

Fairfax CONNECTION

HOME LIFE STYLE

PAGE 6

Honoree Scott Peirce (green shirt) with (from left) nephew CJ Ray, daughter Rachel Peirce, wife Mary McCullough, Mayor David Meyer, and sons David and Brian Peirce. (In back are Council members Michael DeMarco and Janice Miller).

‘An Individual who Exemplifies the Very Best’

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‘A Reminder of How Generous Our Neighbors Are’

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Celebrating Young Musicians

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'An Individual who Exemplifies the Very Best'

City honors Fairfax Little League's Scott Peirce.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The audience was packed during last week's Fairfax City Council meeting. But most people weren't there because of a particular piece of City business; instead, they came to honor and support Scott Peirce for his many years of service to youth baseball in Fairfax.

At the outset of the Feb. 11 meeting, Mayor David Meyer had Peirce and his family step to the podium for a special presentation. Then, said Meyer, "Tonight we're here to affirm our national pastime, baseball – the finest sport ever invented by humanity."

He said the reason baseball is so ingrained in American culture is because it starts on the corner fields in people's neighborhoods – "when children get together and learn the basics of sportsmanship and cooperation. Baseball requires a lot of teamwork and players thinking about what they need to



Enjoying the ceremony with Scott Peirce (at far right) are family members (from left) sons and daughter David, Brian and Rachel, wife Mary McCullough and nephew CJ Ray.

do and how they can back each other up."

And through the generations, said Meyer, "There are always adults who have stepped forward to take young players under their tutelage and teach them the basics – not

just the mechanics of fielding and hitting – but, also, how to cooperate and work as a team." He then told the attendees there who work with young baseball players that, years from now, those players will still remem-

ber them with fondness for the qualities of leadership and fairness their coaches taught them when they were young.

"Today we're here to recognize an individual who exemplifies the very best in what I was just talking about – Scott Peirce," said Meyer. "He has been Mr. Baseball, here in the City of Fairfax, for many, many years. And, for that, we are very, very thankful, and we appreciate the support of his family, as well."

THE MAYOR then read a proclamation from the City detailing Peirce's numerous accomplishments. It said he joined the Fairfax Little League Board in 2006, became president of the American Little League and later served as Fairfax Little League president. In addition, Peirce:

- ♦Has been actively involved in City of Fairfax youth baseball for more than 20 years and volunteered to manage almost 40 baseball teams from T-ball to Juniors;
- ♦Was responsible for advocating and assisting with the development of the Providence Elementary School baseball complex;

- ♦Provided outstanding leadership establishing an environment where the community, parents, school staff and students accepted high, academic expectations for all

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'A Reminder of How Generous Our Neighbors Are'

Britepaths holds Stuff the Bus event at Fairfax Walmart.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

In case anyone wonders why so many food drives are needed in a county so ostensibly wealthy as Fairfax, Britepaths Programs Director Chris Garriss has a brief, but poignant, story in response.

"We received a thank-you card recently from a single mom with two children, and the children wrote notes in it, telling why they were thankful for our food program," she said. "One child wrote, 'My mommy was able to buy me milk.' That really struck a chord with us, and just thinking about it is heartbreaking."

So Garriss was especially pleased that the Walmart in Fairfax City agreed to host a Stuff the Bus event for Britepaths, on Saturday, Feb. 8. It enabled the nonprofit to restock its food pantry to help local families in need, as well as provide them with grocery-store gift cards to purchase their own items.

"It was great to be in a grocery store that supports the food program's needs by letting us ask for those things here," said Garriss. And by the end of the five-



Some of the Stuff the Bus participants are (from left) Diane Lobasso and children Charlie and Courtney; Natasha Nunn and daughter Zoe; Walmart employees Andrew Sanza and Arati Sigdel; police officers Reanna Jacobson and Todd Givens; Britepaths' Christina Garriss; Volunteer Fairfax's Shelley Brosnan; and CSP's Monica Obozele and Arathi Krishendra.

hour event, 688.5 pounds of food and toiletry/hygiene items – valued at \$1,183 – had been donated by the community, plus

cash and gift cards totaling \$851.

