

## Richmond Priorities: Education and Transit

Supervisors host session with Fairfax General Assembly delegation.

BY ANDREA WORKER  
THE GAZETTE

**T**he 2019 session of the Commonwealth of Virginia's General Assembly will begin at noon on Jan. 9. That's still weeks away, but the county has been preparing its "ask list" even before the second special session adjourned on Aug. 30.

That preparation takes into account the achievements and the disappointments that resulted from the 2018 session along with analysis of the current political situation, changes in federal rules, regulations and laws that may affect the state, and a review of the county's financial status and forecast of future needs before the budget is advertised in February 2019.

On Dec. 11, the Board of Supervisors invited the delegation representing Fairfax County to participate in a work session at the Government Center and to be formally presented with the county's legislative program which was adopted on Dec. 4. Most of those delegates were in attendance, and those unable to attend sent representatives.

"Securing K-12 funding is a top priority," said Board Chairman Sharon Bulova in her opening remarks. A joint position with the Fairfax County School Board on "Funding Core Services" for those grades was the very first item in the legislative program packet distributed to the delegation.

Bulova said some progress has been made, but the statistics continue to show an inequality when educational funds are apportioned, leaving local jurisdictions to fill in the gaps to maintain a quality system.

Only four other school system divisions in the state serve as many or more students receiving free or assisted school lunches. The county also has one of the largest shares of students with special education needs, or who are learning English as a second language



**Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay chairs the Board of Supervisors' Legislative Committee. McKay gave an overview of the county's legislative priorities to the Fairfax Delegation to the General Assembly, his colleagues, and a roomful of staff and interested parties at the Government Center on Dec. 11.**

to be properly educated, yet the county contends that the formulas for funding distribution contain structural features that leave "statewide funding far behind the inflation-adjusted FY 2009 level." As of 2013, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission ranked Virginia 23<sup>rd</sup> nationwide in total per-student spending, but 11<sup>th</sup> in the local share of this spending."

**THE COUNTY** says this trend reflects "Virginia's reliance on local effort and a growing imbalance in this partnership."

Together, the Board of Supervisors and the School Board strongly support a number of elements for their K-12 funding request:

- ❖ Restoration of full funding for Cost of Competing Adjustment for support personnel;

- ❖ Increased state funding for school divisions with high numbers of English learners, students living in economically disadvantaged households, students with special needs, and/or requiring mental health services;

- ❖ Elimination of the support positions ratio cap "which has artificially lowered state funding contributions ... by hundreds of mil-



**State delegates and senators joined the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, other county staff, and representatives from a number of civic groups for a legislative work session prior to the start of the 2019 General Assembly in January.**

lions of dollars;"

- ❖ Appropriately funded Standards of Quality consistent with local staffing costs;

- ❖ Use of "true weighted averages" when calculating average teachers' salaries and other education costs;

- ❖ Recognition of cost of living variations throughout the Commonwealth in the funding formulas;

- ❖ Increased state resources for early childhood education programs to give all students the same opportunities for success when they enter the K-12 system.

The boards jointly oppose:

- ❖ State budgets that target or disproportionately affect Northern Virginia;

- ❖ State policies which direct funds away from local public schools and toward non-public options;

- ❖ Cuts or formula/policy changes which impose unfunded mandates.

Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee District) chairs the board's Budget and Legislative Committees and spoke to the next issues on the county's "top priorities list," starting with "Transit."

He urged the delegation and the audience members to review the "Transportation Fact Sheet" included in the Legislative Program, and maybe even "dig deeper" for background information and a

clear understanding of the current situation.

Of particular concern, and so noted in the "Priorities" of the Legislative Program, is the fact that legislation enacted in the 2018 General Assembly addresses the needs of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in part by diverting funds from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTa).

This diversion reduces funds for other critical transportation needs in Northern Virginia by \$102 million per year.

Projects that could be negatively affected or placed on hold for the foreseeable future include widening of several sections of Route 28 and the Soapstone Drive extension in Reston, among others. Such impacts will continue if the funding diversion continues.

McKay also made note of funding formulas which seem to "be a way to take money out of Northern Virginia and put it somewhere else." The Department of Rail and Public Transportation's policy change to allocate state funds

based on project cost versus non-federal share could also impair the county's heavily-subsidized Connector bus system — which receives no federal funds and is a key element in the overall transportation network. In FY 2019 the localities within Northern Virginia will be footing over 19 percent of the bill for transit capital purchases, while outside Northern Virginia, jurisdictions will only be called upon to fund less than 5 percent of these goods and services.

The county also asks the Fairfax Delegation to protect Northern Virginia's fair share of statewide revenues for general maintenance. In FY 2019 the area is expected to only receive 6.9 percent of the state's Good Repair funds, even though the county's secondary roads, with only 39 percent rated as being in Fair or Better Condition, fall far below the Commonwealth's 60 percent average, or its 65 percent target.

**THE ECONOMIC SUCCESS** of the county and Northern Virginia are crucial to the economic health of the Commonwealth as a whole, the supervisors and staff argue, and that health and continued growth are dependent on a modern, efficient, multimodal transportation system that is safe and in good repair.

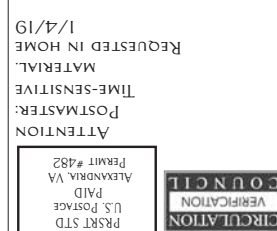
McKay shared the podium with County Executive Bryan Hill, Deputy Director, Department of Management and Budget, Christina Jackson, and James Regimbal of Fiscal Analytics to discuss the county's third — but equally important — Legislative Program priority; the State Budget.

Several pages of examples, statistics and concerns boil down to the county's position that the State "should rebalance its resources and responsibilities."

According to the report, State aid to localities has decreased by

SEE FAIRFAX, PAGE 4

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE GAZETTE





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[www.CallSusanTaylor.com](http://www.CallSusanTaylor.com)



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Shannon and Sergio Morales in Egypt.



The Acropolis is the backdrop in one of their adventures.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

# Backpacking the World Landed Couple in Alexandria

House-sitting and laptop computer jobs became their way of life.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

Shannon and Sergio Morales are a California couple that got rid of everything, including their office jobs, and now live out of their backpacks, house-sitting their way around the world in pursuit of the happiness that this kind of freedom brings. They are now housesitting in Alexandria, working computer contracting jobs on their laptops and taking care of the homeowner's two cats until the end of February, when they'll be off to their next stop in this whirlwind lifestyle.

"We couldn't see ourselves settling down," said Shannon Morales.

They've taken their lifestyle discussion to the web, and have a website, "Screw the Average, be an outlier," full of pictures, a blog, and an explanation.

"We've been called frugal, minimalists, environmentalists, and adventurers. We like to think of ourselves as different, as outliers," their explanation reads on their website "Screwtheaverage.com." An "outlier," is defined as "a person whose residence and place of business are at a distance." The name of their website might seem to be snubbing their noses at a conventional lifestyle, but they insist that's not the case. "Why be average when we can push it a little further?" Shannon Morales asked.

The website photo album shows them in various places in this country as well as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Turkey, Belgium, Italy, Morocco and more. They've house-sat in downtown Vienna, Austria, and Athens, Greece "three or four blocks from the palace," said Sergio Morales.

Shannon Morales often finds herself at Starbucks with her laptop, working for various computer companies she's gotten contracts to support. "I've been to Starbucks all over the world," she said. Kingstowne Starbucks is within walking distance to their current residence, although it is over a mile.



For Shannon and Sergio Morales, Kingstowne is walkable from their temporary home.

PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE

Walking is part of the plan as well.

IN EARLY 2016, they had this lifestyle on their radar screen and worked towards the day when they gave up their apartment, and sold their car in fall of 2016 and left the United States in November.

At that point, their plan was to housesit in Europe, but that extended into Asia and Africa too before they came back in 2017 and landed in Boise, Idaho before getting another house-sitting gig in Portland.

"It's crazy doing taxes," said Shannon Morales, referring to all the out-of-state type forms they use.

The travel life with a laptop computer and no permanent roots is the topic of "Vagabonding Life," a travel blog that George Rodgers has been part since he adopted this lifestyle. He's been traveling around the world for the past 12 years being a "digital nomad," on a laptop, like the Morales couple is doing. "That location-independent lifestyle is very common in the places I travel," he said, naming far-away places he calls "digital nomad hubs," such as Chiang Mai in Thailand, Tulum in Mexico, and Bali. "All offer warm climates, inexpensive living, and networking with

other travelers and online entrepreneurs," he said, via email. "I did one of those house sitting gigs myself for two months down in Mexico, simultaneously working with my laptop," Rodgers said.

Although the Morales couple's goal is to be happy, another goal goes by the acronym of FIRE – Financially Independent, Retire Early. The FIRE community is prevalent to a certain group out there, and the couple got further involved when they were in Colorado where they met the "NoCo Mustachians" community and learned a few things. The guru of this financial freedom meetup was a character called "Mr. Money Moustache," who is a well-known figure for this social movement. While the FIRE people are working long hours to get to that point, the Morales couple want their hap-

piness to be the main focus.

"We both put in our time," said Shannon Morales, "for us it isn't working the 9-5 job." Travel is a motivator for them, but the FIRE concept is still a long-term goal.

**THIS LIFESTYLE** is not all about sitting on a sun-drenched beach with a laptop and frozen cocktail, like some of the ads portray.

At each house, there is usually pets that need taking care of, and they walk a lot since they have no car. For work, they scour the job boards, and frequently log on to trustedhousesitters.com to find their next stay. At this point in January, they don't have anything set up for the end of February when the current homeowners will return, but they're not concerned.



Shannon and Sergio Morales babysitting pets in Canada.



# Fairfax Delegation Discusses Assembly Priorities

FROM PAGE 1

almost \$1 billion between FY 2009 and FY 2016.

The inclusion of a 5-year period during that time when localities were required to return funds in order to help balance the state's budget basically created a "reverse concept of local aid to the Commonwealth" and equated to more than \$20 million in state funding cuts to Fairfax County which was further affected by cuts to the K-12 funds and the implementation of the cap on funding education support positions.

Since 2016, the General Assembly has made progress in increasing the state's commitment to education in the county, but the formulas and the allocation of resources for education and other services and activities in Northern Virginia continue to fall way short of the needs and out of balance with the rest of the Commonwealth's shares and responsibilities.

