

Chantilly CONNECTION

Fair Oaks ♦ Fair Lakes

Three volunteers helping Our Neighbor's Child package Christmas gifts for families in need are (from left) Stephanie Agar, Carolyn Wheeler and Tammy Sankner of Privia Health.

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Police MPO Kitzerow Receives Two Awards

Honored by
Crime Solvers
and Sully
District Station.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

When it comes to police work, MPO Steven L. Kitzerow is one of the best officers in his field. Not only has he been named the Sully District Police Station's Officer of the Quarter, but he's just received the 2019 Crime Solvers Pinnacle Award, as well.

PFC Meg Hawkins, the station's community outreach officer, said Crime Solvers recognized him for his "outstanding work and commitment to criminal investigations. His dedication to our district is greatly appreciated by all."

Earlier, Kitzerow was also chosen as his police station's Officer of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2019. And as such, he was honored at a recent meeting of that station's Citizens Advisory Committee.

Nominating him was Lt. Joe Ankers, who said Kitzerow has more than 36 years' experience in law enforcement. Over the course of his career, he's been assigned to several different positions and is currently a detective in the Criminal Investigations Section. Ankers then presented some examples of Kitzerow's stellar police work.

THIS PAST FEBRUARY, a manager from Wegmans grocery store contacted the Fairfax County Police Department regarding suspicious activity in which a woman was obtaining gift cards in a manner they believed might be fraudulent. Kitzerow volunteered to investigate the matter and soon discovered that she had indeed committed fraud by obtaining gift cards with stolen numbers.

"Further investigation revealed that the woman may have committed more fraud in multiple ways for several years without being detected," wrote Ankers. "Although Kitzerow had enough probable cause to obtain an arrest warrant for the original complaint, he decided to further investigate the suspect's pattern of conduct in other possible financial scams.



From left, Station Commander, Capt. Todd Billeb, presents the Officer of the Quarter award to Det. Steve Kitzerow.

"Kitzerow not only recovered evidence supporting several financial crimes, but also uncovered an organized financial-crime system."

— Lt. Joe Ankers

"His thorough investigation into the suspect's actions led to numerous search warrants and the identification of many other victims," continued Ankers. "Kitzerow not only recovered evidence supporting several financial crimes, but also uncovered an organized financial-crime system."

The detective then developed three additional suspects that led to three more search warrants in multiple jurisdictions. And with the evidence collected, Kitzerow was able to obtain several warrants for all four suspects. Altogether, a total of 37 warrants were issued for the four people. This complex investigation lasted several months, involved several other law-enforcement agencies and, wrote Ankers, "will culminate in prosecution at the federal level."

THEN IN MAY, Kitzerow started investigating a series of larcenies from vehicles that were also re-

lated to cars being stolen. During this investigation, he quickly determined the suspects had victimized many people in multiple jurisdictions since the beginning of the year.

"With his investigative skills and determination, the detective was able to identify the perpetrators," wrote Ankers. "His strong work ethic was on display for all to see when he went out and personally processed vehicles for evidence, one morning, when a dozen vehicles in a neighborhood were entered the night before. Due to Kitzerow's diligence, most of the property stolen was recovered and charges were placed against the ones responsible. Larceny from vehicle cases in the Sully District have dropped drastically as a result and, in large part, to his efforts."

Furthermore, wrote Ankers, "He has always performed at a high level throughout his career, and this was no different. The cases in this investigation were complex, taxing and needed a detective with the tenacity for which Kitzerow is known."

"He is an excellent role model who supports the other detectives and officers in the station. His ability to communicate with the community and his knowledge are invaluable to the department. He continuously goes above and beyond to bring justice for the victims of crimes, which is the reason he has been chosen as Sully Station's Officer of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2019."



PHOTO ERIC KAYNE/AP IMAGES FOR MACY'S

Wish Kid, Olivia Greider of Centreville, and Tara Wilson Jones, vice president of marketing and communications for Make-a-Wish Mid-Atlantic arrive at Macy's in Tysons.

A Wish Granted

Make-a-Wish Mid-Atlantic, Macy's at Tysons sending a 7-year-old Olivia Greider of Centreville to Australia.

