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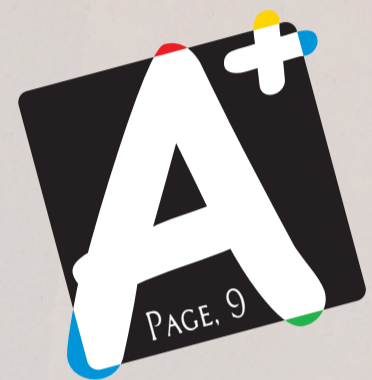
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Ballroom dance instructors Alan and Thuyle Golombek at the Workhouse Arts Center Open House in Lorton.

Expanded Dance Classes at Workhouse

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Tolls Off the Table for Area Parkways

Public opposes Express Toll Lanes on Fairfax County and Franconia-Springfield Parkways.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) planner Thomas Burke told the Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee that “tolls were not included in the strategies under consideration” as improvements to the Fairfax County and Franconia-Springfield Parkways at their meeting on Feb. 12 at the Government Center.

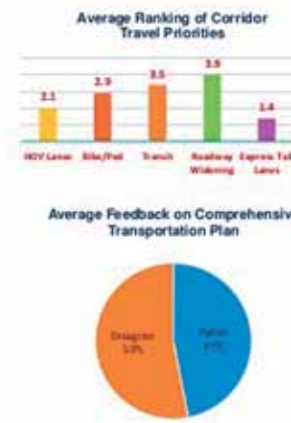
Burke was there to update the committee on the progress being made by FCDOT and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) on the “Alternatives Analysis and Long Term Planning Study” of the two major thoroughfares. The multimodal corridor study spans the often-congested 31 miles from Route 7 (Leesburg Pike) in the north, to Route 1 (Richmond Highway) in the south and includes 17 interchanges and 83 intersections.

FCDOT is leading the long-range aspect of the study, reviewing today’s deficiencies along the network and projecting future needs in order to make recommendations for improvements for 2040 and beyond. VDOT, in conjunction with the county, conducted an Existing Conditions study in 2017, developing more than 350 recommendations for immediate or near-term improvements to the roadways. To date, said Burke, 49 of those recommendations have been implemented. Still in the works for VDOT is a planned widening of a section of the Fairfax County Parkway from Route 29 to Route 123, including the interchange at Popes Head Road and Shirley Gate Road extension.

In October of 2018, FCDOT held three public outreach meetings to inform the com-



Public Outreach Summary “Fall 2018”



FAIRFAX COUNTY DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION

Fairfax County Dept. of Transportation’s Thomas Burke presented an update on the study of the Fairfax County and Franconia-Springfield Parkways which included a summary of the public’s feedback the department received after a series of outreach meetings last October. A number of proposals met with public approval, however the notion of adding Express Toll Lanes to either roadway received opposition.

munity of the project and to solicit public feedback before developing recommendations.

Some of the questions being posed included:

- ❖ How transit should be integrated into the corridor
- ❖ Addition of, or improvements to, interchanges and intersections
- ❖ Bicycle/pedestrian considerations
- ❖ Possible implementation of Toll and/or HOV lanes

At the meetings, attendees were invited to participate in several interactive exercises to offer their own suggestions. Comments sheets were also made available and, in addition, project managers produced a 45-

day on-line survey and commentary forum that gave participants the opportunity to “plan” various segments of the parkways, or simply leave written comments as they wished.

The number of respondents exceeded their expectations.

“We were thinking maybe 3 or 4 thousand would participate,” admitted Burke, judging by the response to previous on-line transportation-related surveys. Instead, a total of 15,150 responses were recorded via the online survey, with 108 more responses received via emails, the website comment form and to district offices. Another 71 comments were recorded on the project’s Facebook page.

FCDOT and the project planners were pleased that their efforts to engage the public through numerous methods, including social media, resulted in “so many voices being heard.”

Burke summarized the responses for the committee. While HOV lanes were generally ranked below road widening and addition of transit options, the idea of adding toll lanes to any segment of either parkway was met with significant opposition.

FCDOT got the message. None of the preliminary strategies under review will include toll lanes as an option, although HOV-2 lanes, possibly just at certain junctures, are still being considered.

Burke’s presentation was met with appreciation for the work already done and still to come. Supervisors John Cook (Braddock) and Pat Herrity (Springfield) however, cautioned that they would like to see any strategies for improvements take a “more regional outlook” before recommendations are developed, with Cook asking “how do these concepts affect others roads in the region?”

