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Springfield CONNECTION

Franconia ♦ Kingstowne ♦ Newington

HomeLifeStyle
PAGE 9

Leslie Reyes with daughter Sophia, 4, of Springfield pose with "Anna," aka Lizzie Allen, and the "Frozen Queen," aka Jenepher Esser, (from "Frozen"), who represented The Princess Performers during the Santa Fest at Springfield Town Center last Saturday.

Santa Fest At Springfield Town Center

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DINING

Mezeh Mediterranean Grill Expands

Healthier choices.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

West Springfield resident Rebecca Bazzel was on her way to Whole Foods when she saw that Mezeh Mediterranean Grill was open a day early, so she stopped in Thursday for a bowl of Chicken Shawarma and all the toppings. The following night, Friday, Nov. 9, there she was again, but this time the line wound out the door the night of the grand opening special, a free “bowl,” which usually is \$9.25.

“It’s authentic, people are open to it for sure,” Bazzel said.

The Mezeh, next to Whole Foods in Old Keene Mill Center, offers three main dishes and a variety of meats, toppings, sauces and sides that screams ethnic and doesn’t leave anyone hungry. “People are looking for a healthy alternative,”



Behind the fixins line, there are pickled vegetables they use in their dishes.

said co-owner Steve Walker, who was spending as much time behind the counter as he was visiting tables and chatting to the customers. The Mezeh in West Springfield is the second to open in the area, after the opening of the Springfield Town Center location.

“I think the flavor combinations is what makes it unique,” said Walker, who opened the chain with co-owners Saleh Mohamadi and Tai Chiao. “Being right next to Whole Foods is good,” he said.

The 28 toppings are a combination of vegetables, cheeses, seeds,



Steve Walker with a “bowl” full of chicken, vegetables, noodles, humus and sauces.

hummus and dips that give the dish a variety of flavors. Muhammad Jameel got the recommendation from his daughter in Rockville, so he had to try it. “Much healthier,” he said.

The interior has a splash of the Middle East too, with a low-key

color scheme, a community table and a shelf full of pickled peppers and cucumbers behind the serving line that are used in the toppings.

“It makes this place feel welcoming, the sharing of food,” said Karen Wee, a Mezeh spokesperson who traveled over to Turkey and ate in similar restaurants. This area, which is known to be a mixing bowl of ethnicity, will work good, they figured. “A good mix of different cultures here,” she said.

The word Mezeh is derived from the Turkish “meze,” which means taste, flavor, snack, relish, said information released by the restaurant. Traditional Middle Eastern music provides the background soundtrack to the place, “as guests are taken on a multisensory journey to the Mediterranean region,” their literature states.

The day starts at 7 a.m. for the chefs there, and they make “everything in small batches throughout the day,” Walker said. They open for lunch at 11 a.m. A “similar concept,” to tapas in Central American restaurants in the area, Wee said.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

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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.



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.



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.

'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 opportuni-



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.

ties 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

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION



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.

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.

BULLETIN

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 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 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.

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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." 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 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



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.

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
south@connectionnewspapers.com

Kemal Kurspahic
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

Andrea Worker
Contributing Writer
aworker@connectionnewspapers.com

Jean Card
Production Editor
jcard@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
e-mail:
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Steve Hogan
Display Advertising, 703-778-9418
shogan@connectionnewspapers.com

Debbie Funk
National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment Advertising
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
[@MaryKimm](https://twitter.com/MaryKimm)

Executive Vice President
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor in Chief
Steven Mauren
Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic
Art/Design:
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
Ali Khaligh
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
Circulation Manager:
Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) and Fairfax County Department of Transportation's Director Tom Biesiadny discuss the plans.

PHOTO BY
MIKE SALMON/
THE CONNECTION



Pedestrian Bridge Meetings Narrow it Down

Second Braddock Road pedestrian workshop supports bridge crossing Braddock Road.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

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.

