

Springfield CONNECTION

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Planet Fitness is a 'Judgment Free Zone,' they say. It will be opening later in February offering classes in weight lifting and cardio.

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PHOTO COURTESY NAHID NASSEH, GREENSPRING

From left — Roy O'Connor, Greenspring Resident; Chandra Kumar, Executive Director; Betty Griffin, Resident; and Clint Lambert, Resident, do the honors in front of a crowd of residents and staff who gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the grand re-opening of the senior living community's Potomac Café.

Greenspring Celebrates Grand Re-Opening of Potomac Café

Greenspring, a senior living community developed and managed by Erickson Living®, recently celebrated the re-opening of one of its signature dining venues, the Potomac Café.

Located in the community's Town Center clubhouse, the Potomac is open all day, and features short-order favorites like salads, deli wraps, and tasty breakfast sandwiches. With a

brand new pizza station, grill, deli station and hot line, the newly renovated Café will add even more variety and diversity to Greenspring's robust menu options on campus. Greenspring has five on-site restaurants located throughout the community for residents' convenience. Additional information can be found at GreenspringCommunity.com.

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New Heliport for the Fairfax County Police is in the Works

Upgraded facility will address the safety and efficiency of this county asset.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

In the first week of the new year, the Fairfax County Police Helicopter Division flew off to 10 missions ranging from missing persons calls to an overturned boat and river rescue in Prince William County. There are situations coming up all year that require more than just a squad car, so when the division showed the need for an updated helipad out at their base in Chantilly, the county came through with \$13 million and is now making it a reality.

The Police Department has identified the Police Heliport at the West Ox Road Complex as a critical facility in need of renovation/expansion or replacement. The facility has exceeded its intended life cycle and no longer meets the needs of the Police Department. The facility is deficient in office space, classroom space, parts storage space, paramedic training requirements as well as staff locker areas. In addition, the current helicopter bay size is inadequate to perform efficient and safe maintenance procedures, police officials said.

When the new heliport was looked at by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in early January, Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) supported the move. "I am delighted that the police heliport, including

the helicopter pad, will finally receive the much-needed upgrades and repairs," he said. "These improvements will create a more secure area for the police helicopter, safer conditions for the officers, and enable first responders to better serve the residents of Fairfax County."

As part of the 2015 Public Safety Bond Referendum, \$13 million dedicated for the new Police heliport was approved as part of the FY 2020-FY 2024 Adopted Capital Improvement Program.

Currently, the existing heliport is enclosed only by a guard rail that extends along the western side of the property along Academy Drive, and partially along the northern side between the wet pond and the helicopter facility, and partially along the south side along the access road to the vehicle services building. This rail is two and a half feet high and provides no security for the police staff, operations and equipment. The helicopter building itself as well as the parking area are openly accessible to the public. An eight-foot, non-climbable, security fence is proposed to surround the heliport area.

The heliport is part of a larger county operations area to include the Fairfax County



PHOTO BY FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

The police helicopter flies out to missing persons reports, gunshots, boating incidents and fugitives on the run.

Fire Academy in the west of the building, and the Department of Vehicle Services building in the south. There are no residences in the immediate surroundings that could be impacted. The view from West Ox Road is shielded by existing vegetation.

Per the Zoning Ordinance, the property line along West Ox Road is considered the front yard. The zoning ordinance would be modified to permit the fence height along West Ox Road to be increased from four feet to eight feet. This modification will also permit an increase from seven feet to eight feet along the other three sides of the property.

This item has been coordinated with the Department of Planning and Development. "Currently, there are roughly 150 helicopter missions a month and over 80 medical evacuations a year throughout Fairfax County," Herrity added. "We must continue

to equip our law enforcement members with the necessary tools to keep our communities safe," Herrity said.

'Fly Neighborly'

There has been complaints about helicopter noise in Northern Virginia, and while many of the helicopters flying around are military, the Fairfax County Police Department adopted a policy they call "Fly Neighborly," with these steps to reduce noise.

❖ When responding from Fairfax Base to events that are not time critical, pilots should climb over the area of the landfill to an altitude of at least 1200 feet before proceeding on course.

❖ When returning to Fairfax Base, pilots should maintain a minimum altitude of 1200 feet until intercept of a steeper than normal glide path to the base.

❖ Flight operations between the hours of 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. are limited to essential police and medevac missions.

❖ Vary landing and departure courses at Fairfax Base and remain over the landfill as much as possible.

❖ Avoid noise-sensitive areas when possible.

❖ Select routes over areas of high ambient noise levels when possible.

❖ Maintain an altitude of at least 1,000 feet when possible.

❖ Avoid fast cruise speeds when not responding to missions.

