

Burke CONNECTION

Head cat Sophia O'Connor leads dancers in the macarena at the Animal Sweethearts Dance at Hidden Pond Nature Center last Saturday.

Animal Sweethearts Dance

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Community Embraces Vindman

Vindman family's small congregation, of about 250 members and families, overwhelmed by hundreds of letters in support of the Vindmans.

BY SUSAN LAUME

On Friday, Feb. 7, Lt Col Alexander Vindman was removed from his job on the National Security Council and escorted from the White House.

In a statement his counsel, Ambassador David Pressman said, "There is no question in the mind of any American why this man's job is over, why this country now has one less soldier serving it at the White House. ... During his decades of service to this country, LTC Alexander Vindman has served quietly but dutifully, and he has served with honor. He came into the public eye only when subpoenaed to testify before Congress, and he did what the law demanded. ...The truth has cost ...his job, his career, and his privacy."

Called a hero by many for his courage to testify, his faith community made a statement of support following his removal from the National Security Council position. "The Vindman Family is a valued member of Congregation Adat Reyim's community of friends. We are proud to support Lt Colonel Alex Vindman during this challenging time."

Vindman became a nationally known figure during his October 2019 testimony before the United States Congress. His testimony was part of the U.S. House of Representatives' impeachment investigation of Trump. Vindman was the first White House official to testify who was actually on a July 25, 2019 telephone call between President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. His testimony corroborated previous testimony from foreign affairs official, Fiona Hill, and William B. Taylor Jr., Acting Ambassador to Ukraine. Though lauded for his professional testimony by many, he was also denounced by Trump and Republican lawmakers.

A career Army officer, Vindman will be reassigned within the Army. He is a Purple Heart recipient for injury sustained during the Iraq war in 2004.



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME

Adat Reyim, which means "community of friends," is a congregation which celebrates the diversity of Jewish beliefs, located in Springfield.

Ambassador Pressman represented LTC Vindman during the Congressional impeachment trial. He served as ambassador to the United Nations for Special Political Affairs during the Obama administration. At the end of that appointment he entered a law practice.

Rebecca Geller, Synagoge Adat Reyim's co-president, said, "If community members are seeking ways to show support, we are honored that the Vindman family has requested that donations be made to the synagogue via www.asatreyim.org in honor of LTC Vidman. We are accepting letters/postcards of support on his behalf..."

Though recently announced, the small congregation of about 250 members and families, has been overwhelmed by hundreds of letters in support of the Vindmans.

Adat Reyim, which means "community of friends" is a non-affiliated Jewish congregation which celebrates the diversity of Jewish beliefs, located in Springfield.



PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Head cat Sophia O'Connor leads dancers in the macarena at the Animal Sweethearts Dance.

Animal Sweethearts Dance at Hidden Pond Nature Center

The Hidden Pond Nature Center held its Annual Animal Sweethearts Dance on Saturday morning, Feb. 8. Young would-be dancers and animal lovers, between the ages of three and five, were invited to participate in dancing, refreshments, crafts and seeing live animals.

The Center, tucked into the woods at the end of Greenley Boulevard in Springfield, offers a regular calendar of indoor and outdoor events to educate all ages on area wildlife,

streams, and woodland ecology through the seasons. Registration fees support the Park Authority.

Upcoming events include animal feeding with worms on the menu, and campfire talks on tracking, pelts, and skulls.

Information on upcoming events and pre-registration is at <https://fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hidden-pond>, or at 703 451-9588.

—SUSAN LAUME



Hidden Pond Nature Center holds children's dance.

Area Students to Work with ARSFAIRFAX Artists

Students at two Fairfax County public schools will explore a deeper engagement with the arts as part of the ARTSFAIRFAX Artist Residency Program. Rocky Run Middle School and Lake Braddock Secondary School art students will work with artists who connect 3D art exploration through mosaics and dance to history, language arts, and creative writing for engaging, unique, and innovative learning experiences.