Supervisor McKay (Lee) also asked that the FCDOT team keep up communications with the county’s delegates in Richmond, in light of upcoming legislation that could affect the project.

Burke says there will be more public outreach events in the next few weeks to report on the survey results to the community and gather additional feedback before further recommendations are brought before the committee and the full Board of Supervisors.

The update presentation, as well as history and additional information, are available on the county’s website.

Fairfax Adult Softball Holds Record-setting Fundraiser

More than 250 participants, friends and long-time supporters of Fairfax Adult Softball, Inc. (FAS) united together on Sunday, Jan. 27 for the 19th Annual Benefit Bowling Tournament to raise funds for INOVA Children’s Hospital and Fairfax County Park Authority field improvements. The event took place at the Falls Church Bowl America and grossed more than \$22,000 making it the most successful event in its 19 year history. In fact, this is the fourth straight year that the fundraising record was broken.

“Even though we sold out in just two short weeks with several teams on the waiting list, with the Government being shut down, I wasn’t sure what to expect at this year’s event,” said FAS Program and Media Manager, Becca Frece. “We managed to raise more funds than any year in the event’s history which speaks volumes for the amazing people involved in the event. We are beyond grate-

ful and are very excited to be able to donate to INOVA Children’s Hospital.”

“INOVA relies on community support to provide world-class care to Northern Virginia’s children and their families,” said Kristin McArthur, Director of Leadership Giving. “We are grateful for the generous gift from the members of the Fairfax Adult Softball league. The gift is already having an impact on our youngest patients and we look forward to partnering on more events in the future,” McArthur said.

FAS softball offers play for adult men and women in a number of different leagues across Fairfax County: Men, Women, Coed, Modified Coed, Social Coed, Fast Pitch, Men’s

35+, Men’s 50+ and Church. Registration is currently open for 2019 Spring Season for both team and individual registration. The deadline for applications and payment is March 1, 2019. Visit and register online at: www.fairfaxadultsoftball.com



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Benefit Bowling Tournament raised more than \$22,000 making it the most successful event in its 19 year history.



Kumu Hula Master Cherry Nutting and Ho'opa'a chanter Kari Akini give a talk during the Open House.



Modern dance instructor Roxann Morgan Rowley leads stretching in the NRDC Company Class during the Open House at Workhouse Arts Center.

Expanded Dance Classes at Workhouse Arts Center

With new hire Mimi Glass, they're launching more kids' and adult classes in Lorton.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

The Workhouse Arts Center is expanding its dance program by launching more kids' and adults' classes. It held a Dance Open House on Saturday, Feb. 16, 2019, where people could visit the studios, meet the instructors, sample the "taster" mini-classes and find out what's new for ages 2 to adults. They have something for everyone – from Children's (Keiki) Hula to Ballroom Dancing to Ballet.

According to Elizabeth "Mimi" Glass, Audience Development Coordinator: "We're launching kids' classes here. So, we'll be having everyone from 2-years-old all the way up to 12 for our kids' classes. That's everything from hula to belly dance to ballet, tap, and modern. We want to be a well-rounded dance program, and we're hoping to grow into a full-blown dance academy in the years to come."

She added: "For our adult dance classes, we have ballroom, hula, belly dance, a modern company class with Next Reflex Dance Collective, and that's free every Sunday. So, we really want to be a place where the beginner can come all the way up to the advanced level and have something for them to explore and create and grow."

She said the cost averages \$15 per class; and the age ranges from 2-12 for kids; and 16 and above for adults. They will be adding a teen-centered program in the future but for now they're starting slow and growing steadily. Visitors can drop in and do trial classes with free vouchers for anyone who wants to just drop. The classes last from 6-8 weeks.

BALLROOM DANCE INSTRUCTOR

Alan Golombek teaches both beginners and intermediate classes, for ages 16-90. "We teach beginners that have basically little or no experience and we teach the ballroom dances like waltz, tango and foxtrot, cha-cha, rumba and swing," he said. No part-



Belly dance instructor Sonia Monson.

ner is needed and it's for people who've never danced before and want to learn some social skills and dancing and get enough confidence to go on the dance floor.

"We love to teach people how to dance and introduce them to the fun and exciting world of ballroom dancing," said Golombek, who with his wife Thuyle are the Virginia State Dancesport Ballroom Champions.