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RGW is pleased to announce that Dr. Joshua D. Levinson has joined the practice and is seeing patients in the Fairfax and Alexandria offices. It was his research on improving the safety of intravitreal injections for Macular Degeneration, Retinal Vein Occlusions and complications from Diabetes that is credited with making more sterile techniques common practice at clinics throughout the country. Dr. Levinson cares for patients suffering from Diabetic Retinopathy and Age-Related Macular Degeneration, and performs surgical procedures for retinal detachments and macular holes among many other eye-related problems.

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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Vietnam Veterans Support Lamb Center

As part of its community outreach and veteran support programs, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 227, Dean K. Phillips Memorial Chapter of Northern Virginia, donated more than 600 travel size toiletries to the Lamb Center, a non-profit day time service center for homeless people in Fairfax County on Nov. 8, 2018. Chapter members have donated the toiletries over

the last several months from their travels. In addition, the national office of VVA donated four boxes of toiletry travel pouches. The individual size personal care items are ideal for the Center's showers. The chapter has supported the Lamb Center in many ways over the years. Doris Paul, the Center's Volunteer Manager and a military spouse, accepted the items from Leonard Ignatowski, Chapter Vice

President. The Center provides space and time for Veteran Administration staff to assist veterans in applying for their benefits.

The chapter is currently conducting a fundraiser to provide holiday gift cards for needy veterans and their families in Northern Virginia as identified by social service agencies and Veteran Administration staff. Emergency assistance grants are also provided



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Len Ignatowski, Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter 227 Vice President, delivers travel size toiletries to Doris Paul, Volunteer Manager of The Lamb Center in Fairfax City, as part of the chapter's continual community and veteran outreach.

throughout the year. The chapter's annual cash grants are over \$10,000. Donations can be mailed to Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 227, P.O. Box 5653, Arlington, Virginia 22205-0653. Checks made payable to VVA Chapter 227

with memo note: Veteran Assistance. Contact Len Ignatowski at 703-255-0353 for any questions. Membership and meeting information available on the website, vva227.org, and Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/VVA227>.



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.

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.

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).



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

Sheriff Kincaid Speaks At Rotary Club of Springfield

Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey A. Kincaid receives a certificate from Phil Sternberg, past president of the Rotary Club of Springfield, for a book in her honor given to Garfield Elementary School's Library. Sheriff Kincaid spoke to the Rotary Club about her career at the Sheriff's Department and the Diversion First Program she helped spearhead with Fairfax County Police Department and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board.

AREA ROUNDUPS

Fatal Single-vehicle Crash in Lorton

Detectives from Crash Reconstruction Unit continue to investigate a fatal single-vehicle crash on Nov. 9 around 9:20 a.m. Officers responded to the 10000 block of Ox Road in Lorton for a crash involving a car that hit a concrete barrier. According to FCPD, the driver of a 2016 Nissan Versa was travelling southbound on Ox Road, ran off the road on the right side, and hit the barrier. The driver — identified as 48-year old James Stephens — was taken to an area hospital and pronounced dead. Alcohol does not appear to be a factor; however, detectives are still working to determine if speed was a factor. Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0553.

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



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.

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 De-

sign 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.

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“Anna,” aka Lizzie Allen, and the “Frozen Queen,” aka Jenepher Esser, of The Princess Performers delight the crowd during the Santa Fest at Springfield Town Center.



The crowd was large for the Santa Fest at Springfield Town Center last Saturday.

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Santa Fest at Springfield Town Center

Ringing in the holidays with Santa Claus, magical “Frozen” characters, crafts, and games.

About 650 people attended a huge Santa Fest on Saturday, Nov. 10 at Springfield Town Center. The one-day event for newborns to age 10 featured magical holiday characters, craft and games, coloring, make-your-own ornaments, and a visit with Santa Claus himself.

“Basically, we throw a huge party celebrating the fact that the holidays are coming and the Big Jolly Man’s here,” said Laura Feinschil, marketing director at Springfield Town Center.

“And we have a few other characters; we have Elsa and Anna (from “Frozen”). We also have some friendly elves and we also have face painting and vendors who are giving away fantastic giveaways.” Santa will be visiting Springfield Town Center through Christmas Eve. The venue will have choir, music and dance performances on select weekends throughout the holidays.