This year's artists include:

❖ Katherine Zukeri, program director for Born 2 Dance Studio's urban styles program: Urban Theory and Movement, and adjunct professor at George Mason University's School of Dance, will pilot an after-school residency at Lake Braddock Secondary School, Hip-Hop Time Machine, from Feb. 7 to May 1. The residency will integrate history to provide students the opportunity to recount a specific narrative from a historical time period

of their choosing through choreography. The residency culminates with students collaborating and arranging a group dance performance.

❖ Shona D'Cruz, member of the Vienna Arts Society and owner of mosaic company, Blue Hyacinth Mosaics, LLC, will engage Rocky Run Middle School art students in Ocean Treasures from March 2-23. The residency will integrate language arts, math, and science with students discussing ocean pollution and its impacts on the survival of ocean species into completed sea creature sculptures that will be made into a mosaic. The residency culminates with mosaics presented as individual artworks to be placed together to form a temporary group mosaic.

ARTSFAIRFAX's Residency Program brings together professional artists and educators to share their passion, creativity, knowledge, and skill, guiding students to discover and develop their own creative expressions.

Realizing Dreams and Filling Jobs

BY ANNE M. KRESS, PHD AND
TODD ROWLEY

This session, General Assembly members are considering a proposal that would help close the Commonwealth's skills gap by providing workforce scholarships to individuals without access to the community college education required to gain these skills. This proposal is a win-win-win: assisting students, growing businesses, and developing our communities.

We are describing Governor Northam's "Get Skilled, Get a Job, Give Back" (G3) budget initiative. G3 is a last-dollar workforce scholarship program designed to create opportunities for low and middle-income families. The support it provides would make-up the difference between what financial aid covers and the actual cost of tuition, fees, and books for targeted programs in high demand fields.

Qualifying students must select a career field in which employers cannot find enough qualified candidates. In Northern Virginia, these include IT, Cybersecurity, and Healthcare. In other words, G3 is an investment in continued and accelerated regional economic growth.

Because of Northern Virginia's historically low unemployment rate, it has become clear that we need to "Grow our Own" workforce through educating more people to fill high-demand and high-value positions. In fact, finding and developing talent has emerged as the top concern of members of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce. For that reason, the G3 plan has already earned the official endorsement of the Chamber.

Our initial estimate is that approximately 12 percent or 8,400 Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) students could be eligible to participate in G3, and our data show that 60 percent of NOVA students work part-time while pursuing college. They want to and need to work but lack the credentials needed to find full-time employment in high demand fields. Many cobble together multiple part-time jobs, which makes them take much more than two years to complete an associate degree. This workforce-based initiative would make it easier for our students to place a priority on quickly completing their education and finding sustaining wage careers. These graduates can stay in our region, building their families and contributing to their communities.

The Commonwealth wants G3 recipients to understand their responsibility to those who are supporting their education, so in return for this financial support, G3 students will be asked to "give back" to our state by completing two hours of community or public service for each credit hour in which they are enrolled.

Through offering more NOVA students a chance at the American Dream, we do much more than help individual students; we assure a competitive business climate, continued regional growth, and graduates connected to the communities they serve. NOVA is committed to assuring that every student succeeds, every program achieves, and every community prospers. G3 supports this mission, and we encourage you to voice your support for this transformational program.

If you would like to let General Assembly members know you support the Governor's G3 initiative, please let them know. If you are unsure who your delegate and senator might be, you can access whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov, then enter your address and find out.

Anne M. Kress, PhD is Northern Virginia Community College's new President. Todd Rowley is Chair of the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce.

Natasha McKenna and the OneFairfax Imperative

One white man's journey to the cause of equity.

BY THOMAS G. GOODWIN

Natasha McKenna died five years ago today, [Feb. 8, 2015] naked, cold, frightened, shackled, muzzled, and Black, after a rough afternoon at Fairfax County jail. The social and racial inequities that contributed to her death still loom as the OneFairfax policy is extended throughout county government.

I wasn't thinking about racial inequity when I volunteered to help Sheriff Stacey Kinkaid manage what became a long hot summer of investigation, protests, and relentless adverse publicity. I wasn't even necessarily thinking about my civic duty: Here was a rare (unpaid) opportunity to work on a difficult case.