"I find belly dancing to be a very empowering dance for women; it's very ancient," said belly dance instructor Sonia Monson, who has been dancing for 30 years. "What I do is basically teach the basics of belly dance. My course that I'm teaching now starts out with the warmup and we do the slower movements, drill through those and drill through the faster movements and then we work on choreography." She started the



Ballroom dance instructors Alan and Thuyle Golombek at the Workhouse Arts Center Open House in Lorton.

belly dance program with the City of Norfolk, with the Norfolk Parks and Rec, and taught 20 years there.

Hula instructor Cherry Nutting added: "Hula is the embodiment of Hawaiian culture. In my hula class, you not only learn the dance routines, you learn the culture, the language, the Hawaiian crafts and most important, you gain sisterhood between hula sisters. I promote each other's achievements."

Modern Dance teacher Roxann Morgan Rowley runs the Next Reflex Dance Collective on Sundays, and specializes in teaching ages 2 to adults. "I'm also teaching some of the kids' classes here – I'm teaching a 4-year-old Creative Movement class along with a Pre-Ballet class for 5-year-olds and a Dance with Me class for moms and kids,"

she said. "I'm excited to be starting a program here with the Workhouse folks, so it should be great."

Added Joseph Wallen, Director of Performing Arts at Workhouse Arts Center: "At the Performing Arts Department we have offered dance classes historically for the past several years but with the new hire, Mimi — Elizabeth Glass — we now have the capacity to offer a more robust schedule, more offerings for a wider age group, particularly for youth, which we have not been able to offer in the past."

WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER is located at 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. For more dance info, visit www.workhousearts.org. Click on Classes and Tickets link, then Dance. Call 703-584-2900.

NEWS

Serving on a Girl Advisory Board

Hannah C Lee, 10th grade at Lake Braddock High School, of Girl Scout Troop 229, based in Burke, was selected as a Girl Advisory Board (GAB) delegate for 2019-2020 by the Girl Scout Council's Nominating Committee. The purpose of GAB is to work as a team to determine priorities of Girl Scouting needs addressed in the areas such as programs, girl activities, girl engagement, training, and social trends and other areas determined by the CEO. GAB members will also be exposed to governance opportunities and be able to represent the Council at various activities and events.

By facilitating adult partnerships, these leadership opportunities allow GAB members to influence and have their voices heard in programmatic activities in the Nations Council. GAB members also have the opportunity to make recommendations and share ideas. The GAB will meet with the CEO at least three times a year in person.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Hannah C Lee

The Girl Advisory Board (GAB) allows Girl Scouts who are 14 years or older, the opportunity to serve as an advisory team providing programmatic input to the CEO. By lending a voice to the Girl Scout movement that wants, needs and values girl-led contributions, these young leaders will play a significant role in shaping the ongoing work of the Girl Scouts Nation's Capital.

Hannah has been a girl scout for 7 years and a naturally born leader in school and her community. She is also pursuing her Girl Scout Gold Award.

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OPINION

A Historic Session

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



As you read this column the Virginia General Assembly will be nearing its adjournment *sine die* for the 400th year of its existence, having first met in the church on Jamestowne Island in 1619. During this commemorative year there will be many opportu-

COMMENTARY

nities to learn more about Virginia and to reflect on how its history influences it to today even in the current legislative session and in what on another occasion was referred to as its "recent unpleasanties."

That first session of what became known a century and a half later as the General Assembly was composed of a representative of the 22 plantations that had sprung up along the major rivers of the state as there were no local government, political boundaries, or transportation networks in existence. The representatives were all white males who were land owners. African Americans had to wait for the out-

come of the Civil War and women the twentieth century before they became part of the electorate. While the right to vote has begrudgingly expanded over time there continues to be a resistance to making it easier to vote. In the current session there were proposals to allow people to vote early or vote absentee without an excuse and to make election day a holiday for the convenience of voters, but it does not appear that any will become law. Establishing a fair way to draw legislative boundaries has been hotly debated, but the decision to establish an independent redistricting commission will await the closing hours of the session.