Governance and Local Authority rounded out the county's Top Priority list. There was no one in the room not aware that Fairfax County relies primarily on residential and

property tax for its revenues. The county continues to call for diversification of tax revenue streams and the ability for local authorities to have more control over those methods of revenue generation.

McKay also expressed the board's strong opposition to the "Proffer Bill" as enacted by the General Assembly in 2016 which "severely limits proffer authority" and has the effect of "distancing communities and neighborhoods from decisions about development in their area."

"This needs to be fixed," said McKay.

The Legislative Program Priorities were accompanied by numerous position statements on issues regarding the environment, health, public safety, general laws, human services and more that the board asks the Fairfax Delegation to consider and address in the upcoming session.

The entirety of the 2019 Fairfax County Legislative Program is available on the county's website at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov) along with archived information from many of the board's Legislative Committee meetings.

## BULLETIN BOARD

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

### DONATIONS NEEDED

**UCM Needs Help.** United Community Ministries (UCM), 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria. Inventory is low on disposable diapers especially sizes 4, 5, 6; canned tuna and other canned meats like chicken; and low-sugar breakfast cereals. Shop and donate with their Amazon Wish List at: [bit.ly/UCM\\_FoodPantry\\_AmazonWishList](http://bit.ly/UCM_FoodPantry_AmazonWishList). Email Assistant Food Pantry Manager Von at [vonneta.jones@ucmagency.org](mailto:vonneta.jones@ucmagency.org) or

visit at [www.ucmagency.org](http://www.ucmagency.org).

### SATURDAY/JAN. 5

**Fairfax Public Hearing with Fairfax General Assembly Delegation.** 9 a.m. at Fairfax Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Before session begins, Surovell will join the entire delegation from Fairfax and Prince William County to host public hearings in each jurisdiction. These hearings give individuals and organization the opportunity to voice their legislative priorities before a wide audience of legislators. Participants need to sign up to speak at [bit.ly/2019FFXsignup](http://bit.ly/2019FFXsignup).

### TUESDAY/JAN. 8-FEB. 19

### Workshop Series: Mind in the Making.

6:30-8:30 p.m. at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 – Room 100, Dunn Loring. Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs by Ellen Galinsky, encompasses an evidence-based list of life skills that are essential for children to succeed socially, emotionally and intellectually in the short and long term. Participants may register for one or all of the workshops and do not need to attend the previous class. Registration is limited. Call 703-204-3941 or visit [www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center](http://www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center) for more or to register.

- ❖ Tuesday, Jan. 8 – Focus and Self Control (part 1)
- ❖ Tuesday, Jan. 15 – Perspective Taking

- (part 2)
- ❖ Tuesday, Jan. 22 – Communicating (part 3)
- ❖ Tuesday, Jan. 29 – Making Connections (part 4)
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 5 – Critical Thinking (part 5)
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 12 – Taking on Challenges (part 6)
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 19 – Self-Directed, Engaged Learning (part 7)

### WEDNESDAY/JAN. 9

**Safety Workshop for Women.** 7-8:30 p.m. at Curves Alexandria-Hollin Hall Shopping Center, 7918 Fort Hunt Road. Taught by Shelly A. Good-Cook, a Safety Trainer with Damsel In Defense, the hands-on workshop gives women a chance to learn about self-defense items such as

pepper spray, stun guns and kubatons and how to use them safely and effectively. Open to the public, Curves membership not required. Free, advanced registration required at [eventbrite.com/e/alexandria-warrior-woman-workshop-tickets-53966107079](http://eventbrite.com/e/alexandria-warrior-woman-workshop-tickets-53966107079).

**Grant Application Deadline.** More than 50 artists have been recognized by ARTSFAIRFAX with an Artist Grant over the past decade. Artist Grants recognize outstanding achievement for work that has already been completed, the artist's commitment to an artistic discipline, their professional activity in Fairfax County and their contributions to the quality of life in Fairfax County. Learn more at [ARTSFAIRFAX.org](http://ARTSFAIRFAX.org).



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# Officers Search for Fugitive

The Mount Vernon District Police is currently searching for 27-year-old Jaquan Ross after he escaped from its custody at a local hospital shortly before 7 a.m., Tuesday, Jan. 1.



Jaquan Ross

Officers initially responded around 4 a.m. to the 6100 block of Richmond Highway to assist the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. Two local bail bondsman had apprehended Ross, who was wanted for multiple outstanding warrants from various jurisdictions in the Northern Virginia area. Ross complained of pain and asked to be taken to a local hospital. Once medically treated, Ross broke free from an officer and ran towards Route 1. He was still wearing a handcuff on his right wrist. Multiple officers, to include K9 units and our helicopter, re-

sponded to help find Ross, but he eluded capture. He is described as 5'8", 185 pounds, with a short beard, and was wearing a white shirt with black pants at the time of his escape.

Ross is facing the following charges from Tuesday's incident: possession of marijuana; obstruction of justice; and providing false ID to law enforcement.

Additional outstanding charges include:

- ❖ From Fairfax County: assault on family member (twice); fail to appear on felony; fail to appear on misdemeanor; violate condition of release;

- ❖ From Alexandria City: Felony aggravated assault on family member; assault on family member; destruction of property; prevent summoning of police;

- ❖ From Virginia State Police: Felony fail to stop for law enforcement; driving while suspended; reckless driving; fail to abide by traffic light (three times).

If anyone knows his location or sees him, call 9-1-1 immediately and do not approach him.

## CRIME REPORT

The following incidents were reported by the Mount Vernon District Police Station.

**BURGLARY:** 1800 Old Richmond Highway (Ourisman Chevrolet Buick GMC of Alexandria), Dec. 25, 9:11 p.m. Employees called officers when they discovered someone broke into the building and stole a 2019 GMC Denali which was later recovered.

**VEHICLE PURSUIT:** 7800 block of Richmond Highway, Dec. 22, 4:43 p.m. An officer tried to stop a car for a traffic violation but the driver refused to pull over. A 29-year-old Alexandria man eventually stopped his vehicle in a nearby shopping center. He was arrested for felony speed to elude, resisting arrest, and disregarding a red light. His concealed weapons permit was suspended by the magistrate.

**UNLAWFUL ENTRY:** 7000 block of Republic Court, Dec. 20. The victim returned home after being out of the country since October, and found two unknown men in her apartment. They ran out when she called 911. There was evidence they had been staying in the apartment for an extended amount of time. There were no signs of forced entry. The first suspect was a black man, 30 to 40 years old, 6' tall, with a big beard and dark clothing. The second suspect was a black man, 30 to 40 years old, 5'6", skinny with dreadlocks.

**BURGLARY:** 8000 block of Buckman Court, Dec. 18, between 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. The property manager arrived at the apartment complex and saw a man leave the laundry room

with nothing in his hands. The man walked away from the area. The manager went to the laundry room which is normally locked and noticed that the door was forced open. Several tools and other miscellaneous items were left behind. It is not known at this time if anything was taken.

**ROBBERY:** 2600 block of Arlington Drive, Dec. 17, 8:20 p.m. A man was walking home and chose to take a shortcut through a fence opening. As he walked through the opening, he was hit in the head with a piece of wood by a man. A second man appeared and demanded money. The men left after the victim gave them cash. The victim was not injured. Both men are believed to be Hispanic, slim build, and in their late teens to early 20s. The first man was about 5' tall, and was wearing a white t-shirt, blue sweatpants, and used an orange shirt to cover his face. The second man was said to be about 5'8", wearing a grey jacket, blue jeans, and used a white shirt to cover his face.

**CARJACKING:** 5800 block of North Kings Highway, Dec. 16, 1:01 a.m. A man was getting out of his car when he was approached by two men wearing masks. One of the men held a gun to the victim and made him get out of the car. The two men drove off in the dark blue 2008 Range Rover with Washington, D.C., license plate FV9498. Both were described as black men, about 6 feet tall, slim build, wearing black masks and all black clothing. The driver was not injured.

UNLAWFUL ENTRY/WARRANT

**SERVICE:** 8400 block of Sky View Drive, Dec. 14, 10:23 p.m. A resident reported that several people had entered a vacant home in the neighborhood. Officers found a woman and three men staying inside the home without permission. Stolen property was found in the home. A 20-year-old man from Alexandria was charged with unlawful entry and violation of conditions of release. A 37-year-old man from Alexandria was charged with unlawful entry and fugitive from justice out of Maryland. A 27-year-old man and a 19-year-old woman, both of Alexandria, were charged with unlawful entry.

**DEC. 28 LARCENIES**  
8600 block of Richmond Highway, merchandise from business

**DEC. 27 LARCENIES**  
2600 block of Arlington Drive, property from residence  
6100 block of Holly Tree Drive, cash from residence

**STOLEN VEHICLES**  
2500 block of Parkers Lane, 2006 Hyundai Sonata

**DEC. 26 LARCENIES**  
8400 block of Frye Road, merchandise from business  
2300 block of Huntington Avenue, merchandise from business

3100 block of Lockheed Boulevard, merchandise from business  
7100 block of Mason Grove Court,

SEE CRIME, PAGE 14



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**Alex/Woodland Heights \$819,900**  
**8608 Woodland Heights Ct.**  
Beautiful turnkey home: 4BR, 3.5BA center hall colonial in sought after Mt. Vernon neighborhood of Woodland Heights. 4,000 sq. ft. Stunning Sun Rm addition looks out over beautifully landscaped & terraced bkyd, complete w/in-ground irrigation system. Large & updated kitchen w/center isle, granite counters & ceramic tile. Gorgeous hardwood floors, 6 panel doors, double pane windows. Large Owner's suite w/vaulted ceiling & walk-in closets. Updated MBA has separate soaking tub & shower. Finished basement offers a Rec Rm w/bar, 3rd full bath & ample storage. GREAT LOCATION: 10 mins to Ft. Belvoir & 15 to Old Town & easy access to GW Pkwy.



**Stafford/Harris \$239,900**  
**11 Shady Lane**  
Beautiful 3BR, 3BA Cape Cod, bursting with charm. This property contains two lots (for total .67 acres), with winter views of Aquia Creek. 2nd Lot may potentially be buildable (grandfathered). Expansive and open floor plan. Enjoy nature's beauty from the back screened porch or multiple decks. Large shed/hobby room w/electricity (conveys as is). Quiet and serene location. Close to Quantico!