Natasha was a victim of several mental illnesses including depression. She died unexpectedly following a traumatic extraction from jail intended to enable her to get access to care, but that wound up with her being tased four times by a team of deputies. The entire episode was recorded. The Washington Post excoriated the Sheriff five (!) times editorially. I advocated a "let's-release-the-video-and-keep-our-heads-down" PR strategy that found a credible alternative villain in America's broken mental health system. An investigation found no wrongdoing.

But something very wrong obviously did happen, and my inability to grasp it fully in the moment will cause readers of color to shake their heads wearily at my clueless white privilege. I didn't get it: I believed (still do) the deputies involved meant Natasha no harm. I believed (still do) Sheriff Kincaid's human compassion matches her lifelong passion for public safety: The county's DiversionFirst program

she championed has become a national model.

Epiphany for me arrived in the form of the social theory of "intersectionality."

Well-known to people of color, intersectionality explains how categorizations such as race, class, gender, sex and disability create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Natasha was the personification of Intersectionality: She was Black ... naked, an inmate, indigent, a woman, and her mental condition seriously had deteriorated. Had I been in Natasha's place, would the outcome have been the same?

OneFairfax recognizes that, five years after Natasha's death, we as a community no longer can afford to be unaware about how inequitable life is in Fairfax. Public policy in housing, zoning, transportation, hiring, and in public safety job opportunities has long been infested. Many in our ever-more-diverse community suffer from one or more disadvantages attributable to intersectionality.

There is much to work on:

- ❖ Our unsustainable school boundaries remain unchanged, heavily weighted in favor of under-capacity wealthier, whiter school districts, poorer districts strain at the seams.

- ❖ A person of color likely will not be hired as a school administrator here.

- ❖ Kids of color lag behind their white peers in academics, even as the schools become increasingly diverse.

- ❖ And, incredibly, in parts of our affluent community there is no reliable source of food.

- ❖ Five years after Natasha's death, and ten years after they started work, dedicated leaders, residents and businesses still seek an elu-

sive solution to the intractable shortage of affordable housing. Decades of discriminatory official government policy take time to reverse.

The research underlying OneFairfax reveals that when equity becomes part of the premise of public policymaking, positive results follow. This finding is all the more potent when we recognize that individuals who once were known collectively as "minorities" soon will be the majority in Fairfax: we need all hands on deck if we want to continue to thrive.

Fortunately, "equity" already is a routine component of county decisionmaking. The pursuit of equity does not require that people of color or underserved residents receive special treatment or quotas that reduce someone else's slice of the pie, only that they have an equal opportunity to pursue their own potential. Here in Fairfax we have lots of pies.

The question of how Natasha McKenna died will always be controversial. But we know why she died. Racial and social inequity, whether it is rooted in virulent racism or clueless white privilege, has long outlived its cruelty, or for that matter its usefulness, to Fairfax.

I will never be "woke," but at least I'm awake. Today I offer my volunteer time to citizens' groups including the OneFairfax Community Roundtable, the Human Services Council and the Council to End Domestic Violence. Many opportunities abound for residents – you, for example — to boost Fairfax County's future as a great place to live, work and play, by rallying around equity and fairness in public policy.

Natasha McKenna left behind a seven-year-old daughter. Let's do this for her.

The writer is a member of Human Services Council Fairfax County; Member, Steering Committee Council to End Domestic Violence; Chairman of the Board of Directors Shelter House, Inc. and Member OneFairfax Community Roundtable.



NEWS

Keeping the Promise

Speaker Filler-Corn statement on House of Delegates accomplishments at General Assembly Crossover.

Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn released the following statement on the Virginia House of Delegates accomplishments upon "crossover" of the General Assembly session:

"Voters demanded action in November. They called for decisive action to make their communities safer, more equal and more prosperous. Today, at the crossover of the 2020 General Assembly session, I am proud to say the House of Delegates has delivered on the voters' mandate.

We have kept our promise to truly be



Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn

the 'People's House' by passing long overdue legislation to protect Virginians from exploitation, discrimination and senseless violence. We have stood up for working families, strengthened our democracy, moved to preserve Virginia's natural assets, and, at last, enshrined women in the United States Constitution.