Slaves were brought to the colony of Virginia in 1619 to work the tobacco fields that were the mainstay of the colony's economy. They had none of the rights that Englishmen claimed and beginning in the 1640s were subjected to "slave codes" that defined them as property to be bought and sold with no access to learning to read and write or to move about freely. After the Civil War these restrictive laws became the Jim Crow laws that con-

tinued to limit the rights of black people who were kept in line by the Ku Klux Klan and by public lynchings. White supremacy reigned with black-face entertainment intended to degrade black people through crude humor. Happenings during this legislative session showed how little we have progressed on issues of human rights and respect, but there is hope. The reminder to the Governor of his racist past will make him an even more enlightened person who if he continues can provide important leadership to dismantling racism in the state. The incredible people of color who were elected to the House of Delegates in the last election bring strong voices to the need for greater equity and justice in the Commonwealth. Some limited reforms that will help establish equity and remove racism in the criminal justice system are on their way to passage.

Women first came to the Virginia colony in 1619. While rights of women have expanded slowly over the centuries, having Virginia ratify the Equal Rights Amendment is still in doubt. May the lessons of this historic legislative session move us forward in future years.

To check on the fate of specific bills, go to <http://lis.virginia.gov>.

Virginia Joins States to Sue Trump Over Wall Funding

Concern over loss of funds for local military bases.

BY JAYLA MARIE MCNEILL
CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Virginia has joined a coalition of 15 other states to challenge President Donald Trump's declaration of a national emergency and to block the diversion of congressional funding to build a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico, according to a lawsuit filed Monday, Feb. 18.

"Concocting a fake emergency to build a needless wall goes against the Constitution and the values America was built on," Attorney General Mark Herring said in a statement.

"President Trump's ill-advised plan could divert critical funds from actual national security priorities, including military construction projects at bases and facilities throughout Virginia. We must stand up to this administration when it violates the law and attacks our values."

According Herring's statement, the complaint was filed to block Trump's "fabricated" national emergency declaration and the "unconstitutional" diversion of appropriated federal funding to pay for the construction of the border wall.

On Friday, Trump said he would declare a national emergency in order to bypass Con-

gress to fund the construction of a wall along the southern border.

The White House released a statement stating that the president has "clear authority" to declare a national emergency and that Trump is taking "necessary steps" to "ensure we stop the national security and humanitarian crisis at our Southern Border."

"We fight wars that are 6,000 miles away, wars that we should have never been in in many cases, but we don't control our own border," Trump said in his speech Friday at the White House. "So we are going to confront the national-security crisis on our southern border. And we are going to do it one way or the other."

The administration estimated that the national emergency declaration will make over \$8 billion in taxpayer funds available to build the border wall.

Other states participating in the lawsuit includes Hawaii, Colorado, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Nevada, New Mexico, New York and California.

The states contend that Trump's emergency declaration is only a means to justify using federal funding to pay for his border wall.

"The states allege that the Trump Administration's action exceeds the power of the executive office, violates the U.S. Constitution and federal statutes, and would illegally and unconstitutionally divert federal funds appropriated by Congress for other purposes," Herring's statement said.

"The suit seeks declaratory and injunctive relief to block the emergency declaration, the construction of the wall, and any illegal diversion of congressionally-appropriated funds."

According to the attorney general's statement, Virginia could potentially lose over \$130 million in military construction funding — money that is currently allocated for projects at Dam Neck, Fort A.P. Hill, Fort Belvoir, Humphreys Engineer Center, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, and the Pentagon.

Trump said that he expected his contentious national emergency declaration to prompt lawsuits. He remains confident, however, that his decision will be upheld by the Supreme Court, similar to the way his 2017 travel ban was upheld by the court in a 5-4 decision.

"We will have a national emergency and we will then be sued," Trump said. "Hopefully we will get a fair shake and win in the Supreme Court just like the ban."

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Assembly Repeals 'Jim Crow' Minimum Wage Exemptions

BY DANIEL BERTI
CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

A Democratic bill to repeal a Jim Crow era law that legalized wage discrimination against many African-Americans is headed to the governor's desk after being approved by the House of Delegates.

The bill, SB 1079, rescinds the law that allows employers to pay less than minimum wage to "newsboys, shoe-shine boys, ushers, doormen, concession attendants and theater cashiers" — jobs to which many African-Americans were relegated decades ago.

The bill's sponsor, Sen. Lionell Spruill, D-Chesapeake, said the exemptions were rooted in

Virginia's history of discrimination against African-Americans.

"It's clear that this law was put into place to keep African-American Virginians from advancing," Spruill said. "Hardworking Virginians deserve wage protections, regardless of the job that they do. I am proud to champion this long overdue legislation and to witness its bipartisan passage in the Gen-

eral Assembly."

Spruill's bill also eliminates the minimum wage exemption for babysitters if they work more than 10 hours per week.

