside Lane and the officers drove their guns and shouted commands. Ghaisar then drove away at a normal rate of speed. As he drove away, one officer slammed the butt of his pistol on Ghaisar’s trunk in frustration while shouting at him.

Ghaisar exited the Parkway after the stone bridge and turn west onto West Boulevard Drive and then left onto Alexandria Avenue. As Ghaisar approached a Fairfax County Police cruiser partially blocking Alexandria Avenue at Fort Hunt Road, Ghaisar slowed, stopped and then began to slowly move his car around the right side of the FCPD cruiser after the Park Police officers again drew their weapons.

The Park Police officers then suddenly fired nine shots into Ghaisar’s vehicle striking him four times in the head. Thanks to a report issued by FCPD two weeks ago, we now know that the police found no weapon. We also know that the U.S. Park Police officers violated official chase and weapons policies.

While the U.S. Park Police took the positive step of referring the matter to the FBI for an independent investigation, neither the Park Police nor the FBI has released a report. Arlington County has not released the 911 tape. It is very troubling that as the one-year anniversary approaches, we still do not know the names of the officers who shot Ghaisar, their de-escalation measures were used.
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ome of the area’s most talented tastemakers are donating their time and creativity to benefit a local hospital. From feathers and yarn to seashells and tree branches, local interior designers and artists are creating holiday trees, mantel and table displays, wreaths, and artwork for the second annual Light Up the Season fundraising event for Children’s National Medical Center on Dec. 16.

Designers were paired with children who are patients at Children’s. Throughout the creative process, the artistic creations unfolded as the patient-designer relationships grew. “Our design was inspired by the warmth of the holiday season, the onset of winter, and the magical imagination of 7-year-old Johnny our patient,” said Jeff Akseizer of Akseizer Design Group in Alexandria. “In our interview with him, his mind exploded with all the colors, textures, and characters he loves to see at the holiday season, his favorite being the Grinch.”

Akseizer is creating a holiday tree with designer Jamie Brown, also with Akseizer Design Group. “Johnny is a true inspiration,” said Brown. “He plays wheelchair basketball and sled hockey. We took much of the spirit from our interview with him and plugged it into our creative minds to come up with something that would surely wow.”

The holiday decor will be created to reflect the personality and spirit of each child. “My patient artist, Savannah, inspired my wreath design for this year’s event,” said designer Mary Biletnikoff. “She is a sweet, 6-year-old girl who loves to draw, make snow angels and snowmen … she is a strong, kind, smart and creative just like my patient artist.”

“My patient partner loves fun, color and sparkle, so we created a vibrant wreath that reflects her personality,” said Wendy Danziger of Danziger Design in Bethesda. From traditional colors to hues that stretch the imagination, ideas for creating festive designs will abound at year’s event, says Biletnikoff. “I hope that visitors will be inspired to incorporate some fun and lightheartedness in their own home,” she said. “If you are decorating for the holidays, I want people to consider elements that make them smile and maybe even chuckle. Design is about incorporating what you like, not what you think you should have.”

Details

By Marilyn Campbell

Lighting Up the Season

Event teams young patients with designers and artists.

"When decorating for the holidays, let your imagination take over and don’t be afraid to combine elements that may at first seem unlikely companions,” said Sarah Hayes of Sarah Hayes Design, who created a console table display with her 17-year-old patient. “And, as Caolinn and I would both agree, the more twinkle lights, the merrier.”

"Also, make decorations together with and for your children so they can be a part of the fun,” added Biletnikoff.

Offering hints at what awaits those who visit the displays, Ashley Greer of Atelier Ashley Designers in Alexandria said, “I have teamed up with a sweet … patient to create a classic, woodlands-inspired holiday tree. … Along with my crew of talented volunteers, we’ve designed dozens of handmade wreaths that will adorn the tree along with beautiful glass and felt ornaments. … This tree will bring our theme — Over the River and Through the Woods — to life.”

“We’re inspired by our É patient partner who loves horses, unicorns, magic, pink, and purple,” added Rachel and Charles Gang of Helen Olivia Flowers, also in Alexandria. “She lives in the country with her family so being outdoors is a part of her life. We’re incorporating nature, plants, and pastel colors into our enchanted design.”

Metalic animals, feathers and other natural elements are what designer Marika Meyer of Marika Meyer Interiors and Marika Meyer Textiles in Bethesda is using to create a safari-themed tree. “We’ll incorporate some our Marika Meyer Textiles to create the garland and tree skirt using a custom colorway,” she said. “It will be a festive and fun way to celebrate the holidays.”

