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Fairfax CONNECTION

HomeLifeStyle
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Participants gather for a group photo after Sunday's Veterans Day ceremony at American Legion Post 177.



'Freedom Doesn't Come Without Sacrifice, Courage'

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'Real Work of Advocacy Begins Again'

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A Show to Blow You Away

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION
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Eagle Scout Nathan Hanson, Troop 1346, Burke

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARK BLANCHARD

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.

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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

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.



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.



The Fairfax County Sheriff's Office Color Guard.



From left, Lecia Dorfler, Rosemary Smith, Regent Cathy Sampson and Donna Hoenscheid, members of the Providence Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR), participate in the wreath-laying ceremony, honoring those who died in WW1.



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Dignitaries attending included (from left) City Council members So Lim, Sang Yi and Janice Miller; Mayor David Meyer; County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid, Rep. Gerry Connolly and Army Col. (ret.) Chris Conrad.

Boy Scouts from Troop 1131 participate in the Veterans Day ceremony. In back, on left, are City Mayor David Meyer and Sheriff Stacey Kincaid.

'Freedom Doesn't Come without Sacrifice, Courage'

America's veterans honored on Armistice Day.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

State and local dignitaries, residents and veterans alike gathered Sunday morning, Nov. 11, outside American Legion Post 177 for the annual Veterans Day ceremony in the City of Fairfax. Post 177 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8469 sponsored the event, which significantly ended at 11 a.m. – the exact time, a century ago, on Nov. 11, 1918, that WWI was declared officially over.

In his opening prayer, Mike Semene, VFW Post 8469 adjutant, said, "Almighty God, today we remember those who responded and went forward to serve, the families who shared their loved ones and waited, the gallant ones who gave their lives, the families who grieve still. And today, those who serve in dangerous places and their families who await the days of reunion. May we have blessings on our nation and our people."

Semene said Veterans Day is a time to say thank you and pay tribute to the millions who served and continue serving in the military. He also explained what the VFW and American Legion do to help America's veterans.

Originally chartered as an organization focusing on service to veterans, service members and communities, the American Legion evolved into one of the most influential nonprofits in the U.S. It now has more than 2 million members in more than 13,000 posts worldwide and has influenced considerable social change. Semene said it's won "hundreds of benefits for veterans and produced many important programs for children and youth."

Also a nonprofit serving veterans, the VFW was initially founded by veterans of the Spanish-American War and Philippine Insurrection wanting to obtain pensions and medical care for their illnesses and injuries sustained in those wars. Now with some 1.7 million members, the VFW was instrumental in establishing the Veterans Administration and national cemetery system.

It also fought for compensation for Vietnam vets exposed to agent orange and for those later diagnosed with Gulf War Syndrome. And in 2008, it helped pass a modern-day G.I. Bill, providing expanded educational benefits to active-duty service members and those in the National Guard and reserves. Furthermore, the VFW helped fund the creation of the many memorials honoring U.S. veterans.

U.S. REP. GERRY CONNOLLY (D-11) was the first speaker during Sunday's observance. "One hundred years ago, the 'War to end all wars' ended," he said. "WWI was one of the longest, ugliest chapters in U.S. history, with millions of people dead. Today, we can honor those dead by taking care of all of our veterans and their families."

Speaking directly to the children in attendance, Fairfax Mayor David Meyer said, "It is our hope and prayer that you're the generation that doesn't have to grow up with the horrors of wars. But oftentimes, our nation is called on to protect the values



Gerry Connolly



David Meyer



Stacey Kincaid



Jeff White



Mike Semene



Guest speaker, Army Col. (ret.) Chris Conrad

The main guest speaker was Col. (ret.) Chris Conrad, a Fairfax resident who served 28 years in the Army, primarily with troop units in Korea, Vietnam, Germany and the U.S. He mainly commanded armored, cavalry units and, later, worked in the Army Chief of Staff's office. He later earned a Master's in environmental engineering and worked on improving the environment.

"Today we pay tribute to all those who've worn, with honor and pride, the military uniforms of our nation," he said. Conrad then related what happened last December while he and his grandsons were laying wreaths on soldiers' graves in Arlington National Cemetery.

"One of my grandsons asked me why so many of the stones had the same, last dates of Nov. 9 and 10, 1918," he said. "I told them it was because so many of the soldiers died in the same battle – the Argonne Offensive, or 100-Day Offensive – that ended the war."