**Alex/Stratford \$574,900**  
**2601 Culpeper Road**  
Price just reduced on this — Lovely 4BR, 3BA home with carport in popular Stratford on the Potomac. Situated in sought after Stratford Elementary school district. Well maintained home. Replacement windows. Freshly painted interior with refinished hardwood floors. Beautiful landscaping. Updated baths. Family room with gas fireplace. You'll love it!!



**Alex/Mt. Vernon Woods \$362,500**  
**8102 Martha Washington**  
Precious 3BR, 1BA Rambler—Perfect Starter Home — Double pane windows & updated bath plus wood burning fireplace—Large deck overlooks the beautifully landscaped, deep, fenced backyard—Perfect for the grill. Roof 2016, A/C Compressor 2017, HWH 2018—10 minutes to Ft. Belvoir, 17 mins to Old town, Alex.



**McLean/Fountains at McLean \$232,500**  
**1537 Lincoln Way #304**  
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LOCATION! Beautiful 1BR unit in heart of Tysons near shops/mall/restaurants/metro/495/Toll Rd, commuters dream! Upgraded bathroom & kit w/granite counter-tops. Kit w/breakfast bar is open to living rm which flows out to spacious private balcony and storage closet. Bedroom w/walk in closet. Full washer & dryer in unit. A MUST SEE!



**Ft. Hunt/Collingwood on Potomac \$730,000**  
**8313 Cedardale Drive**  
Beautiful 5BR/3BA home w/carport in sought after Ft. Hunt community with easy access to GW Pkwy and Mt. Vernon Bike Trail just blocks away. Waywood Elementary. Home provides lots of space including finished attic as a bonus room. Hardwood floors throughout 4 of the 5 levels. Anderson glass doors off of dining room lead to large deck overlooking lovely fenced back yard w/garden shed. Updated kitchen and baths. Fireplace in living room. Large family room in lower level is bright and cheerful.



**Alex/Engleside \$1,300,000**  
**8734 Lukens Lane**  
4.128 acres zones R-2 for sale. There are 2 lots: 4/0 acres w/house (Tax Map 1101 01 0043) and .128 acre vacant land (1101 01 0043A). House on Property sold "AS IS" and NO ACCESS given or allowed. Land Value only. Water, sewer, gas, electricity available. This land is adjacent to the houses on Halley Farm Ct. which were built in the 2010-2011 time frame.



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6821 Richmond Highway / Alexandria, VA 22306



# OPINION

## Looking Ahead

In 2019, completing major planning milestones for the Richmond Highway Corridor.

By DAN STORCK  
MOUNT VERNON  
DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

**H**appy New Year! The Mount Vernon District is an exciting place to be as revitalization and renewal comes to the Richmond Highway Corridor. 2019 will be a pivotal year as we finalize the planning for the future of our community. Highlights include:

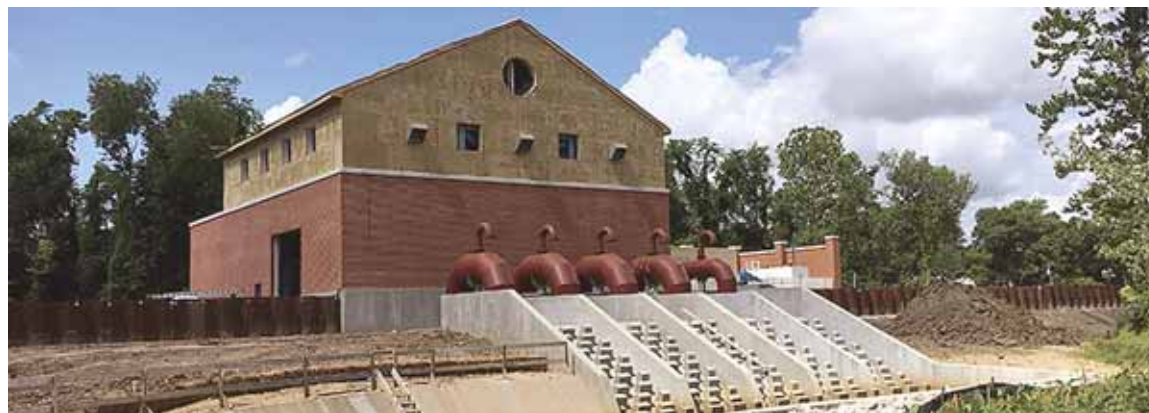
- ❖ Completion of the Huntington Levee;
- ❖ Renovations at Hollin Meadows ES, Waynewood ES, Belle View ES, Washington Mill ES and West Potomac HS;
- ❖ Opening of new Lieber Gate at Fort Belvoir;
- ❖ Completing the Master Planning for OMVHS as a community and education hub;
- ❖ Completing financing and contracting for North Hill workforce housing;
- ❖ Completing design and beginning right-of-way acquisition for the Richmond Highway widening ;
- ❖ Continued planning and funding for Corridor revitalization and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT);
- ❖ Completing design for the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway trail connection;
- ❖ Kicking off Grist Mill master planning process;
- ❖ Continuing to fully support our schools.

**ONE OF THE MOST** important activities for our community in 2019 will be creating the Urban Design Guidelines for the Richmond Highway Corridor. The urban design guidelines will elaborate on design guidance described in the Embark Comprehensive Plan to include the overall design, appearance, character and function of streets and streetscapes, parks and plazas; the form of buildings and their relationship to streets and public spaces; and, specific information related to street furnishings and other streetscape details.

This process began in 2018 with a very well attended and engaging community workshop and will continue through 2019 with many additional opportunities for you to participate. The findings from the workshop can be found at: <http://www.fcrevit.org/richmondhwy/designguides.htm>. Future oppor-



Original Mount Vernon High School rendering .



Huntington Levee rendering.



Penn Daw rendering.

tunities for providing input on the guidelines will be forthcoming in 2019.

**AN ADDITIONAL FOCUS** of our office in 2019 will include the proposal of a strong environmental package aimed at protecting and enhancing our valuable ecological

resources and heritage sites. With numerous rivers and streams in the district, as well as abundant parks and wildlife, the care and preservation of our environment is particularly important to our communities. I will be advocating for the county to take a more aggressive position on these issues,

including litter control efforts such as a plastic bag fee, calling for a Community Climate Action Plan and beginning resiliency planning, particularly for our shorelines. Look for more on this in the coming weeks.

As always, my office continues SEE LOOKING AHEAD, PAGE 14

## Mount Vernon Gazette

[www.MountVernonGazette.com](http://www.MountVernonGazette.com)

@MtVernonGazette

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# Much To Accomplish in Short Session

BY SCOTT SUROVELL  
STATE SENATOR (D-36)



**T**he General Assembly Session gavels in on Jan. 9 and we have a full agenda awaiting us for our 45-day or “short” session.

First, the budget will probably take center state this year even though we adopted a two-year budget last year. As I mentioned in my previous column, between federal tax reform, rising revenues, and the Supreme Court’s Wayfair decision that allows states to tax internet sales, the Commonwealth has over \$1 billion of excess revenue to appropriate. Governor Northam has proposed a targeted tax cut to working Virginians, investments in K-12, and investments in higher education.

I will be carrying at least 25 bills which is the limit in the Senate. First, I will be carrying Governor Northam’s coal ash bill. We propose to ban leaving ash in place and to

incentivize coal ash recycling and moving ash away to landfills. The bill requires locally-sourced jobs that pay decent benefits, local government input and prioritizing rail transport.

The program is expected to cost between \$2 and \$5 billion although experience in other states has cost much less.

Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment will also be a big focus. I have been Chief Patron for six years, but I am deferring to my Republican colleague Sen. Glen Sturtevant from Powhatan and Dumfries Del. Jennifer Carroll Foy to lead the charge this year. We are one state away from 38 states needed to ratify and equal rights for all people should be in the U.S. Constitution.

I am also carrying a bill for the Administration to require annual sign inspections for tall signs near interstates. Last year, a wind-damaged Potomac Mills sign shut down I-95 for three days in March after a wind storm tore through our area shutting down interstate carrying 100,000 vehicles per day. That situation should never happen.

I am proposing several bills to reform homeowners’ association rules. One clarifies

the rules on when associations can regulate home-based childcare. Affordable childcare is very difficult to find in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area and many conflicts have arisen over interpreting association rules on home businesses. I am also carrying a bill that provides better annual transparency in association reserves and more importantly – reserve shortages.

With the advent of the new “gig economy,” more people are employed as independent contractors and one of my bills will allow Virginia’s Department of Child Support Enforcement to start garnishing employees paid by 1099 working for entities like Uber or AirBnB.

The NAACP Criminal Justice Committee asked me to carry a bill to reform School Resource Policy (SRO) statewide. Virginia has been ranked No. 1 in the United States on putting children into the School to Prison Pipeline.

My bill makes clear that SRO’s are not involved in school discipline but only actual crime and requires parental notification when criminal investigations commence to ensure a fair process.

Once again, I will carry a bill to re-regulate consumer finance lending to protect

against internet lenders using 400 percent interest rates from exploiting a license used by lenders who historically make loans at only 36 percent or less. I am also supporting other bills to close other loopholes.

I am working with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) to press legislation to allow localities to provide mobile voting locations – e.g. voting equipment that can be moved around to retirement homes, transit stations or used in emergencies on election day.

I am working with a group to clean up the Code of Virginia’s provisions for same sex couples who use assisted conception. Also, I will once again attempt to provide temporary driving permits to all Virginians regardless of immigration status.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has asked me to carry legislation streamlining the commercial driver’s license process for veterans certified to drive heavy trucks during active duty. I will also be carrying several other bills that I will write about in coming columns.

Please come visit my office in Richmond and provide me your input throughout the session at [scott@scottsuovell.org](mailto:scott@scottsuovell.org)! It is an honor to serve as your state senator.

## COMMENTARY

## Bipartisan Approach to ‘Good Government Bills’

BY PAUL KRIZEK  
STATE DELEGATE (D-44)



**O**ne of my key responsibilities as your delegate is crafting “good government bills.” Now, some of you might say, I have heard the term good government with respect to legislation but what does that really mean? These are bills that are often brought to our attention by constituents and are common sense bipartisan fixes that will improve the lives of people across the Commonwealth.

Working to pass laws in a divided government like we have here in Virginia is especially important, though not always easy.

At times, the General Assembly can descend into a partisan fight where we are unable to reach a consensus. However, a good government bill can bring representatives from across the political spectrum together in agreement. This year, I am proud to be introducing a number of good government bills and will highlight two of them.