The measure passed the Senate, 37-3, on Jan. 18. On Wednesday, Feb. 13, the House voted 18-14 in favor of a modified version of the bill. And on Friday, Feb. 15, the Senate unanimously approved

that version and sent it to Gov. Ralph Northam to be signed into law. In 2018, Del. Paul Krizek, D-Alexandria, carried a bill with the same intent, and it died in committee. Krizek said the minimum-wage exemptions were "obviously aimed at African Americans who were in these service jobs because those were the jobs they could get at the time."

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Time: 9:00-9:30a.m.-Registration
9:30-1:00 p.m.-Workshop

Place: Duff & Kronfeld, P.C.
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ENTERTAINMENT

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ONGOING

Art Exhibit: Amazing Art Jam. Through Feb. 24, gallery hours at the Vulcan Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Workhouse Arts Center hosts the third iteration of the Amazing Art Jam. This pop-up exhibition offers fresh perspectives by exploring several young, contemporary themes including street art, anime, Marvel iconography and hip-hop culture. Curated by Ackshun Jackson, the show will feature works in various mediums including interactive, sculpture, murals, paintings and works on paper from over 40 regional artists. Visit www.workhousearts.org/event/amazing-art-jam.

Winter Golf. Through Feb. 28, skip the traffic with the Afternoon Drive special at the heated and covered ranges at Burke Lake Golf Center. All buckets are \$2 off, Monday-Thursday, 4 p.m. until closing. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/golf.

THURSDAY/FEB. 21

Burke Historical Society Speaker. 7 p.m. at George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Learn about the many spooky legends of the region — and their historical background — as Cindy Bennett presents “Ghosts, Goons, and a Bunny Man.” Visit burkehistoricalsociety.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 23

Father/Son Advance. 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. Hundreds of men and sons from Northern Virginia come together for a jam-packed day full of adventurous activities and workshops. The Father/Son Advance features a comic book sketching session with Marvel artist, Sal Buscema; ziplining; bb gun target shooting; an escape room; laser tag and more. All men and children ages 5-18 are invited. \$15/person (\$30 maximum/family). Register at jccag.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/191181.

Orienteering Workshop. 10 a.m.-noon at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Put down the GPS and get around the old-fashioned way. Orienteering is the sport of navigation with map and compass. It's easy to learn but always presents challenges. Participants in this program will learn how to use a compass, read a topographic map and navigate orienteering courses. A compass is required. Designed for participants age 8-adult. \$31 per person. Call 703-323-6600 or visit fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burke-lake.

Reception: Amazing Art Jam. 7-11 p.m. at the Vulcan Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Workhouse Arts Center hosts the third iteration of the Amazing Art Jam. This pop-up exhibition offers fresh perspectives by exploring several young, contemporary themes including street art, anime, Marvel iconography and hip-hop culture. Curated by Ackshun Jackson, the show will feature works in various mediums including interactive, sculpture, murals, paintings and works on paper from over 40 regional artists. Visit www.workhousearts.org/event/amazing-art-jam.

SUNDAY/FEB. 24

Hands On Activity Day. 1-4 p.m. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad



Monty's Model Train Display

Local model train enthusiast Monty Smith will display his running brick-built model trains featuring LEGO trains in this two-day event. Saturday, March 2, noon-5 p.m. and Sunday, March 3, noon-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Crafts and activities often in a railroad or historical theme will be offered for visitors to enjoy. Cost of supplies is included in the admission. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

Burke. Join Chef Cal Kraft to welcome spring. He'll help plan and host a special brunch to celebrate the season. Adults, Teens. Free. Visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/5020831 or call 703-978-5600.

MARCH 2-31

The Explorer's Club. Friday-Saturday, 8 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m. at Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. London, 1879. The prestigious Explorers Club is in crisis: their acting president wants to admit a woman, and their bartender is terrible. True, this female candidate is brilliant, beautiful, and has discovered a legendary Lost City, but the decision to let in a woman could shake the very foundation of the British Empire, and how does one make such a decision without a decent drink? This is the area premier of The Explorer's Club by Nell Benjamin, directed by Frank Shutts. \$20-\$30. Visit www.workhousearts.org.

SUNDAY/MARCH 3

Historical Society of Fairfax County Meeting. 2-4 p.m. at Fairfax County Public Safety Headquarters, 12099 Government Center Pkwy., Fairfax. Come join the Fairfax County Historical Society as it tours the new Fairfax County Fire & Police Museum. View vintage uniforms, firearms, patches, and memorabilia. Free parking in the garage. Free. Email suzannelevy@cox.net or visit www.fairfaxhistoricalsociety.org.