DURING WWI, said Conrad, there were 192,000 American casualties – almost 2,000 a day. "That's why Armistice Day [Nov. 11] was welcomed with relief as a day of thanksgiving," he explained. "But freedom doesn't come without effort, sacrifice, courage and commitment."

He said American veterans are sworn to protect the Constitution's values of justice, freedom, responsibility, courage and integrity. "And they're why every generation throughout history has been the best our

we hold dear."

"We think positively about our country's future because of our citizens' commitment to freedom, democracy and our civil liberties," he continued. Then, to the veterans present, Meyer said, "Thank you for your sacrifice, your service and for ensuring that the values of our country are sustained."

Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid called it "a privilege and an honor to remember those veterans who've made the ultimate sacrifice and those who continue to serve. On behalf of all the members of the Sheriff's Office, we thank you."

Next, American Legion Post 177 Cmdr. Jeff White told the youth in the audience to "become good citizens and vote, every chance you get. Those rights have been obtained and protected for you by veterans. And don't forget to keep thanking veterans for what they've done."

SEE VETERANS, PAGE 14

NEWS

Rob Stalzer Named New City Manager

Rob Stalzer, Fairfax County's deputy county executive for the past 18 years, has been named the new city manager for the City of Fairfax. He'll replace David Hodgkins, who's been the acting city manager since longtime city manager, Bob Sisson, retired June 30. Stalzer will take over on Jan. 7.

For the county, he served as the deputy for public safety, planning and development (2000-2012) and the deputy for planning and development (2012-present).

Pleased to now be joining a smaller municipality, Stalzer said, "Fairfax City has an incredible reputation in the region for its small-city feel, with award-winning parks, services and a vibrant business sector – and it's home to the largest university in the commonwealth, George Mason. I can't wait to help make this an even better place to live, work and do business."

BULLETIN BOARD

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

HOLIDAY DONATIONS

Food Collection. Through Friday, Nov. 16, PenFed is collecting boxed and canned foods at all of its DC area branch locations. PenFed, NBC4, Telemundo44 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 may 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 novareliefcenr.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.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

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OPINION

Half Might Be Perfect

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.

"These two 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, chairman 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 with 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, 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. "Those discussions were based on assumptions about the increased demand for public education and other public services versus the returns to the tax base."

The Commonwealth of Virginia will benefit in terms of income tax generation because of the much higher-than-average income levels that Amazon will pay. 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 business' equipment," Gordon said. "Historically, companies have contributed far more to the tax base than they take in 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

BY SCOTT SUROVELL
STATE SENATOR (D-36)

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

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.



Last week, one hundred Mount Vernon residents joined Bijan Ghaisar's family in a candlelight vigil at the shooting site. The Ghaisar Family is holding another vigil on the one-year anniversary of their son's death on Saturday, Nov. 17, at 6 p.m. at the Lincoln Memorial. More at www.facebook.com/wearebijan/

are few places to pull over.

Mr. Ghaisar stopped his car on the hill up to Morningside Lane and the officers drew 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 explanation for the shooting or whether any de-escalation measures were used.

SEE SUROVELL, PAGE 15

Fairfax
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PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

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.

'Real Work of Advocacy Begins Again'

Annual SALT conference celebrates 2018 achievements, outlines 2019 priorities.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

"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."

CALHOUN, 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 gangs will do so."

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 opportunities 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 dol-

SEE SALT, PAGE 8

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We hope our patients will have the opportunity to meet and be treated by Dr. Levinson sometime soon. They can be certain their eyes are in excellent hands.

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SALT Outlines 2019 Priorities

FROM PAGE 7

lars 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 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 400,000 Virginians starting Jan. 1, 2019. Enrollment 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 Kinship Guardian 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@coxnet.com.

The SALT conference’s keynote speaker, John “Jack” Calhoun, served his remarks with humor. “That’s one key element to the principles of ‘Keepin’ On’ when engaged in this very serious and important work.” Calhoun spoke encouragingly of “Finding Hope and Joy in Broken Places” with stories of success when faith-based groups work together and work with the community at large.