❖ Avoid sharp maneuvers.

❖ Use steep takeoff and descent profiles.

Reception Highlights Area Charities

BY SUSAN LAUME

New Fairfax County Board of Supervisors (BOS) Chairman Jeff McKay hosted a new year's reception for citizens at the Government Center, on Jan. 30, continuing a tradition observed by former Chairman, Sharon Bulova.

Receiving citizens for comments and photographs, the Chairman also collected donations for charity. Those attending were encouraged to bring items for the municipal animal shelter and for the county's neighborhood community service effort to fight hunger.

Some, like the "Save Blake Lane Park" grassroots group, came to remind the Chairman of their cause. Supported by the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, and Friends of Accotink Creek, the group seeks to preserve what they describe as their "island of green space" in Oakton against construction of a needed new school. Says Jennifer Pradas, a teacher and resident of the area, "Every tree counts; other school alternatives need to be reviewed." Adds Dennis Allerton, "It's not



PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME

Grassroots "Save Blake Lane Park" activists brought their conservation message to the Chairman Jeff McKay.

too much to ask to have both," referring to needs for adequate schools and green space.

Chairman McKay seems to agree. While visiting the park during his campaign, he said, "Green spaces are limited... Where we have an opportunity like this to protect an

environmental treasure in a community, we need to be able to do that."

Others, like Mary Jackson, of Reston, came "Just to see what's going on." Mary works to be sure young people understand the importance of voting and get registered.

Citizens meet County Board Chairman Jeff McKay.

Police Chief Ed Roessler was available to speak with citizens. He described his office's three primary functions: 1) prevent and fight crime, 2) preserve the sanctity of life, and 3) keep pace with urbanization in policing, a nod to the growth and challenges of policing in high rise buildings and with the growing urbanization of the county.

The County's "Stuff the Bus" program, highlighted for donation by Chairman McKay, is a food collection partnership to fight hunger in our neighborhoods. Weekly through February, the bus makes stops at local grocery stores to collect food and household items. A schedule of stops is available at the County's Neighborhood Community Services calendar, at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community.../calendars>.

The Fairfax County Animal Shelter is an open municipal shelter with an outstanding animal placement rate and vibrant volunteer program. More information and the Shelter's wish list for donations can be found at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter>.



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

Over in Kingstowne, the former Toys R Us site has been divided into two parts and one side is being renovated to house another business.



Along Telegraph Road, a former Giant Food store will soon be a Planet Fitness.



Planet Fitness is a "Judgement Free Zone," they say.

Tenants Coming to Big Box Vacancies

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

Although there has been a rash of big box stores moving out of the Springfield-Kingstowne area over the last few years, there are signs that things are straightening out retail-wise. Here, where the Giant Foods was previously, the

space was divided in half and a new Planet Fitness is moving in on one side. It will be opening later in February. The new workout facility will offer classes in weight lifting and cardio.

About two miles up the street, in a space that was once occupied by Toys R Us, construction crews have divided that space in half and one half is being reconstructed for a new food store.



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- Reston Connection
- Springfield Connection
- Vienna/Dulles Connection

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.

PIPE REPLACEMENT FEB. 3-7

Woodfair Road between Little Ox Road and Sydney Road will be closed to through traffic (weather permitting) from 8 a.m. Monday, Feb. 3 to 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 7 for crews to replace a stormwater pipe, according to the Virginia Department of Transportation. Those needing to reach properties along Woodfair Road will have access; however, traffic will not be able to go beyond the point of pipe replacement in either direction. Through traffic will be detoured via Little Ox Road and Sydney Road back to Woodfair Road.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 12

TBI Recovery Group. 10:30-12 p.m. At Brain Injury Services, 8136 Old Keene Mill Road, Suite B-102, Springfield. Educational group for survivors, families, and caregivers, to answer questions about mild TBI or concussion. February Speaker: Dr. Alec Lebedun Topic: What happened to my brain? How does brain biology affect me? Free. Visit the website: www.braininjurysvcs.org

SUNDAY/FEB. 23

Town Hall Meeting. 1 p.m. At 8390 Laurel Crest Drive, Lorton. Sen. Scott Surovell and fellow legislators will host town halls throughout the 36th District in February. The legislators will discuss their legislative agendas and take questions from the audience. Some topics will include: Transportation, Education Funding and Reform, The State Budget and Tax Reform, Redistricting, Medicaid Expansion, Marriage Equality and LGBTQ Rights, Firearm Violence Prevention, Civil/Criminal Justice Reforms, Consumer Protection/Predatory Lending, Investing in Green Energy, Reproductive Choice Issues, Protecting Environmental Interests.