From 11 a.m.-4 p.m., various volunteers greeted Walmart customers and passed out

fliers asking for donations of food or money. Everything collected was then stuffed into a Fastran bus parked outside the store and brought to the organization's pantry.

THE DAY was chilly, but that didn't stop several groups from coming to Walmart to help make the effort a success. They included police officers from the Fair Oaks District Station, local students, and members of Fairfax County's Neighborhood and Community Services, Coordinated Services Planning and Volunteer Fairfax.

Franklin Middle School eighth-grader Zoe Nunn got volunteer-service hours for school for lending a hand. "I'm greeting people at the entrance and handing out lists of the needed food items," she said. "It's pretty fun because it's nice to talk to and meet new people. I like to know that I'm helping people, and it's a fun experience overall. My mom and I are doing this together."

MPO Reanna Jacobson and three auxiliary police officers represented the Fair Oaks District Station. "After people have paid for the items they're donating, we collect them in shopping carts to go 'stuff the bus,'" she said. Garriss said the food donations were then weighed as they went into the bus.

"I'm very excited to have this event in

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OPINION

Black History Month 2020

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

A tradition in the House of Delegates that has come about in recent years is to have a speech at the beginning of each daily session during February about a Black person. Some speeches are about well-known historic figures; most are about lesser-known Black persons who have made contributions to their communities and to the state. After all, the point of Black History Month is to have all of us gain a greater knowledge and appreciation of Black persons' contributions to our history. The Legislative Black Caucus organizes the event, and I am pleased to have been invited to speak each year at one of the daily sessions. This year I spoke about the late Gwen Ifill of PBS NewsHour and Washington Week in Review who was the first Black woman to become a national news commentator. I always appreciated receiving the daily news from her in her calm and professional manner. Not all speeches are about historic figures; one delegate spoke



this year about his experiences of growing up Black.

I predict that in future years a speech will be made on the floor of the House of Delegates about the 2020 Virginia General Assembly being a transformative event in Black history. Black experience accounts for a major portion of the story in a state that unfortunately has been known for centuries for its racist policies. The first enslaved Africans were brought to Virginia in 1619, and the slave codes that were enacted to keep them subjected as slaves were inhumane. When the tobacco fields were no longer productive, Virginia's chief source of income became the selling of slaves into the deep South. Even the freeing of the slaves with the Civil War did not bring equal rights to Virginia's Black population. Slave codes were replaced by Jim Crow laws. Voting by Blacks was restricted. Their separate schools and other accommodations were not equal.

Supreme Court decisions and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 brought about changes that started Black people on the way to greater freedom. A suc-

cessful lawsuit against gerrymandering in the state along with greater voter participation brought about a record number of Black candidates being elected to the General Assembly. Black legislators took on greater roles of responsibility in the 2020 session of the legislature. The first Black woman was elected Majority Leader of the House of Delegates, and the first Black woman was elected President of the State Senate. While there had been a few Black committee chairs over the years in the House of Delegates, half of the fourteen committee chairs are now Black. Vestiges of Jim Crow laws that remained in the Code even though they had been overturned by the courts are being stripped away. Localities are being given permission to deal with Confederate monuments that were the symbols of Jim Crowism. Laws that were unevenly applied to Black persons are being amended or repealed. Black cemeteries are being cared for as the Confederate cemeteries were for many years. A commission is going to look at the teaching of Black history in our schools to ensure that it tells the whole story. Major strides are being made in this month of Black history!

Arriving at Crossover with Many Bills Moving

Driver privilege, minimum wage, class action lawsuits, marijuana decriminalization ...

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL
(D-36)

The sixth week of the General Assembly brought us to "crossover" – the day each chamber is required to cease work on their own bills and work on bills from the other chamber.

The last two days brought furious action on many major bills. Forty-three of my own bills crossed over to the House of Delegates. Last week, the Senate passed my legislation creating driver privilege cards for undocumented immigrants for the first time and on a bipartisan basis. We still have work to do in order to reconcile the House and Senate bills, but it will change the lives of over 100,000 Virginia residents.

