

Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

Stories of Sacrifice and Cost

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Donna Pence recites
"Memorial Day Prayer,"
written by Rev. John
Gundlach as the Invo-
cation for the Town of
Herndon's Memorial
Day Ceremony at Chest-
nut Grove Cemetery.

Herndon Festival at
New Location

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

seating. Call 301-263-0616 or visit www.dcpnsupport.org for more.

TUESDAY/JUNE 4

Professional Networking Breakfast. 8-9:30 a.m. at Sunrise at Reston Town Center, Third Floor Activity Room, 1778 Fountain Drive, Reston. Start the day with Sunrise. Enjoy a hot breakfast, with all the trimmings, while meeting and mingling with colleagues. Meet the Sunrise team, tour the community, and learn more about their services. Email reston.dos@sunriseseniorliving.com or call Jen at 703-956-8930 for more information and to RSVP.

SATURDAY/JUNE 8

Caregiver Workshop. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Join this Caregiver Workshop with Pete Shrock, nationally known grief and crisis responder, focusing on building resilience through caregiving challenges. This is a free event, and all caregivers and family members are invited to attend. Lunch will be provided. Visit insightmcc.org, to register or contact Lindsey Vajpeyi at 703-204-4664 or lindsey.vajpeyi@insightmcc.org.

TUESDAY/JUNE 11

Park Authority Summer Jobs. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Herry Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. This year the Fairfax County Park Authority's Rec-PAC summer camp program will operate at 45 elementary school locations around Fairfax County on weekdays from July 1-Aug.8, 8:15 a.m.-3:45 p.m. Applicants are required to bring an original Social Security Card and a DMV photo ID. Only those who are 18 years of age and older will be considered. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec-pac/jobs or email Recpac@fairfaxcounty.gov.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

THURSDAY/MAY 30

Interfaith Ramadan Dinner. 7:30 p.m. (registration); 8 p.m. (program starts) at Fairfax County Government Center – Cafeteria, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Join for an Interfaith Ramadan Dinner hosted by Fairfax County Chairwoman Sharon Bulova. Call to prayer and dinner are at 8:30 p.m. Register at bit.ly/fxcounty2019.

FRIDAY/MAY 31

Open House. 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at Hunters Woods at Trails Edge, 2222 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Learn about Hunters Woods at Trails Edge's state-of-the-art retirement community nestled in a tranquil wooded setting right next to the Turquoise Nature Trail and Reston Community Center. Come see a retirement community for vibrant living and an active lifestyle. Reception, 4-6 p.m.; ribbon cutting, 4:30 p.m. Visit www.integracare.com/hunters-woods-at-trails-edge.

SATURDAY/JUNE 1

Dementia Care Support. 10-11 a.m. at Hunters Woods at Trails Edge Showroom, 2254B Nunters Woods Plaza, Reston. Dementia Care Support Group - 1st Saturday of the month. Distinguish between normal aging and dementia, understand different types of dementia, the impact of changes to the brain and how family caregivers can best cope with these changes. Free. Call 703-708-4047 or visit www.integracare.com.

Peripheral Neuropathy Support Group. 2-4 p.m. at Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale. The Peripheral Neuropathy Support Group for greater Washington meets the first Saturday of the month. All are welcome. RSVP for available

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Hand over heart and military salute by members of The Wayne M. Kidwell American Legion Post 184 Herndon/Reston while saying the Pledge of Allegiance during the 2019 Memorial Day Ceremony at Chestnut Grove Cemetery in the Town of Herndon.



Young and old attend the Town of Herndon 2019 Memorial Day Ceremony.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Tell the Stories of Sacrifice and Cost

2019 Memorial Day Ceremony Town of Herndon.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

“In preparing for today, I realized that I was able to enjoy a normal week thanks to the blanket of freedom and liberty that was given to me by the fallen warriors of the past ... Many gave the ultimate sacrifice. That is why we are here today. We are here to remember and honor what they did to keep us a free nation,” said Post Commander of The Wayne M. Kidwell American Legion Post 184 Herndon/Reston David R. Womack.

On Monday, May 27, Post 184 hosted the Town of Herndon’s Memorial Day Ceremony at Chestnut Grove Cemetery. Following a welcome by Herndon Vice Mayor Sheila Olem, Donna Pence gave the Invocation. “Though their names may fade with the passing of generations, may we never forget what they have done,” Pence read quoting, “Memorial Day Prayer,” written by Rev. John Gundlach.