The first bill clarifies a piece of the Virginia code related to absentee voting. Currently, Virginia law allows that if you are in line by the close of the polls at 7 p.m. on Election Day you will still be able to cast your ballot. Yet, there is no such language in the Virginia code relating to absentee voting. Currently, the code does not require that the polling location allow you to cast a ballot on the same day if you are in line

when absentee voting ends that day. Fixing this issue is a common sense solution that is critically important as more and more Virginians continue to vote absentee each year. According to the Virginia Department of Elections over 287,000 individuals voted absentee in the 2018 election. This is more than double the 123,000 people that voted absentee in the last midterm in 2014. This legislation will ensure that we have one statewide policy that allows you to vote if you were able to get in line, no matter how long the line may be, before the poll closed during absentee voting that day, just as if it were Election Day. A second bill would codify the current practice of most police to activate the Virginia Endangered Missing Children Media Alert (VEMCMA) when all AMBER Alert criteria is not met. In short, the VEMCMA notifies state agencies, law enforcement and the media of a missing child on a smaller scale than the AMBER Alert. This legislation was prompted by the murder of my constituent, Mount Vernon High School student Jhoulie Moussa, earlier this year. Following this tragedy, I met with members of her family concerning ways in which we can improve the process for finding missing children.

In my research, I noticed that the VEMCMA is not required to be issued in the event a missing child does not meet the necessary criteria to trigger the Amber Alert system. Our police do great work and often issue the VEMCMA even when the AMBER Alert criteria is not met, but the lives of our children are precious and we need to be 100 percent certain that each time a child goes missing that we utilize every single avenue available to find that child.

These bills are part of the larger picture of the need for reform in Virginia. As I have discussed previously, we must make it easier to vote in Virginia. A few examples of large scale needed reforms include automatic voter registration, no excuse early voting and the adjustment of our voter identification laws. For missing people, we have made great strides in Virginia. The Ashanti Alert passed last year by the General Assembly is a great step to combat the rising epidemic of missing adults in Virginia and across the nation. However, there are still larger reforms needed to combat the issue of missing children and human trafficking which I have been examining very closely as a member of the Virginia Crime Commission.

While we continue to work on these larger reforms, good government bills allow us to make real progress that will address the needs of Virginians across the political spectrum. I am proud to be sponsoring these two pieces of legislation and am drafting a few other potential good government bills as we head towards the 2019 General Assembly session in two weeks.

sembly session in two weeks.

Continuing the theme of good government, I would like to quickly discuss why I am refusing future campaign donations from Dominion Energy. In the past, I have accepted donations from Dominion due to the desire to use that money to help elect Democrats across the Commonwealth. But, just last week, the Attorney General joined the Lieutenant Governor and announced his policy going forward is that he would no longer be accepting contributions from Dominion and Appalachian Power, both publicly regulated electric monopolies. I agree that such donations contribute to public distrust in government and feed the narrative that the energy monopolies control the legislative body. While these donations never impacted my judgement, I understand how it erodes the public trust that you could be in a position to regulate a state run monopoly that is also contributing to your campaign. Taking this stand is the right thing to do. Promoting good government is one of my core values.

## BULLETIN BOARD

### SATURDAY/JAN. 19

**Town Hall Meeting.** 9:30 a.m. at Walt Whitman Middle School, 2500 Parkers Lane, Alexandria. State Senators Scott Surovell and Adam Ebbin with Del. Paul Krizek will host a town hall. Individuals will have the opportunity to hear about progress in Richmond and ask questions about legislation as the legislative process happens.

**Town Hall Meeting.** Noon at Hayfield Elementary School, 7633 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. State Senators Scott Surovell, Adam Ebbin and George Barker with Delegates Paul Krizek and Mark Sickles will host a town hall. Individuals will have the opportunity to hear

about progress in Richmond and ask questions about legislation as the legislative process happens.

### TUESDAY/JAN. 22

**Climate Change and Children’s Health.** 6:30-8 p.m. at Frog Pond Early Learning Center, 7204 Harrison Lane, Alexandria. Mother Nurture Company presents a Community Forum on Climate Change & Children’s Health Samantha Ahdoot. Ahdoot is the Chair and Co-founder of Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action. Free. RSVP to [mothernurturecompany.eventbrite.com](mailto:mothernurturecompany.eventbrite.com).



# ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## ONGOING

### Sparkle and Glow: Holiday Show.

Through Jan. 6 at Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery, located in Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 29, 105 North Union St., Alexandria. Free admission. The Gallery shines with holiday spirit – unique gifts to give, lovely pieces to wear, and enchanting and decorative works for the home. Themed work will be eligible for recognition by the jurors. Non-themed work may also be exhibited. Visit [www.Potomacfiberartsgallery.com](http://www.Potomacfiberartsgallery.com).

**Art Exhibit – Re:Vision.** Through Jan. 6, gallery hours at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. In Re:Vision, Elizabeth Casqueiro reflects on the emotional content of immigration and what it means to push forward with a new life while remaining pulled by the old. Using as springboard two sets of images that represent these conflicting dynamics, namely retro comic books and lifestyle ads, she investigates the power of visionary myth to propel and restrain, the relinquishing of the precious as a condition to move forward, and the struggle to reconcile who we are, how we are perceived, and who we want to become. Visit [www.nfaa.org](http://www.nfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

**Art Exhibit: re-Cog’-ni’-zing / dc.** Through Jan. 6 at The Torpedo Factory Art Center (Studio 21), 105 North Union St., Alexandria. From unique vantage points and unexpected perspectives, painter and architect Milton Shinberg invites viewers to rediscover Washington in watercolor, through his limber brushstroke and clear, glassy palette. Shinberg captures fragments of Washington in luminous watercolor, lingering on details that captivate the mind of an architect and beguile the hand of an artist. Visit [www.theartleague.org](http://www.theartleague.org) or call 703-683-1780.

**Art Exhibit: Bringing Words to Life.** Through Jan. 27 at VCA Alexandria Animal Hospital, 2660 Duke St., Alexandria. The exhibit is a part of Del Ray Artisans’ Gallery Without Walls program in partnership with VCA Alexandria. The show pairs a line from an artist’s favorite song, poem, book, or speech with the artist’s visual interpretation of that quote. Patrons may view the artwork at VCA Alexandria during regular business hours and at the discretion of hospital staff. Visit [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits/gww](http://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits/gww).

**Still Life Alive.** Through April 2, 2019, 9-5 p.m. at River Farm, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria. Patricia Uchello One Woman Art Show, featuring 100 original oil paintings of flowers, fruit, landscapes and seascapes. Uchello’s work has been collected by IBM, the International Monetary Fund and more. Email [pmuchello@aol.com](mailto:pmuchello@aol.com) or visit [www.patriciauchello.com](http://www.patriciauchello.com).

**Revolutionary War Medals.** Through March 2020 at George Washington’s Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mt. Vernon. Now on view in Mount Vernon’s Donald W. Reynolds Education Center is an exhibition featuring 30 rare medals from the American Revolution and the early republic. War and Peace in Miniature: Medals from the American Numismatic Society is an unparalleled collection that highlights the remarkable heroes and events from the Revolutionary War and the new nation’s diplomatic endeavors. Visit [mountvernon.org/warandpeace](http://mountvernon.org/warandpeace).



Milton Shinberg, Eyes on Lincoln, Watercolor

## Art Exhibit: re-Cog’-ni’-zing / dc

An exhibit by painter and architect Milton Shinberg who captures fragments of Washington in luminous watercolor, lingering on details that captivate the mind of an architect and beguile the hand of an artist. From the gilded dome of Georgetown’s iconic bank, to the half-moon colonnade of the Jefferson memorial, he dwells on moments and memories. Approaching familiar sights from unusual angles, the exhibit focuses on the architecture of Washington — what the artist calls the “connective tissue” of the urban environment. The exhibit runs through Jan. 6 at The Art League Gallery, 105 North Union St., in the Torpedo Factory, Studio 21, Alexandria. An opening reception is planned for Thursday, Dec. 13, 6:30-8 p.m. Visit [www.theartleague.org](http://www.theartleague.org) or call 703-683-1780.

### Tours of the Freedom House

**Museum.** Saturdays and Sundays, 1-5 p.m. at Freedom House Museum, 1315 Duke St. The Freedom House Museum was once the headquarters and holding pen for the largest domestic slave trading firm in the United States, Franklin and Armfield. The building is currently owned by the Northern Virginia Urban League and together with the Office of Historic Alexandria. Visit the museum in this historic reminder of slavery. Admission is \$5 per person. Tickets can be purchased at the door. Visit [www.alexandriava.gov/Museums](http://www.alexandriava.gov/Museums).

### “Alexandrians Fight the Great

**War.”** Various times at The Lyceum, Alexandria’s History Museum, 201 South Washington St. This new exhibition traces the experiences of local people during the first World War. The homes, hospitals, factories and shipyards of wartime Alexandria come back to life through the use of rare images, archival and modern-day video clips, quotes from participants, original objects including weapons, period music, and scale models. Call 703-746-4994 or visit [www.alexandriahistory.org](http://www.alexandriahistory.org).

### “Before the Spirits are Swept

**Away.”** Various times at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. This exhibition, featuring 20 of Sherry Sanabria’s African American historic site paintings, is made possible by the Sanabria family, who generously donated 23 of her paintings to the Alexandria Black History Museum. These paintings are part of Sanabria’s “Sites of Conscience” series, which has as its focus African American heritage, prisons, concentration camps, and mental hospitals. Free, but donations are appreciated. Call 703-746-4356.

**Pick-Up Hockey.** Ongoing, Wednesdays and Fridays 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Mount Vernon Ice Skating, 2017 Belle View Blvd. Play hockey with other hockey buffs, hitting slap shots and learning puck handling skills that the pros use. Players must have full equipment. 16 and older. visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec/mtvernon/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec/mtvernon/) or call 703-768-3224.

**Alexandria Cars and Coffee** invites car enthusiasts to meet for coffee at Hollin Hall Shopping Center in front of Roseina’s, 1307 Shenandoah Road. Owners of classic cars, hot rods, exotic cars, motorcycles and more meet to share car stories and drink coffee. Group meets the first Sunday

of every month. 8:30-11 a.m.