PHOTO BY ANDREA WÖRKER/
THE CONNECTION




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:

<p>Wednesday, November 28, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.* NOVA District Office Potomac Conference Room 4975 Alliance Drive Fairfax, VA 22030</p>	<p>Thursday, November 29, 2018 at 4 p.m.* Fredericksburg District Office Auditorium 86 Deacon Road Fredericksburg, VA 22405</p>
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Fall meeting materials will be available at: <http://www.ctb.virginia.gov/planning/fallmeetings/> beginning October 15, 2018.

*Please note that these dates have been changed from previous listings.

<p>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-YearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov.</p>	<p>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.</p>
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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).

Lighting Up the Season

Event teams young patients with designers and artists.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Some 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, menorahs 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 celebrates Christmas and loves Christmas lights," she said. "My wreath is named 'Savannah the Snow Girl' and is a modern day take on the traditional snowman. I chose this theme because girls need to grow up knowing that they are 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."

"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 Caoilinn 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 Flowers 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."

Metallic 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 my 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, menorahs 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.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY BILETNIKOFF

A mixture of dark red and white flowers along with holiday greenery and black and white ribbon are elements that designer Mary Biletnikoff will use to create a wreath for Light Up the Season.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARIKA MEYERS

Marika Meyer Textiles will be used to create the garland and tree skirt for a holiday tree that Meyer is designing for Light Up the Season.

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Julie and Army Col. (ret.) Mike McNamara attended OLLI's ceremony.



Sympatico, a barbershop quartet with the Fairfax Jubilaires, performs patriotic songs.

OLLI Honors Veterans with Annual Celebration

'War is dirty business, but we better be prepared.'

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) in Fairfax has a special place in its heart for America's veterans. And last Friday, Nov. 9, it honored them for the fourth year in a row with a special ceremony acknowledging their service to their country.

Following the presentation of the colors by the Fairfax County Police Color Guard and the singing of the national anthem, Army Col. (ret.) Mike McNamara read an original poem he wrote for the occasion. Then songs representing each branch of the service were played, with veterans standing for their particular anthem.

"We are here today to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the armistice ending WWI," said OLLI's Jim Dunphy. "On Sunday, Nov. 11, at 11 a.m., Americans across the nation will toll bells in remembrance of those who served and sacrificed."

Among those at Friday's event were WWII veterans Chester Myslicki and Adrian Pelzner. Myslicki, 98, was a sergeant in the Air Force Signal Corps; and Pelzner, 92, was a motor machinist in the Navy. And they and the others enjoyed patriotic songs performed by Sympatico, a barbershop quartet that's part of the Fairfax Jubilaires.

Attendees also watched the documentary film, "The Hello Girls," which premiered in March at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial. Narrated mainly by their granddaughters, it told the story of the 223 uniformed women in the U.S. Army Signal Corps who went to France in WWI to serve as switchboard operators.

THEIR EFFORTS allowed Army personnel to make calls and connect to their party in just 10 seconds. By the end of the war, they'd connected more than 26 million calls. But when they came home, they were told, "You were never soldiers," and it took 60 years for them to get their proper recognition.

Ultimately, the law turned out to be that, because the Army gave them uniforms and told the women to wear them, they were considered soldiers. In November 1977, they were finally recognized as being in the



Women in the U.S. Army Signal Corps served in France as switchboard operators during WWI.

Army, and President Jimmy Carter signed legislation to that effect. Sadly, though, two of them died overseas, serving their country, and most of the others never received their full, military honors until after their deaths.

Prior to OLLI's Veterans Day program, McNamara spoke with The Connection about his life in the military. By his side was his wife of 62 years, Julie. He served 30 years in the Army, beginning in 1959. "I was in the ROTC at Rutgers; and since we were getting married, I wanted to enter as an officer, rather than an enlisted man," he said.

McNamara was an infantry officer, a ranger and a parachutist; he commanded a battalion in Texas, served 15 months in Korea and spent two tours in Vietnam. He was also a member of the Old Guard at Fort Meyer and Fort McNair. When Pres. John F. Kennedy died, Nov. 22, 1963, he was one of six officers in charge of funerals.

"I was in charge of all the ceremonies taking place for him at St. Matthew's Cathedral," said McNamara. "We'd rehearsed state funerals for other past presidents and

five-star generals, but not for Kennedy, because he was so young. So we had to create one for him, from scratch."