GROW AND PLANT UNDERWATER GRASSES

Volunteers are needed across Virginia to restore

native underwater grasses by growing them at home, school, or work through the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Grasses for the Masses program. These wild celery grasses grow underwater in Virginia's tidal rivers and offer many benefits for both wildlife and clean water. While submerged grasses in Virginia have been seriously depleted by pollution, they are beginning to make a comeback.

To participate, volunteers must attend one of several upcoming workshops in the area. Volunteers then grow grasses from seed in trays submerged in the provided tubs. They nurture these grass sprouts until late spring, when they will transplant their grasses to restoration sites in the James, Rappahannock, Chickahominy, and Potomac rivers. Advance registration is required. Participants will receive a self-contained indoor growing kit, seeds, and instructions at any of the following workshops:
 ♦ In Northern Virginia, on Jan. 22 at Daniels Run Elementary School in Fairfax and on Feb. 2 and Feb. 8 at Alexandria ReNew Enterprises; there is a \$40 fee per grass growing kit. Visit www.cbf.org/grassesworkshops.

Britepaths Seeking Volunteers

Fairfax-based nonprofit Britepaths is seeking volunteers to sponsor families in need who live throughout the Fairfax County area. Sponsors are matched with families who have demonstrated need, and may opt to provide a December holiday meal and/or gifts for children under 18. Britepaths also has a great need for cash donations and gift cards to grocery stores or Target/Walmart to assist those who are not sponsored. A wonderful family, company or group holiday service project. Register and learn more at: britepaths.org. Contact 703-273-8829 or sryan@britepaths.org.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents. SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

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Important Bills Are Moving

BY SCOTT SUROVELL
STATE SENATOR (D-86)



In the fourth week of our historic General Assembly session, both the Senate and the House of Delegates voted to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment after a 50 year battle. Our Clerks transmitted the ratifications to the Archivist of the United States of America and now the battle moves to Congress and the courts. We had a lengthy debate in the Senate on repealing unnecessary restrictions on women's access to reproductive health, including requiring an intrusive, medically-unnecessary ultrasound before seeking an abortion and rules designed to make abortion clinics extremely expensive to construct. The Senate voted 20-20 and the Lieutenant Governor broke the tie to approve the measure.

On Tuesday, the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee passed my legislation to eviscerate predatory lending in Virginia. The bill provides a 36 percent interest rate cap with monthly fees that result in annual percentage interest rates (APR's) of 50-110 percent, depending on the length of the loan. The longer the loan, the smaller the rate. The bill would prohibit the 267percent loans currently allowed at title lenders, businesses that have exploded along U.S. 1 and online loans currently made at rates exceeding 400 percent. I expect a tough Senate floor fight. The House has already passed similar legislation.

The Senate Transportation Committee approved my bill to repeal the 2004 law requir-

ing drivers to prove legal status to obtain a Virginia driver's license. I have worked for five years with Senator Jennifer Boysko and Republican Delegate Rob Bloxsom to pass this bill. The implementation of federal Real ID rules eliminates the need for drivers to prove legal status which is required for a Real ID compliant driver's license and this proposal is the top priority for my Hispanic constituents. It will make our streets safer and enhance everyone's quality of life. Imagine trying to live in our society without a driver's license.

On a 33 to seven vote, the Senate passed my legislation prohibiting drivers from using handheld phones in moving vehicles. Similar legislation is moving through the House and enactment looks promising. This will reduce accidents and make our roads safer.

My legislation to empower Northern Virginia localities to hold retailers accountable for failing to control their shopping carts passed the Senate 20 to 19. To me, this is like someone, in effect, allowing their property to be stolen thousands of times and continually expecting others to clean up the mess. I am thankful for support from Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay and Supervisors Rodney Lusk and Dan Storck who have promised to implement this authority when enacted.

The Senate approved my bill to prohibit hydraulic fracturing or "fracking" east of Interstate-95 and now the House of Delegates will consider it.

On Jan. 27 and 28, my eight Puller Institute

only the recognition they deserve, but it will pave the way for other states and even nations to recognize and embrace equal rights as well. If we—as residents of the state of Virginia—are one step closer to becoming a more equal and inclusive community, then we must hold a responsibility to report on these views and enlighten others along the way.

Rudan Balay
Springfield

Don't Abolish The Death Penalty

To the Editor:

It's become quite clear that the movement to abolish the death penalty has reached Virginia. Death penalty opponents have suggested replacing it with life without parole (LWOP). They advocate for it as a more humane alternative to execution. That it's "punishment enough." Except you shouldn't believe that death penalty opponents will keep LWOP.