Herndon High Navy Junior ROTC Color Guard members, Nicole Gonzalez, Elisa Castro, Eleisa Cruz and Ximena Ramirez presented the Colors, followed by the Reston Chorale singing the national anthem.

COMMANDER WOMACK led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance and then provided his remarks. Womack said people were there, in a beautiful cemetery on the morning of the unofficial start of summer, to remember and honor what service members killed in action or who later died from injuries sustained in action, did to keep the United States of America a free nation.

“And that, I think, was one of their biggest fears. The fear of being forgotten. The

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During the Monday, May 27, Town of Herndon Memorial Day Ceremony at Chestnut Grove Cemetery Great Falls resident and Guest Speaker United States Army Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Elsner, gives remarks.

fear of people not remembering the sacrifice and the cost. Not for the accolades and the glory. But just to be remembered. To tell the stories of their honorable actions in the face of the enemy...I see many young people here today. They are from the Herndon High School NJROTC Color Guard... Or the Troop 1570 Scouts, securing our flags. Or the other young men and women in the crowd from all parts of our community. They are being taught the importance of remembering at a young age, which is so commendable. And that is my generation’s responsibility. To teach the importance of this day to the next generation.”

Commander Womack introduced guest speaker United States Army Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Elsner. Womack said that Lt. Col. Elsner served as the Community of Action Branch Chief of the Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Organization.

Lt. Col. Elsner said that since the found-



David R. Womack, Commander of The Wayne M. Kidwell American Legion Post 184 Herndon/Reston, says it is his generation’s responsibility and that of the Post to teach the importance of this day to the next generation.

ing of the United States, 1.1 million service members lost their lives in combat. “Currently, less than 1 percent of the population has served in the Armed Forces. Because of this, there is a growing distance between your average American and the military. Americans are most likely far removed from current conflicts and operations across the globe.”

He said his intent was not to bore those listening with statistics or a history lesson. “It does not matter if you are a Soldier, Sailor, Airmen, or Marine, the experiences that we share on the battlefield absolutely embody the statement, Brothers in Arms...The experience of combat is something that creates incredible bonds between service members.”

LT. COL. ELSNER shared stories of service members he knew, beginning with the story of Army Staff Sgt. Ricky A. Kieffer. “A good fisherman stationed in Iraq,” he re-

called and added that when it rained there, it poured. “I remember coming out of our barrack buildings one day, and there is Ricky Kieffer, tossing a small weight with his fishing pole into one of the large, swimming pool sized puddles. I asked SSG Kieffer the dumb question, ‘Catching anything?’ He stated, ‘Just passing the time, Sir. Just passing the time. Besides, need to stay in practice for when I get home.’ A week later, Tuesday, 15 March 2005, while leading his soldiers, SSG Ricky A. Kieffer, Michigan Army National Guard, attached to the 720th MP Battalion, was shot and killed by a sniper as he was preparing his squad to depart a checkpoint.”

Lt. Col. Elsner told the story of Army Second Lieutenant Matthew Coutu. “He looked like he could bench press a Buick... He loved the Army, his unit, and his soldiers. He reminded us every day that he was committed to being the best and that he took care of his platoon... Second Lieutenant Coutu, 2nd Platoon Leader, 64th Military Police Company, was killed in action on 27 June 2005 by small arms fire while investigating a roadside bombing in Baghdad, Iraq.” Lt. Col. Elsner told similar stories of other service members, and he shared something they all had in common, the same words used by their families to describe them: “...great guy, amazing father, true patriot, loyal husband, loved life, very positive”.

“From Normandy to Kandahar, Gettysburg to Fallujah, the faces of the fallen that we have stood shoulder to shoulder with in combat will be forever burned into our heads. To all of our fallen comrades, if you are listening up there, we will never forget the price you paid,” said Lt. Col. Elsner. “Over time, things will change. We will find ourselves in different locations than our predecessors. Our equipment and our training absolutely have and will continue to change. Other things will never change. We will, always, remember those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our great nation,” he said.

ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

Art Exhibit: Things That Don't Have Names.

Through June 22, gallery hours at Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market St., Suite 103, Reston. Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE) presents a site-specific sculptural installation by DC-based artist Stephanie J. Williams, whose work explores themes of identity through omission and inclusion. Visit restonarts.org or call 703-471-9242.