On Wednesday, Dec. 4, Macy's Tysons Corner Center and Make-A-Wish Mid-Atlantic welcomed 7-year-old Olivia Greider of Centreville in-store to celebrate her wish to go to the Penguin Parade on Phillips Island in Australia. The Wish Wednesday event was a part of Macy's annual Believe campaign, which benefits Make-A-Wish.

Olivia, who is battling leukemia, arrived to the store in a limousine and was enthusiastically welcomed by a crowd of Macy's and Make-A-Wish colleagues and volunteers.

Joe Hockey, Ambassador of Australia to the United States, led Olivia on a penguin-themed scavenger hunt throughout the store where she received gifts for her trip at each stop including a penguin travel pillow, water bottle and suitcase.

Macy's Believe letter-writing campaign, in partnership with Make-A-Wish, seeks to capture the joy and generosity of the holiday season by asking the community to come together to help grant wishes for children with critical illnesses.

From Nov. 4 through Dec. 24, Macy's is asking customers of all



Brandon Stewart, Macy's district vice president, Wish Kid Olivia and Darran Whitlock, Macy's Tysons Corner store manager.

ages to write letters to Santa and drop them off in stores or submit them online at macys.com/believe.

For every letter sent, Macy's will donate \$1, up to \$1 million, to Make-A-Wish to help grant wishes for children battling critical illnesses.

As part of Macy's Believe select Macy's locations throughout the country are celebrating the wish of a local Make-A-Wish child through dedicated Wish Wednesdays.



These employees of Tableau Software show their Christmas spirit. From left are Stephanie Weiss, Martha Shanfeld, Adam Gutekunst, Caroline Orr and Jason Warren.



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Filling families' gift bags with new toys is this group from Salesforce.com.

ONC Makes Children's Dreams Come True

Our Neighbor's Child (ONC) is in its 28th year of bringing holiday joy to hundreds of local families in need. And one of its gift-packaging days was Thursday, Dec. 12.



Lending a hand are these staff members from the Hilton Garden Inn in Fair Oaks.



Hard at work are (from left) Cliff Singh, TK Kirkland and Rene Jacobs of Quest Diagnostics of Chantilly.



Three volunteers helping Our Neighbor's Child package Christmas gifts for families in need are (from left) Stephanie Agar, Carolyn Wheeler and Tammy Sankner of Privia Health.



Selecting toys to fulfill children's gift wishes are (from left) Kris Colangelo, Robin Litteral and Callie Rennyson.



(From left) Susan McClanahan and Ilham Azim help with the packaging.

OPINION

Merry Christmas

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

The pages of the Connection (including the Alexandria Gazette Packet, the Mount Vernon Gazette, the Potomac Almanac and the Centre View) have been full of holiday spirit, beginning before Thanksgiving. Help for the needy, holiday parades, Santa and more Santa; tree lightings, stories of giving, the Nutcracker.

Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ. Whether you believe the Christmas story literally or in spirit, you know it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption.

It is also about embracing the teachings of Jesus: to love thy neighbor as thyself; to help the needy; to feed the hungry and clothe the poor; to care for those who are sick; to invite and welcome strangers; to treat others as you would have them treat you.

Matthew 7:12:

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.”

Matthew 25:35-40:

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or

needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’”

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

SO SHARE the verse relating the birth of Jesus from the Bible, Luke 2: 4-19:

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David.) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

“And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and

on earth peace, good will toward men.

“And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.”

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Editor's Note

About the Rest of 2019

This is our last regular edition of 2019. Next week, after Christmas, we will publish our annual Children's Issue, devoted entirely to the artwork and writing of local students. You'll be able to find this online at <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/> Scroll down to Children's.

Our next regular edition will publish Jan. 8, 2020, with deadline for content and advertising of Jan. 3 (late ads accepted).

In the meantime you can email the editors at editors@connectionnewspapers.com. You can reach sales/marketing/advertising at sales@connectionnewspapers.com.

Digital replica editions of the most recent week's papers are available at www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/PDFs

Past issues of the Connection back to 2008 are available at connectionarchives.com/PDF/ Sign up for a free digital subscription at www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/subscribe

Give Locally

Many local nonprofits are reporting a significant drop in contributions this year. To some, the decrease constitutes an existential threat. Not only will they be unable to meet their goals for helping others, but some might not be able to keep their doors open.

This comes as the need is increasing, as the White House cuts food stamps, as more people go hungry.

This is a perfect time to give, give a little more than you have in the past.

The holidays are about giving, and giving thanks.