Recent legislation in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Vermont is seeking to end LWOP, using the exact same arguments that have been used against the death penalty. "Few civilized countries have LWOP, it's too harsh," et cetera. The movement to abolish the death penalty has become a moving of goalposts, as oppo-

nents from West Potomac, Mount Vernon, Hayfield, Osborne Park and Brooke Point High Schools visited Richmond. They met with the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, other elected officials, government relations professionals and were interviewed for public access cable television. I look forward to their project submissions.

Mike Rizzo, the General Manager of the Washington Nationals baseball team also visited us and I learned that many Nationals' employees, including the team's Communications Director, live in the 36th District (It's an easy Metro ride or commute to and from Nats' Park!).

A few of my bills found their lives cut short. The Senate Finance Committee continued my proposal to reinstate the estate tax to the next session. The bill exempted family farms, closely-held businesses and any couple worth less than \$23.5 million and would generate about \$600 million per decade. I will try again next year. My bill to rename and refocus the Crime Commission on broader justice issues also failed, along with my bill to create an exception to contributory negligence for bike and pedestrian collisions.

This coming week we will address major issues, including the death penalty, decarbonizing our economy, criminal justice reform and protecting personal data. Hard work on the budget also begins.

Please visit me in Richmond, complete my constituent survey at <http://scottssurovell.org/2020-constituent-survey/> and email me at scott@scottssurovell.org if you have any feedback! It is an honor to serve as your State Senator.

nents (who have suggested LWOP) as an alternative, are using the very same arguments they used against the death penalty, to advocate for the removal of the very same alternative punishment that they suggested in the first place! Vox News and The Sentencing Project are now promoting the abolition of LWOP, so you shouldn't think it's me fearmongering. The death penalty should stay in Virginia, not just because some crimes are just too heinous to be punished by life without parole, but because it also prevents the abolition of life without parole. If the death penalty is abolished on a Monday, the movement to abolish life without parole will begin the following day. And before you know it, murderers will be back on the streets.

Daniel Garcia
McLean

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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Call: 703-917-6444.
By e-mail: editors@connectionnewspapers.com

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PHOTOS BY ENOLA THABOUN

Volunteers packing bags,

West Springfield Rotary Packs 1,000 Snack Bags

The Rotary Club of West Springfield and Britepaths held a "Food4Thought" community event on the MLK Day of Service to provide snack bags to help feed local school children who often go hungry on weekends and school holidays. More than 100 volunteers met at the Springfield Hilton on Jan. 20 to unload food, organize the items onto five assembly lines, prepare and pack the snack bags and box them up for delivery: 1,000 snack bags were prepared and packed in under two hours, and then delivered to Montrose Learning Center, Cardinal Forest Elementary, Keene Mill

Elementary and Koinonia. Local sponsors included the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, The Journey, Koinonia, Greenspring, WilkinsonPM & HomeFirst Realty, Interstate, Andrews Federal Credit Union, Springfield Golf & Country Club, FCPS and the Alexandria Central Rotary Club. According to Enola Thaboun, president of West Springfield Rotary, the event was so successful that it will become an annual event for the club. She noted that Rotarians are "people of action" and that events like this have a direct and positive impact on the local community.



Loading snack bags.

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CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

The Beauty of Wood. Feb. 4 thru March 2. At Artists' Undertaking Gallery, 309 Mill Street, Occoquan. The Artists' Undertaking Gallery presents "The Beauty of Wood". This exhibit features photography and digital paintings by David and Jane Ernst of Springfield, and wooden boxes by Jon Kaufman of Fairfax Station. A Meet the Artists Reception will be held on Saturday, Feb. 8, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The exhibit runs Feb. 4 through March 2. Contact the gallery at 703-494-0584 or at info@artistsundertaking.com. Visit the website www.artistsundertaking.com

Funday Monday. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Mondays now thru March. At Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Play, paint, sing and dance at Funday Monday in the City of Fairfax. This season they are bringing back My Gym to help everyone move and play together, Oh Susannah! with her guitar to sing some old songs and have just as much fun with new ones, and Good Gollie it's Mollie will be coming 'round with more games and playtime fun. They would like to welcome some new friends as well like Drew Blue Shoes, a magician whose magic will leave you mystified and a kids' nature puppet show will come to teach us about the jungle in our backyard. This season they have the local animal shelter and local Spanish emersion group Mi Chu Chu Train coming with specially made programs. Visit the website: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts>

All You Need is Love. Now thru Feb. 16. At Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic, 2905 District Ave., #105, Fairfax. In celebration of Valentine's Day, Torpedo Factory artists are tackling one of society's most complex human emotions — Love. In its newest exhibit titled All You Need is &e, the gallery is presenting a selection of original paintings, photographs, jewelry, scarves, ceramics and more, that reflect its artists' interpretations of love. Open Wednesday thru Sunday 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