Other designers participating in Light Up the Season who are in the area include Lauren and David Liess of Lauren Liess in Great Falls, Wendy Danziger of Danziger Design in Potomac, and Sascha Roth of Urban Country in Bethesda.

All of the holiday trees, mantelpieces, wreaths, monarchs and artwork on display will be available for purchase. Proceeds benefit Children’s National. Light Up The Season will be on Sunday, Dec. 16, from 12-4 p.m. at Four Seasons Hotel Washington, D.C. Family activities include holiday cookie decorating, ornament making, musical performances and visits from Santa. Tickets for the event are $50 per child 16 and under, $85 per adult for the family and $250 per family of four (two adults and two children 16 and under). For more information, including how to purchase tickets and how to be a sponsor, go to childrensnational.org/lightuptheseason or email lightuptheseasondc@gmail.com.
When Barbara Pearson crosses Braddock Road from the commuter parking lot to the bus stop by Danbury Forest Road, she and the other commuters make sure the drivers are aware of the pedestrians in the crosswalk.

“Do not cross until you have the eye of the driver, we wait until they wave,” she said.

Pearson was at the second Braddock Road Pedestrian Workshop to show support for the idea of a pedestrian bridge crossing Braddock Road at the Wakefield Chapel–Danbury Forest Drive intersection. It is just a drawing for now, but could be the second pedestrian bridge over Braddock Road if enough people support it. In the initial meeting last June, there were four pedestrian bridge suggestions, but now it has come down to the bridge at the Kings Park Shopping Center which is on the county plan, and possibly another at Wakefield Chapel Road.

“These three options have been whittled down to one,” said Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) who hosted the meeting at Lake Braddock Secondary School on Thursday, Nov. 8. The pedestrians cross Braddock in the morning to access the eastbound buses to the Pentagon. “This is part of an effort to enhance more bus use,” Cook said.

Construction on the pedestrian bridges or bridge, whatever is finally decided, will not start until 2023, but the final design concepts will be in by the spring of 2020. Pearson has been catching one of the #17 buses for four years to the Pentagon where she jumps on the Metro to her job at the Newseum. When looking at the plan, the crosswalks still looked more attractive because the actual bridge ramps were away from the intersection, and the stairs were not located in the best place, she thought.

Fairfax County Transportation Planner Michael Guarino said they’d consider changing that, but there is a stream underground to consider. “It’s as close to the intersection as we could get it,” he said.

Bill Brennan also supported the pedestrian bridge at Wakefield Chapel Road, and sees the traffic congestion every morning, which has an impact on traffic flow on Braddock Road. “We want very much to have this overpass,” he said. The meeting was broadcast on Facebook Live, and got a comment from a Facebook user, that compared the intersection to a computer game of “Frogger,” where the frogs jumped from rock to rock, crossing the stream.

When it came time for audience questions, one issue was brought up a few times: whether people would use the pedestrian bridge or just run across the road, like they are seeing now. “If they build it, I hope it gets used,” said Jim Hickey, a resident of Ravensworth Farm for 30 years. He was also concerned about silt run off and trees.

Cook is encouraging comments by Dec. 10, and then they will move forward with the plans and the process.
Burke Civic Ballet Presents ‘The Nutcracker’

BY STEVE HIBBARD
The Connection

The holidays wouldn’t be the same without The Burke Civic Ballet’s presentation of “The Nutcracker,” on Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 17-18, 2018, at the Ernst Community Cultural Center in Annandale. It’s the timeless story of Clara and the Nutcracker Prince, the Mouse King, the Sugarplum Fairy, Uncle Drosselmeier who turns out to be a magician, and a series of famous dance routines (Arabian, French and Russian) set to iconic music by Tchaikovsky.

This local production features more than 90 dancers (ages 4 to adults from Burke, Springfield, and Fairfax), who will perform the scenes from the Stahlbaum House, the Snow Forest and the magical Kingdom of Sweets. The show also features two professional dancers with the Colorado Ballet: Yosvani Ramos and Sharon Wehner.

THE BURKE CIVIC BALLET COMPANY was founded 25 years ago by Buffy Hargrett, Artistic Director, who runs her very own

When & Where
Showtimes for ‘The Nutcracker’ are Saturday, Nov. 17 at 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.; and Sunday, Nov. 18 at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Tickets are $20/children and $28/adults. The venue is located at the Ernst Theater of Northern Virginia Community College, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. For organized groups (10+) and handicapped seating, email burkecivicballet@gmail.com. Call 703-425-5599 or visit www.buffas.com.

