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The Khona family, (from left) dad Dhiren, children Sujay and Bhavika, and mom Deepti, celebrate Sujay's national video award.

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OPINION

2020 General Assembly: 39 Surovell Bills Passed

BY SCOTT SUROVELL
STATE SENATOR (D-36)



The 2020 General Assembly finished work on all legislation this past Sunday, except we did not pass a final state budget or elect new judges to fill vacancies. We will return to Richmond on Thursday, March 13, to complete that work and adjourn for this year.

This was my most successful session in passing bills in my eleven years in the General Assembly. The legislature sent 39 of my bills to Governor Ralph Northam. We carried over nine bills and referred them to study commissions. The legislature also carried over my legislation to abolish the death penalty to be potentially considered over the summer.

I will highlight some of the other major bills we passed and discuss more bills and the budget in future columns.

I carried a bill with Norfolk Delegate Jay Jones to authorize Virginia to join 20 other states that allow community net metering for electricity. This bill, which passed both chambers with large bipartisan majorities, opens the door to solar energy for Virginians who live in communities with heavy tree cover, apartments, condominiums or for businesses that do not own their roofs. It will enable them to purchase solar power and net the energy against their home meters, while reducing car-

bon-generated energy usage and purchasing a share of the energy generated by a solar project.

Both bodies sent my bill banning hydraulic fracturing or “fracking” for natural gas east of Interstate 95 to Governor Northam for signature. Both chambers also finalized my legislation requiring each state agency to designate an energy manager and energy reduction goals to help coordinate a reduction in energy usage by state agencies. Thank you to my constituent Elizabeth Beardsley with the Green Buildings Council for the concept.

The House also passed my bill to authorize the State Corporation Commission to approve 2,700 megawatts of energy storage, enough to power 2.7 million homes. As we transition to a clean energy economy, we must also develop technology for night-time storage of energy generated during the day. This requires significant advances in energy storage. My legislation is a first step.

Virginia will become the seventeenth state plus the District of Columbia to authorize temporary driver privilege cards for undocumented immigrants. The legislation I carried with Senator Jennifer Boysko and Delegate Kathy Tran passed with a bipartisan vote in both chambers. It will pay for itself and likely generate significant long-term benefits for taxpayers, in addition to simply fostering a better quality of life for our newest Virginians and their families. This legislation is projected to help about 240,000 drivers plus their children.

The Majority Leader asked me to help negotiate the final minimum wage legislation with Mount Vernon Delegate Paul Krizek as mem-

bers of the joint, six-person conference committee. The final bill raises Virginia’s minimum wage to \$9.50 per hour effective January 1 and up to \$12.50 by January 1, 2023 in annual \$1/hr steps. The wage can rise to \$15.00 per hour in 2026 with an additional vote, narrows exemptions for disabled individuals while preserving exemptions for high school and seasonal workers. The bill also requires various agencies to conduct a study to determine whether Virginia should enact regional minimum wage rates before moving wages to \$15/hour. A \$15-per-hour wage would be nearly 90 percent of median family income in nearly two dozen Virginia localities.

My legislation to authorize Fairfax and Arlington Counties to adopt ordinances to address retailers who fail to control their shopping carts passed both bodies with bipartisan majorities. I have now removed over 230 shopping carts from Little Hunting Creek itself since 2014. Residents in Springfield and Crystal City also reached out to me about their ongoing challenges when they heard of our problems in Hybla Valley. Local governments will now be able to act.

The House approved my bill to allow people to expunge public records relating to dismissed evictions. There are over 200,000 dismissed eviction cases in Virginia each year. Since most tenant application screenings are now done by automation and most algorithms do not distinguish between dismissed evictions and actual evictions, this will help potential tenants to clear their records.

I encourage you to email me at scott@scottsurovell.org with your comments.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Supporting \$15 Minimum Wage

To the Editor:

I am writing in response to the article titled, “Opinion: We Both Deserve \$15. Why Don’t Our Senators Think So?”, published in your newspaper on February 28, 2020. I agree with that the minimum hourly wage in Virginia should be

raised to \$15/hour. Northern Virginia is an expensive area to live and the wage you receive often determines the choices you are able to make.

Oftentimes, people are constrained by their education in what job they are able to acquire. Raising

the minimum wage will help those who may start out further behind everyone else due to socioeconomic status. If we take a step back from individuals, and look at our community as a whole, we will see that amongst many well-off families, there are some families

in poverty. Raising the minimum wage to \$15/hour, will allow families in lower socioeconomic statuses to “catch up” to other people in their community.

Hannah Johnson
Centreville

Deserve \$15?

Nick Riviere’s and Tony Hedgepeth’s op-ed insisting that all Virginia workers deserve a \$15/hour minimum wage, regardless of cost-of-living in their locale, fails to factor in economic reality. In high-cost locales such as ours, employers should be able to afford \$15, but in low cost ones, such a minimum wage might put too many out of business. The final minimum wage, once it is fully phased in, not only should be inflation-adjusted, but should be based on cost-of-living in the locale where the job is located. This would be a proper model for the federal government to consider.