St. James Intramural High School Basketball League. Now thru March 10. At the St. James Sports, Wellness and Entertainment Complex, 6805 Industrial Road, Springfield. The St. James invites you to participate in its Middle School Basketball League for Boys & Girls (8th to 12th grade), Now thru March 10, in the new 33,000 square foot Basketball Courthouse on four high school regulation sized courts. The TSJ Intramural High School Basketball League registration fee is \$250 per player and \$600 per team. All games are officiated and statistics provided. The TSJ Intramural High School Basketball league also includes a Playoff round where top teams in the league will meet. Visit <https://www.thestjames.com/sports/basketball/sessions/8/courses/tsj-basketball-winter-team> or contact Alpha or Pele with any questions at 703-239-6841.

NOW THRU FEB. 29

Fairfax City Golden Ticket. 12 p.m. Fairfax City's Economic Development Authority has partnered with the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce to host the 2nd Annual Fairfax City Golden Ticket contest in support of the 2020 Chocolate Lovers Festival. The Fairfax City Golden Ticket Contest features three golden tickets hidden within 1,200 chocolate

"Hate Mail"

"Hate Mail:" A comedic play at the Auld Shebeen on Feb. 13, 14, and 15.

FEB. 13, 14, 15

"Hate Mail." 7-8:30 p.m. At The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. A fast-paced, quick-witted comedic play about outrage, scandals, and falling in and out of love. Tickets on Eventbrite. Cost is \$20. Visit the website <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/hate-mail-a-comedy-play-tickets-90457752573>



Lesson Zero

Lesson Zero will perform at The Mixing Bowl on Feb. 15 in Springfield.

SATURDAY/FEB. 15

Lesson Zero. 8 p.m. At The Mixing Bowl (formerly J W and Friends), 6531 Backlick Road, Springfield. Music and dancing with Oasis recording artist Lesson Zero. Visit www.youtube.com/lessonzero or www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero for more information.

bars made by local chocolatier Cameron's Coffee & Chocolates. The chocolate bars are available for purchase at participating Fairfax City businesses beginning Jan. 31 for \$3 each while supplies last. The contest offers three lucky winners who find the golden tickets a Chocolate Lovers gift basket featuring chocolate and items from participating Fairfax City businesses valued at \$200. To purchase a Golden Ticket chocolate bar, visit any of the businesses listed at fairfaxcityconnected.com/goldenticket2020.

THURSDAY/FEB. 6

Nutrition & Healthy Eating. 6-7 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Nutrition and Healthy Eating for Teenagers, Young Adults, and Adults. Learn how nutrition affects growing young people, ways to eat more healthy, and what families can do to make a difference in their family's diet. Free. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/5832187>

SATURDAY/FEB. 8

Animal Sweethearts Dance. 10 a.m. to noon. At Hidden Pond Nature Center, 8511 Greeley Blvd., Springfield. Bring your youngster to the nature center for a morning of dancing, refreshments and crafts. There will be costumed animal characters, as well as live animals to entertain. The program runs from 10 a.m. to noon and is designed for children age 3 to 5. The cost is \$10 per child. Call 703-451-9588 or visit

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hidden-pond>.

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra. 8 p.m.

At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Dr, Fairfax. Violinist Simone Porter is the virtuoso soloist in Vivaldi's dazzlingly imaginative evocation of the sights, sounds and sensations of the Italian seasons. The Four Seasons violin concertos are so richly detailed you can feel the sirocco of summer, hear the dancing villagers of Autumn and slip on the ice of a Venetian winter. The master of the New Tango, Ástor Piazzolla, brought the wild dance of Buenos Aires into the concert hall. There's an apt nod to Vivaldi in Leonid Desyatnikov's sensational string arrangements of the Estaciones Porteñas, but they have an atmosphere that's unique to Buenos Aires — fiercely sensual in summer, hazy and melancholic in winter, all moving to the heartbeat of the tango. Vivaldi's seasons enfold Piazzolla's in this dance around the year. Prices begin at \$25; \$15 for students. Visit the website: <https://cfa.gmu.edu/>

SUNDAY/FEB. 9

T-Trak Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m.

At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia T-TRAK members will hold a N gauge Model Train Display. Admission: museum members, free; adults 13 and over, \$5; children 5-12, \$3; under 4, free. Seniors (65+ and military (active & retired), \$4. Call 703-425-9225. Visit the website www.fairfax-station.org.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 9



PHOTO BY JIMMY LAWLOR/COURTESY OF VIRGINIA OPERA

Cast of Virginia Opera's production of Rossini's "Cinderella/"

Goodness Triumphs in Rossini's 'Cinderella'

Virginia Opera performances Feb. 15 and 16 at Center for the Arts.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Where and When

Human connections are at the heart of Rossini's "Cinderella" ("La Cenerentola"). It is a comic opera unlike the fairy tale some may recall or read to children and grandchildren.

