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# Chantilly CONNECTION

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WELLBEING

PAGE 2

From left are Ellie Whitfield, her mom Jennica, and Ellie's Hats founder Jay Coakley.

# Ellie's Hats Celebrates Fifth Anniversary

NEWS, PAGE 3

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## WELLBEING



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

A new study shows that even after one hour spent on electronic devices each day, children and teens may begin to have less emotional stability and a greater inability to finish tasks.

# Managing Screen Time

Working collaboratively with one's child can decrease the struggle.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Julia Wires purchased an iPhone for her 12-year-old daughter in part she says, because many of the girls at her Potomac, Md. school have smartphones that they bring to campus daily. Wires and her husband were initially hesitant to make the purchase because their daughter was diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Anxiety Disorder at the end of 2018.

"First, there's the social pressure she feels because all of her friends have iPhones. Then there's the issue of her dad and I being able to keep in touch with her now that she has more freedom to go places on her own," said Wires. "Both of those [factors] are juxtaposed against the fact that she has trouble staying focused and calming down when she needs to. That made the decision tough for us."

Too much time spent on gaming, smartphones and watching television could exacerbate symptoms in children who've been diagnosed with ADHD, according to a new study by researchers at San Diego State University and the University of Georgia. The report showed that even after one hour of screen time, children and teens may begin to have lower self-control, less emotional stability and a greater inability to finish tasks.

"Kids with ADHD have trouble keeping track of time, so they could spend hours on their tablet without realizing it. Screen time can make bedtime rou-

tines more difficult and parents might have an additional struggle getting their kids to fall asleep," said child psychologist Adele Schwartz, Ph.D., of McLean, who was not involved in the study. "Kids with ADHD also might be more likely to ignore parental guidelines and I would worry more about them engaging in risky behavior online."

Helping a child with ADHD transition from playing a video game to doing their homework could require special handling, advises Sarah Bryant, LCSW. "Instead of telling your child that they have to stop watching television at six o'clock or that they have five more minutes on a video game, try telling them that they have to stop at the next commercial break or at the end of the round in a video game," she said.

Working collaboratively with one's child will reduce the chance of a power struggle, says Bryant. "You and your child can work together to list all of

the things that need to get done, like homework, time spent outside, doing sports, chores and other activities and come up with a schedule," she said. "Figure out how much time is left for things like video games and television. Hang the schedule somewhere that's visible to both of you. Your child will see how little time is left for playing video games and since they were part of the process, they'll feel like they're part of a team rather than a subordinate with no control over their life."

"Parents of kids with ADHD should definitely make use of parental controls on tablets, smart phones and television, especially during school hours or when kids should be doing their homework," added Schwartz. "It's also important that children, especially those with ADHD not use electronics at least an hour before bedtime. And it almost goes without saying that parents should model the behavior that they want their children to have by limiting their own screen time."

**"... parents should model the behavior that they want their children to have by limiting their own screen time."**

— Adele Schwartz, child psychologist

# 'Source of Support' for Sick Children

**Ellie's Hats celebrates its fifth anniversary.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS

**D**uring the fifth-anniversary celebration for Ellie's Hats, children ran around playing with each other, munched on cake pops and built a tall tower of Jenga blocks. But not too long ago, some of these same children were in hospitals being treated for cancer.

So when the organization's president and founder, Jay Coakley, addressed the crowd for a few minutes, he had the children come stand beside him. Then, pointing at them, he said, "They're what it's all about."

And that's exactly right, because he started his hat effort to help one child. But seeing the difference it made in her life, he couldn't stop there. And now, with support from partners, sponsors and volunteers, Ellie's Hats has donated thousands of hats to children throughout the U.S.

Ellie Whitfield was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia in 2013; and by the time she started kindergarten at Woodburn Elementary, she'd lost her hair and was wearing hats to school every day. Her PE. teacher, Coakley, noticed how happy the hats made Ellie and organized a hat drive for her.

He also wanted to bring that same joy to other children suffering from cancer, while raising awareness of the disease, so he founded Ellie's Hats. Most come from hat drives held by schools and groups, such as churches and Scouts – and in every state, plus Canada and South Africa, people knit and crochet hats for the nonprofit.

The organization's motto is "More Than Just a Hat," and it's easy to see why. Be-

**"The hats and visits helped break up the isolation and gave us another source of support."**

— Stephanie Snapkoski



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS

**Volunteer Fairfax members (from left) Barbara Small, Michelle Jacobs and Katrice Saddler man the Ellie's Hats fundraising table selling hats and T-shirts.**

sides raising the hat recipients' self-esteem, Ellie's Hats also helps their financially struggling families and contributes to hospitals and clinics treating pediatric cancer patients. Besides monetary donations, it gives them items including iPads, TVs, DVD players and gift cards.