Buffa’s Dance Studio at 9570-H Burke Road in Burke.

“The Nutcracker” is a magical experience. As a lifelong dancer, this time of year is incredibly special. It brings together all of what we’ve learned in class; what we’re portraying — to life for the audience. It ushers in the holiday time period and all that is magical and delightful about the holiday season. So, bringing to life the ballet and knowing what happens with the magic that Drosselmeier presents is an unbelievable experience for adults and children alike,” said Carla Cannonito of Springfield, who plays the Mother role.

She added: “I hope to entertain
Read approve 10:44 AM

By David Siegel

A Show to Blow You Away

Family Series performances bring ‘Mutts Gone Nuts’ to Center for the Arts on Thanksgiving weekend.

Listening to parents in the local area, the Center for the Arts (CFA) introduced a new Family Series of performances meant for all ages; but especially children. The Family Series aims to provide lively and engaging programs for families to explore live performance together.

On the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend, the Family Series will headline “Mutts Gone Nuts,” a blend of physical comedy and circus arts for families and for everyone who loves a dog. “I think audience members can expect to be blown away by what these dogs can do. This will be a high-energy show, where award-winning canines perform a variety of entertaining tricks and routines,” said Adrienne Bryant Godwin, Programming Manager, George Mason University, CFA.

“Many longtime CFA patrons told us how excited they are to be able to share their love of the arts with their family,” said Godwin. “If you’re looking for an entertaining and cost-effective way to spend the afternoon with your family, ‘Mutts Gone Nuts’ is for you. Be forewarned, you’ll fall in love with these pups!”

For “Mutts Gone Nuts,” the husband and wife duo Scott and Joan Houghton will bring a dog-centered show full of Frisbee and barrel tricks, to dance and jump rope routines. The talented canines were rescued from shelters. The Houghtons use positive, reward-based training methods for the dogs. “We look for what our dogs like to do naturally, and cultivate those talents.”

According to the Houghtons there are even two world record holders performing. Feather, a greyhound, set the standard for highest canine jump and cattle dog mix Geronimo holds two world records in double-dutch jump rope.

In addition to the performance the audience will have the opportunity to have a picture taken with one of the “cast member” pups and at the same time support a local organization, Homeward Trails Animal Rescue in Fairfax Station.

“Our Family Series at the Center for the Arts is a great opportunity to serve the family population in Northern Virginia looking for high-quality artistic and educational activities to experience together.” said Godwin. “In addition to parents and children, the Family Series is a great way for grandparents to spend time with their grandchildren.

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Two Free Acupuncture Treatments

If you benefit from acupuncture, please accept our invitation to try this valuable therapy at no cost to you. Experience the benefits of acupuncture with an evaluation and two free treatments.

[Ad for acupuncture services]

Where and When

Center for the Arts presents “Mutts Gone Nuts” at George Mason University, Concert Hall, Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Sunday, Nov. 25 at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. Tickets: $18 for adults/$10 for children. Call 703-993-2787 or visit www.cfa.gmu.edu.

Note: After the performance, a canine cast member will be available for a photo opportunity on stage. Photos are $10 each. Proceeds support Homeward Trails Animal Rescue, Fairfax Station.

“Mutts Gone Nuts” dogs were adopted from animal shelters or from rescue groups.

News
SATURDAY/NOV. 17
Civic War Tours begin at 11 a.m. at Fairfax Station Railroad Museum and sites in Clifton, Centreville, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Tours of the historic colonial church will be led by the Docent Guild at 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m. for $13. Tours will serve luncheon at three sittings and include a visit to the museum. For reservations, call Bea Stephenson, President of The Links, Incorporated, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Anna Maria Fitzhugh Counseling Center, 6715 Commerce St., Fairfax. For reservations, call 703-690-7136 for more.

THURSDAY/NOV. 15
Endar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. For more information call 703-339-6572.

THURSDAY/NOV. 15
Historic Pohick Church Christmas Mart, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Pohick Episcopal Church, 3901 Richmond Highway, Lorton. The Parish House and the Vestry will be transformed into a festive Christmas atmosphere. This Angel-Filled Holiday Event with Artic Treasures, a Consignment Shop, fresh baked goods, homemade candy and apple butter, and fudge, will be made by the women of Pohick Church. Booths will feature the work of artisans showcasing handmade jewelry, stained glass, Christmas decorations and other crafts. Colonial-attired ladies will serve refreshments. Transportation is needed, call the SCFR office 703-323-4788. Visit www.scbva.org.

