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Senior Living
PAGE 8

Reston CONNECTION

Many audience members at the public hearing at the Planning Commission meeting Jan. 23, about increasing density in Reston wear yellow shirts to show their unified opposition to the proposed amendment.

Decision on Density Deferred

NEWS, PAGE 3

Arguments Pro&Con
NEWS, PAGE 3

Broadway's Legend On CenterStage
NEWS, PAGE 6

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION OPINION, PAGE 5 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 4 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 6

BULLETIN BOARD

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

WINTER SHELTERS

Find homeless and cold weather drop-in centers and shelters that serve Northern Virginia at www.novaregion.org/174/Homeless-Shelter-Lists.

If you see someone who could be at risk of hypothermia, call county's non-emergency line at 703-691-2131, TTY 711.

DONATION REQUEST

Support Reston Historic Trust & Museum.

The Reston Historic Trust & Museum has launched a GoFundMe campaign with the goal to raise \$15,000 to go towards the repair, cleaning, and reinstallation of icons on the façade of the former Lakeside Pharmacy, an original Lake Anne Plaza store, in a new permanent exhibit. The new exhibit will be unveiled during Reston's annual Founder's Day event, April 6. Read more about their history and donate at www.gofundme.com/preserve-lakeside-pharmacy-icons to assist in their preservation. Thank you for your help!

INPUT SOUGHT

Shaping the Future Together. Fairfax County Government is beginning a strategic planning process with the community to shape the future together. The goal is to hear all voices and reach all segments of the community. This effort will span most of 2019, but in this first phase, the community is being asked to visit fairfaxcounty.gov/strategicplan and:

- ❖ Take a short five-question online survey
- ❖ Join a community conversation in person: Feb. 13 – Reston; Feb. 25 – Alexandria; Feb. 26 – Fairfax; March 6 – Falls Church.
- ❖ Share the survey and conversation invitation with neighbors, co-workers and county family and friends.

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Program.

Fairfax County is developing a comprehensive Public Safety Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) program and would like to hear from residents. Each of six public information meetings will

include a static display of unmanned aircraft followed by a presentation outlining the program. After the presentation, there will be an opportunity to ask questions. The formal presentation will begin at 7 p.m. To find out more about the UAS program go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/uas. Send feedback or questions to uas@fairfaxcounty.gov or through the link located on the UAS webpage. Written comments on the draft program must be received by the close of business Feb. 8, 2019, to be included in the official public record.

- ❖ Wednesday, Jan. 30, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Braddock Hall – Kings Park Library, 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke.

TUESDAYS THROUGH 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 for more or to register.

- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 5 – Critical Thinking (part 5)
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 12 – Taking on Challenges (part 6)
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 19 – Self-Directed, Engaged Learning (part 7)

THURSDAY/JAN. 31

Poetry & Creative Writing Contest Deadline.

The Fairfax County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. announces its 4th Annual Poetry Contest for Middle School Students and Creative Writing for High School Students. Visit www.fcacd.org/creative-writing-contest for contest details and to download the applications. Email artsandletters@fcacd.org with questions.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 6

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Decision on Reston Density Deferred

Fairfax County Planning Commission defers decision on Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Density Provisions for the Reston PRC District.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

As the clock ticked to ward midnight after the public hearing at the Fairfax Planning Commission Meeting Jan. 23, on Zoning Ordinance Amendment-Article 6- Density Provisions for the Reston PRC District (Hunter Mill District). A reported 29 speakers, members of citizen action groups opposing the amendment and others representing developers advocating for the amendment, spoke for nearly five hours.

James R. Hart, Commissioner At-Large made reference to four years ago. "We left ourselves a real mess," he said. Hart said there was a consensus at that time the future development of Reston would mainly be concentrated around the Transit Station Areas. "It would be vertical rather than hori-

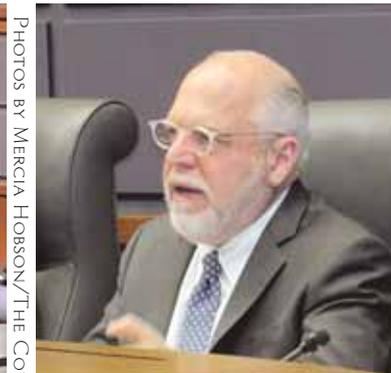


Members of the Fairfax County Planning Commission listen to public comments during the Jan. 23, 2019, public hearing on the controversial proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Article 6, Density Provisions for the Reston PRC District.

zontal ... designed in such a way to be compatible with Mr. Simons principles ... and that we would leave the rest of Reston, basically, the way it was. We were not in-

creasing anything other than the Transit Station Areas."