And on Sunday, Feb. 17, the nonprofit Ellie's Hats celebrated its fifth anniversary at Mustang Sally Brewing Co. in Chantilly. Owner Sean Hunt met Coakley when he opened his business, and Ellie's Hats was the first group for which Hunt held a fundraiser. So he was delighted to host its latest event, called "Beers & Cheers."

Also attending the festivities was red-haired Ellie, herself, now 10 and in the fifth grade. "She finished treatment in 2015 and is in remission and doing well," said her

mom, Jennica Whitfield. "She does plays in school, is learning basketball skills and enjoys playing with her girlfriends in the neighborhood."

Although a bit "overwhelmed" seeing such a large crowd – some 75 people – at the event, Whitfield said, "It's also exciting to see how the organization's grown – I never expected it to be so big. But it's pretty wonderful to see so many people who've supported the organization, our family and other families, as well."

Furthermore, said Whitfield, "It represents strong community, and while Ellie was very sick, one of the most important things for us was to have families come around us in support. And I know Ellie's Hats is doing this for other families in similar situations. We're just very thankful for Ellie and for Ellie's Hats."

So is Stephanie Snapkoski, whose son Drew, now 6, was diagnosed with high-risk, acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) in March 2018 and has a 3-1/2-year treatment

plan. He had a cold that wouldn't go away, plus tiredness and lethargy. And after his third doctor's visit in a week, his blood was tested and doctors broke the news to his parents.

"It was hard to process, at first; I was numb," said Snapkoski. "Then I went into aggressive research mode. We were lucky to be connected to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, which connected us to five top doctors for second opinions. Drew had a rare mutation in one of his genes, so there wasn't a lot of research into its treatment or prognosis."

Since then, he's had a great deal of chemotherapy, but it was difficult for his parents. "You want to treat your child aggressively, but don't want to expose him to a lot of toxins," said his mother. "He had nine months of aggressive treatment, in and out of the hospital. And my husband Michael – whose job kept him busy traveling – quit it so he could be home with us. Now, Drew is on maintenance treatment for 2-1/2 years, until June 20, 2021, when he's 9."

Meanwhile, said Snapkoski, "Within days of Drew being diagnosed, Jay came to us at Inova Fairfax Hospital and quickly became a longtime, family friend. The first visit, he brought hats, plus a backpack of toys and activities to keep Drew busy in the hospital – so it was more than a hat."

And whenever Drew was hospitalized, Coakley visited him and arranged for "Star Wars"-costumed people to come by, too. He also dropped by their home to see Drew. "The hats and visits helped break up the isolation and gave us another source of support," said Snapkoski.

Glad to be at the anniversary celebration, she said, "I'm so proud of Jay, and anything we can do to support him and Ellie's Hats, we're happy to do. And it's great to connect with other families [like us], too."

While in the hospital, Drew met and became good friends with another young cancer patient, Ella Borowski, and so did their mothers. So they were delighted to see each

SEE ELLIE'S HATS. PAGE 5

## ROUNDUPS

### Learn about Animal Protection

Animal protection is the topic of the next meeting of the Sully District Police Station's Citizens Advisory Committee. It's set for Wednesday, March 13, at 7:30 p.m., in the Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly.

Meeting attendees will learn about the duties of an Animal Protection Police Officer and how people become this type of officer. They'll also receive information on what types of animal incidents should be reported to the police, what types of investigations

(i.e., cruelty, hoarding and neglect) are done, and when wildlife encounters should be reported.

### Free Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will perform free, child safety carseat inspections Tuesday, March 19, from 5-8:30 p.m., at the station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. But residents should install the child safety seats themselves so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed.

Because of time constraints, only the first

35 vehicles arriving on each date will be inspected. That way, inspectors may have enough time to properly instruct the caregiver on the correct use of the child seat. Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140, to confirm dates and times.

### WFCM Looking for Volunteers

Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM), a Chantilly-based nonprofit serving local families in need with food and emergency financial services, is seeking volunteers to fill several positions. They are:

♦ Costco Food Pick-up (Chantilly), 8:30-9:30 a.m., every Tuesday;

♦ Harris Teeter Pick-up (Fair Oaks), 8:30-9:30 a.m., every Thursday;

♦ Admin., WFCM front desk, 10-2:30 p.m., every Friday (Will consider job sharing every other week);

♦ Admin., front desk, 2:30-4:30 p.m., every Tuesday;

♦ Admin., front desk, 2:30-4:30 p.m., every Thursday;

♦ Fill-In/Substitute Pantry Volunteers - Placed on an on-call list (Training will be provided); and

♦ Fill-In/Substitute Admin. Front desk - Placed on an on-call list (Training will be provided).

Those interested should contact Deb Culbertson at [dculbertson@wfcmva.org](mailto:dculbertson@wfcmva.org) or 571-599-2871.

# OPINION

# 2019

## But this year is supposed to be an improvement.

**E**very year is election year in Virginia. Add in primaries and special elections, and there are many more elections every year, all with consequences.