**Fifty Years of Collecting.** Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sundays 12-5 p.m. Fort Ward Museum, 4301 W. Braddock Road. An anniversary exhibit of objects from the Fort Ward collection. Free. visit [www.fortward.org](http://www.fortward.org) or call 703-746-4848.

**Dinner for the Washingtons.** 11 a.m. at George Washington’s Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. A walking tour that goes behind the scenes to find out how food was prepared and served before the era of microwaves and TV dinners. \$7 in addition to estate admission. visit [www.mountvernon.org](http://www.mountvernon.org).

**Evenings at the Athenaeum.** At the Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. 7 p.m. Second Thursday of every month. visit [nvfaa.org](http://nvfaa.org) to view concert calendar and listen to upcoming Second Thursday Music artists. Visit [www.nfaa.org](http://www.nfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

**The Monday Morning Birdwalk** takes place weekly, rain or shine (except during electrical storms, strong winds, or icy trails), at 7 a.m. (8 a.m. November through March), is free, requires no reservation and is open to all. Birders meet in the parking lot at the park’s entrance at 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Direct questions to park staff during normal business hours at 703-768-2525.

**Civil War Sundays.** 1-5 p.m. at Alexandria Archaeology Museum, 105 North Union St., #327. Learn more about the Civil War as it occurred in Alexandria. Find dioramas, newspaper articles and more Free. visit [www.alexandriarchaeology.org](http://www.alexandriarchaeology.org).

## CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

**Community Dance.** 7:30-9:30 p.m. every third Friday at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Live music. \$4. Call 703-765-4573.

**Life Drawing.** Del Ray Artisans offers a range of open life drawing sessions for anyone to develop life-drawing skills further. Drop-in for the session and bring supplies to draw or paint live models. Fee ranges from \$8-\$12. All skill levels are welcome. Del Ray Artisans is located at 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. visit [www.TheDelRayArtisans.org](http://www.TheDelRayArtisans.org) for a schedule.

**The Harmony Heritage Singers** (Mount Vernon Chapter of Barbershop Harmony Society), a

daytime, a cappella, Chorus, rehearses on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, monthly, at Sherwood Hall Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Newcomers welcome for fun or to book for a performance. visit [www.HHSingers.org](http://www.HHSingers.org), or call Bruce at 703-352-5271.

## THURSDAY/JAN. 3

**The Athenaeum’s Civil War Authors Series: Michael Pope.** 7 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Reporter Michael Pope of Virginia Public Radio returns to the Athenaeum to discuss pre-Civil War Alexandria. He uncovers a long-forgotten period of the 19th century when Alexandria was part of the fledgling District of Columbia. \$15 per lecture or attend all three events for \$30. NVFAA Members can attend all three events for \$15. Visit [www.nvfaa.org](http://www.nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

## JAN. 3-31

**Exhibit: “Hard Wired.”** At Touchstone Gallery, 901 New York Ave. NW Washington, D.C. Tory Cowles of Potomac is represented by Touchstone Gallery, a resident artist in Studio 7 at Alexandria’s Torpedo Factory, and an abstract painting instructor at Glen Echo Park’s Yellow Barn. Her work evolves out of a spontaneous abstract expressionist process which depends on the rawness of the materials, the unexpectedness of the composition, and the mystery of how materials are transformed. Opening reception, Saturday, Jan. 5, 4-6 p.m. Artist talk, Saturday, Jan. 19, 4-6 p.m. Call 202-347-3787 or visit [www.touchstonegallery.com](http://www.touchstonegallery.com).

## FRIDAY/JAN. 4

**Opening Reception: “Faces.”** 7-9 p.m. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. The “Faces” art exhibit at Del Ray Artisans features portraits that show the life a person has lived, joy a person emanates, wisdom gained through years of living, and focuses on the soul of the person. View the exhibit from Jan. 4-27, 2019. Visit [www.DelRayArtisans.org/event/faces](http://www.DelRayArtisans.org/event/faces).

**Classical Concert.** 7:30 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament Church, 1427 W. Braddock Road. Celebrate the end of the holiday season with a classical



Constance Whiteside performing music for Twelfth Night on a re-creation of a medieval harp at Christ Church, Alexandria.

## Twelfth Night Concert

Savor the joy and peace of the holiday season with music celebrating Winter Solstice. Armonia Nova, one of DC’s early music ensembles, welcomes the audience to join them for their 17th annual ‘Twelfth Night’ concert featuring early and traditional favorites – music both serene and joyful. Enjoy the chance to see and hear re-creations of period instruments in the beautiful setting of Christ Church. Sunday, Jan. 6, 6-7:30 p.m. at Christ Church, 118 N. Washington St. Free, donations requested. Email [armonianova2001@gmail.com](mailto:armonianova2001@gmail.com) or visit [www.armonianova.org](http://www.armonianova.org) for more.

concert including three choirs and a professional orchestra featuring Vivaldi’s Gloria and the Christmas Oratorio by Camille Saint-Saens. Free-will offering at the door. Visit [blessedsacramentcc.org](http://blessedsacramentcc.org) or call 703-998-6100.

## SATURDAY/JAN. 5

**Paint the World in Pastels.** 10 a.m.-noon. At Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria. Cost \$35. Local artist Teresa Brunson will demonstrate many ways to paint with pastels and give you a solid knowledge of the medium and its expressive use. Learn painting techniques, mark-making and layering, and pick up other tips to enhance your pastel work. All supplies will be provided. Stretch your creative muscles and create something beautiful. Call 703-768-2525 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows).

**Story Time for Little Historians.** 11 a.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St., Alexandria. Enjoy cultural stories and creative craft activities that introduce world history and folklore. Afterwards, explore the museum exhibits to learn about local Black history. All ages welcome, but most suitable for children 4 and older. Admission is \$3 per person. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 703-746-4356.

**Opening Reception: “Hard Wired.”** 4-6 p.m. at Touchstone Gallery, 901 New York Ave. NW Washington, D.C. Tory Cowles of Potomac is represented by Touchstone Gallery, a resident artist in Studio 7 at Alexandria’s Torpedo Factory, and an abstract painting instructor at Glen Echo Park’s Yellow Barn. Her work evolves out of a spontaneous abstract expressionist process which depends on the rawness of the materials, the



# ENTERTAINMENT

unexpectedness of the composition, and the mystery of how materials are transformed. Wear the body sculptures and join the dancers at her reception. Call 202-347-3787 or visit [www.touchstonegallery.com](http://www.touchstonegallery.com).

**Twilight Boardwalk.** 4:30-6:30 p.m. At Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria. Join in on a chill winter evening to encounter the beauty of Huntley Meadows Park as it transitions from day into night. Watch and listen for beaver, owls, and other nocturnal residents along the forested paths to the wetland, and experience the sunset over the boardwalk. \$9. Call 703-768-2525 or visit online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park/).

**Fairfax County RECenter Swim Classes Start.** The Fairfax County Park Authority offers youth swim instruction for babies to teens at nine RECenters throughout the county. Adults join their children in the pool in the early years. Kids go solo and advance through different instruction levels as they get older. For more information about the Park Authority's swim programs, call 703-222-4664 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/recenter/swimming](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/recenter/swimming).

## SUNDAY/JAN. 6

**Artist Talk: Re:Vision.** 2 p.m. at The Athenium, 201 Prince St. Enjoy an artist talk with Elizabeth Casqueiro about her show Re:Vision which runs through Jan. 6. Free. Visit [www.nvfaa.org](http://www.nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

**Twelfth Night Concert.** 6-7:30 p.m. at Christ Church, 118 N. Washington St. Savor the joy and peace of the holiday season with music celebrating Winter Solstice. Armonia Nova, one of DC's early music ensembles, welcomes the audience to join them for their 17th annual "Twelfth Night" concert featuring early and traditional favorites – music both serene and joyful. Enjoy the chance to see and hear re-creations of period instruments in the beautiful setting of Christ Church. Free, donations requested. Email [armonianova2001@gmail.com](mailto:armonianova2001@gmail.com) or visit [www.armonianova.org](http://www.armonianova.org).

## MONDAY/JAN. 7

**Yoga for Gardeners.** 9:30-10:30 a.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Spend some time this winter getting ready for a spring and summer of gardening. The class meets weekly from 9:30-10:30 a.m. for eight sessions, beginning Jan. 7, 2019. The cost of the series is \$93. This yoga class features a gentle introduction to the Vinyasa method. It's designed to help participants increase the strength, flexibility and endurance necessary for gardening. Call 703-642-5173 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring).

## BEGINS MONDAY, JAN. 7-FRIDAY, JAN. 11

**Science for Homeschoolers.** 10 a.m.-noon at Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Looking for a fun, hands-on way to supplement a home school science unit? Each session meets for six classes. The fee is \$108. Call 703-768-2525 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park/).

❖ 4-6 years old, begins Friday, Jan. 11, 10 a.m.-noon: This hands-on class will introduce early learners to STEAM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) with Naturalist-guided support. These active nature experiments will include use of binoculars, magnifying glasses and field microscopes to deepen their investigations.



**Conductor John McCrary in rehearsal.**

## Classical Concert

Celebrate the end of the holiday season with a classical concert including three choirs and a professional orchestra featuring Vivaldi's Gloria and the Christmas Oratorio by Camille Saint-Saens. Friday, Jan. 4, 7:30 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament Church, 1427 W. Braddock Road. Free-will offering at the door. Visit [blessedsacramentcc.org](http://blessedsacramentcc.org) or call 703-998-6100.

- ❖ 6-9 years old, begins Monday, Jan. 7, 1:30-3:30 p.m.: Explore seasonal patterns, plants, animals, and observe nature in action.
- ❖ 9-12 years old, begins Wednesday, Jan. 9, 1-3 p.m.: Investigate earth cycles, ecosystems, and cell processes.
- ❖ 13-17 years old, begins Friday, Jan. 11, 1-3 p.m.: Older scientists can jump into hands-on field work studying natural sciences. This group will study aquatic ecosystems, soil, biodiversity, and wetlands.

## TUESDAY/JAN. 8

**Guest Speaker Author.** 12 p.m.-1:30 p.m. At Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Author Mark Maloy will be the guest speaker presenting and signing his new book, Victory or Death. The event is hosted by the Rotary Club of Alexandria. Visit [rotaryclubofalexandria.net](http://rotaryclubofalexandria.net).