Golden Age Musical. Through June 23, at NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. From Artistic Director Evan Hoffmann comes a wildly inventive re-imagining of an American mega-musical as no one has seen it before. Singin' in the Rain has all the magic and glamour of the greatest movie musical ever made. So, when the projector at a super-fan screening of the film goes up in smoke, the hosts save the day... after all, in theatre, the show must always go on. \$40-55. Visit www.nextstoptheatre.org/shows/singin-in-the-rain.

Art Exhibit: A Purposeful Manner Towards a Vague Destination.

Through Aug. 27, Tuesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at The Signature at Reston Town Center, 11850 Freedom Drive, Reston. Gallery hours at Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE) presents A Purposeful Manner Towards a Vague Destination, a solo exhibition featuring work by painter Douglas Moulden. Painter Moulden exhibits a series of large-scale acrylic on panel paintings developed from photographs and memory inspired by exploration of the woods near his home. Visit restonarts.org for more.

Mr. Knick Knack! Mondays through September, 10:30-11:15 a.m. at Reston Town Square Park. Free performances of heart-centered music for children. No performances on Memorial Day or Labor Day. Visit restontowncenter.com/events

Herndon Farmers Market. Thursdays, through mid-November, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in Historic Downtown Herndon, Lynn Street. Vendors will offer seasonal plants, produce, baked goods, meats and more; all sold by local growers and producers. Additional enhancements to the market include seasonal events and entertainment, including "Farmers' Market Fun Days," free performances for the whole family. Visit www.herndon-va.gov/FarmersMarket

THURSDAY/MAY 30

Dollars and Sense. 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Monthly group discussion focuses on business leaders and markets. Discussing "Freakonomics" by Steven Levitt. The event is free and open to the public. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

THURSDAY/MAY 30-SUNDAY/JUNE 2

Herndon Festival 2019. At Northwest Federal Credit Union, 200 Spring St, Herndon. The four-day festival, which is produced by the Town of Herndon's Parks and Recreation Department with assistance from area civic organizations and businesses, will feature entertainment on two stages, a carnival, a children's hands-on art area, arts & crafts show, business expo, 10K/5K races and fitness expo, and an eclectic variety of top-quality food vendors. Visit www.herndonfestival.net.

FRIDAY/MAY 31

Live Music: Something's Brewing. 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. at Kalypso's Sports Tavern on historic Lake Anne in Reston. Bands play inside the sports bar on a dedicated stage. No cover. Visit www.kalypsosportstavern.com.

SATURDAY/JUNE 1

Gardens of Note. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. around Reston. Enjoy the sights and sounds of notable gardens on The Reston Chorale's exclusive tour with pop-up performances, beekeeping talks, and the Hidden Lane garden party. \$22/advance; \$25/tour day. Email restongardensofnote@gmail.com or visit www.restonchorale.org for more.

Reston Pride Festival. 2-7 p.m. at Lake Anne Plaza. The Second Annual Reston Pride Festival will celebrate and support Greater Reston's LGBTQ+ community. The festival will feature

choral groups, dancers, performers, speakers – both political leaders and faith leaders – all coming together to support the LGBTQ+ community. In addition, more than 40 LGBTQ+ friendly exhibitors. This child-friendly event is free and open to the public. Visit www.facebook.com/RestonPride/ for more.

FRIDAY/JUNE 7

Grand Opening. 5-8 p.m. at Optimal Motion Physical Therapy, 950 Herndon Parkway, Suite 425, Herndon. Optimal Motion Physical Therapy was created by Secili DeStefano and Matt Barnes. They bring a combined 40 years of experience. The community is invited to join them for a grand opening celebration. RSVP at www.optimalmotion-pt.com or call 703-665-1444.

Live Music: The Jones. 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. at Kalypso's Sports Tavern on historic Lake Anne in Reston. Bands play inside the sports bar on a dedicated stage. No cover. Visit www.kalypsosportstavern.com.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/JUNE 7-9

Celebrate Fairfax! Festival. Northern Virginia's largest community-wide event, the 38th annual Celebrate Fairfax! Festival, is set to take place on the grounds of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. The Celebrate Fairfax! Festival features 25 acres of concerts, family programs, exhibits, carnival rides and nightly fireworks. Among the festival's highlights are more than 120 performances on seven stages, including Better Than Ezra and Smash Mouth. Call 703-324-3247 or visit www.celebratefairfax.com.