Control of this year's Virginia General Assembly came down to pulling a name out of bowl (literally). In 2019, every seat in the House of Delegates and Virginia Senate will be on the ballot.

**EDITORIAL** While some good things did happen in this year's session of the General Assembly, (eviction protections, foster care reform, step towards menstrual equity, to name some), other important legislation stalled because of party politics and ideology, including reforming fines and effects on drivers licenses; seat belt laws and legislation on distracted driving.

A huge number of candidates will seek seats on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and School Board as well, with the direction and tone of the future hanging in the balance.

Results of 2019 Elections will matter in many ways.

**Are you registered to vote?** Check here: <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation>

### Upcoming Elections:

May 7, 2019 - Vienna Town Council Elections  
June 11, 2019 - Primary Elections  
Nov. 5, 2019 - General & Special Elections

### 2019 Elections Include:

Filing deadline for parties, March 28  
Primary if held: June 11  
General Election Nov. 5  
Virginia Senate (4-year term)  
House of Delegates (2-year term)  
Soil and Water Directors (4-year term)  
Board of Supervisors  
School Board  
Counties: 4-year terms:  
◆ Commonwealth's Attorney  
◆ Sheriff  
◆ Commissioner of Revenue  
◆ Treasurer  
Vienna Town Council

In case you wonder what will be on the ballot next, here is a guide.

Virginia has a General Election every year on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November.

- ◆ Federal offices are elected in even-numbered years.
- ◆ State and Local offices are elected in odd-numbered years.
- ◆ Clifton Mayor and Town Council are elected in even-number years on the first Tuesday in May.
- ◆ Herndon Mayor and Town Council are elected in even-number years on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November.
- ◆ Vienna Mayor and 3 Town Council members are elected in even-numbered years on the first Tuesday in May.
- ◆ 3 Vienna Town Council members are elected in odd-numbered years on the first Tuesday in May.
- ◆ If primaries are called by the political parties, they are held on the second Tuesday in June.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

ments in Virginia's future.

At the recommendation of the House Select Committee on School Safety, we also prioritized school safety in the 2019 budget with \$12 million in new funding for school resource officers, infrastructure, and other initiatives designed to keep our kids safe. That funding is in addition to over a dozen bills aimed at making our schools safer through counseling realignment, increased mental health services, and more training for our school personnel. These are common sense investments towards providing a safer atmosphere for our children at school.

Last but not least, I am proud to have voted for, and been a Co-Patron of, HJ 615 which is non-partisan redistricting legislation that will create an independent map making commission. As a constitutional amendment, this bill will need to pass one more session of the General Assembly before it can be presented to Virginia voters as a referendum, but I am pleased to have started that process this session. Ending partisan gerrymandering is a common sense and good government measure that I believe we should all applaud and one I look forward to working on in the future.

In addition to these efforts, I have a number of bills important to our district which are currently awaiting the Governor's signature. One of those bills, HB 2527, would prevent tolls from being placed on Fairfax and Prince William County Parkways. I encourage you to learn more about

that legislation, and my other bills, by visiting lis.virginia.gov or by contacting my office directly at 703-815-1201 or DelTHugo@house.virginia.gov. With session over, I also look forward to

engaging you here at home and discussing these and other important issues facing our community and state.

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# Balanced Budget with Tax Relief

BY TIM HUGO  
DELEGATE (R-40)



The 2019 session of the Virginia General Assembly has come to an end, and I am particularly proud of our work to provide tax relief, balance the budget, improve school safety, and pass non-partisan redistricting legislation.

The last time I wrote in, I had recently introduced my plan to reform Virginia's tax code and prevent an unnecessary tax increase. Today, I am happy to say that legislation, HB 2529, is now law. HB 2529 is the most significant tax relief plan in 15 years, the second largest tax cut in

Virginia history, and will provide Virginia taxpayers with nearly \$1 billion in tax relief. Most importantly, it will put your hard-earned money back where it belongs — in your pocket.

Equally important, our General Assembly delivered on its constitutional requirement to pass a balanced budget. Our 2019 state budget includes a 5 percent pay raise for our teachers, \$85.7 million in new funding for K-12 education, \$57 million to freeze tuition at our colleges, \$19 million for broadband funding, and \$13.5 million for workforce training and development. While no budget is perfect, we were able to provide vital services and make smart invest-

### WORDS & PICTURES

## The New Boy in Class

There was a new boy in class today,  
his name was Greg.  
He wore a red hat and grinned a lot  
and had a huge white brace on his leg.

He read poetry during science class,  
did history instead of math.  
He thought Jamie was a boy  
and thus incurred her wrath.

When the final bell rang,  
he hopped on the bus  
where he sat eating his snack  
without much of a fuss!