## JAN. 8-FEB. 3

**Art Exhibit: It's Not All Black and White.** 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. daily (Thursdays until 9 p.m.) at Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery, in the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Studio 29, Alexandria. Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery announces the opening of its juried show, It's Not All Black and White. It may be black and white (dreary) outside but Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery radiates with color. In addition to lovely neutral pieces, artists have warmed their space with colorful creations. Themed work will be eligible for recognition by the jurors. Non-themed work may also be exhibited. Free admission. Visit [www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com](http://www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com) or call 703-548-0935.

## JAN. 9-FEB. 2

**Art Exhibit: "Destroy the Picture."** Wednesday-Saturday, noon-6 p.m. at Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Suite E, Bethesda. Beverly Ryan has been a resident artist at the Torpedo Factory Art Center since 2001 and has taught at The Art League School in Alexandria, Va., for 15 years. She has curated several shows of abstract painting, narrative painting and encaustic painting. Between 1949 and 1962, numerous painters including Alberto Burri, Salvatore Scarpitta and Yves Klein produced

artwork that incorporated destruction in their processes. The book Destroy the Picture: Painting the Void, written and edited by Paul Schimmel describes the exhibition of these works in Los Angeles at the Museum of Contemporary Art, 2012-2013. In the spring of 2018, this work inspired Beverly Ryan to lead a group of her students to explore destruction and re-creation of artworks from previously unresolved paintings. Visit [www.bethesda.org/bethesda/gallery-b](http://www.bethesda.org/bethesda/gallery-b).

## JAN. 9-MARCH 27

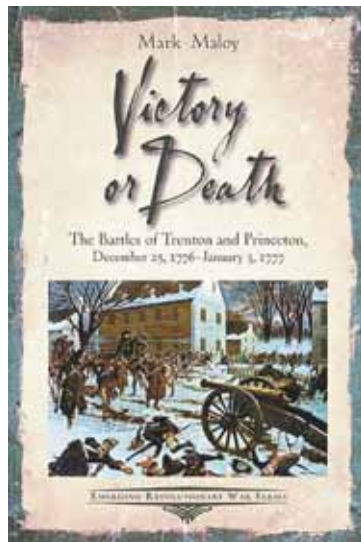
**Beginner Square Dance Lessons.** 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 N. Chambliss St. Keep up with New Year's resolutions and enjoy both mental and physical exercise with Square Dance Lessons. \$30 for each four-week session. Open to couples, singles and groups. Email [boomerangs@wascacclubs.com](mailto:boomerangs@wascacclubs.com) or call 571-210-5480.

## THURSDAY/JAN. 10

**Grand Opening: GetFitStudio.** 5-7:30 p.m. At 227 S. Washington St., #120, Alexandria. Come for food, drinks, gift bags and giveaways. GetFitStudio is a boutique fitness studio offering personal training and small group training sessions. Visit [www.getfitstudiova.com](http://www.getfitstudiova.com).

**Blues Night with Meigs Hodge.** 7 p.m. at The Athenium, 201 Prince St. An evening of traditional and contemporary blues guitar and vocals. Meigs Hodge explores delta and Chicago styles through the music of Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, and others; as well as contemporary standards and original compositions. \$10. Visit [www.nvfaa.org](http://www.nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

**How Plants Move: a Talk by Charles Smith.** 7:30-9 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Charles Smith explores the ways plants disperse across land and water and discusses reproductive strategies, niche exploitation, plant community composition and what the future may look like considering the fragmented condition of our landscape and climate change. VNPS programs are free and open to the public. No reservations are necessary for lectures. Visit [www.vnps.org/potowmack](http://www.vnps.org/potowmack).



## Author: Mark Maloy

The Rotary Club of Alexandria hosts author Mark Maloy as the guest speaker presenting and signing his new book, Victory or Death. Tuesday, Jan. 8, noon-1:30 p.m. at Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Visit [rotaryclubofalexandria.net](http://rotaryclubofalexandria.net).

## JAN. 10-FEB. 24

**Photograhpy Exhibit: Fax Ayres.** Thursday-Sunday, noon-4 p.m. at The Athenium, 201 Prince St. Fax Ayres' photography employs a 'lightpainting' technique to imbue his subjects with an almost surreal quality. He sets up still life vignettes in the dark and then carefully paints individual components with light, assembling multiple images together to create the final photograph. Visit [www.nvfaa.org](http://www.nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

## FRIDAY/JAN. 11

**Opening Reception: "Destroy the Picture."** 6-8 p.m. at Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Suite E, Bethesda. Beverly Ryan has been a resident artist at the Torpedo Factory Art Center since 2001 and has taught at The Art League School in Alexandria, Va., for 15 years. Between 1949 and 1962, numerous painters including Alberto Burri, Salvatore Scarpitta and Yves Klein produced artwork that incorporated destruction in their processes. The book Destroy the Picture: Painting the Void, written and edited by Paul Schimmel describes the exhibition of these works in Los Angeles at the Museum of Contemporary Art, 2012-2013. In the spring of 2018, this work inspired Beverly Ryan to lead a group of her students to explore destruction and re-creation of artworks from previously unresolved paintings. Visit [www.bethesda.org/bethesda/gallery-b](http://www.bethesda.org/bethesda/gallery-b).

**Family Splash Night.** 6-9 p.m. At Chinquapin Park Rec Center and Aquatics Facility, 3210 King St., Alexandria. Featuring St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School. Enjoy swimming, a floating obstacle course, games, relays, refreshments, music, diving for prizes and more. Different schools are featured at each event but all are welcome. Admission is \$4 per person upon entry.

**ASO Presents: Bach, Brandenburgers & Brews.** 7-10 p.m. At St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 228 South Pitt St., Alexandria. Members of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra, led by Music Director James Ross, present this special evening of Brandenburg Concertos in the intimate setting of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Hear the ASO's rendition of concertos No. 2, 4 and 5 with principals from the ASO

featured as soloists. Stay after for a reception in Norton Hall to mingle with the musicians and enjoy delectable German food and beer. Food provided by Port City Brewery, the German Gourmet and Pork Barrel BBQ. Tickets: \$40/adults; \$5/youth. Visit [www.alexsym.org](http://www.alexsym.org).

## SUNDAY/JAN. 13

**Visit with President James Madison.** 1-4 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal St. Facetime with History is an ongoing series that allows guests to spend time with people from the past in an informal setting, much like meeting at the tavern to catch up with friends. Guests touring the museum are welcome to enjoy chatting with President James Madison now that he is retired. This event is sponsored by Gadsby's Tavern Museum Society and included in the regular museum admission of \$5 per adult, \$3 per child under 12. Call 703-746-4242 or visit [www.gadsbystavern.org](http://www.gadsbystavern.org).  
**Gardening Lecture.** 1:30-2:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. The Harry Allen Winter Lecture Series at Green Spring Gardens provides a wealth of information for when the weather starts to warm. The lecture costs \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door. Call 703-642-5173 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring).

**Photograhpy Exhibit: Opening Reception.** 4-6 p.m. at The Athenium, 201 Prince St. Fax Ayres' photography employs a 'lightpainting' technique to imbue his subjects with an almost surreal quality. He sets up still life vignettes in the dark and then carefully paints individual components with light, assembling multiple images together to create the final photograph. Exhibit runs Jan. 10-Feb. 24. Visit [www.nvfaa.org](http://www.nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

**Live Music: House of Hamill.** 7 p.m. at George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Focus Alexandria presents The House of Hamill. Rose Baldino and Brian Buchanan are both accomplished traditional Irish style fiddle players and classical violinists, and despite being young, have over 25 years of writing and performance experience between them. Tickets are \$18 in advance at [www.focusmusic.org/buy-tickets](http://www.focusmusic.org/buy-tickets) and for FocusMusic and FSGW members, \$20 at the door.

## TUESDAY/JAN. 15

**Federal Government Claims.** 1-3 p.m. At Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Sponsored by the Mount Vernon Genealogical Society, Claire Prechtel-Klusken, former Senior Archivist for the National Archives, will speak about researching Federal Government claims to gather genealogical information. Free, open to public. Visit [www.hollinhallseniorcenter.org](http://www.hollinhallseniorcenter.org).

## WEDNESDAY/JAN. 16

**Antiques Club Program.** 9:30 a.m. at Hollin Hall Center, Room 216, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Joyce Ramsey will present a program on collectable match holders at the Alexandria-Mt. Vernon Antique Club. She will show some of her collections and telling the history of tabletop and wall match holders. Visitors are welcomed and may bring any match holders they have to show and tell. Call 703-960-4973.

## JAN. 18-27

**Alexandria Winter Restaurant Week.** For 10 days and two weekends, 65 restaurants in

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# ENTERTAINMENT



**Micheal Pope**

## Civil War Authors Series

Reporter Michael Pope of Virginia Public Radio returns to the Athenaeum to discuss pre-Civil War Alexandria. He uncovers a long-forgotten period of the 19th century when Alexandria was part of the fledgling District of Columbia. Thursday, Jan. 3, 7 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. \$15 per lecture or attend all three events for \$30. NVFAA Members can attend all three events for \$15. Visit [www.nvfaa.org](http://www.nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.



## Story Time for Little Historians

Enjoy cultural stories and creative craft activities that introduce world history and folklore. Jan. 5 story is Grandma and the Great Gourd - A Bengali Folktale is retold by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and illustrated by Susy Pilgram Waters. Afterwards, explore the museum exhibits to learn about local Black history. All ages welcome, but most suitable for children 4 and older. Admission is \$3 per person. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Saturday, Jan. 5, 11 a.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St., Alexandria. Call 703-746-4356.



**“The New Mother Look” by Rita Schooley**

## Art Exhibit: ‘Faces’

The “Faces” art exhibit at Del Ray Artisans features portraits that show the life a person has lived, joy a person emanates, wisdom gained through years of living, and focuses on the soul of the person. View the exhibit from Jan. 4-27, 2019, at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. An opening reception is scheduled Friday, Jan. 4, 7-9 p.m. Visit [www.DelRayArtisans.org/event/faces](http://www.DelRayArtisans.org/event/faces) for more.

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## CALENDAR

Alexandria, Virginia, will offer a \$35 three-course dinner for one or a \$35 dinner for two. More than 35 restaurants will also offer lunch menus at \$15 or \$22 per person in addition to the dinner specials. Brunch lovers can enjoy brunch menus for \$15 or \$22 per person at 14 restaurants. Visit [www.AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com](http://www.AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com).