SUNDAY/JUNE 9

"Love Your Body Yoga Festival." 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Reston Town Center. 11th Annual "Love Your Body Yoga Festival" features yoga classes all day, kids yoga tent, Bhakti music tent, YED wellness talks, and over 80 eco-conscious vendors. This year will feature for the first time, DC area non-profit organizations that include Yoga in their offerings. ONE Common UNITY is among the non-profits. Visit www.loveyourbodyyogafestival.com.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 12

Author Event: Rachel Louise Snyder. 7 p.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston Town Center. In No Visible Bruises, journalist Rachel Louise Snyder gives context for what we don't know we're seeing. Through the stories of victims, perpetrators, law enforcement, and reform movements from across the country, Snyder explores the real roots of private violence, its far-reaching consequences for society, and what it will take to truly address it. Free. Register at eventbrite.com, search Scrawl Books.

FRIDAY/JUNE 14

Live Music: The Vandelay's. 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. at Kalypso's Sports Tavern on historic Lake Anne in Reston. Bands play inside the sports bar on a dedicated stage. No cover. Visit www.kalypsosportstavern.com.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JUNE 14-15

Taste of Reston. Friday, 4-11 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m.-11 p.m. at Reston Town Center. Taste of Reston features the region's best cuisine, family activities, live entertainment and a Wine 'n Dine section with cooking demonstrations from local chefs, a Family Fun Zone and free garage parking. Live music will fill the air both days with favorites such as Cherry Crush Band, New Blue Soul, Delta Spur, and Vinyl Rhino. Taste of Reston event admission and parking are free. Food tickets are \$1 per ticket or \$20 for 24 tickets. Advance tickets are on sale online, at www.RestonTaste.com.

SUNDAY/JUNE 16

Sully Antique Car Show. 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Take Dad for a stroll down memory lane this Father's Day with a visit to the Antique Car Show at Sully Historic Site. Relive a time when chrome was king and V-8 engines ruled the land. Car show tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors, and \$6 for children, and will be sold at the gates. Call 703-437-1794.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

2018 Herndon Festival in the Historic Downtown District.

2019 Herndon Festival At New Location

NWFCU to host the family-friendly event at their campus.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION



Herndon Parks and Recreation Department's Executive Director Cindy Roeder, and Northwest Federal Credit Union's President and CEO Jeff Bentley show off a banner for the 39th annual Herndon Festival to be held Thursday, May 30 - Sunday, June 2, 2019, at NWFCU campus, 200 Spring Street.

USATF 10K/5K

The 10K/5K Races will be held on Sunday, June 2 at 7:30 a.m. at the Herndon Community Center. These races are great for all fitness levels and ages, very family friendly. The race course takes you through historic downtown Herndon. Both the 10K and 5K courses are USATF certified. Awards are presented to the top two finishers from each age group from the 10 & under, to 70 & over. There is still time to register. All the details at <http://www.herndonfestival.net/10k-5k-races.html>.

Speaking about performers participating in Festiva, Roeder said, "With more than 50 performances you will surely find a singer or entertainer you really enjoy. We are excited about Vertical Horizon closing the show on Sunday afternoon at 4:45 p.m. We also think folks will like Farewell Angelina, Eve Strings Electricque, China Grove, the Doobie Brothers tribute act and a fun yacht rock group called Three Sheets to the Wind. And throughout the day, you might discover someone new on either the Parkway or Herndon Family Medicine Stage as they both offer a full schedule of quality entertainers. Check out the schedule at www.herndonfestival.net/entertainment.

For the first time in 39 years, the Herndon Festival, one of the most popular free outdoor festivals in Northern Virginia, will not be held in the historic Downtown District. This year the time-honored event is sited one block off the Fairfax County Parkway at 200 Spring Street on the campus of Northwest Federal Credit Union. Admission to the festival is free with free shuttle buses departing regularly from the Worldgate Shopping Center and Herndon High School. The Festival runs Thursday, May 30 - Sunday, June 2, billed as "New Location, Same Great Festival." The Connection asked Northwest Federal Credit Union's President and CEO Jeff Bentley, and Herndon Parks and Recreation Department's Executive Director, Cindy Roeder, what was their take on the 2019 Herndon Festival.

Roeder explained the change to "New Location, Same Great Festival."