Rossini's "Cinderella" differs from the more classic fairytale. It is not full of the supernatural or magical characters. "There is no fairy godmother, no magic pumpkin, or even a glass slipper," noted Kyle Lang, Virginia Opera director. Rossini's opera has glimmering splendor, comic characters, "with an ending about forgiveness and transformation."

Rather Rosinni's "Cinderella" has "characters who are quite human and tangible," added Lang. There are "disguises and mistaken identities" as key points for the opera's story. And the opera is full of "movement and music and that entwine in the story." Adam Turner will conduct the orchestra for this production provided by the Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

Rossini's enduring "Cinderella" was composed in late 1816 when he was 25 years old. In place of the traditional evil stepmother, the character of Cinderella is mistreated by an obnoxious, rather broke aristocrat. Instead of a fairy godmother, Cinderella is helped by a kindly tutor. There are two conceited step-sisters. And a love-struck prince with his clever valet who trade places

Virginia Opera presents Rossini's "Cinderella" (*La Cenerentola*) at Center for the Arts, Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Performance Feb 15 at 8 p.m. and Feb 16 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets: \$110, \$70, \$40. Call 703-993-2787 or visit www.cfa.gmu.edu. Note: Sung in Italian with English supertitles. An "Opera Up Close" pre-performance discussion with Dr. Glenn Winters begins 45 minutes prior to the performance. Seating is limited. Special Note: There is a Valentine's Package available including a Fairytale Valentine photo station. The special Valentine's Date Package includes: Two tickets for "Cinderella", Champagne and chocolates, two commemorative champagne glasses and two spill-proof tumblers to enjoy the champagne during the opera! Valentine Date Package tickets: \$255, \$175, \$115. This offer valid for either performance, Feb. 15 or 16. To purchase package call the Center for the Arts Ticket Office at 703-993-2787. Package is non-refundable and cannot be exchanged.

with a critical purpose in mind. Another difference from the classic fairy tale; no sparkling, showy glass slippers. There are a matching pair of bracelets for the lovers to find each other.

What makes Rossini's "Cinderella" unique; his "vision of forgiveness; not just transformation at the heart of the production. It is emotionally moving," noted Lang.

The role of Angelina (the character of Cinderella) is sung by the vocally distinctive Alyssa Martin. "Cinderella" is marvelous. It is funny and thought provoking. Envy and pride are vanquished as goodness wins the

SEE CINDERELLA, PAGE 9

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

MONDAY/FEB. 10

Healthy Living, Healthy Aging. 7-8:30 p.m. At Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Learn about research in the areas of diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity and social engagement. Presented by the Alzheimer's Association. Light refreshments will be provided. Free. Call 703-978-5600.

FRIDAY/FEB. 14

Winter Beauty in the Garden. 4-5 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. This program is for dazzling winter. Winter offers its own special charm. Let Master Gardeners show you how to create visual interest with berries, seed heads, colorful branches, garden accents - even flowers. Presented by Green Spring Master Gardeners. Free. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/6344889>

SATURDAY/FEB. 15

Country-Western Dance. At Accotink Universalist Unitarian Church, 10125 Lakehaven Ct, Burke. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a dance. Lessons, 6-7 p.m. Open dancing, 7-9:30 p.m. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Admission for NVCWDA members \$10; non-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Trial memberships available at door for member level entry fee. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. Visit www.nvcwda.org.

Valentine's Day Banquet. 6:30-11 p.m. At Waterford Receptions at Springfield, 6715 Commerce Street, Springfield. The Family Ministry of the Greater Little Zion Baptist Church in Fairfax is sponsoring their Annual Valentine's Day Banquet. All couples and singles are invited to join with us and enjoy an evening of fine dining, music, dancing and featured entertainment. This is a great opportunity to treat someone special to a wonderful night of Christian fun and fellowship. Cost is \$60 per person (Payment deadline is Feb. 9, 2020). Tickets can be purchased on the church's website at www.glzbc.org.

Country-Western Dance. 7-9:30 p.m. at AUUC, Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a dance with lessons, 6-7 p.m. and open dancing, 7-9:30 p.m. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Admission for members \$10; non-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. Visit www.nvcwda.org for more.



LEGO Model Train Show

Monty's Trains Special LEGO Model Train Show will take place Feb. 29 and March 1 at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum.