Basket Bingo. 2-5 p.m. at West Springfield High School - Cafeteria, 6100 Rolling Road, Springfield. Doors open at 1 p.m. Twenty Bingo games will be played for prizes. There will be a door prize raffle, three special games, and three raffle ticket drawings. Prizes include electronics, a gift card tree, and more. Food and drinks will be available for purchase. \$25 in advance; \$30 at the door. There is no ATM on site, bring cash or checks. Visit www.spartancrew.org or email info@spartancrew.org.

Erth's Prehistoric Aquarium. 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. at GMU's Center for the Arts, Concert Hall, Fairfax Campus. Erth's Prehistoric Aquarium Adventure is an immersive experience that invites everyone to jump in and explore unknown ocean depths where prehistoric marine reptiles lived eons ago—and maybe live still today. \$15 for Adults/\$10 Children. Family-Friendly. Recommended for ages 5 and up. Visit cfa.calendar.gmu.edu/erth-39-prehistoric-aquarium-adventure.

THURSDAY/FEB. 28

Screening: The Unafraid. 7:30-10 p.m. at Johnson Center Cinema - George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. GMU Visiting Filmmakers Series: The Unafraid with Heather Courtney. The documentary follows three DACA students in Georgia over four years, growing up both American and undocumented in the United States. Free. Call 703-993-2768 or visit fams.gmu.edu/events/8588.

FRIDAY/MARCH 1

Registration Deadline: Fairfax Adult Softball. Experience firsthand the enjoyment that only FAS softball offers with play for adult men and women in a number of different leagues across Fairfax County: Men, Women, Coed, Modified Coed, Social Coed, Fast Pitch, Men's 35+, Men's 50+ and Church. Team and individual registration now open. Visit us and register online at www.fairfaxadultsoftball.com.

SATURDAY/MARCH 2

Spring Brunch. 2-3:30 p.m. at Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road,

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Black History Month: A Look at African American Art

Promoting and preserving a part of history.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Despite his predilection for visual arts, Allen Carter, an African American boy growing up in pre-civil rights era Arlington, might not have been granted entrance into some of the nation's museums due to segregation. Still, he persisted, and years later he became a lauded artist, distinguished teacher and mentor to underprivileged children. And in February — African American History Month — his work is being shown in an exhibit, "Big Al Carter: A Retrospective," at the Fred Schnider Gallery of Art. While his work is part of the permanent collections of both the Smithsonian Institution and the Corcoran Gallery of Art, this is the first exhibit of Carter's work in the Washington, D.C. area since his death in 2008.

"Big Al's family has given us an incredible gift by sharing his art, allowing us to continue to reflect on his life, his art and his message for future generations," said Marty Schnider, president of Fred Schnider Investment Group and founder of Fred Schnider Gallery of Art.

As a painter, printmaker, sculptor and muralist, Carter, also known as "Big Al" drew inspiration from his life experiences,

art history and everyday life. He believed that his life's purpose was to use art to heal. "Art is my emotion. Art is my memories. Art is my life. I create the essence," he once said.

"He paints poor people, he paints people who are fishing or people who are having dinner at the table ... his work is very vast," said Carter's daughter, Cecilia Carter.

Carter's exhibit is particularly noteworthy to some African-American art historians who point to a recent study showing that just 2.4 percent of all acquisitions and gifts and 7.6 percent of all exhibitions at 30 prominent American museums have been of work by African American artists. The recent Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey of 181 art museums in North America found that African Americans are greatly underrepresented in mainstream art museums as directors, curators, conservators and educators. Those who study African American art say that solving this dilemma requires a year-round approach.

"We can't just focus on it during Black History Month," said African American art historian Crystal Johnson, Ph.D. "These two statistics go to hand-in-hand and prove what we already know. We need more African American students to explore their ar-



President of Fred Schnider Investment Group, LLC and Founder of the Fred Schnider Gallery of Art, Marty Schnider with Allen "Big Al" Carter's daughters, Cecilia Carter (left) and Flora O. Stone (right)

tistic talents and we need more students to take chance on a non-mainstream career and pursue jobs in museum administration. In order to make any changes, we need to have a seat at the table."