We also passed my legislation authorizing state-level class action lawsuits. Forty-eight other states and the District of Columbia already allow similar lawsuits. The lack of such remedies in Virginia means that corporations can steal money from Virginians in smaller amounts and never face justice.

The Senate also approved my bill allowing people to expunge evictions that have been dismissed. Companies have begun to collect and disseminate eviction records to landlords and the existence of multiple dismissed and unfounded eviction cases can present a barrier to property rental. My bill will allow people to clear unfounded lawsuits from their third party data files.

We also passed my bill to create the Virginia



Efficient and Resilient Buildings Board. It requires each state agency to designate an energy manager to monitor and reduce energy consumption over time. Energy efficiency is America's cheapest energy resource to access and I appreciate the collaboration with my constituent Elizabeth Beardsley and the United States

Green Buildings Council who brought this concept to my attention.

The Senate also approved my bill I am carrying with Del. Kathleen Murphy to create two hundred \$4,000 college scholarships for children in families who receive Temporary Need for Families (TANF). The bill has passed the Senate four times but always dies in the House. This year will be different.

Beyond my own bills, we took action on majority legislation. Sen. Adam Ebbin's marijuana decriminalization bill passed with a large bipartisan majority. The bill is not perfect, but an appropriate first step as we move towards legalization.

I helped to negotiate the Senate's proposed minimum wage increase. The bill increases the state minimum wage to \$9.50/hour starting January 1, 2021. The wage then increases \$1/hour per year starting July 1, 2022 until it reaches \$15/hour and then increases with the Consumer Price Index. Other parts of Virginia would be divided into Wage Regions and the wage increased on a basis relative to their Median Family Income compared with Northern Virginia. We also created an exemption for training employees and students employed

part-time while in college or high school. The House approach is much different and must be reconciled.

Both chambers passed legislation allowing collective bargaining by public employees, ending Virginia's ban on project labor agreements, and allowing localities to require prevailing wages to be paid in public contracts. We also passed legislation creating private actions for worker misclassification, employer retaliation for reporting illegal conduct, and wage theft.

On the energy front, we passed bills endorsing a renewable energy portfolio standard or mandate that utilities shift to renewable energy by certain deadlines. We created a framework to authorize a \$2 billion investment in offshore wind that will make Virginia and Hampton Roads a national leader in technology deployment.

We also passed legislation to officially join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) also known as "Reggie." Joining this compact will give the Commonwealth greater flexibility in reducing carbon emissions and net the Commonwealth \$100 million per year in revenue given the progress we have made this far relative to other compact states.

We also passed Senator Adam Ebbin's legislation authorizing a statewide tax on plastic bags of \$0.05 per bag. It only applies to bags in grocery, convenience, and drug stores, but not restaurants. The monies will go to the General Fund and retailers will be allowed to keep \$0.02 of the tax to defray the costs of collection.

Each chambers' proposed budgets will come out before this goes to print and we will also begin work on legislation from the opposite chamber and the state budget. Please send me any feedback at scott@scottsurovell.org.

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LETTERS

Virginia Teachers Need and Deserve Collective Bargaining Rights

To the Editor:

I am an elementary school teacher in Fairfax County who has been teaching for 27 years in Virginia's public schools. I know I speak for my colleagues in saying we all want what is best for our students and their families.

We see the effects of 31 third graders in a classroom or teaching positions staffed by a patchwork of substitutes because there just aren't any teacher applicants to fill them. We experience burnout

caused by administrative requirements, too little time to plan, and thus "burning the candle at both ends" due to our dedication towards providing well planned, meaningful lessons for our students. We also see the exodus of quality teachers due to such burnout.

Despite these challenges, we work closely with our students to further their successes and close gaps. But none of the conditions described above are conducive to student success.

Legislation currently moving through the Virginia state legislature would change that by enabling collective bargaining for teachers, which provides a forum for employers and employees to join together to tackle such problems through negotiation. Kudos to the majority of our state delegates who supported the collective bargaining bill for educators. I hope our state senators will support it as well!

The importance of access to collective bargaining for teachers cannot be over-

stated. It would give us a say in decisions regarding our students' education. It would help ensure that policies are applied and adhered to in the same way from school to school within a district. Most importantly, it would enable us to work collaboratively for the betterment of all, which is a win for educators, for students, for the school system and our communities.