There are people going hungry here, people who need help, organizations that will help, but can only help with the resources they have.

There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of ways to give locally this season, for humans in need, for animals in need, for an environment in need. Here are a few ideas.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Families face uncertainty and need; nonprofits face drop in contributions.

Where to Give Locally

- ❖ **Assistance League of Northern Virginia** is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that feeds, clothes and educates children in need. Assistance League's philanthropic programs touch the lives of thousands of children at 11 Title I schools in Northern Virginia, serving children most in need at selected schools in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria. To learn more about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, contact nfo@alnv.org or visit www.alnv.org
- ❖ **Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington Fairfax Area** operates clubs in two of the neediest areas of the county, Culmore, Mount Vernon/ Route 1 corridor, and Chantilly, focusing on character and academic success. <https://www.bgcgw.org/club-page/fairfax-county-region-our-impact/>
- ❖ **Britepaths** Britepaths is working to assist 500 Fairfax County area families who might otherwise go without holiday meals and gifts for their children. Sponsor a family or donate to provide a family with a holiday meal and/or gifts for their children. Britepaths.org <https://britepaths.org/our-programs/holiday-program>
- ❖ **Centreville Immigration Forum**, a safe, organized center where residents and contractors can negotiate work arrangements with day laborers.

Centreville Square Shopping Center, 5944 Centreville Crest Ln, Centreville, VA 20121. Phone: (703) 543-6272

website: www.centrevilleimmigrationforum.org and email contact@theCIFva.org

❖ **Closet Of The Greater Herndon Area** is a nonprofit thrift shop in downtown Herndon. The Closet recently awarded over \$20,000 in grants to seven local non-profit organizations: Cornerstones, Fellowship Square, Herndon-Reston FISH, Meridians Recovery, Mobile Hope of Loudoun, South Lakes High School PTSA Food Pantry, and Herndon Woman's Club in support of Wreaths Across America. The Closet is a source of low-cost clothing and household necessities and also gives away clothing at no cost to truly needy individuals. 845 Station Street Herndon, VA 20170 (703) 437-7652. Email TheClosetInc@verizon.net Web: theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/

❖ **Community Foundation of Northern Virginia** www.cfnova.org The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia works to respond to critical need and seed innovation in our region. Your gift helps us make grants in our focus areas of interest while also bringing a spotlight on the benefits of community philanthropists www.cfnova.org/for-donors/donate-now

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Chantilly
CONNECTION

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com

Jean Card
Production Editor
jcard@connectionnewspapers.com

Bonnie Hobbs
Community Reporter, 703-778-9415
bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com

Andrea Worker
Contributing Writer
aworker@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk
National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment Advertising
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
[@MaryKimm](https://www.facebook.com/MaryKimm)

Executive Vice President
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic
Art/Design:
Laurence Foong, John Heinly, Ali Khaligh
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

A Connection Newspaper

NEWS



Sarah Luffy, as Princess Elsa from "Frozen," with (from left) Bella Xu, 4; Jacob Xu, 11 months; Josephine Woolard, 4; and Emma Portillo, 2-1/2.



Mountain View students (from left) Alejandra Hernandez; Monserrat Perez and son Nathan, 4 months; and Veylin Alvarenga and son Dylan, 4 months.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

Children's Holiday Party at Mountain View

Mountain View High's annual holiday party for its pregnant/parenting students was Thursday, Dec. 12. Providing Christmas gifts were The Life Church, The Optimists Club of

Fairfax, Centreville Presbyterian Church, Our Neighbor's Child and Centreville resident Elizabeth Higgins. Centreville Presbyterian also provided the food and the "princess."

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2/5/2020.....	Valentine's Dining & Gifts
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- Oak Hill/Herndon Connection
- Potomac Annapolis
- Reston Connection
- Springfield Connection
- Vienna/Oakton Connection

NEWS

Conservation Award Presentation

The Centreville based Lane's Mill Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) presented an award on Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Virginia Run Community Center during a chapter meeting. Chapter Regent, Karen Burkett, presented the NSDAR Conservation Award and Medal to Katelyn Charlotte Walters.