Commissioner Hart referenced the village centers as a leftover from what Reston founder Robert



James R. Hart, Commissioner At-Large, says the approach has to be mindful of Robert Simon's principles and the continued involvement of the community. "I think we can get there," he says.

Simon wanted at the inception of Reston but didn't quite happen, with the exception possibly of Lake Anne.

"It wasn't something that was

bumped up in this process. It was just something that just wasn't torn down in that process ... We left it the way it was," Hart said. "We had that consensus, and I think it's faded away, and I'd still like to hope that there's a way to get things back together," he said.

Hart expressed the approach had to be mindful of Simon's principles and the continued involvement of the community. "I think we can get there," he said.

Hart introduced a motion to "defer the decision."

Chairman Peter F. Murphy, (Springfield) said, "All those in favor of the motion to defer decision only on the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Article 6, Density Provisions for the Reston PRC District, to a date certain of Feb. 13, with the record remaining open for comments, say aye."

The record showed the motion carried by a vote of 12-0.

Restonians Speak Out on Density Increase

Voices pro and con at Planning Commission Public Hearing.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Given the number of speakers at the County of Fairfax Planning Commission Meeting Jan. 23, 2019, Zoning Amendment-Article 6- Density Provisions for the Reston PRC District (Hunter Mill), here is just a sample of remarks by individuals who represented a cross-section of thoughts, ideas and concerns.

Mark Ingrao, President and CEO of the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce (GRCC) said he supported the PRC Amendment and his remarks represented the 600-plus member companies that, through the chamber board, supported the PRC Amendment. "Once the Reston community went down the path of funding the Metrorail extension, the paradigm in Reston was going to change. ... Our founder (Robert Simon) knew this Master Plan would support his vision. ... Stable residential neighborhoods, as one moves from the Transit Station Areas are pro-



Dennis Hays: "The key for Reston's continued success is found in the guiding principles of the Reston Master Plan." Hays said community participation had not been honored in the development of proposals.

tected. The plan calls for the highest commercial and residential density be at the TSAs. ... A diverse housing stock is expressly protected under the plan. ... The concern of the Task Force was not that we would have too much residential but that we might not get enough to achieve optimal jobs-to-household ratios. ... Adequate transportation infrastructure and programs, and other infrastructure components such as schools, parks and other public facilities should



John Mooney: "The County has very likely underestimated the amount of traffic generated by the new development in the Transit Station Areas."

occur with development. ... \$2.4B of transportation-related infrastructure is planned, and dedicated revenue streams are already in place. ... It took Reston over 50 years to reach its current population, and it will likewise take decades to achieve anything close to full build-out under the Plan."

John Mooney spoke as a representative of Hampton Pointe Condo Association in Reston. He urged not to adopt the proposed



Mark Ingrao, President and CEO of the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce: "\$2.4B of transportation-related infrastructure is planned and dedicated revenues streams are already in place."

PRC amendment but instead that the consideration of any PRC ordinance change be coupled with the next review of the Reston Master Plan. "The County has very likely underestimated the amount of traffic generated by the new development in the Transit Station Areas... The County's 2018 Reston Network Analysis: Final Report modeled how new TSA-generated trips will impact TSA Reston but did no modeling of their impact on non-TSA Reston. Those new

trips will very likely create significant cut-through traffic as mounting TSA congestion leads drivers to find new routes through non-TSA Reston into and out of the TSAs."

Sherri Hebert, a member of the Board of Directors of the Reston Association, and the immediate past president urged the Commissioners to reject the proposal to increase the population density of the PRC areas of Reston.

"RA is convinced that no genuine community planning process would endorse 50 dwelling units per acre over the entirety of the non-residential portions of these village centers (Hunters Woods, South Lakes and North Point) ... RA believes that any change to the PRC zoning must be done concurrently with a review of the Master Plan. We believe this Commission was right when you raised concerns about having "uncoupled" planning and zoning for the PRC when the Commission approved Phase 2 of the Reston Master Plan revisions in 2015."

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

Winter Wonderland Ice Skating.

Public skating every day and extended hours for all Holidays, through March 10, hours vary at Reston Town Center Ice Skating Pavilion. Visit restontowncenter.com/amenities/ice-skating.