Dan Hale
Fairfax County

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HOME LIFE STYLE

Traditional-Style Makeover Satisfies

A second act for family home.

BY JOHN BYRD

Sometimes the second act requires a set change. In the case of a Reston couple seeking to re-vitalize the home they had occupied for 30 years, agenda-busy lives had come to a reflective pause.

The kids were now in senior high school and college—mostly living at home. The lower-level family entertainment area, meanwhile, belonged to a by-gone era. The master suite was, likewise, an anachronism.

The circa 1990s kitchen in the northwest corner of the first floor provided easy access to both an adjacent family room with fireplace, and a dining room/living room—which, nonetheless, were being used less frequently. In short: the house was ready for new beginnings, revisions more properly aligned to a dynamic family's actual needs.

"Of course, large-scale life changes don't necessarily require a whole house makeover," Sun Design president Bob Gallagher admits. "We advocate an incremental approach focused on what is needed now, and what changes will satisfy the whole regimen of foreseeable requirements."

On the other hand, when a homeowner is discovering an interior design style that speaks to them, "the process may build momentum," he adds, "especially when the owners have been given the tools needed to explore ideas in depth."

By tools Gallagher refers to multi-faceted space-planner/lead designer Ericka Williams, and the project team at Sun Design Remodeling.

"It was an inspiring collaboration," Gallagher allows. "The owners had attended Sun Design seminars earlier, toured several remodeled homes and talked to our past clients...so they knew what to expect. Turns out, this was just the beginning of their discovering more about their personal tastes."

To start at the top: that summer the owners had celebrated 23 years of residency in their two story, four bedroom production house, and were taking stock of what they wanted from the years ahead.

At just over 1,000 square feet, the home's primary level living area seemed adequate relative to living space requirements. The problem was that the original space plan and interior finishes were quite dated. Bathrooms designed in the 1990s featured oversized bathtubs, small showers and a vanity illuminated by Hollywood strip lighting. The children's playroom in the lower level had been set up for grade school activities. Walls formed to define rooms also blocked the light, and obstructed visual continuum.

The food prep island in the kitchen, meanwhile, nearly abutted a breakfast table which was, in turn, sequestered from the family room by a half wall. When entertaining was underway, the kitchen was beyond the conversational reach of both social gathering zones. Moreover, with the microwave above the cooktop and refrigerator to the right, the cook's work triangle was often in the center of traffic bottlenecks.

"There was a wall with an HVAC duct separating the kitchen from the dining room/living room," Williams recalls. "The original Formica countertops didn't function well as a working surface for hot pots and pans."



Glass-facing cabinets, a 25-bottle wine refrigerator and a granite-topped serving station now unify the kitchen and the family room.

PHOTOS BY GREG HADLEY



To generate more light and living space in a circa 1990s house, Sun Design Remodeling removed a wall between the kitchen and great room. A granite food prep and dining counter replaces a stand-alone breakfast table. The wine refrigerator is convenient to the re-designed family room.

Elsewhere, main level carpet and tiling were becoming threadbare. While the dining room and kitchen had been originally conceived for formal entertaining, the reality was a 24 ft x 16 "great room"—mostly reserved for holidays.

"Interior lines were not well articulated," Williams says. "The first level rooms were large enough, but the space seemed looming, almost empty."

What was needed was an "open" plan with interactive, clearly defined activity zones.

Seizing the day, Williams proposed a custom buffet as a way to differentiate the dining zone and from the living room. The piece would function as a service station and storage unit from both sides.

To better articulate the main level interior, Williams re-routed the HVAC duct work and converted the wall into a pair of arched openings crowned. Taupe-hued walls combined with a soft white trim confer a stately elegance on uncluttered sightlines.

Glass-facing cabinets, a 25-bottle wine refrigerator and a granite-topped serving station now unify the kitchen and the family room. The fireplace surround is MSI Gray Oak tile in a straight lay pattern. The new flooring is 5-inch plank gray-stained solid maple.