McNamara was a captain then and had to brief all the joint chiefs of staffs on the plans. "I didn't sleep for three days," he said. "Everybody in the Old Guard loved Kennedy and held him in high regard – not just as a president, but as a man. The night before the ceremonies, I had to re-brief Cardinal Cushing. Originally, the family was going to limit the funeral to immediate family and friends, but people wanted to attend from all over the world, so it grew larger."

One of the most iconic photos from Kennedy's funeral shows his 3-year-old son, John John, saluting as his father's casket left the cathedral, en route to Arlington National Cemetery. "I was 10 feet away from him," said McNamara. "We were all saluting, so he did, too."

Another career highlight was when McNamara was a senior advisor to a Vietnamese ranger battalion. He later taught ROTC at the University of Hawaii while working on his Master's in English Literature.

McNamara then returned to the Vietnam-

ese Delta in 1968-69. "I was executive officer of an American Riverine Battalion, which was part of the 9th Infantry Division," he said. "We were transported by Navy ships to do strike operations in the Mekong Delta, just south of Saigon."

So, he continued, "I got to experience the war from both sides. But the hardest part was being away from my family – including a son and daughter in grade school – at a time when the war wasn't too well-thought-of."

Afterward, McNamara attended Command and Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and finished his Master's at the University of Kansas. He then flew Boeing 707s with the U.S. Air Force in England and was the officer in charge of sending emergency-action messages.

Next, he commanded a battalion at Fort Hood in Texas, under Gen. George Patton's son, who made McNamara the division's inspector general. He then attended the Royal College of Defense Studies in London before going to NATO as a staff officer doing logistics and briefing people.

McNamara was then slated to be an Army attaché in London. "But our son had leukemia, so we came back to the U.S. to be with him until he was better, about a year later," he said. "Then around 1987, I went to work in the Pentagon in the Secretary of Defense's office, preparing briefing papers for any U.S. negotiations with the British and, later, with Turkey."

RETIRING IN 1989, he began working for his former boss to try to get continued military aid and equipment for the Turks. After that, he kept tabs on Bosnian equipment and training by the Americans and other governments.

"Then I did the same thing, trying to get money from Congress in support of equipping and training the Afghans," said McNamara. "But when they asked me to go to Iraq and do it there, too, my wife said she'd shoot me. So I retired and taught Shakespeare, military issues and international poetry at OLLI."

And each year, he writes and reads an original poem for OLLI's Veterans Day ceremony, which he called "a means of recognizing good service." But quoting Plato, he added, "Only the dead have seen the last of war.' War is dirty business, but we always better be prepared."

NEWS



PHOTO COURTESY GMU/CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Mutts Gone Nuts – “Selfie”.

A Show to Blow You Away

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

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

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!” said Godwin.

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

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.

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.

“The 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.

“Our Family Series has been received with warm enthusiasm, and we at the Center for the Arts look forward to programming it for future years,” added Godwin.

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.

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

THURSDAY/NOV. 15

Historic Pohick Church Christmas Mart. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Pohick Episcopal Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. The Parish House and the Vestry House will be transformed into a festive Christmas atmosphere with rooms filled with Attic Treasures, a Consignment Shop, fresh baked goods, homemade candy and apple butter, and frozen casseroles made by the women of Pohick Church. Booths will feature the work of artisans showcasing handmade jewelry, stained glass, Christmas decorations and many other crafts. Colonial-attired ladies will serve luncheon at three sittings (11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m.) for \$13. The Docent Guild will be leading tours of the historic colonial church and the Golden Dove Gift Shop will be open. Admission to the Christmas Mart is free. Visit www.pohick.org or call 703-339-6572.

Lunch N' Life. 12-2 p.m. at Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. Steve Friedman, the guest author and lecturer, will present a program about Broadway musical theater. Sponsored by the Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke. For reservations, call Bea Stephenson at 703-273-5730 by Nov. 9. Cost \$10.00; checks payable to SCFB. If transportation is needed, call the SCFB office 703-323-4788. Visit www.scfbva.org.

SATURDAY/NOV. 17

Civil War Tour. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. at Fairfax Station Railroad Museum and sites in Clifton, Centreville, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Blake Myers, noted Civil War Historian, will lead a history tour of interesting Civil War sites in and around Fairfax, Clifton and Centreville. Meet at the Museum. Wear comfortable walking shoes and appropriate clothing for walking through wooded areas. Museum members, \$20; non-members, \$30. Register in advance and pay by Square at squareup.com/store/fairfax-station-railroad-museum.com. Payment may also be made the day of the Tour with cash, check or credit. Register at information@fairfax-station.org. Call 703-425-9225 or visit www.fairfax-station.org.