One such aspiring decision maker is recent a George Mason University graduate who landed a position as the co-curator of an exhibit at Howard University. "I'd worked with an exhibition, but I've never had the chance to curate before. I was excited and

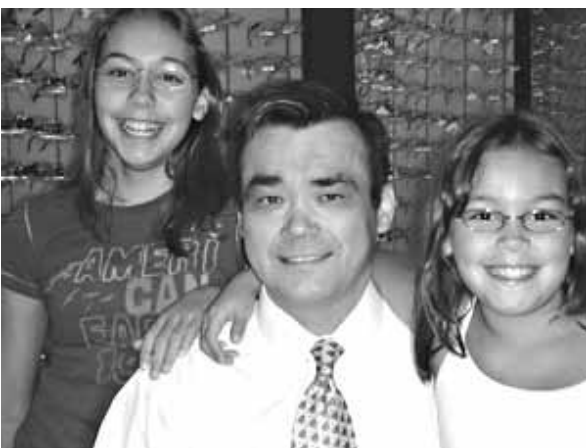
nervous," said Kourtney Riles of the exhibit called, "An Examination of Feminist(s) Subjectivity in Modern and Contemporary African American Art."

Art plays a vital, but often overlooked role in African American history, not just during Black History Month, but all year long, advises Angela Black, who has taught art history. "Art is a way of preserving our history," she said. "It tells our story and we need more professionally trained artists who can do that."

Carter's exhibit, which features rarely seen artwork from his daughters' private collection, runs through March 3 at the Fred Schnider Gallery of Art, 888 N. Quincy Street, Arlington. Several pieces will be available for sale.

"The exhibit and his work reflect everything that he's been through, what he's seen, and what other people have been through and seen," said Big Al's daughter Flora O. Stone, Carter's daughter.

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NEWS



PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Diane Volcansek is the new Executive Director of Northern Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children.

Promoting Early Learning

Diane Volcansek heads Northern Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children with 1,100 members.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Diane Volcansek, 47, of Herndon is the new Executive Director of the Northern Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children, which has 1,100 members and covers Fairfax, Arlington and Loudoun counties as well as the city of Fairfax and Alexandria. She also works as the Director of Christ Presbyterian Preschool, which has 110 students, along Route 50 near Fairfax/Chantilly.

Her new position is important, she says, because the early childhood education world is so varied. It includes in-home daycares where the employees have a high school diplomas all the way up to private schools where the teachers have upper-level graduate degrees, but they all affect the world of a young child.

“NVAEYC hopes to standardize the continuity of care and professional development for these educators. We also hope to be a voice for those who work in the early child education field as policy and local and state laws are developed,” she said. Up until about a year ago, the organization was all-volunteer.

She said her mission is to promote high-quality early learning for every child from birth to age 8. “We connect practice, policy and research to support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children in Northern Virginia,” she said. They are an affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

“My job is to coordinate with the volunteer Board of Directors to make sure that we have an outreach program to those who serve young children in the Northern Virginia area — to meet and collaborate with local elected officials, School Board officials, early childhood education professionals — to help

them grow and learn in early childhood concepts,” she said.

She added: “We train early childhood professionals on best practices based on the latest research and we advocate at the local and state level for the policy to best benefit young children.”

They provide professional development workshops to early childhood professionals in the area. “We offer training on different concepts teachers can take into their classroom — behavior management, math and science curriculum, mental health and other current topics,” she said.

Part of her job is also community engagement. They conduct family events where they help educate parents to engage them in developmentally appropriate activities. They hold arty parties where they engage young children in creative art processes in libraries and other settings.

They’ve also hosted book clubs and book stores with guest readers. The Week of the Young Child held in April is where they explore different areas of child development and celebrate what young children are capable of doing.

They also help in the preschool accreditation process. The National Association for the Education of Young Children provides an accreditation system for early childhood programs and they help local schools reach that accreditation. Since 1985, the NAEYC accreditation has served as a transformative quality improvement system that sets professional standards for early learning programs and helps families identify programs of the highest quality, she said. The accreditation process can take two years and there’s also a renewal process.

According to Rosemary Kendall, Ph.D., Co-President: “We are excited to have Diane Volcansek as our new executive director. She brings to the job enthusiasm, experience in a variety of early care and education settings, and an understanding of the importance of teamwork and involving new partners. NVAEYC currently provides professional development and scholarships to early childhood educators in Northern Virginia.

We also advocate for local, state, and federal efforts to promote high-quality early learning for every child birth through age 8. Her leadership will help NVAEYC continue its work in all these areas.”