Upstairs, the new spa bath features a large walk-in shower with a bench seat, "cubbies" designed for personal-use and hand-held shower sprays. Among the lighting enhancements: overhead LED recessed lighting and decorative sconces.

The lower level now boasts a state-of-art entertainment center and is equipped with refrigerator and wet bar.

Sun Design Remodeling frequently sponsors design and remodeling seminars as well as tours of recently remodeled homes. For more information, visit www.SunDesignInc.com/Events or call 703-425-5588.

JOHN BYRD (BYRDMATX@GMAIL.COM) HAS BEEN WRITING ABOUT HOME IMPROVEMENT FOR 30 YEARS.

City Honors 'Mr. Baseball'

FROM PAGE 3
students;

❖Mentored coaches, assistant coaches and was an exemplary role model for players and students alike;

❖Oversaw long-term projects, such as the partnership with National and its uniform program, the restructuring of the league age format, and contributing to future plans for Thaiss and Providence parks; and

❖Received the Abe and Irene Pollin Award in 2010 for his tireless efforts on behalf of youth in his community.

Therefore, the proclamation stated, "In recognition of his many exceptional accomplishments and his vision, leadership, commitment and dedication to the Little League community, the School Board authorized the dedication and naming of baseball field 3 at Providence Elementary in honor of Scott Peirce, to be henceforth referred to as Scott Peirce Field, as a permanent recognition of [his] contributions."

In addition, Meyer and the City Council proclaimed this April 18, Fairfax Little League opening day, as Scott Peirce Day in the City, and the entire audience stood and gave Peirce a standing ovation. "This past fall, we all experienced a remarkable victory of our hometown team [Washington Nationals] winning the World Series," said Meyer. "But in some ways, that just pales in comparison to what we're recognizing this evening." Then, directly addressing Peirce, Meyer told him, "You are a world champion, as well." Again, Peirce received thunderous applause; and in response, he said, "Thank you all very much; I'm amazed at this turnout — you guys are wonderful." He also thanked the mayor, Council, School Board and Department of Parks and Recreation.

"It's been a great 15 years working with you guys," he said. "This really is quite an honor; and it's not just for me — it's for all of the Little League. We all work together; nothing gets done alone on a Little League Board."

"As you know, I'm struggling to get some of the words out," continued Peirce. "I've been diagnosed with ALS — Lou Gehrig's Disease. Currently, there's no cure for ALS, [but] we're very hopeful; there's a lot

of great research going on. Any cure for ALS will be a cure also for other neurological diseases — MS, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's — so we're all hopeful there's a cure real soon. It would be nice.

"It's taken away some of my speech and reduced some of the strength in my arms and shoulders, so I can't do the fields and grounds stuff I've been doing for 15 years for the Little League and the City of Fairfax. A lot of good folks on the Board are taking my spot, though, and doing those things."

MOST IMPORTANTLY, said Peirce, "What ALS cannot take away from me is my love for life, my love for my family, my friends, for baseball and sports, in general, and for volunteering. I've always wanted to volunteer and give my time. The Board has literally been my second family, at times, and I've made some lifelong friends."

He also expressed appreciation for his family's support, throughout the years, plus his Mantua neighborhood. "One of the greatest things they did for me, after my diagnosis, was getting me two tickets for the World Series," he said. "It was game four, at home, and my son Brian and I went together to see the Nats play. The score wasn't that great, but the night was magical — what a gift."

"Thank you all for being here," continued Peirce. "I hope I've got many more years of service, but none of us know that answer." Speaking last, Meyer told him, "Baseball is really a metaphor for life. You coached and taught people a lot about the game, but you've taught us more about living. And I know that, every day you get up and face a new day — in the spirit of your coaching — you're saying, 'Play Ball!'"

Afterward, Peirce said he initially volunteered because of a need for coaches, then a love for the game and youth sports, and then because "I realized it was a great way to give back to the community." "We all should volunteer in some form."

As for the accolades he received, he said, "I felt honored that the City would do that for me and Fairfax Little League. It means the world to me to be recognized for 20 years of hard work, and I hope others see what I, and the league, have been able to accomplish and follow our lead for many more years."