We look forward to finishing this session just as strong as we have started it as we work with our colleagues in the Senate to continue this historic progress in Virginia."

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

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

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 19

Fairfax County Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary Meets. 10:30 a.m. at The Fairfax Salvation Army Corps Office, 4915 Ox Road, Fairfax. Ladies interested in attending this meeting are welcome. Call Lori Smith, 301-717-3029 or Meg McLane 703-750-3568.

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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7



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Announcements

Brown v. Board of Education SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS THROUGH MARCH 20, 2020

The Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program was established by the Virginia General Assembly in 2004 to provide educational opportunities for persons who were denied an education in Virginia due to the closing of the public schools during Massive Resistance between 1954 and 1964. The program is open to new eligible applicants for the 2020-2021 school year. For applications and information on eligibility, visit:

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or contact Lily Jones, Division of Legislative Services, at (804) 698-1888.

Announcements

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News

Graduates of the 2017 Citizens Fire and Rescue Academy class.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT

Applications Accepted for Community Fire and Rescue Academy

Want to learn more about the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department? Want to participate in an interesting, fun-filled, eight-week program that will show you what firefighters and paramedics do every day?

You can now apply to the Community Fire and Rescue Academy (CFRA)! The CFRA is open to persons 18 and older who live in Fairfax County. Each session will cover different aspects of the organization, providing an in-depth overview of the department and its uniformed and civilian workforce. Program topics include: fire suppression, emergency medical services, training, recruitment, special operations, and other interesting topics.

CFRA Application will be accepted until March 9, 2020. The Academy will begin March 26, 2020, and will meet for eight consecutive Thursdays, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and ending on May 14, 2020. There is no charge to participants.

To learn more about the program and to sign up, go to: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire-ems/cfra>

It is important to note the Community Fire and Rescue Academy is a vehicle that provides an overview of, and in-depth look at, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. The Community Fire and Rescue Academy is not intended to train participants as firefighters/EMTs or to assist in an emergency situation.

Announcements

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Announcements

Announcements

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Be a part of our **Wellbeing** pages, the first week of every month.

Delight in our **HomeLifeStyle** sections, the second week of every month. Peek at the top real estate sales, glimpse over-the-top remodeling projects, get practical suggestions for your home.

Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our **A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun** pages, the third week of every month.

Questions? E-mail sales@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9431

THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 5

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.

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.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

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 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.

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.

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All Gowned Up



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

All Gowned UpAnd somewhere to go, or so I thought. I had checked in at the front desk. I was given a number, and almost immediately, it was called. I said good-bye to Team Lourie and was led back to a staging area (beds, curtains, doctors, nurses) where I was told I would see them both before surgery. There I was given a gown, no-slip socks and a hair net to change into, and instructed to place all my clothes (underwear, too) into two plastic bags and then told to pull back the privacy curtain and lie back on the bed.

Within a few minutes a female nurse, part of a very attentive and conscientious staff, began to attend me. She started an I.V. in my left forearm, wrapped a blood pressure cuff around my right bicep and then stuck half-a-dozen or so EKG contacts over the front me and down my legs to monitor my heart. In addition, the typical other vitals: oxygen, pulse and temperature were taken. At that point, it appeared that I had passed muster. My surgeon stopped by for a brief visit and all was progressing normally. Until that is when the anesthesiologist came by for what I thought was the final step. It was the final step alright. She said that "due to an abundance of caution," she was uncomfortable proceeding with the surgery. She explained that the facility (not a hospital) where I was to undergo the surgery, was not fully equipped to respond to certain potential complications which might occur which involved a breathing tube, a ventilator and the weakness of my lungs, so she sent me packing (unpacking actually). Disappointed, as you might imagine, we all left the facility and waited for further instructions.

By the end of the day, arrangements had been made to reschedule my surgery at a local hospital on Wednesday, a mere two day delay. I could live with that. At home, I resumed my post-shower, pre-surgery, infection-preventing scrub as I had for the previously scheduled surgery. This time surgery was scheduled for 1:30 pm instead of the 10:50 am it had been on Monday. Still, if all went well, I could be released that same day, under someone else's recognition of course, given the late hour, but likely recuperating at home in my own bed.