Where to Give for Local impact

FROM PAGE 4

- ❖ **Cornerstones**, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, www.cornerstonesva.org. Nonprofit providing support and advocacy for those in need of food, shelter, affordable housing, quality childcare, and other human services. Programs and services include the Embury Rucker Community Shelter, Emergency Food Pantry, Hypothermia Prevention Program, Gifts for Kids and annual Coat Drive. www.cornerstonesva.org. Contact Nate King, Donations and Drives Coordinator, at 571-323-9569.
- ❖ **FACETS** helps parents, their children and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty in the Fairfax area, a partner in efforts to end homelessness in Fairfax County. FACETS is always in need of donations and volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities. Donations will be accepted at FACETS' main office (10700 Page Avenue, Building B, Fairfax VA 22030) between 9am - 5pm. Contact Haylee Davis at hdavis@facetscares.org. 703-865-4251 or volunteer@facetscares.org. www.facetscares.org. 10640 Page Ave., Suite 300, Fairfax VA 22030
- ❖ **Food for Others** Located at 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-207-9173. 2938 Prosperity Ave. info@foodforothers.org. Food for Others distributes food to more than 1,800 local families in need each week. Drop off food at our Merrifield Warehouse, 2938 Prosperity Ave, Fairfax, VA 22031. Monday through Friday from 9:30am to 5pm. www.foodforothers.org
- ❖ **Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter**. Each year, nearly 5,000 pets, including cats, dogs, small mammals, reptiles and livestock, come to the Fairfax County Animal Shelter. Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter funds important needs throughout the Shelter such as behavioral training and dental or medical care beyond what the shelter's budget can provide. generalinfo@ffcas.org 571-212-9858 www.ffcas.org/
- ❖ **Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia** transforms the lives of lower-income families in need by providing affordable homeownership opportunities in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax and Falls Church. Learn more at www.habitatnova.org.
- ❖ **LINK**, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more. holiday@linkagainsthunger.org. 703-437-1776 www.linkagainsthunger.org.
- ❖ **NAMI Northern Virginia** (National Alliance on Mental Illness) works to raise awareness and provide

- education, advocacy, and support programs for people living with mental illness, families, students, educators, law enforcement, and the public throughout our neighborhoods. Many excellent programs. NAMI Northern Virginia serves Fairfax, Falls Church, Arlington, Alexandria, and Loudoun www.nami-northernvirginia.org/ **HelpLine: (571)458.7310, Email: info@nami-nova.org**
- ❖ **National Capital Food Bank**, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia, (571) 482-4770 . www.capitalareafoodbank.org
- ❖ **Neighborhood Health**, 6677 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA 22306. The organization partners with its patients to treat the whole person through medical, behavioral health and dental programs. It has 10 clinics throughout Arlington and Fairfax counties. Participating with all insurance including commercial, Medicare, and Medicaid, 703-535-5568, www.neighborhoodhealthva.org
- ❖ **Northern Virginia Family Service**. The organization provides the essential building blocks for financial, emotional and physical well-being, serving as leaders and innovators for the Northern Virginia community. Every year, it empowers 35,000 individuals to achieve self-sufficiency. www.nvfs.org Northern Virginia Family Service, 10455 White Granite, Drive, Suite 100, Oakton, VA 22124. 571-748-2500
- ❖ **OAR** rebuilds lives and breaks the cycle of crime with opportunities, alternatives, and resources for offenders and their families to create a safer community. 10640 Page Ave., Suite 250, Fairfax, VA 22030, 703-246-3033. OAR needs volunteers and financial donations. oarnova.org/ donate
- ❖ **Our Neighbor's Child** (ONC) volunteers are preparing for delivery of holiday gifts for children from financially struggling families in western Fairfax County - predominantly in Centreville and Chantilly. www.ourneighborschild.org/
- ❖ **Pathway Homes** providing non-time-limited housing and supportive services to adults with serious mental illness and co-occurring disabilities in Northern Virginia. Founded in 1980, Pathways currently serves more than 400 adults in community-based homes in Northern Virginia. www.pathwayhomes.org
- ❖ **PRS**, Inc. is a non profit providing mental health, crisis intervention and suicide prevention services in Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C. Seeking to change and save lives in our community by empowering hope, safety, recovery, wellness, independence and community integration. PRS also provides crisis counseling and connection to supports CRISISLINK When crisis