Britepaths Holds Stuff the Bus Event

FROM PAGE 3

our store because it's giving back to the community, and that's one of Walmart's goals," said Arati Sigdel, a Walmart coach (similar to an assistant manager). "I'm new to this store, but I'm pleased to know that this particular Walmart has been hosting this for a few years."

As for the county representatives, Garris said they were there so people could "learn how to get help for themselves by talking to the volunteers here." Two of them were Monica Obozele and Arathi Krishendra of Coordinated Services Planning (CSP).

"Fairfax County has different organizations that help within the community," explained Obozele. "So people can call CSP at 703-222-0880, and we'd do an assessment to see how we could help them."

Krishendra said county residents contact CSP seeking emergency assistance – food, clothing, shelter and money. "Britepaths is one of the nonprofit or community-based organizations that CSP partners with to help out with these emergency needs," she explained.

"We're also an information resource line for community services, such as where people can find transportation or obtain

permits."

And often, CSP refers residents to Britepaths. "They're doing a wonderful job of helping families and individuals in crisis," said Krishendra. "So it's wonderful to be here with them today, see our community partners in person and team up on this good cause of stocking their pantry."

BRITEPATHS spokeswoman Heather Webb called the Stuff the Bus food drive "always a wonderful reminder of how generous our neighbors are. We raised \$2,034.45 [in donated merchandise, cash and gift cards] to help feed local families in need while they work through a crisis. We are grateful to everyone who came out and donated and to our wonderful volunteers, including Fairfax County employees and police officers, who helped make the day a success.

"We would also like to thank Fairfax County and [bus provider] MV Transportation for sponsoring these drives, and Walmart for hosting us.

However, the need is ongoing, so community members who wish to donate, as well, may do so by visiting our Food Bridge page at britepaths.org."



2020 Fairfax County Teen Job Fairs and Career Building Workshops

Woodson High School Saturday, March 7th 10 am to 12 pm	Mount Vernon High School Saturday, March 21st 10 am to 12 pm
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Chantilly High School Saturday, March 14th 2 pm to 4 pm	Full-time employment Part-time employment Seasonal positions Internships Volunteer Positions and More

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BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Something very special awaits Northern Virginia audiences. It is a live performance of "From the Top," the most popular weekly one-hour music program on public radio.

Carefully selected young performers share their passion for classical music through live performance and conversation. They will even provide insights into their musical pursuits and their own day-to-day lives.

How did "From the Top" find its way to the Center for the Arts?

"I spend a lot of time exploring how we can serve as a creative classroom, not just for our patrons and students, but also for the artists who perform here," said Adrienne Bryant Godwin, program manager, Center for the Arts. "From The Top" is the perfect opportunity to host an event that would serve our various communities in such a unique way.

"Audiences will get to witness the up-and-coming super stars in the classical music world," added Bryant Godwin. "These fine young musicians will get to participate in



Where and When

Center for the Arts, George Mason University presents "From the Top," the nationally-distributed NPR program and podcast that celebrates the voices and talents of America's young classical musicians, at Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Event: Saturday, Feb. 29 at 8 p.m. Tickets \$48, \$41, \$29. (there are 50 percent off tickets available for youth through grade 12). Call 703-993-2787 or visit www.cfa.gmu.edu. **Note:** "From the Top" is heard Sundays on WETA 90.9 FM at 6 p.m. as well as more than 200 other stations nationwide. The "From the Top" event at the Center for the Arts will air on participating stations and by podcast during the weeks of April 20 and May 11, 2020.

old violinist Lira Masuda from Glen Allen, Va.

The live "From the Top" event will be hosted by celebrated pianists Greg Anderson and Elizabeth Joe Roe. Anderson and Roe will interview the young performers as well as perform with them to showcase the exceptional talents of the young artists.

Of note, the selected musicians and "From the Top" staff will also participate in Community Engagement and Arts Leadership sessions at Poe Middle School in

SEE FROM THE TOP, PAGE 11

Lira Masuda who will perform on NPR's 'From the Top' at Center for the Arts, George Mason University.

a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to perform on a broadcast that reaches nearly half a million listeners. I also love that 'From the Top' focuses on growth opportunities for these performers off stage as well."