### SATURDAY/JAN. 19

**Artist Talk: “Hard Wired.”** 4-6 p.m. at Touchstone Gallery, 901 New York Ave. NW Washington, D.C. Tory Cowles of Potomac is represented by Touchstone Gallery, a resident artist in Studio 7 at Alexandria's Torpedo Factory, and an abstract painting instructor at Glen Echo Park's Yellow Barn. Her work evolves out of a spontaneous abstract expressionist process which depends on the rawness of the materials, the unexpectedness of the composition, and the mystery of how materials are transformed. Call 202-347-3787 or visit [www.touchstonegallery.com](http://www.touchstonegallery.com).

### SUNDAY/JAN. 20

**What's Buggin' You?** 1:30-2:30 p.m. At Green Springs Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Bring your bug questions and stories for entomologist Nate Erwin who will present a colorful slide show about insects and their associated plants. Find out how to attract butterflies and fireflies or put a name to that curious bug in the garden last year. Cost is \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door. Call 703-642-5173 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring).

### FRIDAY/JAN. 25

**Family Splash Night.** 6-9 p.m. At Chinguapin Park Rec Center and Aquatics Facility, 3210 King St., Alexandria. Featuring James K. Polk and William Ramsay Schools. Enjoy swimming, a floating obstacle course, games, relays, refreshments, music, diving for prizes and more. Different schools are featured at each event but all are welcome. Admission is \$4

per person upon entry. Visit [www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation](http://www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation).

### MONDAY/JAN. 28

**Bullying and Lockdowns: Perspectives on School Security.** 7:15 p.m. At The Hermitage Auditorium, 5000 Fairbanks Ave., Alexandria. Part of the Agenda:Alexandria program, which falls on the fourth Monday of the month, begin at 7:15 p.m. Programs are \$5 each or free with your \$35 membership, payable online at [www.AgendaAlexandria.org](http://www.AgendaAlexandria.org)/sign-up page or at the door by check or credit. All are invited to a pre-program dinner if desired. Dinner is 6:45-7:15 p.m., prices starting at \$32 with reservations by the Friday prior to the program. Visit [www.Agenda:Alexandria.com](http://www.Agenda:Alexandria.com).

### FRIDAY/FEB. 1

**Family Splash Night.** 6-9 p.m. At Chinguapin Park Rec Center and Aquatics Facility, 3210 King St., Alexandria. Featuring Ferdinand T. Day and Samuel W. Tucker schools. Enjoy swimming, a floating obstacle course, games, relays, refreshments, music, diving for prizes and more. Different schools are featured at each event but all are welcome. Admission is \$4 per person upon entry. Visit [www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation](http://www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation).

### FRIDAY/FEB. 8

**Family Splash Night.** 6-9 p.m. At Chinguapin Park Rec Center and Aquatics Facility, 3210 King St., Alexandria. Featuring George Mason and Matthew Maury schools. Enjoy swimming, a floating obstacle course, games, relays, refreshments, music, diving for prizes and more. Different schools are featured at each event but all are welcome. Admission is \$4 per person upon entry. Visit [www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation](http://www.alexandriava.gov/Recreation).

### SATURDAY/FEB. 9

**ASO Presents: Mozart's Prague Symphony.** 8-10 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, 4915 East

Campus Drive. New and old traditions collide in February with an exploration of the Classical-era symphony. The program centers on Mozart's Symphony No. 38 “Prague,” juxtaposed with Prokofiev's Symphony No.1 “Classical.” The program will also feature soloists from the ASO for Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 and Stravinsky's Dumbarton Oaks. Adult, \$20-\$80; youth, \$5; student, \$10. Call 703-548-0885 or visit [www.alexsym.org](http://www.alexsym.org).

### SUNDAY/FEB. 17

**2019 Alexandria Wedding Showcase.** 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Road. 2019 Alexandria Wedding Showcase will feature more than 60 vendors, a grand prize \$25,000 wedding giveaway, a fashion show, demonstrations, a multicultural wedding display, and destination experts, all at an event benefiting Brides Across America. Visit [www.visitalexandriava.com/event/2019-alexandria-wedding-showcase/10189/](http://www.visitalexandriava.com/event/2019-alexandria-wedding-showcase/10189/) or [www.bridesacrossamerica.com](http://www.bridesacrossamerica.com).

### WEDNESDAY/FEB. 20

**Antiques Club Program.** 9:30 a.m. at Hollin Hall Center, Room 216, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Dr. Brian Belanger, curator at the National Capital Radio & TV Museum will give a program on “The Fibber McGee and Molly Show” at the Alexandria-Mt. Vernon Antique Club. All are welcomed. Call 703-960-4973.

### THURSDAY/FEB. 21

**The Athenaeum's Civil War Authors Series: Audrey Davis.** 7 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. In celebration of Black History Month, Audrey Davis, the Executive Director of the Alexandria Black History Museum, will lead a conversation on the African-American experience during the Civil War. \$15 per lecture or all three events for \$30. NVFAA Members can attend all three for \$15. Visit [www.nvfaa.org](http://www.nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

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## NEWS

# Thinking Outside the Box

**Ideas for original and attainable goals for New Year's resolutions.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

**W**ith a new year often come new resolutions, be they six-pack abs by spring or giving up carnivore's diet and going vegan, but setting drastic or unrealistic goals can lead to failure. For New Years resolutions that can bring change in overall wellbeing, whether physical, emotional or financial, local innovators say think outside the box and they offer unorthodox resolutions and minor actions that can have a major impact.

While spending a week or even a day without one's smartphone or tablet might be unrealistic given the constantly connected world in which we live, a digital dial-down might be more attainable. "How about spending five minutes each morning meditating or reading or doing stretches?" said Jen Pape, yoga iRest Level II teacher and studio manager at Circle Yoga.

"One simple and realistic thing to try in the New Year is right when you wake up, instead of ... reaching for your phone to scroll for the news of the day or checking how many likes to your Instagram, take a moment to identify something you are grateful for and a one word intention for the day," said Carolyn Lorente, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Northern Virginia Community College. "A word such as peace, centered, integrity or abundance can be returned to throughout the day. The research on gratitude and intention is strong and doing it just as you start your day can set the tone for the rest of the day."

Whether beginning or completing an undergraduate or graduate degree for professional advancement or simply taking a class that piques one's interest, consider education-centered goals. "I'm sure others can relate to this one," said Jacqueline W. Lee, director of the Inventive Awards Program at the University of Maryland. "Make a timeline and then set weekly or monthly goals." Examples of those goals might be resolving to complete and submit applications or scheduling informational interviews with three people in an area of one's interest.

From rough, dry hands to unsightly acne, skincare is important to one's overall wellbeing says Jaclyn Madden of Rodan + Fields who suggests resolving to take care of one's outer layer. "For a resolution that might be manageable ... I would suggest trying to commit to exfoliating your skin two to three times a week with a facial scrub to rid it of the old, dead skin and bring up the new skin and see a healthy glow," she said. "It also allows your skincare products to work deeper and more effectively."

A scroll through the pictures on most smartphones might reveal that many people have more snapshots than they'll ever be able to use. Resolve to organize those photos by taking small actions, suggests professional photo organizer Jody Al-Saigh of Picture Perfect Organizing. "Five minutes in a doctor's waiting room or in line at the grocery store is enough time to delete a few unwanted photos and dupli-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Resolving to put an empty bag near your closet and filling it with unwanted clothing items as you come across them is a simple alternative to a complete overhaul all at once, says professional organizer Jodie Jacobs.**

cates from your phone," she said. "Try to remember to do this during your idle moments instead of scrolling social media or news sites."

"Resolve to plan a weekly or monthly time on your calendar to organize photos and backup your collection," added Al-Saigh. "Set reminder alarms to jog your memory. Always set a time after a big vacation or important event to offload photos as well."

While bringing order to chaos is a goal that many hope to achieve, getting to the bottom of the mound of paper on one's desk or cleaning out an overstuffed closet can feel insurmountable. "Resolve to put an empty bag in the bottom of every closet in your home and fill it with unwanted clothing as you come across them instead of waiting until you find time to go through your entire closet," said professional organizer Jodie Jacobs, of SOUPerior Organizing. "Set a date and actually go to a charity to drop off the bags of clothing you already decided to donate."

"Resolve to start shredding your unwanted or sensitive papers once a week instead of waiting and creating an overwhelming amount that you then have to take somewhere and pay to shred," continued Jacobs. "Recycle your junk mail every evening so that it doesn't pile up."

Finding ways to add joy to one's life is a suggestion from therapist Carol Barnaby, MSW, LCSW-C. "I tell people to think not about giving things up, but about what would bring happiness to them in the New Year," she said. "For example, dating, taking up a new hobby, cultivating more friendships or creating less stress. Then set up actionable ideas to achieve those goals. Be kind to yourself and remind yourself that you are human and expected to make mistakes."

**"I tell people to think not about giving things up, but about what would bring happiness to them in the New Year."**

— Carol Barnaby, MSW, LCSW-C

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 • Chantilly Connection • Mount Vernon Gazette • Vienna/Daleton Connection





## Financial Empowerment

United Way of the National Capital Area (United Way NCA) hosted a check presentation Dec. 18 by TD Charitable Foundation at its Financial Empowerment Center (FEC) at South County. From left are: Chris Leonard, director, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services; Angela Franco, DC Health Benefit Exchange Authority, senior advisor and United Way board member; Terry Kenny, market president, TD Bank and United Way NCA board member; Rosie Allen-Herring, president and CEO, United Way NCA; Jeff McKay, Lee District supervisor and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. The grant will be used to support the development of a data collection and reporting system to be used across all four FECs located throughout the region. The database will allow frontline staff at each FEC to enter client intake and demographic data digitally and track their progress toward their personal financial goals. Visit: <https://tinyurl.com/UWNCA-FEC>.

## Electrical Cord Causes Fire

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department units responded to a report of a townhouse fire on Monday, Dec. 24 at approximately 11:51 p.m., in the 8500 block of Towne Manor Court.

Units arrived on the scene of a two-story, middle-unit townhouse with no smoke or fire initially evident. Crews found a fire in a second-floor bedroom. The fire was extinguished. There were no reports of civilian or firefighter injuries.

There were two occupants and two dogs home at the time of the fire. All occupants self-evacuated prior to the arrival of the fire department. One occupant

went to a neighbor's home and asked him to call 9-1-1. There were working smoke alarms in the home which sounded prior to the occupants discovering the fire.