— OM DESAI



ILLUSTRATION BY OM DESAI

A 6th grader at Greenbriar West, Om Desai wrote this ballad and illustrated it for Anita Mohan's poetry workshop held at the Chantilly Regional Library.

## NEWS

# Ellie's Hats Celebrates Its Fifth Anniversary

FROM PAGE 3

other at the party. Now 6-1/2, Ella was diagnosed in May 2018 with acute myeloid leukemia (AML).

"We thought she had allergies because she was really congested and was having trouble breathing," said her mom, Kate Borowski. "She also had swollen gums and was lethargic, so we took her to her pediatrician. We got her bloodwork back, the next day, and they told us to take her immediately to Inova Fairfax."

Ella's the middle child and has brothers, 9 and 2. And when her pediatrician told her parents what she had, said Borowski, "I felt like I was punched in the stomach. I didn't know anything about this disease or that there were different types of leukemia. I thought cancer happens to other people, not us."

With her husband away on business, she had to quickly arrange for childcare for her sons so she could take Ella to the hospital. "My husband flew home that night and met us at the hospital," she said. "And his parents drove from Michigan that night to watch the boys."

As with Drew, Ella's cancer was also treated aggressively. "She was bombarded



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS

**Michael, Stephanie and Drew Snapkoski**

with four rounds of harsh chemo," said Borowski. "Her last round took 6-1/2 weeks. She was treated from May until the end of October. After the first round, they did another bone-marrow test and said she was in remission. Now she has monthly blood counts, for at least a year."

Borowski met Coakley, their second day in the hospital. "Another mom there with her child told him about Ella, and he came in with a bunch of hats and a Wonder Woman backpack full of toys for her," said Borowski. "She now uses that backpack for

school. He brought hats and toys for the boys, too, and came back continuously with toys and to visit. One time, he even came with the basketball players from GMU. And later, he arranged for us to go to a GMU basketball game, and we all had a blast and even got to meet the team."

"We were so overwhelmed and humbled that there are people out there who take the time out of their lives to do this," she continued. "It was nice that Jay thought of the siblings, as well. And a lot of the families he helps then get involved in Ellie's Hats, too. I'm proud of this organization, and I'm happy to attend and celebrate with him to bring awareness to Ellie's Hats."

As for Coakley, he said, "It's great seeing some of the families we've helped and some of the sponsors. But it's sad that we can't close up shop and that we're still doing this [because so many children have cancer]."

"It's also nice to see the kids I first met in the hospital now playing and doing so well," he continued. "Even some former students of mine came back for the celebration."

One of them was Kristen Dallhoff. Coakley was her high-school P.E. teacher, and they now live in the same neighborhood. "We reconnected five years ago when I was look-

ing to participate in something that meant something and to give back," she said. "So he told me about Ellie's Hats and I started helping."

Initially, she donated hats, plus clothing to sick children's siblings when the family was in need. Then she became a board member. "Every spring, at the pancake-breakfast fundraiser, I'm in charge of the raffle, which generates several thousands of dollars."

Dallhoff also spreads the word about Ellie's Hats to bring it recognition. "Most of the hat donations come from other kids who hold hat drives at school or ask guests to bring hats to their birthday parties, in lieu of gifts," she said. "So it's kids helping kids. And our business sponsors also donate hats and help us financially."

Whenever they learn about a newly diagnosed child, said Dallhoff, they also ask about the siblings' interests so they can get them the cartoon characters, superheroes or sports-team hats they'd like and would actually wear. Pleased to be part of Ellie's Hats, she, too, was thrilled to attend the anniversary festivities.

"I can't believe it's been five years," said Dallhoff. "Now, so many people around here know what Ellie's Hats is, and it's also increasing awareness of childhood cancer and ways that children can help. This gives them an easy way to give back."

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# ENTERTAINMENT

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

## SATURDAY/MARCH 9

**Maker Day.** The Fairfax County Public Library is joining the maker movement with the first annual FCPL Maker Day. Several branches are hosting events that are geared toward inventing, creating, and tinkering, with the goal of helping children learn through doing. Some events require registration, so check before going.

- ❖ Centreville Regional Library: How to Build a Robot, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- ❖ Chantilly Regional Library: Arduinos, 10:30-11:30 a.m.; Create!, 3-4:30 p.m.

For the full schedule of FCPL Maker Day events, visit [tinyurl.com/y3bswcl6](http://tinyurl.com/y3bswcl6).

**Taking the Wraps Off.** 1-2 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. On this tour, visitors will walk freely with their guides through the home of Richard Bland Lee, the first congressman from Northern Virginia. The usual museum barriers will be down. This tour is designed for visitors age 5 to adult. \$7 per person. Call 703-437-1794 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site).

## SUNDAY/MARCH 10

**Game Day Fun.** 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum will host a Game Day for all ages and prizes as well. For the little ones there will be a Thomas the Tank Engine game. Older children will have a sticker scavenger hunt bingo game and there will even be a game for the grownups. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org) or call 703-425-9225.