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 for more.

"Ever the Gray Ghost." 2 p.m. at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Free. "Ever the Gray Ghost: Colonel John Singleton Mosby and the Lincoln Conspiracies." How much did Mosby know, and was he complicit in an attempt to murder the President of the United States? In his new book, author Dave Goetz – the first author to examine Mosby's possible in the conspiracy – offers new insights and focuses on numerous attempts to capture or kill Lincoln. Call 703-591-0560.

2018 Evening of Elegance with Jazz and Advocacy Gala. 6-11 p.m. at the Waterford Reception Center, 6715 Commerce St., Springfield. The National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Incorporated, Northern Virginia Chapter (NCBW NOVA) welcomes Dr. Kimberly Jeffries Leonard, 17th National President of The Links, Incorporated,



Burke Civic Ballet's "The Nutcracker"

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. Saturday, Nov. 17, 2 and 6 p.m.; Sunday, Nov. 18, 1 and 5 p.m. at Ernst Community Cultural Center Theater, Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus. Visit www.buffas.com email burkecivicballet@gmail.com for tickets.

as the Keynote Speaker at their inaugural Evening of Elegance with Jazz and Advocacy Gala. \$75. Purchase directly from coalition members or through Eventbrite at www.eventbrite.com/e/national-coalition-of-100-black-women-nova-presents-an-evening-of-elegance-tickets-49268297805.

Jazz4Justice. 8 p.m. at GMU's Center for the Arts, Fairfax. George Mason University's School of Music presents the 17th annual Jazz4Justice live concert and fundraiser. The events raise funds to support vital legal services and the George Mason University Jazz Studies program. Tickets available at 703-993 2787, or at cfa.gmu.edu.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 17-18

Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday. At The HUB Ballroom, GMU, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Admission \$6/adults; kids free. Presented by the Northern Virginia Club, Inc. and sponsored by the Dept. of Atmospheric, Oceanic and earth Sciences at GMU. Featuring over 20 dealers. Also demos, door prizes, exhibits and kids' activities including mini-mines for kids to dig in and get free minerals and fossils. Contact Tom Taaffe at rockclctr@gmail.com or visit www.novamineralclub.org.

Burke Civic Ballet'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. Visit www.buffas.com to order tickets or email burkecivicballet@gmail.com.

SUNDAY/NOV. 18

Flower Design Show. Noon-4 p.m. at Blenheim Civil War Interpretative Center, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Fairfax Ferns Garden Club presents a Small Standard Flower Show – "Strolling Through Historic

Fairfax City." It will include flower design, horticulture, nature photography and educational exhibit. Plant related items for sale. Free admission. Email hilcarn31@aol.com or call 703-591-5305 for more.

CROP Walk. The walk begins and ends at Fairfax Presbyterian Church, 10723 Main St., Fairfax. Participants may choose either the 5K or shorter Golden Mile option. This is a family-friendly walk, not a race, and fun for all ages including babies in strollers and pets. Registration begins at 1:15 and the walk starts at 2 p.m. A fun "End of Walk Celebration" will be held at 3:30 p.m. at Fairfax Presbyterian Church (live music, refreshments, fun awards, and prizes). Registration/Sponsor envelopes can be obtained from participating groups, or by contacting Janet Smith at 703-455-9025 or BurkeVA.CROP@cox.net. Walkers can also register online at www.crophungerwalk.org/burkeva.

Community Thanksgiving Dinner. 5-8 p.m. at Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria. Join Franconia United Methodist Church for a free community Thanksgiving Dinner. Turkey and all the trimmings will be provided and the entire family is welcome. Free. Call 703-971-5151 or visit www.franconiaumc.org 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 speed a cure. Visit fundraise.michaeljfox.org/turkey-trot-for-parkinsons for more.