— STEVE HIBBARD



Santa’s Elves Chris and Jodi Whitener of Alexandria delighted the crowd.



Annie Chiu, 10, and sister Leila, 14, of Annandale with their painted faces were singing “First Time and Forever” from the movie, “Frozen.”



Alexander Joyce, 2 1/2, of Alexandria poses with Santa.



Berin Zaimovic, 2, and brother Benjamin, 4, of Alexandria with their painted faces.



Alexis Gonzalez, 5, of Woodbridge with his “Santa Claus” painted face.

News

Mutts Gone Nuts – “Selfie”.



PHOTO COURTESY GMU/CENTER FOR THE ARTS

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

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.

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.°

“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.

Tell us what you think

submit your letter to the Editor to editors@connectionnewspapers.com



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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 burkecivicalballet@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 rockcllctr@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 burkecivicalballet@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.

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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 SCHS All Night Grad Party, PTSO, Band Boosters and Athletic Boosters. Free, \$3. Visit www.southcountyyptso.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/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.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Ballet dancer Michael Cherry, 16, of Springfield, plays roles of the Snow King, Spanish Lead and Ballet Doll.

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 Buffa Hargett, Artistic Director, who runs her very own Buffa's Dance Studio at 9570-H Burke Road in Burke.

"The Nutcracker" is a magical experience. As a lifelong dancer,

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 burkecivicalballet@gmail.com. Call 703-425-5599 or visit www.buffas.com.

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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 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 costuming, 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 Ballet 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



Ballerina Gaby Mabalay, 15, of Springfield, plays the lead role of Clara.

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 Bal-

let, 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.

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; Ernst Theater of Northern Virginia Community College, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Call 703-425-5599 or visit www.buffas.com.



Burke Civic Ballet seniors with Artistic Director Buffa Hargett — Brooke Bentley, Emili Boyle, Maddie Fee, Alexa Hock, and Elbie Kaleb — star in "The Nutcracker."

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Announcements

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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg

Obituary



Kathleen (Kitty) Mary Lewis of Springfield, Va. died on Oct. 31, 2018. She was born Oct. 27, 1934, in Athy, Co. Kildare, Ireland, and emigrated to New York City in 1957. She worked for two periods at the Guardian Life Insurance Co., both in New York and in Northern Virginia. Kitty was known for her strong faith, kind heart, and quick wit. She is survived by her husband of 45 years, Royer (Roy) K. Lewis, Jr., also of Springfield, and her daughter Helen E. Lewis of Washington, D.C.

She was predeceased by her loving parents Kathleen and Andrew Smith, brother Andrew Smith and sister Mary Nemecek. Kitty is also survived by her sisters Peggy O'Sullivan and Dolores Fagan and her brother Peter Smith, as well as many nieces and nephews.

Her memorial Mass was celebrated at Greenspring's chapel in Springfield on Friday, Nov. 9, 2018. Interment at Riverview Cemetery in Richmond, Va. was the next day. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Kitty can be made to the American Cancer Society.

Legals

NEWS

Allstate Contributes to 'Weekend Food for Kids'

Assistance 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.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

From left: Karen Amster (ALNV), Caitlyn Barron (Allstate), Lynn Barron (ALNV) and Christine Angles (Allstate).

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

Eagle 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



Eagle Scout Jackson Gearhard, Troop 1346, Burke.

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.



PHOTOS
COURTESY OF
MARK BLANCHARD

Parents Glenn and Karin with new Eagle Scout Jackson Gearhard.

BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 5

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 Shavaun Wall at recruiter@scfbva.org or call 703-323-4788.

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 14

Grants Workshop for Artists. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Tysons-Pimmit Library, 7585 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. ARTSFAIRFAX 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@artsfairfax.org.

Transportation Open House. 6-8 p.m. at Edison High School, 5801 Franconia Road, Springfield. Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) continues to solicit feedback on how people get around in the Franconia-Springfield area on the local transit network. The outreach events include interactive exercises, facilitated by FCDOT staff, to explore attendees' individual travel needs, issues and ideas. Visit www.fairfaxconnector.com for more.

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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