The young performers come from across America. Featured performers from Northern Virginia include: 12-year-old pianist Ella Kim from Herndon, Jialin Tso, 18, from Chantilly, and Alexander Suh, 16, from Fairfax, and 10-year-

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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. Now 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. 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>



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.

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 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 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.

NOW THRU 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).

FEB. 19 TO MARCH 29

The Color Green. At Torpedo Factory Artists at Mosaic, 105 District Ave., Fairfax. In celebration of an early spring and St. Patrick's Day, Torpedo Factory artists are tackling one of nature's most ubiquitous colors, green. In its newest exhibit simply titled, Green, the gallery is presenting a selection of original paintings, photographs, jewelry, scarves, ceramics and more, that reflect its various artists' interpretations of the color. Torpedo Factory artists are chosen through a rigorous jurying process and enjoy a high degree of acclaim, both locally and nationally. Savvy shoppers know Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic as a place not only to enjoy fine art but also as a great place to purchase art at affordable prices.

THURSDAY/FEB. 20

Henna Workshop. 6-7 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Learn the history and art of henna design with local henna artist Anita Kundal. Attendees will learn how to use Henna tubes and create their own design. Materials provided by Pohick Regional Library. Free. Visit the website:

<https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/6225706>

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

Special Edition: PET Connection

Publishes:
Feb 26, 2020

Ads close:
Feb 20, 2020

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FROM PAGE 9



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Financial Analyst with Associates in Comm, Eco,Buss Admin/Mgmt or rldt plus three years experience to Develop, maintain, and distribute financial and cost models as needed, assist in maintaining and updating company financial data. Conduct quan- titative analysis of information affecting managements investment programs on public or private institutions. Provide direct marketing & advertising solutions to survive in the competitive and aggressive categories.

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SATURDAY/FEB. 22

Indoor Yard Sale. 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. At St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. The youth group has been collecting items for weeks and will have a huge indoor yard sale to benefit their youth activities at church. Please come support them and find some treasure. Visit the website: www.standrews.net

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.

Peace, Love & Art. 6:30-10:30 p.m. At Workhouse Art Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Fundraiser for Workhouse; tickets are \$90/door. Psychedelic cocktails and delicious nibbles; dancing Woodstock-style and casino games; hippie and groovy outfits encouraged. Artwork for raffle.

National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine. 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Celebrating their Jubilee 100th concert season, the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine (NSOU) presents a concert of Eastern European delights, including a showpiece for cello by Tchaikovsky, Sibelius' first symphony which displays his unique Nordic style as well as his admiration for Tchaikovsky, and Ukrainian composer Borys Lyatoshynsky's symphonic ballade composed as a tribute to the Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz on the centenary of his death. Considered one of the finest symphony orchestras in Eastern Europe, NSOU has achieved international recognition with its extensive touring schedule and more than 100 acclaimed recordings, including Lyatoshynsky's Symphonies No. 2 and No. 3 named The Best Recording of the Year by the Australian Broadcasting Company. Under the direction of Volodymyr Sirenko, the orchestra is joined by world-renowned cellist Natalia Khoma as the featured soloist. Tickets are \$60, \$51, \$36. Visit the website: <https://cfa.gmu.edu/>

SUNDAY/FEB. 23

Hands On Day Activities. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Hands On Days, suitable for both adults and children, feature a variety of educational activities involving history and train modeling. Mini-workshops or activities focusing on artifact restoration and preservation might also be featured. Cost of crafts or materials for Hands On Day activities are included in the price of admission. 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 active and retired, \$4. Visit the website www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

BULLETIN

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

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.