Turkey Scramble. 10 a.m. at Burke Lake Golf Course, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. This competition is for players age 7- adult. Teams of two compete in an 18-hole, scramble format with a shotgun start at 10



PHOTO BY LYNN MACRUM

Flower Design Show

Fairfax Ferns Garden Club presents a Small Standard Flower Show – "Strolling Through Historic Fairfax City." It will include flower design, horticulture, nature photography and educational exhibit. Plant related items for sale. Free admission. Sunday, Nov. 18, noon-4 p.m. at Blenheim Civil War Interpretative Center, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Email hilcarn31@aol.com or call 703-591-5305 for more.

a.m. There will be closest-to-the-pin contests and prizes for first-, second- and third-place teams in two age divisions: Adult/Junior 7-12; and Adult/Junior 13-17. Registration is limited to the first 48 teams. \$70 per team includes lunch. There is no rain date. Call 703-323-1641 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/golf/burke-lake.

SATURDAY/NOV. 24

Build a Gingerbread House. Noon-1:30 and 2-3:30 p.m. at the 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 houses in this special event. \$40 (\$35 for museum members). Reservations and advance payment are required. Purchase at squareup.com/store/fairfax-station-railroad-museum or by emailing events@fairfax-station.org with name, number of houses to purchase and seating time. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 24-25

Fairfax Ballet Company's Nutcracker. Saturday, 2 and 7 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. at W.T. Woodson High School, Fairfax. The Fairfax Ballet Company presents the full-length production of "The Nutcracker," the family-friendly holiday tradition. Company members, along with students from the Russell School of Ballet and George Mason University, and professional guest artists, join Clara and her Nutcracker Prince in a magical journey through a winter wonderland. \$15-\$30. Tickets are available at fairfaxnutcracker2018.brownpapertickets.com or at the door beginning one hour before each show. Email events@fairfaxballet.com or call 703-665-9427 for more.

Fairfax City-opoly. Shop local with the Fairfax City-opoly game for a chance to win a \$600 cash prize and \$100 gift card to Twin's Ace

Hardware. Participation is free. Call 703-385-7944 or visit fairfaxcityconnected.com/fairfaxcityopoly for more.

SUNDAY/NOV. 25

Burke Historical Society Meeting. 3:30-5 at Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Dr. Mike Johnson will discuss the geological and human history of gold in the area. Learn about the geology of gold veins in the area, as well as the archaeological evidence for human interaction with this metal over the past 13,000 years. Free. Email slawski_brian@yahoo.com or visit www.burkehistoricalsociety.org.

THURSDAY/NOV. 29

Genealogy Workshop. 6:30-9 p.m. at Pohick Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Anna Maria Fitzhugh Chapter, NSDAR, will have a Genealogy Workshop. Prospective DAR members will receive assistance with the application process. Contact 703-690-7136 for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 1

Holiday Extravaganza. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at South County High School, 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. Santa arrives at 8:30 a.m. courtesy of the Lorton Volunteer Fire Department kicking off the Candy Cane Kids Fun Run for kids age 12 and under. At 9 a.m., 170 vendors featuring all sorts of handcrafted items will offer everything from handmade glass ornaments and jewelry to soaps, lotions, clothing, and holiday décor. Cookies with Santa, free, 9:30-12; Fairfax Co Sheriff, Child ID and fingerprinting, free, 9-3; Santa's Book Emporium, 9-3. Proceeds benefit the SCSHS All Night Grad Party, PTO, Band Boosters and Athletic Boosters. Free, \$3. Visit www.southcountypntso.org.

Advent Festival. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at St. Stephen's United Methodist Church, 9203 Braddock Road, Burke. Open to all and designed with busy families in mind. Includes a Fair Trade Christmas Market, Christmas Concert (11 a.m.), Food Trucks, DIY Advent craft stations, free coffee and cookies and more. Free admission. Visit ststephensfairfax.org.

Christmastide at Gunston Hall. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. at George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Mason Neck. A full day of holiday activities starts with a visit from Santa to games and crafts for all ages. The evening hours 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 703-550-9220.

A Cathedral Brass Christmas. 6 p.m. at Living Savior Lutheran Church, 5500 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. The Cathedral Brass will present "Christmas Cheer!" – 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.livingsaviorlutheran.org or cathedralbrass.org for more.

SUNDAY/DEC. 2

Concert: for King & Country. 6-10 p.m. at Eagle Bank Arena, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Two-time GRAMMY Award winners for King & Country hit the road with their Christmas tour. Joining the duo on tour is special guest Zach Williams. \$28., \$40., \$42.5 Reserved, \$78.50 VIP. Call 703-993-3000 or visit www.TheConcertSpot.com for tickets.