## SATURDAY/MARCH 16

**St. Patrick's Day / St. Joseph's Day Party.** 6:9:30 p.m. at St. Veronica's Church parish hall, 3460 Centreville Road, Chantilly. This is a family event that includes food, drink, sing-alongs, Irish dancers and plenty of smiling Irish eyes. Adults \$8, Children \$6, drinks extra. Visit [www.stveronica.net/](http://www.stveronica.net/) or call 703-773-2000.

## SUNDAY/MARCH 17

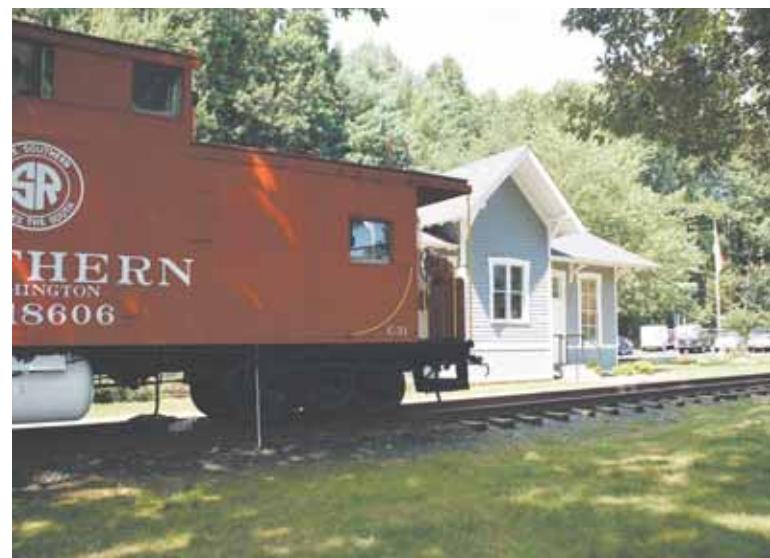
**NTRAK Scale Model Train Show.** 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold a N gauge Model Train Display. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org), [www.facebook.com/FFXSRR](http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR), or call 703-425-9225.

## TUESDAY/MARCH 19

**Live Music: Ryanhood.** 7:15 p.m. at Amphora's Diner Deluxe, 1151 Elen St., Herndon. Acoustic duo Ryanhood got their first break more than a decade ago as street performers at Boston's Quincy Market. Ryanhood is on tour promoting their latest album, Early Best. Suggested donation is \$10 for members of the Folk Club of Reston/Herndon and \$11 for non-members. Visit [www.restonherndonfolkclub.com](http://www.restonherndonfolkclub.com).

## SUNDAY/MARCH 24

**Spring Make 'n Take Activity.** 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Make tissue paper flowers to welcome spring. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4



## Railroad Museum

The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum holds events most Sundays, 1-4 p.m. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum is located at 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Visit [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org), [www.facebook.com/FFXSRR](http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR), or call 703-425-9225.

and under, free. Visit [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org), [www.facebook.com/FFXSRR](http://www.facebook.com/FFXSRR), or call 703-425-9225.

### Live Music: Valerie Smith & Liberty Pike.

7 p.m. (doors open at 6) at Frying Pan Farm Park Visitor Center, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Make plans to "hitch up the team" and head to Frying Pan Farm Park this season for Bluegrass Barn. Food and beverages available for purchase. \$18 in advance, \$20 at the door. Purchase tickets online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park/bluegrass-barn](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park/bluegrass-barn) or by phone at 703-222-4664 or 703-437-9101.

## SUNDAY/MARCH 31

### Learn about the "Tender Cars" on Trains.

1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Learn about the "Tender Cars" a type of railroad car on trains. Story boards and a craft will begin the series of activities to learn about the different types of cars on trains. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org) or call 703-425-9225.

## MONDAYS STARTING APRIL 1

### Program for Homeschoolers.

1-2:30 p.m. At E.C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Flock to Ellanor C. Lawrence Park for Homeschool Biology-Birds where students receive hands-on instruction in wild bird identification, migration, habitats and conservation through citizen science. Instructors use preserved species, and wild birds to illustrate the concepts. All lessons are structured around the Virginia Standards of Learning. The program meets every Monday from 1-2:30 p.m. except April 15. This program is geared for students ages 8-15. Call 703-631-0013 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence).

## THURSDAYS STARTING APRIL 4

### Program for Homeschoolers.

2-3:30 p.m. At E.C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Take a page out of an old book and become a Homeschool Historian. Explore Fairfax County history with hands-on activities and games in this four-week course. Week 1: Textiles: Staying Warm and Cool. Week 2: Technology of food production for the Native Americans and Machens. Week 3: Life of a soldier. Week 4: Digging the Past. The program begins on April 4

and meets Thursdays from 2-3:30 p.m. This program is appropriate for children ages 7-13. Call 703-631-0013 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence).