Art Exhibition: IRL. Through April 23, Tuesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at The Signature at Reston Town Center, 11850 Freedom Drive, Reston. IRL is a solo exhibition featuring work by painter and video artist Monica Stroik. Through a combination of video and paintings selected from her ongoing Cyber series, IRL (online shorthand for "in real life") investigates concepts of simultaneously being present and disconnected and how the natural world becomes entangled in digital lives. Free and open to the public. Visit restonarts.org.

THURSDAY/JAN. 31

Dollar and Sense. 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Monthly group discussion focuses on business leaders and markets. Group will be discussing "Unshakeable" by Tony Robbins. The event is free and open to the public. No registration required. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

FRIDAY/FEB. 1

The Storytime Social Hour. 11 a.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Every Friday, moms, dads, caregivers and kids are invited to join a Storytime Social Hour. Scrawl will provide coffee and treats for the adults; stories and fun for the little people. Make new friends or meet up with neighbors. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com or call 703-966-2111.

FEB. 1-28

Exhibition: "For the Love of Art." Feb. 1-28 at the Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Members of the League of Reston Artists display paintings, drawings, mixed media, photographs and two-dimensional works suitable for wall hanging. This show is free and open to the public during the center's regular operating hours. Kathleen Best Gillman judges the show. Visit www.leagueofrestonartists.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 2

The Bookworms Club. 11 a.m. at



PHOTO BY RUTH JUDSON

Gin Dance Company Artistic Director Shu-Chen Cuff in her new work "We, The Moon, The Sun."

GinDance Presents NEXT

Gin Dance Company, based in Reston, has been selected to present its production "NEXT" at the 2019 Atlas INTERSECTIONS Festival. Come and enjoy a cultural experience with GDC Artistic Director, Shu-Chen Cuff's work "We, The Moon, The Sun" – an Asian culturally influenced work combining Chinese Opera movements and modern dance and '200 Feet' inspired by author Jack Canfield's teachings. Saturday, Feb. 23, 2-3 p.m. at Atlas Performing Arts Center, 1333 H St., NE, Washington, D.C. \$30. Visit gindance.org or call 703-403-3766.

Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Young readers are invited to join Scrawl's all-new and completely free Bookworms Club. Explore a new theme each week with picture books, special guests and most often, authors. Readers are welcome to join or participate any time. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com or call 703-966-2111.

Saturday Series: Nature Explorer.

Noon-1:30 p.m. at Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. In the "Exploring Nature Series-Winter" program, students age 6-adult will explore Virginia's ecosystem. Sessions are spread over four Saturdays in February with a new topic to explore each week: Feb. 2 – Fish; Feb. 9 – Mammals; Feb. 16 – Birds; and Feb. 23 – Trees. Each session is \$8 per person. The program takes place both outdoors and indoors, so dress accordingly. Call 703-471-5414 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-fairfax.

Groundhog Day in the Park. 1-2 p.m. at Ellanor C. Lawrence

Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Join the "Groundhog Day!" program to learn the story behind this holiday and pick up some interesting facts about groundhogs. Visit the home of the Walney garden groundhog and play some groundhog games. Designed for participants age 3-adult. \$7 per person. Children must be accompanied by a registered adult. Call 703-631-0013 or visit fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence.
Amadeus. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at United Christian Parish of Reston, 11508 North Shore Drive, Reston. The Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Greater Washington presents Amadeus, music from the motion picture soundtrack. Reception to follow performance. \$20-\$30; children 17 & younger, free. Call 571-483-8444 or visit www.pacodc.org for tickets.

SUNDAY/FEB. 3

Tailgate Party. Noon at Kalypso's

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 7

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Human Trafficking: Monstrosity in Our Backyard

BY PAT HERRITY
SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT SUPERVISOR
(R)



Human trafficking is a heinous crime and major issue in Northern Virginia. The victims are often children, teens, and young adults who are forced to have sex with as many as 30 customers a day while their trafficker profits. It's easy to think that this awful exploitation of our most vulnerable citizens wouldn't be prevalent in one of the richest regions in the country. But the truth is it's happening in our backyards, and the fight to end it starts with raising awareness to prevent it.

As a member of the Board of Supervisors, I'm proud to say that I've supported anti-human trafficking legislation for many years, including nationally recognized bipartisan legislation put forward by former Congresswoman Barbara Comstock. I continue to support the efforts of Fairfax County law enforcement, nonprofits, faith groups, and schools in the fight to end human trafficking, but there's still so much to be done.