"Our message is that although the Herndon Festival is relocating to the Northwest Federal Credit Union campus, all of the same cherished elements are coming with us, rides, games, crafters, children's hands-on art, food vendors and local businesses, plus more than 50 performances. And it's a great thing to have a new partner in Northwest who has already proven a delightful host."

Bentley said: "The first thing I plan to do is look around and try to absorb all of the incredible sights and sounds. I'm sure it will be exciting to see the Northwest Federal campus buzzing with family fun. Second, my wife and I will probably stop by the Northwest Federal booth right next to the carnival to take a few pictures with the fun photo backdrops available free for everyone to enjoy. Third, I think I'll grab a cold beverage and a snack from one of the amazing food vendors,"

Pride of Herndon Heads to Omaha Beach

Herndon High Marching Band to perform at the 75th anniversary of the D-Day.

In less than a month, the Pride of Herndon Marching Band will stand on the shores of Omaha Beach in Normandy, France, to play at the 75th anniversary of D-Day, one of only 10 performing groups in the United States given this privilege.

This past Friday, members of the marching band were peppered throughout the three bands and four ensembles that played at the Herndon High School Spring Concert, and members of the Herndon community were treated to a festival of jazz, classical, hymns and a rousing closing march.

Highlights of the show included a guest appearance by Buddy Deshler, a professional musician who once played for Herndon Band Director Kathleen Jacoby.



Herndon Band Director Kathleen Jacoby with Col. Arnald Gabriel

Deshler dazzled the crowd in Gale, a piece written specifically for him, ably backed by the Herndon Symphonic Winds. Band parent Margaret Jamborsky, who has dedi-

cated close to two years of research on members of the U.S.S Herndon, was awarded the Community Builder Award from the Herndon Masonic Lodge for her

service in making the Herndon community a better place.

The crowd rose to its feet as Jacoby announced the final two numbers, and the Herndon Wind

Ensemble's guest conductor, Colonel Arnald Gabriel. Col. Gabriel, who commanded the internationally renowned U.S. Air Force Band, Symphony Orchestra, and Singing Sergeants from 1964 to 1985, took the stage to a rousing standing ovation, then led the band in the Hymn to the Fallen, while images of the soldiers from the U.S.S Herndon played across the auditorium wall. Incredibly, Col. Gabriel also was a 19-year-old gunnery sergeant at the D-Day Invasion.

The concert ended with Col. Gabriel conducting the Wind Ensemble in the Salute to the Armed Forces, while members of the audience stood as the portion of the song representing their branch of the military was played.

This year, on June 6, pause for a moment, and think of the thousands of people who sacrificed their lives that day, and the students of Herndon High representing the Herndon community through the marching band, and remember the Herndon motto, "In our past lies the hope of our future."

— LYNNE CUPPERNULL

PHOTO BY CHRIS PINOVER

From left, Cheryl Engley - 40 years of service, Ann Chladon - 10 years of service, Joyce Burd- 20 years of service and Nora Saint Arnold - 10 years of service celebrate and toast their long-standing teaching commitment at St. Timothy's Preschool in Herndon.



MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

The Privilege to Teach

St. Timothy's Preschool in Herndon recognizes teachers.

On May 17, 2019, St. Timothy's Preschool honored their teachers with a Teacher Appreciation Luncheon. Special recognition went to Cheryl Engley, 40 years of service. She began with St. Timothy in 1979. Engley, who says she enjoys her job more each year, taught at the school both when her son attended and later when her granddaughter attended. Engley finds that she's more patient each year and loves to listen to her students' stories.

"Three to five years old is a perfect age. The children are inquisitive, they have

wonderful stories to share, and they're very loving. My goal is that the children love coming to school," said Engley.

Joyce Burd, 20 years of service and a long-time resident of Herndon, also enjoys her job after all these years. "I have had the privilege to teach at St. Timothy's for 20 years. I am always happy to come to work. Sadly, many people can't say that. The people I work with are family. We work together to help these young children have a great beginning to their education. I am truly blessed," she said.

Also honored were Nora Saint Arnold and Ann Chladon for 10 years of service. "The staff's long-term commitment to our school is a true testament to the loving atmosphere that we cultivate. Once people come here, they don't want to go anywhere else," said Director Monica Despina.

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NEWS



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Board members Bo Davis, Carol Ashworth, Jean Ku, Anupam Kumar (LCNV Board President), Gene Durman (Rotary), Paul Byrne, Jan Auerbach (Rotary), John Thomas (in back) and Michael Gavin.