SUNDAY/MAY 17

Psychic Fair. 9-5 p.m. At Arlington-Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Boulevard, Fairfax. Psychic Fair for both those who are serious and for those who are just curious. Event can be a life-changing experience or just a fun time. Many of the best psychics, mediums, healers, and readers of all types, along with related arts and crafts vendors from Virginia and the surrounding areas. Note: 75% of tables offer some type of readings, 25% of tables offer related arts, crafts, books, oils, crystals, sage, herbs, information, jewelry, etc. There will be 44 vendors. All under one roof, all in one room, indoor event, free parking. Cost: \$5 in advance \$10 at the door. Visit the website: <https://va-psychic-fair-2020.eventbrite.com>

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

WEEK IN FAIRFAX

Dance Event at Fairfax High

The Fairfax Academy Dancers will hold a dance benefit concert for The Multiple Sclerosis Society. Dances from the Academy classes, plus groups from the community, will perform. It's set for this Sunday, Feb. 23, at 6 p.m., in the Fairfax High auditorium, 3501 Rebel Run in Fairfax. The event is free, but a \$20 donation is suggested.

From the Top

FROM PAGE 8
Annandale, and with the Mason Community Arts Academy.

"From the Top" will be taped for later broadcast on NPR (National Public Radio) stations including in the Nation's Capital Region's WETA 90.9 FM.

Beyond their performances and leading up to the Center for the Arts event, "the musicians will be participating in engagement activities with students from Poe Middle School in Annandale and the Mason Community Arts Academy. They will be developing their leadership skills and contributing to their overall education on what it's really like as a professional musician," noted Bryant Godwin.

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One Step Forward, Hopefully Not Two Steps Backward



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

And so, what happens next? There's calm and then there's an eventual storm. The storm to which I refer is what will happen after the March 2nd meeting with my endocrinologist when she will assess and determine the next step in my post-thyroidectomy treatment. Presumably, in conjunction with my oncologist, a coordinated plan will be implemented for treating my two cancers. I can't imagine however, that being treated for two cancers, simultaneously, will be easier than being treated for one. And I doubt, although I don't know, that one medicine will be recommended for the treatment of both my non-small cell lung cancer and my thyroid cancer. We'll know soon enough.

In the interim, I intend to acknowledge and appreciate how easy these next few weeks will be. No appointments with doctors, no diagnostic scans, no procedures, no medicine - and no side effects, and no lab work other than as needed, to measure my calcium and magnesium levels and any other thyroid-related effects. Moreover, I am free to come and go as I please. And it does please me. Because I've earned it. I deserve it and I'm going to bask in it. You think being a cancer patient under constant treatment - for nearly 11 years is in any way amusing? Hardly. I make fun of it to make light of it. Otherwise, the weight of it would crush me. And even though my father always said I had broad shoulders, I'm always fearful that the next result will be the straw that finally breaks this camel's back. After all, I'm only human.

But for now, February 9, as I sit and write, I am three weeks and one day to my next reckoning. And since it's early days yet to know what life will be like after that March 2nd appointment (radiation and/or chemotherapy possibly), I will try to be blissfully ignorant and not think too much how easy and unencumbered my life is at the present. As a cancer patient, ceding control where you can and securing it where you thought you couldn't are keys to managing expectations and minimizing aggravation. Unfortunately, there is no one key that unlocks all doors. And there are plenty of doors, and plenty of doctors too, and plenty of fear waiting for one of your doctors to walk through any of these doors to deliver the results from your most recent cancer-related whatever.

None of which concerns me right now, or rather it shouldn't. And if there's any port in this storm where I can offload some anxiety and get in a little R&R, literally, figuratively, hypothetically, magically, unexpectedly, I should jump at the chance. I am reminded of a conversation I had with my oncologist years ago when I experienced a similar interval between treatment. The medicine I was on had stopped working so we needed to start another, another with unknown benefits and side effects. My oncologist suggested that since I felt good, perhaps we should delay the beginning of the next infusion and that I should take that trip I had always dreamed of because I might never feel this good again. I didn't then and I won't now. When I jump however, I can barely get off the ground.

I haven't exactly been presented this time, with this kind of do-before-you-die opportunity, but there is an eerie familiarity to my circumstances. And though I've been down this road trying-to-find out before, I can't be at all certain to what kind of twists and turns await. The last thing a cancer diagnosis provides is a guarantee. Actually, that's wrong. A cancer diagnosis does provide a guarantee: that there are no guarantees. And so, as I prepare for the next phase of my life, the one that begins 11 years after being diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV and being given a 13 month to two-year prognosis to boot, I will quote the late, great Satchel Paige: "Don't look back. Something might be gaining on you."

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