Since 2013 Northern Virginia has seen over 500 cases of human trafficking, in addition to a significant spike in calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline within the last two years. Human trafficking is the second fastest growing crime sector nationally, and is pro-

jected to surpass the drug trade as the first.

Prevention of this heinous crime starts with awareness, which is why I support January as Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

For that reason, I recently awarded a proclamation to Bill Woolf, executive director of Just Ask Prevention, declaring January 2019 as Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Just Ask Prevention is a leading nonprofit I've worked closely with, as their goal is to make sure that young people and parents are able to protect themselves and their children from becoming victims of trafficking.

Over the last few years, we've worked together to support the implementation of human trafficking curriculum in Fairfax County Public Schools. This curriculum teaches students to recognize the recruiting and manipulation tactics of traffickers. As some survivor videos note in the curriculum, often times these tactics are subtle, not the "snatch-and-grab" tactic you would expect. Traffickers are becoming increasingly savvy in trapping their victims, even using social media to identify teens who are likely targets and grooming them through flattery.

As a father of two, I see raising awareness of human trafficking as critical for securing the safety of our children. While I have supported many grants to provide funding for our police to combat trafficking, awareness can

protect our children before they fall prey to the horrors of this monstrous crime. With trafficking cases involving all 26 high schools in Fairfax County, we cannot fall into the mindset that it could never happen to us, never to our kid.

I've listened to heartbreaking stories of parents who never believed something as awful as sex trafficking would happen to their daughter or son, until the police found their child assaulted and drugged in a hotel room. No child and no family should ever have to go through that pain.

Those parents have impressed upon me the importance of listening to our kids and asking them questions about the people they meet and interact with before they are manipulated into believing there is no way out.

But it's not enough to just watch out for our own kid. As a community, we need to look out for other people's kids as well by taking notice of the kids on our daughter's soccer team, at our son's bus stop, and at the fast food place on the corner. Together we can ensure that our community is inhospitable to all forms of human trafficking and that no kid goes unnoticed and unprotected.

If you or someone you know is a victim of human trafficking, contact the National Sex Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 or text 233733 for help. If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

For more information about protecting yourself and others from human trafficking, visit <http://www.justaskprevention.org>.

Tax Season Is Upon Us

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



The arrival of W-2 forms in the mail reminds us, even if we may have momentarily tried to forget, that tax season is upon us. This is no ordinary tax year however. Massive changes in federal tax laws will result in significant changes at the state level as well. No one can speak with authority as to what the differences will be for an individual taxpayer as the state General Assembly has not revised state tax law to reflect the federal changes.

The situation we are in is not new. Anytime the Congress makes changes in federal tax policy the state must adjust to those changes and decide whether to adopt the federal policy or to put in new state provisions. As a conformity state Virginia has generally followed federal policy allowing taxpayers to file state returns using the information on their federal form. The difference this year is that the federal changes are so massive that conformity is not realistic without major changes in the way state forms are filed.

Adding to the fact that the forms may be different is the fact that there are major differences between the way deductions and credits have been handled and what will constitute taxable income. High income taxpayers that

were the winners with the federal changes could significantly reduce monies to a state that is already struggling to meet its obligations to funding schools, mental health programs and other priorities.

Essentially Gov. Northam proposed that additional revenues be used for investments in education, workforce development, expanded broadband and targeted tax relief to those who work at the

lowest wages. Republicans have proposed a plan to return more money to taxpayers, but there is strong concern that the Republican plan will make big dents in the state budget. All agree that a decision needs to be reached soon for taxpayers to file their tax forms as soon as possible and as accurately as possible. In past years as many as 650,000 taxpayers have filed in the first ten days of February.

I am patron of a bill supported by Gov. Northam that would make a portion of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) refundable to taxpayers based on their income and family size. The current Virginia EITC set at 20 percent of the federal EITC does not allow for a refund of its full value as is done in 23 other states. Under the bill I introduced it is estimated that as much as \$250 million would be returned to the pockets of hard-working Virginians who are at the lowest pay levels. This helps not only those workers but since low-

income residents typically spend that money on goods and services, it boosts the local economy as well.