McLean Rotary Provides Funding for Literacy Council of Northern Virginia

McLean Rotary President Gene Durman and member Jan Auerbach attended the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia Board Meeting on May 20 to present a check for \$1250 which coupled with another check

for \$1250 earlier in the year was a grant to support a class which is conducted onsite in cooperation with Doubletree Hilton of Tysons to improve the English of the hotel's banquet and housekeeping employees.

Assistance League of Northern Virginia: Fundraising to Support Low-Income Children

Assistance League® of Northern Virginia, an all-volunteer nonprofit organization, held its annual Spring Fundraiser on April 26 at the Country Club of Fairfax to raise funds for its programs that serve the needs of low-income children in 11 Title I elementary schools in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. During the pre-luncheon reception, the 145 guests in attendance had an opportunity to bid on an array of silent auction items donated by local businesses.

Kathryn Jackson, president of the Northern Virginia chapter of Assistance League, emceed the event and described the positive impact the organization's ongoing programs, including Weekend Food for Kids, New Clothing for Kids, Literacy for Kids and Hugs Pillows, have in the community. Attendees were treated to a slide show that provided a visual portrayal of the nonprofit's programs and activities.

During the current school year, Weekend Food for Kids will deliver 18,000 bags of nonperishable food items to students at risk of hunger to take home on weekends when school meals are not available. The New Clothing for Kids initiative provides essential clothing items, and personal grooming products to improve the well-being of students, and layettes to help new mothers in need. Literacy for Kids delivers individualized tutoring to first graders and supplies books to support summer school reading programs, in addition to providing books to allow individual students to build their home libraries. Hugs Pillows distributes hand-made pillows to comfort children undergoing treatment at a local clinic.

Key sponsors of the charity luncheon were recognized for their support: Quadrant, Inc., Panda Stone-wall, Bob's Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation, Marines Plumbing, and Spine Care of Manassas Chiropractic Center. Several partners that have pro-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Kathryn Jackson, president of the Northern Virginia chapter of Assistance League, emceed the event.

vided support for the organization's food program, including Dominion Energy, Allstate, Intelsat and Sandy Spring Bank, also received praise. A special thank-you was extended to principals and other representatives from the schools served.

For the ninth year, Auctioneer Daniel Sanders, with Four Sales Ltd., donated his services to help raise funds during the live auction and special appeal segment of the program. Two luxury South African Photo Safari packages were just some of the items available for bid this year.

Christopher Baity, a veteran Marine Corps dog trainer and Founder and Executive Director of Semper K9 Assistance Dogs, delivered the keynote address.

For further information, visit: www.alnv.org.

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FROM PAGE 2

FRIDAY/JUNE 14

Application Deadline: Fire Academy. The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department is now accepting applications for its Girls Fire and Rescue Academy summer camp, which will take place July 11-13, 2019. The Academy is open to female students who will be in grades 7-12 in the upcoming 2019-2020 school year. Participants must be a Fairfax County resident. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire-ems.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax or www.northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

ONGOING

Assistance League of Northern Virginia, a volunteer nonprofit, invites community members to join the organization to participate in its Reading Express program. Volunteers provide one-on-one tutoring to first grade students during the school year. To learn more contact VP Membership Mary Gronlund at gronbiz@aol.com or Program Coordinator Lynn Barron at lynnieb517@verizon.net.

STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in six Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or donaldrea@aol.com.

Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed. Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil at Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-4547.

Herndon High School Library needs volunteers. Training available to help with re-shelving books, pulling books for teacher use, helping to check passes, or other special projects. To learn more, email hhs_library@fcps.edu.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Sunrise at Reston Town Center offers a monthly Caregiver Support Group on the fourth Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8 p.m. Monthly support group offers a safe place for family caregivers, to meet and develop a mutual support system and to exchange practical information and possible solutions. Learn about resources available in the community and how to manage caregiver related stress. Call 703-956-8930 or email Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com to RSVP.

Exercise for Parkinson's. Every Monday, 1:15-2:15 p.m. Reston Sport&Health, 11445 Isaac Newton Square, Reston.

This program brings together people impacted by Parkinson's Disease to participate in various physical exercises aimed at improving posture, balance and circulation and increasing strength, muscle control and mobility. Free. parkinsonfoundation.org. Call Natalie McCall nmccall@onelifefitness.com 703-904-7600 for more.