calls, we answer 24/7 Call: 800-273-TALK [8255] Text: "CONNECT" to 85511

- ❖ **Rebuilding Together** Arlington/Fairfax/Falls Church (Rebuilding Together-AFF) is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization that makes critical repairs at no charge for low-income homeowners and nonprofit organizations. Our volunteers make homes safe and healthy, and they help seniors age in place. Since 1988 we have repaired 2,273 homes and non-profit residential facilities in our area and mobilized 69,081 volunteers to do the work. We believe in safe homes and communities for everyone. 10723 Main Street, #135, Fairfax, VA 22030; Phone: 703-528-1999 https://rebuildingtogether-aff.org/
- ❖ **Second Story** — Second Story (formerly Alternative House) provides shelter and services for homeless, runaway or abused teenagers, unaccompanied youth, and young mothers and their children. second-story.org.
- ❖ **Shelter House** provides crisis intervention, safe housing and supportive services to promote self-sufficiency for homeless families and victims of domestic violence in Fairfax County. It is our mission to get families back into stable housing in order to provide them the opportunity to continue their journey to self-sufficiency. www.shelterhouse.org
- ❖ **Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna** providing services, personal enrichment, volunteer opportunities for adults 50 and over. Currently serving 3,000-plus mature adults in the region. 703-281-0538, www.scov.org
- ❖ **TAPS**, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, 3033 Wilson Blvd., Third Floor, Arlington, VA 22201, Call 24/7 800-959-TAPS (8277) The Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors offers compassionate care and resources to all those grieving the loss of a military loved one. Make a donation to support surviving military families and loved ones. You can also make a gift in honor or memory of a loved one. www.taps.org/donate
- ❖ **Touching Heart** in Herndon is a nonprofit organization focused on how to enlighten, excite, and educate children about how they can experience the true joy that comes from helping those in need. www.touchingheart.com, 703-901-7355.
- ❖ **Western Fairfax Christian Ministries** — 4511 Daly Drive, Suite J, Chantilly, VA 20151 in Chantilly. email Assistant Food Pantry Manager/Volunteer Coordinator Debbie Culbertson at dculbertson@wfcmvva.org and put Holiday Food in the subject line. wfcmvva.org/

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.

DEC. 26 TO JAN. 13

Evergreen Christmas Tree Disposal. The Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative will accept evergreen Christmas trees and greens at its technical center at 5399 Wellington Branch Road in Gainesville, near I-66. Trees and greens — free of all decorations, ornament hooks, wire, and light strings — may be left in the parking lot in the area designated by orange safety cones. By recycling greens into woodchips and mulch, NOVEC's tree crews will reduce the amount of debris added to landfills after the holidays. Contact NOVEC's Vegetation Management department at 703-335-0500 or 1-888-335-0500, extension 1600, or VegetationMgmt@novec.com.

STARTING JAN. 1

Sully Historic Site's House to Close for Maintenance. At 3650 Historic Sully Way in Chantilly. The main house at Sully Historic Site will be closed to the public for the first five months of the new year. The historic house will undergo structural repair and maintenance, and it is scheduled to be closed from Jan. 1, 2020, into May. Exhibits, historic artifacts and furniture in the house will be safely protected and packed to make room for work crews. The historic site's grounds, outbuildings and visitor center will remain open, and the center will remain the main point of contact for all visitors. The visitor center will be open Wednesdays through Sundays. Tours of the Fairfax County Park Authority property will resume in March, weather permitting. Cooking classes and demonstrations, scout programs, and all outreach programs will continue. Visit online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site or call 703-437-1794.

THURSDAY/JAN. 2

Car Seat Safety Check. 5-8:30 p.m. at the Sully District Police Station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. Fairfax County Police Department offers free safety check and install events throughout the year to ensure children travel safely. In preparation for inspection, install the seat using the instructions that came with the car seat. Trained officers will review the car seat instructions and car owner's manual to be certain that they are being followed as they should.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 8

New Volunteer Orientation. 7:30-9 p.m. At Providence Community Center, 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax. You and your dog, cat or bunny are needed to join other Fairfax Pets on Wheels volunteers who make a difference in the community by visiting residents of long term care facilities. Visit the website, fpow.org.

TUESDAY/JAN. 14

American Legion Meeting. 7:30-9 p.m. at Sully District Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. American Legion Post 1995 Centreville and its Auxiliary Unit meet separately the second Tuesday of each month.. All veterans and spouses interested learning more about how the Legion supports veterans and impacts the Centreville-Chantilly communities are welcome to attend. Free. Contact Steve Hunter at geoshunter@aol.com or 703-314-3795.