There is a sense of urgency in the General Assembly that this issue be resolved as soon as possible because it impacts every household. Not only is there a great deal of confusion, but that confusion will be multiplied many times as people start to prepare their returns with incomplete directions. The challenge has been known for several months. Tax season is upon us. Our tax policy needs to be resolved now.

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

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NEWS

Broadway's Legend On CenterStage

**An evening of
conversation
with Broadway's
Baayork Lee.**

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

From her Broadway debut in "The King and I," to being in the original company of George Balanchine's "Nutcracker" to a featured role in the Tony Award winning "A Chorus Line," Baayork Lee has performed in some of the most far-reaching musical productions of the past decades. In the D.C. area, Lee directed "Carmen Jones" at The Kennedy Center, was the resident choreographer for the Washington National Opera, and choreographed for DC's renowned Arena Stage.

Baayork Lee will soon be at Reston's CenterStage for an intimate evening chatting about her creative career, the state of Broadway today, and her intergenerational work with the National Asian Artists Project.

"Audiences will hopefully get to know me and my journey from being a kid with ambitions to where I am today," said Lee. "I enjoy chatting about the theatre because it is still an intricate part of my life. The passion that I have for it I hope to continue to share with those who are interested."

Asked about Broadway today, Lee indicated that when she started "shows like 'The King and I,' 'South Pacific,' 'Fiddler on the Roof,' and 'West Side Story' were on a larger scale and expensive to produce. Due to the very high cost, producers realized they could no longer support them. Then 'A Chorus Line' changed all of that. We



PHOTO COURTESY RESTON COMMUNITY CENTER

Baayork Lee; in conversation at Reston CenterStage on Feb. 9, 2019

Where and When

Reston Community Center, CenterStage, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Hunters Woods, Reston. Performance on Saturday, Feb. 9, 2019 at 8 p.m. Tickets: \$15, Non-Reston Ticket Price: \$20. Call Reston CenterStage Box Office at 703-476-4500 or visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com.

enabled producers to afford productions through workshops, instead of going out of town and by giving smaller, but high quality production. Shows like "Normal Heart," "Dear Evan Hansen," and "Spring Awakening" are great examples of this currently.

Lee added that for theatre; "change is important because as generations get introduced to the theatre, we need them to be able to identify with the subject matter as introductions to the theatre for young people."

Asked about the importance of diversity in theatre casting, Lee

said that "When people are able to see diversity on stage, they will be able to relate to the characters more; the experience becomes more personal to them. I believe it has taken so long because it takes a village to make a show, so we have to change the minds of the villagers; the Producers, Directors, Choreographers, Casting Agents, Writers, Composers, and so forth."

For those contemplating a theatrical career, Lee added this: "The most important thing is to be focused in what you want, follow your dreams, and never give up."

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 2

FRIDAY/FEB. 1

High School Success. 10 a.m.-noon at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 - Room 100, Dunn Loring. Ann Dolin, M.Ed., educational consultant and author will presents "High School Success: A Strategic Transition for Teens Moving to Higher Grades," on helping teens finish middle school strong, build positive habits for the future, shift from guided to independent learning,

effective time management, and manage their social life so it doesn't interfere with school. Call 703-204-3941 or visit www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center

Public Comment Deadline. The Fairfax County Park Authority has scheduled its annual public comment meeting on the agency's proposed fee adjustments. The public is invited to share their perspectives on the proposals with the Park Authority Board either at the meeting, via correspondence or by email. Information outlining all proposed

fee changes is available online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/feemeeting, at the Park Authority's main office in the Herrity Building and at staffed park facilities, including RECenters, golf courses, nature centers and historic sites. Email Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov, or send written comments to: Attention Public Information Office/Fee Comments, Fairfax County Park Authority, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 927, Fairfax, Va 22035.

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 4

Sports Tavern, 1617 Washington Plaza, Reston. Join fellow football fans for Kalypos's Superbowl Sunday Tailgate party. Party starts at noon when the grills are fired up for burgers, brats and Souvlaki. There will be a cornhole tournament with prizes for the best team of two. Meet Clarence Vaughn, Darryl Grant and others from the Redskins Superbowl Champs Alumni. Superbowl Trivia from 5-6 p.m. Purchase raffle tickets for a chance to win a big screen TV, football signed by Ryan Kerrigan and more Redskins memorabilia. Tickets are \$10 each or three for \$20 and proceeds benefit the Leukemia Lymphoma Society. Free. Rain or shine. Visit www.KalypsosSportsTavern.com.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 6

Trip to the National Museum of American History. 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Bus pickup: RA Headquarters. See the state-of-the-art gallery for the Star-Spangled Banner, the flag that inspired the national anthem, see Julia Child's gourmet kitchen and learn about Abraham Lincoln, the American Revolution, World War II and more. Also, enjoy the museum cafe and shops. Ages 55+. \$30 RA members; \$38 non-members. Visit www.reston.org or call 703-435-6577.