Master Gardener Training. The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit fairfaxgardening.org or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

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The Weak That Was



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

All's well that ends well. The fortnight or so from you-know-where has finally ended and I am here to write that my warranty has been extended for another two months. The CT scan showed no tumor growth or movement. The "promise" of immunotherapy so far is keeping its 'promise' - keeping the tumors stable.

Throughout my extremely fortunate cancer experience, I have felt reasonably well and manifested few symptoms/side effects; at least the kind of symptoms/side effects: shortness of breath, coughing, expectorating blood, mind-numbing neuropathy and headaches, among others, about which my oncologist regularly inquires.

Generally speaking then, my health status has always been about the tale of the tape - to invoke a boxing reference - meaning the diagnostic scans: brain MRI, CT scan of the neck/lower abdomen, PET scan and the initial X-Ray which started the whole adventure, to determine my fitness for duty, so to speak.

It is not until my oncologist shares/summarizes the radiologist's findings - and occasionally shows us the actual computer images themselves, that yours truly/Team Lourie knows where we stand.

And, where we stand typically is where we are sitting, in a cramped exam room, face to face with the man who holds my life in the palm of his hand - or more specifically, in the words that he chooses and the gesture/body language he exhibits. It's not exactly "Bath Fitter," but "the reveal" is imminent.

It never gets easy, but it does get easier to endure this kind of potentially life-altering/life-ending moment. Though the familiarity of it hasn't dulled the pain, it has enabled us to balance the pros and cons, up and downs and all-arounds, as we anticipate the words we are about to hear.

During most of these post-scan visits, we've exhaled in relief, but we have had our share of disappointment.

On one occasion, back in late July 2013, I was hospitalized for a week when my lungs accumulated 4.5 liters of fluid, among more significant internal problems (lung collapsing).

Externally, I was unable to speak more than a few words before needing to regroup. As a matter of humorous fact, when my long-time oncology nurse, Ron, saw me that infusion day, he thought I "was a goner," since my oxygen level was so low.

Within a few hours, I was a 'goner' in an ambulance to Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, Md. where I was eventually admitted. Two days later, a thoracic surgeon operated, and a day or two after that, my lung amazingly reinflated.

As a result, in my head and in my gut, (though I'm no Jethro Gibbs from NCIS), when I show up for my infusions and for my post-scan appointments, there's always a part of me that thinks I might not be spending that evening in my own bed.

When you're a cancer patient/survivor, and this kind of whisking off not to Buffalo but instead to the local hospital affiliated with your HMO has happened once, it's only a matter of time (it's impossible not to believe it's inevitable when you've been staged a IV) before it will happen again. I'm not being negative, I'm just saying.

As we sit and wait at home for my oncologist to email us the scan results, or whether we sit and wait in the on-site exam room, I wouldn't say our respective lives pass before us, but I will certainly admit to the total unpleasantness of it.

That being said, we're the lucky ones. There are nearly 160,000 lung cancer patients who succumb to this terrible disease every year who aren't nearly so lucky.

So when I hear the words "stable" from my oncologist, I am humbled as much as I am relieved, that I have lived to fight another eight weeks until my next scan is scheduled and my next fortnight is fought.

And that's how I live my life: in increments. Increments which I'm grateful to have. It may not be ideal, but it's a living, and it sure beats a dying.

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

OPINION

Help the Class of 2019 Celebrate Graduation Safely

BY SUPERVISOR
JOHN C. COOK
BRADDOCK DISTRICT



The last month of Senior year in high school is an exciting time for students and their families. Our children are moving on to a new stage in life after four years of hard work and intensive studies. When one considers the caliber of our schools, graduation is an even more impressive milestone.

Amidst these great achievements, I urge parents to talk to their teens about the dangers of alcohol and to prohibit teens drinking in their own homes.

The Fairfax County Police Department will arrest parents who knowingly host teen par-

ties with alcohol. This may seem harsh to some, but this is a public safety issue. Teens are not yet ready to make good choices about alcohol. When adults serve it to them they send the wrong message and encourage the wrong choices.

It is no secret that teen drinking is wrought with dangerous consequences. Since teens who drink are more likely to binge drink, they are also more likely to make poor choices, such as drunk driving. In fact, the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that every year hundreds of young people get behind the wheel intoxicated and cause deadly accidents: 648 people aged 16-20 were involved in a fatal accident with a BAC higher than .08 in 2017. Furthermore, teen drinking can also lead to sexual assaults and other crimes.