Fire Investigators determined that the fire was accidental in nature and started in an upstairs bedroom closet. The cause of the fire was an electric event involving a damaged electrical cord that was supplying power to lights in the closet.

Red Cross assistance was offered and declined by the occupants. Damages as a result of the fire were estimated to be \$20,000.

## Martin Luther King Jr. Essay Contest

“What would our world look like if we never had a Dr. Martin Luther King?” is the title of an essay contest for Mount Vernon District High School students (public, private, parochial, or home schooled), sponsored by Ventures in Community (VIC), a group of about 60 faith communities and nonprofits in the Route 1 Corridor area.

The top three winners will receive prize money (\$250 for first place, \$150 for second, and \$100 for third) and will read their essays at VIC's annual Martin Luther King Holiday Observance at 1 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 19, at Bethlehem Baptist Church, 7836 Fordson Road.

Essays of 500 words must be submitted by Friday, Jan. 11, to [venturesincommunity@gmail.com](mailto:venturesincommunity@gmail.com), subject line titled “MLK Essay.”

The winners will be announced Wednesday, Jan. 16. A committee appointed by the VIC steering committee will select the winning essays.

Contact [venturesincommunity@gmail.com](mailto:venturesincommunity@gmail.com)

with questions.

VIC supplies volunteers to the hypothermia shelter at Rising Hope Church and meets monthly

to hear relevant speakers.

Facebook Page [www.facebook.com/venturesincommunity](https://www.facebook.com/venturesincommunity)



## At Montebello

**Pianist Thomas Pandolfi performed concertos by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Irving Berlin, Leroy Anderson and others at the Montebello Condominium community center on Sunday, Dec. 23. Montebello is a wooded community of four tall buildings on a hill overlooking the Richmond Highway near Huntington Avenue. An internationally known musician, Pandolfi grew up in Montgomery County, Md.**

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## You're In My Thoughts



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Though this column will have been written before Christmas, its content will be about Christmas (as you'll soon read), and because of early deadlines as well for our Jan. 2 edition, it needs to be submitted sooner rather than later anyway.

As you regular readers may remember the timing conflict – and concern – I had involving my pre-Thanksgiving infusion in addition to the impact of this last quarter's every-three-week-infusion schedule would have on the holiday season, fortunately, Christmas was not to be affected.

As scheduled, my last chemotherapy infused on Dec. 7 so by the time Dec. 24/25 arrives, there will be no side or straight-on effects. No problem sleeping. No problem getting up. No problem eating. And no problem driving the two-plus hours up and back to our holiday destination.

However, this column wouldn't be written if there weren't a situation of some substance I felt worthy of 600 words or so.

Because my last infusion occurred when it did, the next infusion is scheduled for Dec. 28. That Friday date means I'll have to contribute blood (lab work) and a collection of the previous 24 hours of urine on Wednesday, Dec. 26 (I'll be back home so that's not the problem). The problem is that I will have had to collect and keep cold urine beginning first thing-ish on Tuesday, Christmas day, a day when for the next 8+ hours I will be in someone else's house eating, drinking and making merry – and more importantly, be away from the privacy of my own bathroom and the at-home convenience of collecting urine in a bottle and keeping it cold.

Not that I intend on making a big production of it on Christmas Day, but I will be bringing a cooler with me and likely needing to place it in a very public bathroom in the house or another less obvious place that I'll be visiting half a dozen times throughout the day.

Moreover, to make sure I can provide a sufficient volume, I'll need to bring along a gallon of Turkey Hill Diet Green Tea because it goes through me – unlike water and enables me to fill the specimen bottle to the top.

Which if my last few creatinine levels are any indication, and I want those levels to measure within an acceptable-for-infusion range, I need to drink as much of the tea as possible and visit that hopefully inconspicuous place as much as possible as well.

However, as I think about the transportation/storage of the urine and tea situation, I'm thinking I'm going to need two coolers; one for the urine bottle and one for my tea. Because I certainly don't want the two bottles in the same cooler or God forbid, touching one another. I may not be a germaphobe, but I really don't think I'll be able to drink my tea if it's stored in the same cooler.

And I certainly don't want to impose on my host's hospitality by asking her to store either of these bottles in her refrigerator likely already packed-to-the-gills with dinner prep.

As much as I can, somehow, I want to keep a low profile and not be interjected into any of the proceedings/conversation. (Not that I'd be embarrassed since everyone in the house is family and familiar with my diagnosis/general circumstances.)

When the dinner/visit is over, we'll be driving home, coolers in trunk. If I need a rest stop, I'll have to pull over to use my bottle since I'm contributing until Wednesday morning, Dec. 26, after I'll have spent the night back at home. So Christmas won't be a total loss, as Thanksgiving nearly was, but it will be impacted nonetheless.

Still, if my creatinine level is low enough to once again enable me to be infused on Friday, Dec. 28, the awkwardness of the occasion/task will have been worth the trouble. (Besides, it was fodder for a column.)

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

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## News

### Looking Ahead

FROM PAGE 6

to look for new ways to engage with you. Our goal remains to ensure each and every Mount Vernon neighbor and business owner has the opportunity to reach their full potential. TEAM MVD is committed to working with you to address your individual concerns, while working proactively to deliver a better quality of life for all district residents. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you out and about in 2019.

Finally, join us at the 32nd Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, Feb. 2, from 7:45 a.m. – noon at Mount Vernon HS to learn more about the year ahead and how you can get involved.

### CRIME REPORT

FROM PAGE 5

packages from residence  
3300 block of Memorial Street, wallet from vehicle

2500 block of Parkers Lane, cell phone from residence

2500 block of Parkers Lane, donations from business

2500 block of Parkers Lane, license plates from vehicle

2500 block of Parkers Lane, wallet from location

7200 block of Parsons Court, cash from vehicle

6300 block of Richmond Highway, merchandise from business

6600 block of Richmond Highway, merchandise from business

6700 block of Richmond Highway, merchandise from business

7400 block of Vernon Square Drive, property from residence

**DEC. 21 LARCENIES**

8000 block of Buckman Court, keys from residence

7700 block of Richmond Highway, merchandise from business

3900 block of San Leandro Place, package from residence

**DEC. 20 LARCENIES**

8000 block of Buckman Court, keys from residence

7700 block of Richmond Highway, merchandise from business

3900 block of San Leandro Place, package from residence

**DEC. 19 LARCENIES**

2500 block of Parkers Lane, gun from vehicle

7600 block of Richmond Highway, cash from business

**DEC. 18 LARCENIES**

1600 block of Belle View Boulevard, merchandise from business

3600 block of Buckman Road, cell phone from residence

5800 block of Cameron Run Terrace, laptop computer from residence

7400 block of Richmond Highway, property from location

**DEC. 17 LARCENIES**

2600 block of Arlington Drive, comforter from location

2000 block of Belle View Boulevard, purse from vehicle

7800 block of Colonial Springs Boulevard, jewelry from residence

8200 block of Cooper Street, bag from vehicle

3100 block of Lockheed Boulevard, merchandise from business

8000 block of Richmond Highway, wine from business

8400 block of Richmond Highway,

8700 block of Sacramento Drive, purse from vehicle

3000 block of School Street, wallet from vehicle

9000 block of Tower House Place, laptop computers and sunglasses from vehicle

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## COMING SOON!



### 9112 Volunteer Dr

Westgate Colonial! | \$655,000

Exceptionally property! Spacious Colonial in the Williamsburg tradition featuring premier setting on large level lot in the desirable Westgate community near Mt Vernon Estate. Features include: large room sizes, 2 fireplaces in family and living room, hardwood floors, two car garage, & incredible sunroom overlooking rear grounds.

## JUST LISTED!



### 8902 Beauchamp Dr.

Mid-century flair! | \$550,000

Expanded and updated contemporary on gorgeous half acre lot near Mt. Vernon Estate. Fabulous features include: bright open floor plan, glass window wall, gorgeous hardwood floors on two levels, and oversize two car garage. Large deck overlooks private grounds. Freshly painted interior makes this one move in ready!



### 8314 Wagon Wheel Dr

Private Dock! | \$665,000

3 level Colonial situated on serene elevated lot overlooking natural wonderland. Private dock for your canoe, kayak, or small motor boat! Home has huge potential & features: 4/5 Bedrooms, large room sizes, hardwood floors, fully finished lower level w/ outside entrance, sunroom overlooking creek. Won't find another one like it!



### 4021 Colonial Ave \$1,130,000

Incredible brand new build in desirable Mount Vernon area. Almost 5,000 square feet on a flat level half acre lot. 5 Bedrooms and 4.5 Baths with long list of builder selections that set this home apart from your average build. Rare opportunity for a brand new build in Mount Vernon!

## CONTRACT!



### 9416 Old Mt Vernon Rd. \$789,000

Incredible opportunity to own a brand new 5 Bed/5.5 Bath home on 4 finished levels! Economical Gas appliances include: fireplace, cook top, heat and hot water. Hardwoods on main level, open kitchen to family room w/ large island & breakfast area, 4 BR's on upper level w/ 3 baths including luxurious master suite, finished basement w/ rec room, bedroom, & full bath. 10 year builder warranty

## CONTRACT!



### 4417 Neptune Dr. \$739,000

Exceptionally unique and spacious Colonial on private .72 acre lot. Special features include: updated kitchen, updated baths, family room with gas fireplace opens to patio overlooking serene pool scene, detached two car garage, extra parking area for RV/ Boat. Short walk to Mount Vernon Yacht Club and riverfront area!

## JUST SOLD!



### 3708 Carriage House Ct \$810,000

Truly special property in prime location on gorgeous lot bordering Mt. Vernon Estate grounds. Fabulous home in pristine condition. Features include bright open floor plan, stunning glass walled addition, updated expanded kitchen, gorgeous hardwood floors, 4 bedrooms including master suite with recently remodeled bath, & 2 car garage. Custom deck & brick patio overlook backyard & MV Estate

## JUST SOLD!



### 4401 Granada St. \$549,000

Immaculate and spacious home on gorgeous flat lot. Features include: 4 Bedrooms, 3 fully updated Baths, top of the line updated Kitchen, refinished hardwoods on main two levels, whole 3rd lower level just for storage, replacement windows and siding, New Roof (2013), garage and long additional list of updates. Great Value!

## JUST SOLD!



### 9411 Mount Vernon Circle \$959,900

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