FRIDAY/FEB. 8

The Storytime Social Hour. 11 a.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Every Friday, moms, dads, caregivers and kids are invited to join a Storytime Social Hour. Scrawl will provide coffee and treats for the adults; stories and fun for the little people. Make new friends or meet up with neighbors. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com or call 703-966-2111.

Charity Swing Dance. 8 p.m. at Washington Dulles Hilton, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon. "Have A Heart Hop" is a swing dance featuring live music by the Fabulettes with silent auction fundraiser to benefit Lucky Dog Animal Rescue and the Honor Flight Network for Veterans. \$25 per person. Visit www.haveaheartHop.net.

FEB. 8-27

Audubon Photography Awards Show. Mondays, Wednesdays-Fridays 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; and Sundays 1-4 p.m. at Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. The winning photographers and their photographs were selected from more than 8,000 entries submitted by photographers from all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and 10 Canadian provinces. This year's photographs celebrate the splendor of many bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Call 703-476-9689 or email naturecenter@reston.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 9

The Bookworms Club. 11 a.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Young readers are invited to join Scrawl's all-new and completely free Bookworms Club. Explore a new theme each week with picture books, special guests and most often, authors. Readers are welcome to join or participate any time. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com or call 703-966-2111.

Saturday Series: Nature Explorer. Noon-1:30 p.m. at Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. In the "Exploring Nature Series-Winter" program, students age 6-adult will explore Virginia's ecosystem. Sessions are spread over four Saturdays in February with a new topic to explore each week: Feb. 9 - Mammals; Feb. 16 - Birds; and Feb. 23 - Trees. Each session is \$8 per person. The program takes place both outdoors and indoors, so dress accordingly. Call 703-471-5414 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-fairfax.

SUNDAY/FEB. 10

Open House: Audubon Photography Awards Show. 1-3 p.m. at Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. The winning photographers and their photographs were selected from more than 8,000 entries submitted by photographers from all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and 10 Canadian provinces. This year's photographs celebrate the splendor of many bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Call 703-476-9689 or email naturecenter@reston.org.

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Cat It Again



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As my white cat, Twinkle, continues to walk left to right and right to left across my writing pad with various stops in between for scratching, nudging, belly-rubbing and paw patty cakes, I can't help wondering if there's a method to her non-madness. She doesn't appear to be the least bit agitated. She's not meowing her presence or seemingly demanding anything - other than attention, that is. In fact, she's purring and seems quite pleased with herself.

What's puzzling to me is exactly what the attraction/need is here? I don't have any treats. Her food and water bowls are not here. Neither is her litter box. It's in the adjacent room. Yet here she sits and rolls and scratches herself with what appears to be not a care or concern in the world. She seems extremely content with her situation.

I would have expected her to be sleeping in the house somewhere like our other four cats. I mean, it is 2:15 in the afternoon, many hours after her 6:30 breakfast and hours still to go before her 5:30 dinner. Heck, I've even dozed off myself for a bit before I sat down to try and write this column. But here she is, wide awake, and back and forth.

My wife, Dina, maintains that cats and dogs have a sixth sense when it comes to people being sick, and tend to hang around those afflicted with something or other, providing aid and comfort, if you will.

And so, she gets nervous when multiple cats surround me when we're sitting on the couch watching television: a black cat, usually "Sleeky," lays on top of the couch behind where I'm sitting; Twinkle, sits on the couch next to me and cuddles up against my left thigh; and Biscuit (one of our two buff-colored brothers) "sphinxes" on the coffee table staring at me while I'm having to stare through him to watch television. The other two cats, "Chino" and Andrew are usually sleeping in their spots, out of sight, but never out of mind.

A shift change, apparently. "Chino" has just jumped on my desk and Twinkle has jumped off, no doubt to find a warm spot to sleep perchance to dream. Chino is now laying on his side/back - partially on my writing pad, with his rear end pressed up against my left forearm with all four paws raised up in the air not exactly in my direction but definitely in my proximity.