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SATURDAY/NOV. 17
Jazz4Justice. Noon-4 p.m. at Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Roland Mesnier and Mark Ramsdell, former White House Pastry Chefs, will be guiding visitors through constructing their own gingerbread house. This year’s event is $40 ($35 for museum members). Reservations and advance payment are required. Purchase at squareup.com/store/fairfax-jazz4justice or call 703-690-7136 for more.

SUNDAY/NOV. 18
Flower Design Show. Noon-4 p.m. at Blythewood Road Garden Club, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Fairfax Ferns Garden Club presents a Small Standard Flower Show – “Stroll Through Historic Fairfax City.” It will include flower design, horticulture, nature photography and eveducation exhibit. Plant related items for sale. Free admission. Email bkevickeilles@gmail.com or call 703-591-5305 for more.

SUNDAY/NOV. 19
Fairfax Ballet Company’s “The Nutcracker.” Saturday, 2 and 6 p.m., Sunday, 1 and 5 p.m. at Ernst Community Cultural Center Theater, Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus. Share in the magic of this holiday tradition. Featuring 3-year old miniature dolls to professional dancers, this 25th anniversary production will enchant all ages. Fairfax City: It will include flower design, horticulture, nature photography and education exhibit. Plant related items for sale. Free admission. Email bkevickeilles@gmail.com or call 703-591-5305 for more.

THURSDAY/NOV. 22
Turkey Trot for Parkinson’s. 9 a.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. Join Thanksgiving morning for the Turkey Trot for Parkinson’s 5K Run/1 Mile Gobble Wobble. All race proceeds benefit The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research and 100 percent of every penny donated will go directly to high-impact research programs to help end the #Freeze. Email mybattleagainstPD@gmail.com or visit www.michaeljfox.org.

SUNDAY/NOV. 25
Bears and the Bees at Gunston Hall. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Mason. A full day of holiday activities starts with a visit from Santa to games and crafts for all ages. Participants can provide a romantic holiday experience by candlelight as visitors sample period food in the kitchen and explore the grounds by candlelight. $15 for adults; $10 for children. Visit www.gunstonhall.org or call 703-556-9220.

A Cathedral Brass Christmas. 6 p.m. at Living Savior Lutheran Church, 5500 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. The Cathedral Brass will present “Euphonia Christmas” – a festive program of holiday favorites from all eras. The Cathedral Brass is a 23-player symphonic brass ensemble. All are welcome. Free. Visit www.living-savior.org or cathedralbrass.org for more.

SUNDAY/DEC. 2
Concert for King & Country. 6-11 p.m. at Eagle Bank Arena, 4500 Fairfax Circle, Fairfax. Two-time GRAMMY Award winners for King & Country have the race and their Christmas tour. Joining the duo on tour is special guest Zach Williams. $28+, $40+, $48+, $78+, $95 VIP. Call 703-993-3000 or visit www.TheConcertSpot.com for tickets.
Burke Civic Ballet Presents ‘The Nutcracker’

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the audience but also to promote the arts because they are so very important in our children’s lives as well as adult lives today. And, there’s so many ways to participate — whether it’s costing, whether it’s makeup, whether it’s dance itself. This is an incredible opportunity for us to express our creativity.”

GABY MABALAY, 15, of Springfield, who plays the lead role of Clara, added: “The production is a magical experience because you get to see Clara at the party and she falls asleep and she has a magical, enchanting journey. It’s really awesome to see the different ages — from the little ones who are 4 or 5 — all the way to the professionals, so it’s a good way to get to see ‘The Nutcracker.’”

Michael Cherry, 16, of Springfield, who plays the triple role of Snow King, Spanish Lead and Ball- let Doll, said: “It’s a show about Clara and how she’s in a dream and all the different places she goes through. She’s first at the party and then she’s in the battle, then she goes through the snow and wonderland. She gets to see all the different nationalities and countries.”

Brian Engler, who plays the father of Clara and Fritz, and has been supporting the ballet for 25 years since when his daughters were young, said the show contains many special effects, including the snowy woods scene with smoke, haze and fog, as well as a battle scene.

“So, 25 years ago when Buffa Hargett began the Burke Civic Ballet, the reason she did it was so that her dancers could see a full-stage production, rather than a recital. They actually see rehearsals on stage with curtains, sets, and a full production. I had danced as a younger person when they needed men in the shows and so I was in the first production and have been in the majority of the productions for 25 years. I’m very happy to be here playing different parts, but always the party scene,” he said.