Woolf Receives National Honor for Anti-Trafficking Efforts

Volunteers needed to expand prevention effort.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

Bill Woolf, executive director of Just Ask Prevention Project, received the 2018 Presidential Medal for Extraordinary Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo placed the silver medal around Woolf's neck in a ceremony Oct. 11 at the White House.

The ceremony took place at a meeting of the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons that was attended by President Trump as well as Cabinet officials. The medal displayed a gold star with an array of 13 lesser points around a blue motto scroll with the words Prohibitio Praesidium Prosecutio in silver metal.

Woolf explains the five-pointed star represents the recipient's dedication to the country and the 13 rays illustrate the everyday fight against human trafficking. The words translate to Prevention, Protection, Prosecution. The award was presented "in recognition for Mr. Woolf's tireless efforts to advance equality and respect for all per-

sons and their inherent rights through combatting human trafficking."

Woolf's work in this area first began in 2009 when he was a gang detective in Northern Virginia and discovered a young victim of sex trafficking inside the gang. In 2010 he had an aha moment and realized human trafficking was going on right here in Northern Virginia. That discovery led to his involvement in hunting down those who prey on the young and recovering victims.

He was assigned to work on the Fairfax County Police Department's Gang Investigation Unit and became aware of an emerging and worsening problem in the region. Sex traffickers pick up teenagers as young as 12 years old at malls, by infiltrating local high schools or online. The process of recruiting and manipulation is gradual and often the victims

don't know what is happening until they are trapped.

Woolf went on to work with state representatives to strengthen Virginia laws and increase penalties for traffickers. In addition, he worked with Fairfax County educators to create educational materials for the school curriculum to increase awareness



The Presidential Medal represents the everyday fight against human trafficking.

Bill Woolf receives Presidential Medal for Human Trafficking efforts from Secretary of State Mike Pompeo

by students of what was happening around them.

After 15 years in law enforcement, Woolf has become full time executive director of Just Ask Prevention Project to develop a systematic approach and analytic tools for bringing awareness training to communities. He is a speaker locally and internationally and reaches out to community forums, law enforcement training programs, and as an adjunct professor at George Washington University in Criminology.

Just Ask, a non-profit organization, focuses on ending human trafficking in the U.S. and around the world through education, prevention and intervention. Its motto is "With Your Help There's Hope," stating "We believe that well informed citizens will decrease sex traffickers ability to operate in our area, while ensuring that victims and survivors feel safe to come forward and ask for help."

Volunteers are needed. To get involved contact info@justaskprevention.org or 1-833.ASK2END.

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NEWS

Veterans Honored on Armistice Day

FROM PAGE 4

nation has to offer," said Conrad. "Our flag waves over our troops everywhere they serve, and in the hearts of every American veteran, long after their time in uniform is gone.

"American warriors never break, never bend and never ever yield," he continued. "Armistice Day is a day based on love of country, and we must take care of our veterans and honor their service. May God bless you and bless these United States."

Then, in his closing prayer, Semenc prayed that all veterans feel appropriately honored, none feel forgotten or neglected, and that every one of them feel the "deep and enduring gratitude of our nation and its inhabitants."



The American Legion Post 177 Color Guard begins Fairfax City's Veterans Day celebration.

PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/
THE CONNECTION

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REAL ESTATE TAX PAYMENTS ARE DUE

Real Estate tax bills have been mailed and are due
Wednesday, December 5, 2018

LATE PAYMENT PENALTY

To avoid incurring a 10%, \$10 minimum, late payment penalty and interest of 10% per annum, payment in full must be **received or postmarked by close of business on Wednesday, December 5, 2018**

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8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Monday thru Friday (excluding holidays)

IMPORTANT

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For Additional Information,
please check the city website at www.fairfaxva.gov
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Be a part of our **Wellbeing** pages, the first week of every month.

Delight in our **HomeLifeStyle** sections, the second week of every month. Peek at the top real estate sales, glimpse over-the-top remodeling projects, get practical suggestions for your home.

Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our **A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun** pages, the third week of every month.

Questions? E-mail sales@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9431

THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 5

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 out 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.

Surovell

FROM PAGE 6

Mr. Ghaisar leaves behind two grieving parents and a sister who still have no explanation for why their family member was killed, despite their numerous requests.