I cannot remember one year without hear-

ing of a tragic local teen death caused by drunk driving. It is up to us as parents to do everything we can to encourage smart choices and safe celebration. That starts with clearly setting the boundary with your children that no alcohol will be served at any parties your family is hosting.

This is a community wide problem and will require community support. If you suspect there is underage drinking happening in your neighborhood, you can call the West Springfield Police Station at 703-644-7377 (or your District station).

Graduation season should be a time of merry making, reveling, and kudos for all the hard work our children have done. It should not include jail cells, ambulances, or coffins. Please join me in promoting a safe environment in our community by keeping alcohol out of teen parties.

Mental Health Awareness Month

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



Before we tear off the remaining couple of pages on the May calendar, I want to address the important recognition of May as Mental Health Awareness Month. While Virginia is credited with having the first mental health hospital, or asylum as they were called in the eighteenth century, the Commonwealth has had difficulty in recent times coming to grips with the enormity of the need and the provision of funds to respond to those needs. In fact Virginia is ranked 40th in the nation in mental health care according to the results of a national study of the issue. It took a state senator's mentally ill son attacking his father with a knife to shock the state to greater action. That father now chairs the Joint Subcommittee on Mental Health Services in the 21st Century, or the Deeds Commission, that includes Senator Janet Howell as a member and has made critically important recommenda-

COMMENTARY

tions on which the state has made significant progress. A special thanks goes to the The Commonwealth Institute (thecommonwealthinstitute.org) for documenting recent progress and remaining opportunities in behavioral health in a recent edition of *The Half Sheet*. The Institute which is a nonprofit organization focusing mostly on human service needs used the term "behavioral health" to be more comprehensive than "mental health" to include mental health services and supports such as substance abuse treatment. The Institute recognized accomplishments this past year to include a 21 percent increase in Medicaid reimbursement to encourage more licensed mental health professionals to accept Medicaid thus increasing access to services for people with low income. Additional funding for emergency opioid kits will expand the access to and availability of Naloxone which is used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. The General Assembly also passed and the Governor signed my bill to expand the health care providers authorized to dispense Naloxone to make it more readily available.

Increased funding was provided to increase

staffing at state mental health facilities that are struggling to keep up with demand. Funding was also approved to replace the aging mental health facility Central State Hospital. In addition, monies have been made available for transportation of persons needing mental health hospitalization from having to be transported by law enforcement. The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services indicates that there is a need for 5,000 permanent housing units for those who need supportive housing in the state. This year's funding along with an increase last year will provide 1,300 units of supportive housing. Obviously, there is a severe need to do more in this area with a price tag of about \$47 million. Challenges remain to be addressed in providing greater access to programs and services for those who live in rural areas and to those who have experienced the trauma of having been exposed to the immigration and refugee system. A task force is looking at ways to increase the number of mental health professionals in the state. Our awareness of mental health needs cannot end with the month of May. More needs to be done!

Health Insurance Tax: An Attack on Seniors?

To the Editor:
Regarding The Connection's recent article on health

disparities in Virginia (March 25, 2019, "Report Shows Geographic Disparities in Health in Virginia,") I want to highlight another threat to care in our region: the Health Insurance Tax.

As a senior who depends on Medicare Advantage for affordable health care to help manage debilitating chronic migraines and back pain, I am appalled by the lack of congressional action on the Health Insurance Tax (HIT).

Medicare Advantage coverage

has helped me get my life and my health back, but the HIT is nothing short of an attack on seniors. It would raise annual costs for more than 22 million Medicare Advantage beneficiaries by as much as \$241 per person annually, imposing a huge

burden for those living on fixed incomes. Seniors on Social Security often live on significantly less than the mean income in Appalachia.

Key legislation before Congress (H.R. 1398 and S. 172) would stop the HIT and protect seniors, but Senators Kaine and Warner and Congressman Connolly have re-

fused to sign on as co-sponsors. It seems like Congress

has forgotten we are here. If Congress allows a tax on my healthcare premiums, I won't be able to afford coverage. If costs go up, I'm out of the game. Senior health isn't a game – and the HIT is a multi-billion-dollar tax on health insurance premiums that will go into effect in 2020 unless Congress acts soon.

It's time for congressional action to stop the HIT and protect our care.

Carol Frysinger
Herndon

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. Send to:

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By email:
editors@connectionnewspapers.com

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