## SUNDAY/APRIL 7

### Author Event: Missy Sheldrake.

Noon-2 p.m. at Barnes and Noble in Fair Lakes. Missy Sheldrake, of Centreville, is the author/illustrator of the "Keepers of the Wellsprings" young adult fantasy series and will be signing books. Visit [www.missysheldrake.com](http://www.missysheldrake.com).

## SUNDAY/APRIL 14

**Live Music: Becky Buller Band.** 7 p.m. (doors open at 6) at Frying Pan Farm Park Visitor Center, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Make plans to "hitch up the team" and head to Frying Pan Farm Park this season for Bluegrass Barn. Food and beverages available for purchase. \$18 in advance, \$20 at the door. Purchase tickets online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park/bluegrass-barn](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park/bluegrass-barn) or by phone at 703-222-4664 or 703-437-9101.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 27

**Springfest 2019.** 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Springfest is a once a year, an environmental festival that strives to educate Northern Virginia residents, businesses and students on the benefits of helping our planet. Springfest strives to celebrate our planet and participate in the observance of Earth Day. Email [yleah@cleanfairfax.org](mailto:yleah@cleanfairfax.org) or visit [Springfestfairfax.org](http://Springfestfairfax.org).

## TUESDAYS STARTING MAY 7

**Program for Homeschoolers.** 1-2:30 p.m. At E.C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Learn a new skill with Homeschool Animal Vets. Students get hands-on experience caring for animals in the visitor center and park. They will explore the lives of birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals. Feed and refresh tanks for exhibit animals and explore the park to see what staff does to assist wildlife. The program meets every Tuesday from 1 until 2:30 p.m. It is appropriate for youngsters ages 8 to 15. Call 703-631-0013 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence)

# 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.

## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Children who will be 5 years old on or before Sept. 30, 2019, are eligible to attend kindergarten. Find the correct neighborhood school by entering your address at boundary.fcps.edu/boundary/. Complete a packet of registration forms found at www.fcps.edu/it/forms/enroll.pdf or in the school office. Gather supporting documents: proof of residence in the school boundary, a certified copy of the child's birth certificate, parent/guardian photo ID, and any custody orders. Certificate of physical exam and immunization will be required before the student may start school, but is not required for registration. Parents who choose to delay enrollment in kindergarten by one year are required to notify the school in writing of their intent. Learn more at www.fcps.edu/registration/general-registration-requirements.

♦ **Colin Powell Elementary School** in Centreville will conduct their Kindergarten registration on Friday, April 5, 9 a.m.-noon; parents may also call 571-522-6008 to schedule an appointment. Due to the time required to register a child, they request that only parents come to school for registration.

♦ **Greenbriar East Elementary School** is now accepting registration paperwork for rising Kindergarteners. Visit greenbriareastes.fcps.edu to make an appointment or call the school office at 703-633-6400. The Kindergartner information session is scheduled for Friday, April 5 from 10-11 a.m.

♦ **Greenbriar West Elementary School** is now accepting information for next year's Kindergarten classes. Families within the school's boundaries should call the school office at 703-633-6700 as soon as possible.

♦ **Union Mill Elementary** is currently registering new students for the 2019-20 school year. Find registration forms in the Union Mill Elementary office or online at www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/forms/enroll\_0.pdf. Call 703-322-8500 or email lrmilla@fcps.edu to make an appointment to bring completed registration forms and supporting documentation to school. Kindergarten Orientation will take place on Monday, April 1, 4-5 p.m.

## TUESDAY/MARCH 12

**Community Meeting.** 7 p.m. in the cafeteria of Centre Ridge Elementary School, 14400 New Braddock Road, Centreville. Fairfax County Department of Transportation will hold a public meeting on the Route 28 widening project, providing an update on progress made over the past year on the project. The meeting will include an open house at 7 p.m., presentation at 7:30 and time afterward for questions and answers. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation for more.

## WEDNESDAY/MARCH 13

**Sully District Budget Town Hall.** 7 p.m. at Chantilly High School, 4201 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Those unable to make it to the meeting may always submit comments on the budget to sully@fairfaxcounty.gov or by phone 703-814-7100.

## SATURDAY/MARCH 16

**Power Up Women's Conference.** 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Westfields Marriott Washington Dulles, 14750 Conference Center Drive, Chantilly. The Power Up Women's Conference attracts attendees from all over the United States and Canada. This year, Daphne Maxwell Reid, iconic TV mom of "The Fresh Prince of Bel Air" and the first woman of color to appear on the cover of Glamour Magazine will be the conference headliner. Registration is \$99 and includes access to the conference, meals and all conference materials. Visit www.powerupwomensconference.com/register.