A community's faith in law enforcement requires transparency in officer-involved shootings. Recent cell phone, dash camera and body camera videos have shown the public how officers are often presented with difficult situations and are required to make split-second judgment calls that can be the difference between life and death and videos provide context. However, the video that we have seen shows that the Ghaisar situation presented zero threat to the police or public safety.

Very disturbing is the complete lack of transparency by the federal government about what happened. Congressman Don Beyer has demanded answers.

If an officer had been shot, the public would have been briefed that night and charges would have been announced the next day. The Turkish Government has provided better transparency on the Khashoggi killing than our own government has right here in our community.

Last week, one hundred Mount Vernon residents and Bijan Ghaisar's family joined me in a candlelight vigil at the shooting site. The Ghaisar Family is holding another vigil on the one-year anniversary of their son's death on Saturday, Nov. 17, at 6 p.m. at the Lincoln Memorial. More at www.facebook.com/wearebijan/

Our community deserves answers and I intend to get them.

Please email me at scott@scottsurovell.org with your suggestions and feedback.

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Airing of a Grievance



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Now that I'm back to every-three-week-chemotherapy infusions, getting through the "holiday" season becomes very tricky. One week delay due to unacceptable lab results can have a cascade effect on one's ability to spread any cheer.

And given that I'm scheduled to be infused rather aggressively, a direct result of tumor growth indicated on my most recent CT scan, delaying an infusion to accommodate my non-chemotherapy schedule seems like a non starter. After all, we're trying to keep me alive here.

Therefore, it seems counter-intuitive almost to push my treatment ahead one or two weeks just so I can enjoy a Thanksgiving turkey.

In the scheme of things, enjoying a meal pales in comparison to enjoying a life. And shrinking and/or stabilizing tumors trumps mashed potatoes and gravy. Missing a festive occasion/not being able to taste/eat anything is much less important than beating back my sworn enemy: cancer.

However, considering the unpredictability of my actually-receiving-chemotherapy on the two scheduled infusion dates before Christmas: 11/16/18 and 12/7/18, and the effect of rescheduling one or the other by one or two weeks, depending on lab results, gives pre-holiday chemotherapy infusions a bad name and an even worse connotation.

The patient (in this context, me), is either damned if you do (side effects) and/or damned if you don't (tumor growth, potentially). I need way more than a Festivus miracle.

To invoke Tiny Tim, I need to tiptoe through the tulips, so to speak; to have my chemotherapy infusions allow me to eat/satiate my meals, travel when necessary without having to double-back for chemotherapy (yes, my infusion center is open on Friday, Nov. 23, as well as the day before Christmas and the day after, with their schedule repeating itself for New Year's) and navigate an already challenging five-week turn of events. To be capped off by a Jan. 2 CT scan followed up by a Jan. 11 face-to-face appointment with my oncologist to discuss the results of the January scan.

I can hardly wait. Although I have to, and of course, think about the what-if constantly.

Nearly two months of scheduling twists and turns impacting one's quality of life during the most stressful time of the year: Thanksgiving through New Year's followed by learning one's fate: stay the course or as Yogi Berra said: "Come to the fork in the road and take it." And if I do take it (Immunotherapy), it won't simply be the road less traveled, it will be the road never traveled - by me. Although many other cancer patients have blazed the trail, the prospect of yours truly blazing the next trail (line) scares me, hopefully not to death.

It might not be so bad - and extremely personal, if my best friend's wife hadn't succumbed to her lung cancer within a year or so after being prescribed one of the drugs that my oncologist and I have discussed if my next scan continues to show tumor growth.

I get so emotional at the mere mention of the drug that I can't even pronounce it through my tears. So my oncologist knows my preference and he's content to respect my wishes especially considering that according to his experiences, the drugs are fairly similar in their effect/success.

And since mind definitely matters, keeping me in a positive frame of mind is the goal. But I'm getting way ahead of myself here; it's only November. This discussion won't occur for almost nine weeks, Jan. 11, 2019.

The only problem is, the next nine weeks present challenges unlike any similar period during the year. Throw in a few lab tests, a couple of chemotherapy infusions, a diagnostic scan and a few weeks to wait for all of it to shake out and what you're left with is your life hanging in the balance and death rearing its ugly head.

"Cancer sucks" - especially during the holidays.

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

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