This cat exchange sort of reminds of how my brother and I would alternate our visiting time with our parents on Sundays, splitting the day so that one of us was always present and accounted for.

But I'm not sick (OKAY, diseased then), and I don't feel as if I need 24/7-type cat companionship. Though I am home alone a lot - and left with my own thoughts, I don't view the cats shifting around me as anything more than there considering me as a big toy.

A toy whose movements and appearance are stimulating to them, sort of like a giant scratching post infused with catnip. A combination they couldn't possibly ignore, like peanut butter and chocolate is to me.

So as much as I feel nurtured and loved and comforted by this cat behavior, I don't feel it's because I'm sick, or rather about to be sick (again, their sixth sense at work), I feel simply that we have some very affectionate cats whose indoor-only lives have caused them to become dependent and appreciative of those who feed and water them. (We won't mention that we're also the ones who stuff them into cat carriers and drive them to the vet, an experience which they collectively hate.)

But if I do get sick (I guess I should be honest: get sicker, I do have cancer) I know I can count on "Chino," Biscuit, Twinkle, Andrew and "Sleeky" to always keep me company. I don't know how much better their presence will make me feel, but I do know their presence will keep me from feeling worse.

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

Weight Lifting in the Golden Years

When done properly, strength training can have tremendous benefits for seniors.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Richard Foley of McLean says he hits the gym at 7:30 five mornings a week. He spends about 40 minutes lifting weights followed by 40 minutes of walking on the treadmill and 10 minutes of sit-ups and crunches.

"I've always been physically active," he said. "I've actually slowed down a little, but it's important to me to keep going for as long as I can."

A National Institutes of Health (NIH) study of Americans over the age of 60 showed that strength training, such as lifting weights, reduced the risk of osteoporosis and chronic conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. It also found that strength-training exercises has the ability to increase muscles strength and mass and allows seniors to stay mobile longer, while also combating weakness and frailty.

"Improving and increasing the muscles in your legs for example, makes them stronger, which means that you'll be able to maintain your ability to walk without assistance longer than you might otherwise," said Rita Days, RN, a gerontological nurse in Falls Church who was not involved in the study. "For seniors who enjoy traveling, shopping or any activity that requires walking, hav-

ing strong quadricep and hamstring muscles means that you'll be able to enjoy those activities longer. It also means that you'll have the strength and endurance to navigate difficult terrain during vacations and other activities that involve walking.

Strength training can lead to a sense of independence for everyday activities like grocery shopping or even getting up from a chair, says Jay Rader, a private health and fitness coach based in Arlington. "When you strengthen the muscles around your joints, you can prolong and even improve your range of motion," he said.

Weight training for seniors, says Days, comes with caveats. "Just because it's beneficial doesn't mean that an 89-year-old should go out and start trying to lift 50 pound weights so that he can regain the ability to walk up three flights of stairs like he could 30 years ago," she said. "The benefits of strength training are tremendous, but they also come with risks and must be done safely. You should definitely consult with a doctor before beginning any kind of exercise program, and it would be my strong recommendation that any one over the age of 50 hire a personal trainer if they're starting any kind of exercise program."

In fact, David Schwartz, a personal trainer in Bethesda says that he has four clients who



Strength-training exercises has the ability to increase muscles strength and mass and allows seniors to stay mobile longer.

are over the age of 60, and while he personalizes each client's workout, there are specific exercises that are particularly beneficial to seniors. "I have one client who is 72 and began training with me when she was 68," he said. "The workouts that I do with her include lunges and squats which

strengthen the quadriceps, or the muscles in the thigh area. It's been interesting to watch her gain leg strength and be able to walk longer distances. But strengthening the quads can also protect your knees and prevent injuries and other problems."

The bicep and tricep muscles of the arm are also important to building strength. "All you need are a pair of light to medium weight dumbbells," said Kat Chetrit, a personal trainer in Fairfax. "Two great exercises, that are also relatively simple are bicep curls where you hold the weight in your hand and bend your arm at the elbow and curl the weight in the direction of your shoulder; and hammer curls, which are very similar except that you hold the weight like you would a hammer. Those are both great exercises for maintaining arm strength."

Days however, underscores the fact that there are risks involved "You can strain a muscle or drop a weight on yourself or even fracture a bone," she said. "With the elderly, these injuries can take a longer time to heal than they would in a person who is much younger. The benefits definitely outweigh the risks, but you want to be safe and smart. That includes talking with your doctor and getting help from a personal training, especially if you've never or rarely exercised before."