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WINTER SHELTERS

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

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/](http://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. **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 lrmill@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.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Interested in local Civil War or Railroad History? Consider volunteering at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. The Museum offers a variety of volunteer opportunities in Museum events, programs and administration. The Museum is also seeking an individual to coordinate the scheduling of the volunteer staff. Training will be provided for all positions. Email volunteers@fairfax-station.org or call 703-945-7483 for opportunities. The Museum is located at 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. It is open every Sunday, except holidays, from 1-4 p.m. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, or call 703-425-9225.

The Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke needs volunteer drivers for trips to medical appointments (Monday - Friday) and companion shopping (Tuesday, Friday) within the Fairfax-Burke area and in the South County area (west of Route 1, Alexandria). Office volunteers are also needed to work in the SCFB (Olley Glen) office to schedule rides.

Bilingual volunteers (English and Spanish) are needed as drivers and office volunteers. Email Shavaun.Wall@recruiter@scfbva.org or call 703-323-4788.

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. 25 - Alexandria; Feb. 26 - Fairfax; March 6 - Falls Church.
- Share the survey and conversation invitation with neighbors, co-workers and county family and friends.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 20

Volunteers Wanted. 10:30 a.m. at the Salvation Army Corp building, 4915 Ox Road, Fairfax. The Fairfax Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary are seeking volunteers for their upcoming events. Meetings are held monthly on the third Wednesday, September through May. Call Lori Smith at 703-830-3520 or Sylvia Laiti at 703-830-8849.

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Enough About Cancer



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

At least that was my intention when I sat down to write this column. I was planning on highlighting a couple of my pet peeves: One was about people who back into parking spaces, an all-too common practice (which does not make perfect) that irks me no end and often inconveniences me while idling in my car waiting for the driver to crane his neck and coordinate his mirrors while backing into a head-first space, all while blocking my passage.

The second peeve also involves cars, but this action has potentially far more dangerous consequences: Drivers who, while motoring along, completely ignore my car's blinkers/indicator lights - WHEN THEY'RE FLASHING.

I was taught that when driving a vehicle and needing to turn/switch lanes, I was to indicate that to other drivers by using my blinkers, look into my mirrors and then move right or left accordingly. Moreover, when I observed those same lights flashing in other vehicles, I was to respect their intentions and give them a wide berth. I was not to speed up and interfere with their indications. Unfortunately, the exact opposite often happens.

Though I am still respectful when drivers flash their blinkers, it often happens that when many of my driving brethren see those lights, they react much the same way as a bull does when he sees red: they SPEED UP, and in their vehicle's acceleration, they put me and my passengers at risk. If it has happened once - which it has - it has happened a thousand times.

Unfortunately, neither of these car-related "misbehaviors" has been able to block out one of my key cancer anniversaries: Feb. 20, 2009, and as such, I will now be returning to the scene of the semi crime. And though I am not Billy Shears 20 years after the band taught me how to play, I am a lung cancer survivor who 10 years ago on Feb. 20 learned that I had cancer. That was the day when my primary care physician called me at work, about noon-ish on a Thursday to discuss the results of my previous week's surgical biopsy.

After declining the offer to come to his office, I encouraged him to just tell me - which he did: the growth was malignant. Dumbfounded, I asked for further details, which he politely deferred to an oncologist (a specialty with which I was totally unfamiliar), with whom, while we spoke on the phone, my primary care physician scheduled a Team Lourie appointment for the following Thursday.

This officially ended the diagnostic process which had been going on since I showed up at the Emergency Room on Jan. 1, 2009 complaining of pain in my right side, an inability to take a deep breath and difficulty bending over.

With an inconclusive X-Ray to not corroborate, an otherwise healthy patient with no family history of anything relevant - especially cancer, the doctor was perplexed. Fifty days later I learned I had cancer. And so I remember that day/date, a day which will go down in infamy, so to speak - in my family anyway.

The intervening days, as I have written about recently, were spent investigating the cause of my original symptoms. Eventually all test results led to one conclusion: non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV.

Meaning metastatic and inoperable, meaning "terminal." It was Feb. 20 when I learned my fate. (The following Thursday, Feb. 27, is another anniversary; that's when we met my oncologist for the first time and learned that my life would never be the same, or last nearly as long.)

But yet here I am, alive and reasonably well, writing about nonsense, mostly, instead of cancer, for this week, anyway. Good therapy for sure, and a nice change of pace.

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



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