On Wednesday, I arrived at the hospital two hours before surgery as directed and began the now familiar process. Once again I was prepped and ready. This time there were no slip-ups. Around 2:15 I was wheeled into the operating room and introduced to the staff on hand. I was asked my name, date of birth and the reason for surgery that day. Answering correctly, the next step involved an oxygen mask coming down over my nose and mouth and being asked to breathe normally, which I did, and the rest, as they say, is history.

It turned out that the anesthesiologist was right to be cautious. My four-hour outpatient surgery turned into a seven-hour admission-to-the-hospital major surgery with complications. Due to my "Adam's Apple" tumor being embedded into/under my collarbone, a thoracic surgeon was brought into consult about possibly cracking open my chest to get at the remaining cancer. Fortunately, a decision was made not to do so and I was wheeled back to recovery and eventually to my room for the night where at 12:35 am, while lying in my bed, my eyes opened and I saw my wife, Dina and close friend, Rita, who had stayed into the wee hours in an amazing show of support.

The next day, after an uncomfortable night in my hospital bed, I was discharged, four hours after the process began. (As you may or may not know, getting discharged from the hospital is hardly a straight line from your hospital room to your curbside pick up.) I was given instructions, prescriptions and follow-up appointments. My thyroid gland, parathyroid, "Adam's Apple" tumor and a few lymph nodes stayed behind. Can't say that I miss any of them. Still, my body may miss them so I'll likely have some post-op work to do at home. Nevertheless, progress has been made for which I'm grateful.

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

CALENDAR

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

NOW THRU MARCH 30

Monday Exercise Classes. 9:30-10:30 a.m. At Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke offers exercise classes for older adults designed to build strength and improve balance and flexibility. All levels of ability are welcome. Call the SCFB office, 703-426-2824, for class information.

NOW THRU MAY 27

Wednesday Exercise Classes. 9-10 a.m. At The Lutheran Church of the Abiding Presence, 6304 Lee Chapel Road, Burke. Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke offers exercise classes for older adults designed to build strength and improve balance and flexibility. All levels of ability are welcome. Call the SCFB office, 703-426-2824, for class information. (20 weeks @\$2.50/class = \$50)

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 bars made by local chocolatier Cameron's Coffee & Chocolates. The chocolate bars are available for purchase at participating Fairfax City



18th-Century Game Night at Gunston Hall

Gunston Hall will host 18th-Century Game Night on Friday, Feb. 21 in Lorton.

FRIDAY/FEB. 21

18th-Century Game Night. 6-9 p.m. At George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Guests are invited to delve into the past and discover the origin story of games like Life, Craps, and Poker. Finger foods and seasonal adult beverages are part of this 21+ evening event. Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased online at www.gunstonhall.org or at the door. Cost: \$35; \$25 for members. Visit the website www.gunstonhall.org.

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.

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>

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>

FEB. 14-APRIL 3

Friday Exercise Classes. 9:30-10:30 a.m. At Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke offers exercise classes for older adults designed to build strength and improve balance and flexibility. All levels of ability are welcome. Call the SCFB office, 703-426-2824, for class information. (8 weeks, \$20).

SATURDAY/FEB. 15

Kids Consignment Sale. 9 a.m. to 12 noon. At Fairfax Presbyterian Church, 10723 Main Street, Fairfax. Kids/baby/maternity consignment sale. Seasonal clothes, toys/games, baby equipment and more! Sale hours are 9 to noon. Discount period is 1:30-3 p.m. Cash or credit (small fee).

Coffee & Conversations. 10:30 a.m. to noon. At 3951 Pender Drive, Suite 130, Fairfax. Bob Silber will be presenting "Coffee & Conversations" at the Northern Virginia Resource Center (NVRCC) Meeting Room. Please bring a sweet treat for six people and enjoy the coffee, treats, and conversations. Everyone is welcome. Courtesy of NVRCC, the meeting room has CART and is looped. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to sign in at the door and update your email address or request to be included in the list to receive newsletters and notices. RSVP to info@hlcnova.org

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.

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