FEB. 29 AND MARCH 1

Monty's Trains Special LEGO Model Train Show. 12-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Local modeling enthusiast, Monty Smith, will share his LEGO (R) model train layouts in a special two day event. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5; seniors 65 and older and military, both retired and active, \$4. Visit the website www.fairfax-station.org, or call 703-425-9225.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/FEB. 15-16

Virginia Opera's "Cinderella." 8 p.m. Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Gioachino Rossini's Cinderella (La Cenerentola) is one of his funniest and best-known comic operas. Following on his success of The Barber of Seville, Rossini and librettist Jacopo Ferretti worked day and night to create this opera in just three weeks. The story differs somewhat from the classic fairytale: there is no fairy godmother, magic pumpkin, or even a glass slipper! Even so, this enchanting tale delivers with all of the glimmering splendor, the comic characters, and the happy ending, of course. Best of all, it includes Rossini's effervescent score with the epic orchestral storm before the Prince finally finds Cenerentola, and the arias "Miei rampolli femminini," and "Nacqui all'affanno...Non piu mesta." Directed by Kyle Lang. Sung in Italian with English supertitles. Tickets are \$45-\$115. Visit the website: www.cfa.gmu.edu.

SUNDAY/FEB. 16

NTrak Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold a N gauge Model Train Display. Admission: museum members, free; adults 13 and over, \$5; children 5-12, \$3; under 4, free. Seniors (65+ and military (active & retired), \$4. Call 703-425-9225. Visit the website www.fairfax-station.org.

MONDAY/FEB. 17

George Washington Birthday Service and Breakfast. 8:30 a.m. At Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Hwy., Lorton. The Brotherhood of Saint Andrew, Pohick Chapter, will sponsor a breakfast following a commemorative service celebrating the birthday of George Washington. The Service will follow the Order for Morning Prayer taken from the 1662 English Book of Common Prayer, which is the service Washington followed in his usual Sunday worship at Pohick Church. Following the service there will be a breakfast hosted by the Brotherhood of St. Andrew with a guest speaker. The Docent Guild will be conducting tours of Historic Pohick Church following the breakfast. Ticket are \$10 per person, \$25 per family group. Call the church office at 703-339-6572. Visit the website www.pohick.org

SATURDAY/FEB. 22

Off the Wall. 2-5 p.m. At the Art and Design Building, GMU Fairfax Campus, Fairfax. Every year GMU opens its Art and Design Building to alumni, parents, prospective students, and the public for a showcase of the visual arts at Mason. Tour 15 open studios and hands-on exhibits with student and faculty artists, enjoy the music, plus create your own works of art - it's a great party. Cost is \$30/regular; \$20/Mason alumni, faculty and staff; \$10/ages 14-18. Ticket and sponsorship proceeds support arts scholarships and guest artist residencies. Sponsorship opportunities begin at \$500. Contact Emily Rusch at 703-993-3872 or erusch2@gmu.edu. Visit the website: offthewall.gmu.edu.

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Legals

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AT&T proposes to replace an existing 30' wood utility pole with a new 40' wood utility pole and install a top-mounted antenna at 43' at 7216 Commerce St, Springfield, VA (20200052). Interested parties may contact Scott Horn (856-809-1202) (1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091) with comments regarding potential effects on historic properties.

Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE
AT&T proposes to replace an existing 25' wood utility pole with a new 35' wood utility pole and install a top-mounted antenna at 39.3' at 6946 S Kings Hwy, Alexandria, VA (20200040). Interested parties may contact Scott Horn (856-809-1202) (1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091) with comments regarding potential effects on historic properties.

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'Cinderella'

FROM PAGE 8

day," said Martin.

Martin grew up in a small rural town outside of Greensboro, N.C. She knew from an early age that she wanted to sing. With the support of her family and local music and voice teachers she discovered and nurtured her voice talent.

The role of Cinderella is one Martin indicated is "a favorite; if fits my voice range" Martin added the character Cinderella is "a woman who makes her own choices. She is powerful and authentic; not an object. Love, family, and connections are what matter to her.

"The human voices can do so much when not amplified," said Martin inviting audiences to take in the Virginia Opera production.

Off Topic, Way Off

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



From cancer to toilet paper. Is that 'off' enough? My reason for writing this column might be because I need a diversion (see last week's column), and because, as is so happened recently, I needed to replenish our toilet paper supply. (It had nothing to do with a winter advisory in the forecast.) As the consumer in the house, I am keen and motivated to spend our money wisely. I look for sales, I use paper coupons, I use digital coupons and of course, I peruse the advertising circulars, in print and online (if necessary) regularly. In addition, I have a number of plastic bonus cards hanging on my keychain. In short, I am prepared and ready for any retail or wholesale opportunity that might present itself.