## MONDAY/MARCH 18

**Assistance League Meeting.** 10 a.m.-12 noon. At Sully District Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Free. Volunteer to help in the community. Assistance League of Northern Virginia, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Individuals looking to stay in touch with the community are invited to learn more about the organization's programs. Pre-meeting social starts at 9:30 a.m. Visit the website: www.alnv.org.

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## No Spring in My Future Step



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I wouldn't say I'm feeling any significant side effects yet from my immunotherapy treatment but, if I'm handwriting these columns to begin with – which I am, I have to do so while holding a pen with a rubber grip (just above the ballpoint). No longer am I able to manipulate without this extra assistance. My fingers simply can't sustain the grip otherwise.

Nor would I say my reaction to my wife, Dina's suggestion, as we walked to the car this morning – and looked around "Belly Acres" (our two acres of mostly trees) post wind storm, concerning what homeowner/landowner thing we should do in the spring: pick up sticks and miscellaneous other debris off the ground, was at all enthusiastic. It was quite the contrary. In fact, I can't think of anything I'm less physically able to do given the side effects I'm semi-experiencing:

♦ Due to the chemotherapy I've infused – and pilled, for 10 years, the neuropathy in my feet makes walking an enduring challenge and running – even in place, totally out of the question. Related to this difficulty walking is difficulty maintaining my balance, especially when walking on non-level ground like "Belly Acres." I'm not exactly a danger to myself – or others, but if those yellow caution signs were placed strategically around our property, there would be yellow every which way you looked.

♦ Because I'm semi overweight (a partial side effect) and definitely out of shape (sort of a side effect), bending over exacerbates the shortness-of-breath side effect I am most assuredly experiencing. Therefore, picking up sticks and stones off the ground may not exactly break any bones, but the names I may be called for being unable to perform this mundane task will not hurt me at all. It might amuse me actually.

♦ The preceding task runs directly into yet another side effect: musculoskeletal pain and weakness. My bones ache a little and my muscles quiver a lot.

Add up the deficits and you get the following: I can't walk. My balance is impaired. Bending over is exhausting and shortens my breath which all together limits my stick picking.

Moreover, carrying the weight I've gained is made more difficult by the weakness and pain I feel in my bones and muscles. This is the trifecta plus one.

I can do many things (activities of daily living, etc.), but the trifecta plus one, I can't. Other than adding a chainsaw ("the most trusted tool in the homeowner's arsenal") and being forced to wear those extremely heavy, metal-toe work boots to the equation, I can't imagine a less enticing spring activity as I gait around attempting to clean up and carry around a season's worth of ground clutter.

Having said all that, I think I deserve a certain amount of credit for knowing my limitations. Granted, such an admission is unlikely to garner any awards or "attaboy," however; when one's life hangs in the balance (or lack thereof) knowing what not to do may be as important as knowing what to do.

And I know what to do indoors; it's more outdoors that presents the problem.

It seems that the side effects I'm beginning to feel, though not quite life changing, are nevertheless life-affecting.

But I'm one of the lucky ones: still alive and reasonably well. I can live, still work (sort of) and play (occasionally) and even walk upright (though my posture could use some straightening).

So I have a few side effects which prevent me from doing two acres worth of stick work. I couldn't have planned it any better.

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

## COMMUNITY

# New Girls on the Block Scouts BSA opens up new opportunity to girls.

BY JOHN FOONG,  
TROOP 159,  
POWHATAN DISTRICT, NCAC, BSA

This was anything but your typical Scout meeting. A group gathered around a table, an unmistakable excitement in the air. They were just getting started, and were raring to go. Chatter filled the room they were in about uniforms, supplies, upcoming outings and more. There was an optimism and energy in their conversation that seemed hard to find today.

Oh, and they were girls. This is Troop 7, a Scouts BSA all-girls troop and one of the first in the Powhatan district that serves Chantilly, Great Falls, Herndon, Oakton, and Reston. The official program with Scouts BSA girls' troops started on Feb. 1 — although the Scouts, adult Scouters, and their parents were up and moving long before that. The BSA has been a boys-only Troops and Packs option for the longest time — although BSA Venture Crews and Explorer Posts have allowed girls for decades — so that begs the question; what's the difference now between a Scouts BSA boys' and a Scouts BSA girls' troop? And how does this accomplish anything?

Troop 7 Scoutmaster Steve Conner has served in BSA Scouting for 14 years with a son who earned Eagle a few years ago — he believes that the move by BSA to allow girls to participate in Scouts BSA Troops was nothing but positive. He said, "I wanted to be a part of forging this path forward and give a group of ambitious girls the same opportunities that were afforded to my son and the millions of boys who have had the privilege of being part of BSA." Steve initially thought that a Scouts BSA girls' troop would struggle to gain acceptance in the community — "but to the contrary, my experience to date has been exactly the opposite." According to him, Troop 7 has had an overall positive response from other Scouts and the community at large.