NOW THRU JAN. 27

HOPE for Mental Health. 7-8:30 p.m. At Centreville Presbyterian Church, 15450 Lee Highway, Centreville. HOPE for Mental Health is a support group for adults 18-plus who are dealing with mental health challenges of various kinds. The group is designed to provide a welcoming, confidential, supportive, and spiritually-enriching environment where participants are encouraged to share their experiences, give and receive comfort and encouragement, and learn how faith and reliance on God can instill hope. Email: Lauren Mowbray at lauren@cpceco.org.

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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them. -Werner Heisenberg			

Catharsis



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Having re-read what I wrote in last week's column: "Still Processing," I can't say it made me feel a whole lot better than when I wrote it. Granted, it was a column that had to be written given my self-indulgent tendencies (that I fight against constantly) and the possible crossroads that I may be entering. Nevertheless, if part of the underlying reason why I take up this space every week is to vent and share, as a means, hopefully not to a premature end, I suppose there was stress released there. But the subject matter was so third-rail-ish that even though I've tried to avoid it, I feel adversely affected by the experience.

The subject to which I so ambiguously refer is my own death. Aside from not wanting it to happen, if I don't plan in advance for it having happened, the chaos that will ensue and envelop my wife, Dina, is both unfair and inconsiderate. You see, in our relationship, she's been the social director and I've been the business manager. To quote my late father: "and neither the twain shall meet except on the twack." If I were indeed to predecease my wife, a fairly distinct possibility, not only would there be no twain, there would be no "twack" as well. There would only be trouble, and that's 'trouble' with a capital "T."

It's not so much that there are complications lurking, so far as I understand them: there are no children, no blended family, no special needs situations, no multi-layered business entanglements, no offshore anything (heck, there's very little onshore), our home and bank accounts are jointly owned, no financial thresholds exceeded, no delinquencies and few liabilities; really not much out of the ordinary. However, I get that ordinary is in the eye of the surviving beholder, which is likely not to be me. Therefore, if I want to contribute to my wife's quality of life after I've departed dearly (and to her peace of mind now, quite frankly), apparently a road map of sorts is in the offing. (And believe me, none of this is about control; it's more about initiative.)

I guess there's something in me that feels I need to get it out on paper so that I might act on it in person. Maybe writing about such a grim task minimizes its grimness, sort of like dipping your toe in the water before you jump? Maybe thinking and writing about the anxiety I'm feeling concerning what my wife will have to do after I've died is kind of a mental ice breaker. Not that I'm getting into any details here, it's more of a broad brush," to once again quote my brother, Richard, about the need for consideration and fairness. The underlying problem is that getting into all this after I'm-dead stuff seems and feels incredibly negative. And I try to ignore negativity. In fact, it may very well have been my positivity which has kept me alive all these live-long days.

I'm sure I'm rationalizing (maybe more like "irrationalizing"), as an excuse for not doing what needs to be done, but I've always been good at that. In addition, I keep coming back to it's my life; I'm the one with "the cancer," to quote "Forrest, Forrest Gump," describing his mother's cause of death, as a means of justifying my stubbornness/unwillingness to make certain arrangements. I mean, when you think of it, having cancer is a heck of an excuse. And though I've rarely used it as one, I've always felt it. And with respect to planning for a future I don't have, I have to blame the cancer. It makes you do and think things you might not otherwise do and think. It's not as if anyone is ever prepared for a cancer/serious health diagnosis. Quite the opposite in fact. As such, you either learn to roll with the punches or get knocked down by them.

This recent/current experience hasn't knocked me down or out exactly, but it has made me a little wobbly emotionally, and reminded me just how insidious cancer can be. Once again, and for the first time in years, I seem to be at greater risk than ever. I suppose with risk comes opportunities. Having my tumors "typed" and in turn treated with specific/targeted medicine seems to be present just such an opportunity; exactly what the doctor ordered, literally.

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

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

2019 White House Ornaments. The 2019 White House Ornaments are available from the Assistance League of Northern Virginia. White House Ornaments are wonderful for gift giving. This year's White House Ornament is a "whirlybird" honoring Dwight D. Eisenhower, 34th president of the United States. To purchase, contact Cindy Burgess at burgessgl@verizon.net. Cost per ornament is \$22. Proceeds support ALNV's local children's programs. Visit the website: www.alnv.org.