With respect to toilet paper, I believe us regular users have been victimized by the toilet paper manufacturers. I refer specifically to the increase in the size of the actual roll itself; from single to double to triple to jumbo to mega and now super mega. Since the manufacturers can't exactly increase demand, they've devised a strategy to increase supply - in our homes. And though using myself as an example is hardly empirical evidence, I will nonetheless continue to do so in an effort to justify my accusation.

If you're like me, you probably like to have an ample supply of toilet paper in the house, just in case (it happened once in college; not good). And to that end, the toilet paper manufacturers have offered up multipacks equivalent to as high as 96 rolls, if I'm not mistaken, to address this potential shortage. However, my beef is not with the number of rolls in these multipacks, my beef, as I've said, is with the size of the rolls. In these cases, size does matter.

For years, we've been buying 4-, 6-, 9-, 12-, 24-, 36- and even 48-roll multipacks, some single and some double to stock the bathroom linen closets, so we're used to having a specific number of rolls on hand/in inventory. Now the rolls are double or even triple the size we had grown accustomed to having as back-ups. But we're still, in spite of the gargantuan size of the newer mega/super mega rolls, wanting to have the same number of rolls in the closet as we've always had (I do, anyway). Sort of a comfort level, you might say. The problem is that having the same number of super mega rolls in inventory as previously one had as single or double rolls gives one way more toilet paper in the house than you ever had. In effect, we have over-purchased. The toilet paper manufacturers have used our predispositions against us in order to take a greater share of our household budget previously allocated for toilet paper.

I don't need six super mega rolls in our bathroom. But I do want to see at least six rolls in reserve (aid and comfort you might say). If the six rolls in reserve were single or doubles, their size would be irrelevant. The number of rolls was more important - in my head. And now, because of the toilet paper manufacturer's insistence that size matters, I am forced to buy these spare-tire, donut-sized rolls that I can't possibly use no matter what "snowmageddon" might hit us. But I can't stock my shelves with reasonably-sized rolls because their unit cost is prohibitive compared to the big roll multipacks. As the consumer I am, I am loathe to overpay for such household necessities. So I buy in bulk, stuff my shelves with ply and go about my business. I just wish I had more than a hand in their decision-making.

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

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AREA ROUNDUPS

Fairfax Salvation Army Helping Others

The Fairfax County Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary held their first meeting of the year Wednesday, Jan. 15 at the Army Corp on Ox Road, Fairfax. Acting President Meg McLane reported she delivered cakes to the Salvation ARC on Little River Turnpike for the monthly birthday celebrations. The auxiliary provides cakes every other month throughout the year. Committee reports from chairpersons for the Fashion Show/Luncheon to be held April 3 were given. The Hat contest will be held again this year with prizes to be awarded for the most decorative hats worn. Major Jean Wilson reported that 1502 children from 658 families, along with 34 senior citizens, were served through the Angel Tree project.

The next meeting will be held Feb. 19 at 10:30 at the Corp office at 4915 Ox Road, Fairfax. Ladies interested in attending this meeting are welcome. Call Lori Smith, 301-717-3029 or Meg McLane 703-750-3568.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

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.nam-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke sponsors a monthly meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, noon-1:30 p.m., for caregivers to learn and to share with others experiencing similar challenges. Before attending, contact the facilitator, Eileen Thompson at 703-451-8626 or eileen.thompson1@gmail.com.

Haven of Northern Virginia provides support, compassion, information and resources to the bereaved and seriously ill. To become a Haven volunteer, please call 703-941-7000 to request an orientation. Volunteers must complete a 30-hour training and commit to one year of service answering Haven phones (2.5 hours weekly). Next training is scheduled for fall 2017.

ONGOING

STEM Professionals Needed. Volunteers are needed to assist K-12 STEM teachers in northern Virginia as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2019-20 school year, beginning in September. Please contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488 or donaldrea@aol.com.

Docents Needed. Sundays 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Greet museum visitors and tell them about the exhibits, the museum and the its railroad and Civil War history. Ideal for those interested in railroads, the Civil War and Northern Virginia history. Training and orientation provided. Other volunteer opportunities are gardening, publicity and exhibit planning. Call 703-945-7483.

Haven of Northern Virginia is committed to offering, support, compassion, information and resources to the bereaved and seriously ill. Volunteers provide individual and group support to those suffering from a loss. Volunteers must participate in a 30 hour training. Training will be offered in October 2018. To volunteer, call Haven at 703-941-7000.

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, including those at 11 Title 1 elementary schools in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need through Weekend Food for Kids, tutoring programs and providing new clothing and layettes. To learn more, email: info@alnv.org, or visit www.alnv.org

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