How To Best Meet Needs of Older Residents?

County-wide survey seeks public input.

The material in these notes and calendar listings comes from the Golden Gazette. To subscribe to the Golden Gazette or update an address, call 703-324-5633. Send email to birendra.kunwar@fairfaxcounty.gov. Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults. Click on the Golden Gazette.

In February, thousands of adults — 50 and over — will find yellow postcards in their mailboxes inviting them to participate in Fairfax County's first 50-plus Community Survey for Fairfax County and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church.

The survey is part of a county-wide initiative to create a more aging-friendly community. Survey recipients will be randomly-selected throughout Fairfax County and the cities of Falls Church and Fairfax.

"More than 25 percent of Fairfax County residents are 50 and over, and we can expect to see that number dramatically increase in the coming years," said Bryan Hill, Fairfax County Executive. "We want to learn more about the experience of aging in Fairfax County so that we can better meet the needs of our 50-plus community."

The local governments conducting the survey hope to learn more about the lifestyles of individuals among the 50-plus

community including opportunities to work, socialize and volunteer; issues facing these adults such as retirement, housing and caregiving; and their usage of community services like public transportation and senior centers.

"The survey is a unique opportunity for us to make our voices heard in a powerful way," said Carolyn Sutterfield, chairman of the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging. The commission, the citizens advisory council for the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, oversees and promotes the five-year Fairfax 50-plus Community Action Plan adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2014. Sutterfield strongly encourages those who receive the survey to take the time to complete it, whether online or by mail. "The 20 minutes you spend on this have the potential to improve the quality of life for older adults in the Fairfax community for years to come," she said. Survey results will play an important role in planning the next 50-plus Community Action Plan.

The county has contracted with the National Research Center to conduct the survey. All responses are anonymous.

SURVEY TIMELINE

❖ Week of Feb. 4: 22,000 randomly-selected adults — 50 and over — will receive a yellow postcard in the mail indicating that they have been randomly selected to par-

ticipate in the survey.

❖ Week of Feb. 11: Selected respondents will receive their survey materials to be completed online or in writing and returned.

❖ Spring: Staff will review and analyze survey results and post the findings online along with next-steps in the process.

While not everyone will receive a survey, everyone is encouraged to make their voice heard. The public is welcome to contribute suggestions and comments to the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging by email at dfscommissiononaging@fairfaxcounty.gov

Seniors Calendar

- ❖ Feb. 4, 10:15 a.m.-2 p.m. AARP Free Tax Preparation Services. AARP is offering free tax help with a preference given to older adults. Arrive at least one hour before the session closes. Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. For information and additional dates, call 703-765-3645.
- ❖ Feb. 6, 9:30-11:30 a.m. LLI/NOVA Forum: Will we have enough money to manage well in our retirement years? Hear about how to manage money in retirement years and how to avoid serious pitfalls at each stage of retirement. Free and open to the public. Free parking. Ernst Cultural Center, NOVA Annandale Campus, 8333 Little River Tnpk., Annandale. Call 703-503-0600.
- ❖ Feb. 9, 2-3:30 p.m. Floral Design Workshop: Valentine Topiary. Branch out for Valentine's Day by making a topiary arrangement with

or during the public comment period of their regular monthly meetings (for a schedule of upcoming meetings go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/older-adults/fairfax-area-commission-on-aging)

You can follow the county's progress on this survey initiative and find additional ways to share comments and suggestions on aging online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/50-plus-community-survey.

Questions?
Call 703-324-4444 or submit questions by email to OSMDataAnalyticsosm@fairfaxcounty.gov.

- assorted flowers and Valentine trim. You get to keep the beautiful topiary for yourself. Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Rd., Alexandria. To register, call 703-642-5173 or 703-222-4664.
- ❖ Feb. 11, 10-11 a.m. Assisted Living: Can I Afford It? Find answers to how much assisted living costs and what expenses Medicare/Medicaid cover. In addition, discuss planning to pay for expenses and how this influences your retirement and legacy goals. Free. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. SE., Vienna. To register, call 703-255-7801.
- ❖ Feb. 12, 7-8 p.m. Register for Fairfax County's free Family Caregiver Telephone Support Group. Call in to join this month's discussion "Prevention and Problem Solving." Discuss how to use problem solving and prevention techniques to avoid the crisis trap. To register, call 703-324-5376.