**Assistant Scoutmaster Karen Downs helps Scouts sort through the troop's cooking supplies.**



**Troop 7 working their way through the trees.**

One of Troop 7's Assistant Scoutmasters, Karen Downs, also saw the potential in allowing girls to join Scouts BSA through her son's participation in the program. Besides developing his self-confidence and maturity, she noted that the friends he made saw him through some really difficult times. Over the years of her involvement as a parent and volunteer, she'd wished "that my older daughter could have had similar experiences ... Even though it is too late for my daughter, I am excited to support the girls who want to participate in this great program." Despite her son going to college this year, what she saw him learn convinced her that supporting a Scouts BSA girls' troop was the right decision.

These newfound opportunities for girls are making waves in the area, and Troop 7 itself is already 16 Scouts strong — with the bridging over of another Scout from the Cub Scout program, that number will continue to grow. According to Sarah E. — a student from Navy Elementary School and one of these new recruits —observing what

her brother had learned in Scouts "intrigued her ... it was an opportunity to learn wilderness and life skills." Another Scout, Melissa, was already a Venturer before joining Troop

7 but was attracted to what the previously boys-only program could offer her, and the chance to interact with BSA Scouts of different ages as peers. Despite being a senior at South Lakes HS, she is aiming for the challenge of Eagle Scout. The requirements are the same for boys and girls, but there is a temporary transition rule available to newly joined youth over 16 years old that gives them a time extension to earn their Eagle.

Even with the overwhelming response, Scouts BSA Troop 7 is still open for new Scouts to join — and for those interested, there is an upcoming opportunity to find out for yourself. The troop is hosting a 30-minute welcoming event on Thursday, March 7 at 7 p.m. in Floris United Method-

ist Church. You can meet the girls who make up Scouts BSA Troop 7 and practice basic Scout BSA skills.

In the time it took you to read this article, Scout BSA Troop 7's girls had unpacked several crates' worth of cooking supplies. Gaby, a student at Franklin Middle School and the troop's Quartermaster, took the lead directing the others in sorting the piles of pots and utensils- a sign of what was in store for the Scouts, and the excitement fueling them. The journey they would undergo on the trail to Eagle would be long and arduous, but it was clear that they were going to make the most of their chance.

*More information about Scouts BSA Troop 7 can be found at [www.Troop7va.org](http://www.Troop7va.org). To join or find a troop in your neighborhood, please visit <https://BeAScout.org>.*

## Exploring Taste @ Hong Kong in Chantilly

BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY

Taking a wild guess, probably dozens and dozens of Chinese restaurants in Northern Virginia serve up their noodles and wontons, roasted duck and tofu with veggies. And think of all the fried rice dishes that usually glamorize Chinese menus.

**DINING OUT** With so many choices around, picking the most genuine eatery may seem challenging. But, for the

devotee of totally real Chinese eats, one Chantilly restaurant hits it home: Taste @ Hong Kong. For those of us who have actually lived in Hong Kong, finding this little (well, large) gem in Metrotech Center is a culinary dream come true.

According to the new owners, who took over in the past few months, this is true HK food — or rather, Cantonese food plus a mix of other regional fare — which is the basis for the local cuisine in many HK restaurants. The restaurant's extensive menu is obviously an appeal to a large local Chinese community — which is why reservations, or coming in for an early lunch or dinner, is one way to be sure to get seated. And much of the background chitchat from the crowded tables is in one or another Chinese dialect, for sure.

For Chinese food aficionados, picking out lunch or dinner dishes is not challenging, for the menu takes patrons from the typical appetizers of spring rolls and soups through to hot pot dishes of pork, chicken, beef, or seafood; Hunan and Szechuan spe-

cialties, such as Kung Pao chicken and pork with garlic sauce; casseroles, such as the frog and Chinese sausage casserole; and lengthy selections of beef, pork, chicken, duck, seafood or vegetable entrées. Every day midday the restaurant features dim sum service for patrons who love to try out bits of this and that wheeled around in metal carts.

The kitchen also has a special selection of noodle- or rice-based entrées, bowls of congee (like rice soup), and Hong Kong barbecued meats with sides of cooked pork, duck, and chicken hanging from a rack in front of the kitchen.

Lunch choices are much more limited, including clay pot dishes of rice topped with a choice meat or seafood; chicken, pork, and beef entrées; and rice bowls. But whenever

you stop by, try the Kung Pao chicken; sweet and sour pork; ma po tofu; and Szechuan shrimp. At dinnertime, you can factor in orange beef, and a whole or half Peking duck. And if you are up for it, though probably few Westerners are, their steamed frog legs with cordyceps flowers.

Portions are large, probably enough for take-home boxes. Good advice: come with one or several friends, and someone will still get some take-home treats anyway. And despite the large portions, many patrons may wish for dessert ... chances are you will get a fortune cookie instead.

*Taste @ Hong Kong, 13912 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy., Chantilly, Va. Phone: 703-378-7680. Hours: Lunch and dinner daily.*