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Public Meetings

Fall Transportation Meetings: Updated Schedule

You are invited to participate in public meetings held by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The meetings will begin with an open house followed by a public comment period. At the open house you can learn about various transportation initiatives, as well as Virginia’s project prioritization process (SMART SCALE), Virginia’s Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, and the VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan. Representatives from the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment and Departments of Transportation and Rail and Public Transportation will be in attendance to highlight their transportation programs and discuss your ideas and concerns about Virginia’s transportation network. The open house will be followed by a public comment period, where you can provide comments about the various initiatives. Comments will be accepted at the meeting and may also be submitted via email or online at www.ctb.virginia.gov.

Updated Schedule: Area Public Meetings will be held at the dates, locations and times listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, November 28, 2018</td>
<td>5:30 p.m.*</td>
<td>NOVA District Office Potomac Conference Room 4975 Alliance Drive Fairfax, VA 22030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, November 29, 2018</td>
<td>4 p.m.*</td>
<td>Fredericksburg District Office Auditorium 86 Deacon Road Fredericksburg, VA 22405</td>
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*Please note that these dates have been changed from previous listings.

If you cannot attend a meeting, you may send your comments on highway projects to Infrastructure Investment Director, VDOT, 1401 E. Broad St., Richmond, Virginia 23219, or Six-YearPrograms@VDOT.Virginia.gov.

You may send comments on rail, public transportation, and transportation demand management to Public Information Officer, DRPT, 600 E. Main St., Suite 2102, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or DRPTPR@drpt.Virginia.gov.

Comments will be accepted until December 13, 2018.

The Commonwealth is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, its services on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on these policies or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation’s Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-2730 or the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation’s Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-4440 (TTY users call 711).
Allstate Contributes to ‘Weekend Food for Kids’

A
ssistance League of Northern Virginia’s Weekend Food for Kids program was the featured volunteer service activity for the “Feed Your Future Volunteer Relay” that took place during the recent Allstate Insurance Company Regional Advisory Board conference in Washington, D.C.

Lynn Barron and Karen Amster, board members with the all-volunteer ALNV, were invited to attend and speak about Assistance League’s impactful program that increases food security in three local school districts in the region. Assistance League provides bags of nonperishable food for at-risk children to take home on the weekends when school meals are not available who otherwise could be hungry.

Following the keynote presentation, the event turned competitive. Executives, regional advisory board members — exclusive agents and exclusive financial specialists from D.C., Delaware, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia — participated in a volunteer relay, packing food for hungry children.

Allstate Senior Communication Consultant Caitlyn Barron coordinated the resources and purchased the nonperishable food items to support The Allstate Foundation Helping Hands in the Community group volunteer event. A team of more than 40 volunteers packed 500+ bags of food for at-risk children whose families struggle to put food on the table on weekends when school meals are not available. This partnership provided an opportunity to satisfy an immediate need for food assistance at two Title I elementary schools not currently supported by the Weekend Food for Kids program.

See www.assistanceleague.org/northern-virginia/

Scout Helps Little League

E
agle Scout Jackson Gearhard is a member of Troop 1346 at Burke Presbyterian Church. Jackson’s Eagle Scout Project was to construct two baseball scoreboards for Fairfax Little League at Providence fields in Fairfax City. He has the Triple Crown of high adventure bases attending Philmont, Northern Tier and Seabase. Jackson is a senior at Robinson Secondary School and has two years of baseball, FBLA, and DECA. Jackson’s parents are Karin and Glenn Gearhard.
Wednesday/Nov. 14
Grants Workshop for Artists. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Tysons-Pimpan Library, 7588 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. ARTSFAX will host a free workshop on how to apply for Artist Grants which support and encourage Fairfax County’s artists in all disciplines. Artist Grants recognize professional working artists’ achievements and their demonstrated history of accomplishments and they promote artists’ continued pursuit of their creative work. RSVP by Monday, Nov. 12 to grants@scfbva.org or call 703-323-4788.

Volunteer Drivers Needed. The Shepherd’s Center of Fairfax-Burke needs volunteer drivers for trips to medical appointments (Monday - Friday) and companion shopping (Tuesday, Friday) within the Fairfax-Burke area and in the South County area (west of Route 1, Alexandria). Office volunteers are also needed to work in the SCFB (Olley Glen) office to schedule rides. Bilingual volunteers (English and Spanish) are needed as drivers and office volunteers. Email Shavonna Wall at recruiter@scfbva.org or call 703-323-4788.

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Includes battery installation. **MAY NOT BE COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER.**

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