NOW THROUGH JAN. 5

Bull Run Festival of Lights. 5:30-9:30 p.m. Mon.-Thurs.; 5:30-10 p.m. Fri.-Sun. and holidays. At Bull Run Regional Park, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. Every year from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day, visitors can drive through the Bull Run Festival of Lights. It stretches 2.5 miles and is illuminated by holiday light displays. After viewing the festival of lights, visitors may go to the holiday village to enjoy rides, refreshments, and photos with Santa Claus (holiday village open select nights). Visit the website: <https://www.novaparks.com/events/bull-run-festival-of-lights>

SATURDAY/DEC. 21

Caroling Wagon Ride & Campfire. 1-2 p.m. At Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Limber up your vocal chords and join in song and exploration on a wagon ride at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park. Shake off the chill with s'mores at the campfire. This family program is for participants ages 4 to adult. Cost is \$8 per person. Children must be accompanied by a registered adult. Call 703-631-0013 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence.

Elegant Evening-Candlelight Tour. 5-7 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Explore the 1794 historic house with a guide, and see the home decorated for the holidays in traditional fashion. The first and second floors will be lit by candlelight as they would have appeared more than 200 years ago. A fun exhibit of nutcrackers – both old and new – also is part of the tour. Visitors can enjoy hot cider and cookies baked following traditional recipes, and there will be an opportunity to craft an ornament to deck your own halls. Tours begin at 5 p.m. and will start every 15 minutes, with the last tour beginning at 7 p.m. Festivities conclude at 8 p.m. Admission is \$10 per person. Call 703-437-1794 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site.

DEC. 27-29

"The Nutcracker." 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. At Northern Virginia Community College Annandale Campus, Ernst Community Cultural Center. The Virginia Ballet Company and School will present its 70th season of the classic "Nutcracker." Ticket prices for reserved seating are \$30 for adults and \$20 for children, students and seniors, plus a \$3 fee per each ticket. Tickets may be purchased online at www.vaballet.org. Group pricing for these 6 performances is available for groups of 10 or more for the same performance. Call 703-249-8227. The box office opens one hour before performance.

SATURDAY/DEC. 28

Elegant Evening-Candlelight Tour. 5-7 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Explore the 1794 historic house with a guide, and see the home decorated for the holidays in traditional fashion. The first and second floors will be lit by candlelight as they would have appeared more than 200 years ago. A fun exhibit of nutcrackers – both old and new – also is part of the tour. Visitors can enjoy hot cider and cookies baked following traditional recipes, and there will be an opportunity to craft an ornament to deck your own halls. Tours begin at 5 p.m. and will start every 15 minutes, with the last tour beginning at 7 p.m. Festivities conclude at 8 p.m. Admission is \$10 per person. Call 703-437-1794 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site.

TUESDAY/DEC. 31

First Night Alexandria. 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. At venues throughout Old Town Alexandria. This 25th Anniversary Celebration is the largest New

Virginia Ballet Company Presents "The Nutcracker"

Dec. 27-29, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. At Northern Virginia Community College Annandale Campus, Ernst Community Cultural Center. The Virginia Ballet Company and School will present its 70th season of the classic "Nutcracker." Ticket prices for reserved seating are \$30 for adults and \$20 for children, students and seniors, plus a \$3 fee per each ticket. Tickets may be purchased online at www.vaballet.org. Group pricing for these 6 performances is available for groups of 10 or more for the same performance. Call 703-249-8227. The box office opens one hour before performance.



The Virginia Ballet Company and School will present "The Nutcracker" on Dec. 27-29 at NOVA's Annandale Campus.



The 25th Anniversary First Night in Old Town Alexandria takes place Tuesday, Dec. 31.

First Night in Alexandria

Tuesday/Dec. 31, 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. At venues throughout Old Town Alexandria. This 25th Anniversary Celebration is the largest New Year's Eve party in the D.C. region that is safe and fun for the entire family and culminates with a fantastic fireworks finale over the Potomac River at midnight. Kids Karnivals: 6 to 9 p.m. at four warm indoor venues in Old Town, Del Ray and the West End. Live Entertainment: 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at warm indoor venues throughout Old Town Alexandria. Rockin' on the River: 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. at Waterfront Park, 1 King St., Alexandria. Midnight fireworks: Potomac River at the foot of King St., Alexandria. All Access Admission: \$25 through November 30, 2019; \$30 December 1-30, 2019; \$35 December 31, 2019; Kids Carnival is \$5 for children ages 2-12 and free for parents and infants. Call 703-963-3755 or visit firstnightalexandria.org.

Year's Eve party in the D.C. region that is safe and fun for the entire family and culminates with a fantastic fireworks finale over the Potomac River at midnight. Kids Karnivals: 6 to 9 p.m. at four warm indoor venues in Old Town, Del Ray and the West End. Live Entertainment: 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at warm indoor venues throughout Old Town Alexandria. Rockin' on the River: 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. at Waterfront Park, 1 King St., Alexandria. Midnight fireworks: Potomac River at the foot of King St., Alexandria. All Access Admission: \$25 through November 30, 2019; \$30 December 1-30, 2019; \$35 December 31, 2019; Kids Carnival is \$5 for children ages 2-12 and free for parents and infants. Call 703-963-3755 or visit firstnightalexandria.org.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 15

Free Photography Class. 7-8:30 p.m. At Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive, Centreville. Learn photography basics and tell us what you would like to learn in future photography classes at the library. Teens and adults. Free. Call 703-830-2223.

women living with diabetes for encouragement, education, and empowerment. Women age 18+ living with any type of diabetes or prediabetes are welcome, regardless of whether they were diagnosed yesterday or 40-plus years ago. They strive to create an open, respectful environment for women with diabetes or prediabetes to truly focus on their health. Free. Visit the website: <https://diabetessisters.org/pods-meetups>

Fitness for 50+. Daytime hours, Monday-Friday at Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. Jazzercise Lite, Zumba Gold, Hot Hula Fitness (dancing Polynesian style), Strength Training, Qi Gong, Tai Chi and more. Membership is \$48 a year, and waivers are available. Email lynne.lott@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-322-4475 for more.

History Volunteers Needed. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum needs history buffs. The Museum offers a variety of volunteer opportunities in Museum events, programs and administration. Email volunteers@fairfax-station.org or call 703-945-7483 to explore 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. www.fairfax-station.org, 703-425-9225.

Art Guild of Clifton Exhibit. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. at Clifton Wine Shop, 7145 Main St., Clifton. Includes oil paintings of European settings; doors, windows, and flower shops. Free. Call 703-409-0919 for more.

Carolina Shag Dance. Wednesdays, 6:30-10 p.m. at Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m.; no partners needed; dinner menu at 6:45 p.m. Tickets are \$8. Visit www.nvshag.org for more.

Open Rehearsal. Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. at Lord of Life church, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Centreville. The Fairfax Jubil-Aires barbershop chorus invites men of all ages who enjoy singing. Free. Visit www.fairfaxjubilairs.org for more.

Live After Five. Fridays at 5:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Every Friday night a band plays on the patio of the winery. Free to attend. Visit www.wineryatbullrun.com for a full schedule.

Mondays are Family Night. 5-7 p.m. at Villaggio, 7145 Main St. \$45 for a family of four. Call 703-543-2030 for more.

LIBRARY FUN

Toddlin' Twos. Tuesdays, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Early literacy storytime with songs and activities included. Age 2 with caregiver, free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Storytime for Three to Fives. Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Stories and activities for children age 3-5 with caregiver. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Plant Clinic. Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. A neighborhood plant clinic with horticultural tips, information, techniques, and advice. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a space.

Lego Block Party. Every other Saturday at 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Legos will be provided for an afternoon of building. Grades 3-6. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Duplo Storytime. Every other Wednesday, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Develop and reinforce early literacy skills for reading success. Ages 1-3 with adult. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Legos Kids Club. Every other Tuesday, 10:30 a.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Thousands of Legos for children to play with. Ages 6-12. Free. Call 703-830-2223 to reserve a space.

Starlight Storytime. Every other Wednesday, 7 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Stories under the stars for ages 4-8. Wear pajamas and bring stuffed friends. Free. Call 703-830-2223 to reserve a space.

IMPROVING ENGLISH

One-on-One English Conversation. Various times at Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Spend an hour with a volunteer tutor to practice conversing in English. Various times and days. Reservations are required. Call the library at 703-830-2223 to make a reservation.