The \$15/hour minimum wage’s advocates fail to fully understand the drawbacks. The \$15/hour

minimum wage is really a “living wage” designed to lift full-time workers out of poverty, different in concept from the traditional minimum wage which was a wage floor that put a moral limit on how little an employer could pay and still maintain a worker’s dignity. \$15/hour minimum wage advocates are engaging in a bit of deception in that they are trying to change the underlying understanding of what minimum wage means. In this respect, the \$15/hour minimum wage is a radical notion which moderate Democrats rightly would insist be phased in more carefully than advocates desire.

Even moderate Democrats are engaging in abuse of language

when they call doubling minimum wage in barely a decade “gradual” when it is really radical. That it is not radical enough for some could create a backlash even redistricting (thought to add four House of Delegate seats to blue Northern Virginia) cannot overcome. Because ten percent is sometimes

considered the limit of de minimis, smaller annual increases of 50-70 cents per year would make more sense. This would take even high-cost Northern Virginia until 2032 to reach the “living wage” threshold.

Dino Drudi
Alexandria

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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A Connection Newspaper

‘A Passion for Video Production and Film’

Chantilly High student wins national award.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Chantilly High junior Sujay Khona loves creating videos, so it was only fitting that he found out he won a national award via video. He did so, Feb. 26, during his Television and Media Production class at The Fairfax Academy.

The video he made, “The Savings Genie,” recently won first place in the Burke & Herbert Bank regional contest for the American Bankers Association Foundation “Lights, Camera, Save!” video contest. Each 90-second entry had to illustrate to teens the importance of saving and using money wisely and were judged on their quality, message, content and overall appeal.

Then, as the top video in Northern Virginia, Khona’s entry advanced to the next level of competition, representing Burke & Herbert Bank on the national stage. In it, a genie gives Khona advice on why and how to save money. Voting on social media determined the winners. Just three were selected, and Khona ultimately captured second place and a check for \$2,500.

His and the other two winning videos are now on YouTube and will become part of a national campaign to make sound money-management relevant to teens. And in celebration of Khona’s accomplishment, Burke & Herbert Bank representatives threw him a party last week, during class, in front of his classmates and family.

“Everything in this class has been very helpful and useful,” said Khona, 16. “I’m very excited and I thank all the judges. It’s a great opportunity.”

WITH A NOD to his video, the bankers brought in a cake decorated with a genie’s lamp atop. But before it was cut and shared



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Dan Adamson, Burke & Herbert Bank’s Vienna branch manager, presents a \$2,500 check to Sujay Khona.

with his classmates, Khona’s teacher, Matthew Balthrop, and the bankers addressed the students. Then the top three videos were shown – and that’s when Khona learned that his was second in the nation.

Balthrop praised both him and classmate Josabeth Hailu, whose video came in third in the regional contest. “When you start a project, there are always going to be obstacles that get in the way,” said Balthrop. “But I’ve learned that all you have to do is ask or try. There’s no problem in failing, because failure teaches us.

“So, Josabeth and Sujay, I’m glad you both entered the competition and succeeded,” he continued. “In the film industry, you’ll hear more ‘No’s’ than ‘Yes’s’ – but it doesn’t mean you should stop trying. And today, I want all you students to celebrate their success with them because you influenced them.”

Jane Petty, a Burke & Herbert vice presi-

dent, said she was delighted that, this year, Fairfax County had finalists in the competition. “This is super-exciting; congratulations,” another Burke & Herbert vice president, Sandra Vasquez, told the students. “This is a great program and an opportunity to showcase what you can do. Our focus is helping prepare the future leaders of our community. We’re here to support you, and I know Jane and her team worked hard on this program.”

Balthrop said he teaches his students the entire film-making process, from production to creation. As for Khona, he said, “I think Sujay has done a great job in taking a subject that could potentially be dry for his age range and making a unique and engaging video that encourages teens to save money. I’m really happy for him.”

So what’s Khona going to do with his prize money? Save it, of course – for college. “My



A scene from Sujay Khona’s video with his award listed at top left corner.

dream college is USC [University of Southern California],” he said. “I want to major in film and video production, and that’s what this class and the bank has helped me do. In class, we learned framing and lighting techniques and how to write a script and plan.”

Eventually, he hopes to become a film director, editor or producer. “Being a director would be cool,” said Khona. “I like action and more dramatic things, but I also enjoy making short videos like this one.”

HIS SISTER, Bhavika, an eighth-grader at Franklin Middle School, played the flute in the background of her brother’s video. And she and their parents were pleased to be at the celebration in his class at The Fairfax Academy.

“He loves making videos, and this contest gave him an opportunity to use his skills to motivate teenagers to save money,” said Khona’s mother, Deepti Khona. “And all aspects of the video – the writing, directing, filming and editing – were done by him.”

“Sujay always had a passion for video production and film – it’s something he enjoys creating,” said his dad, Dhiren Khona. “We’re proud of him. And his teacher is really good and helped us better understand this new field.”

Added Deepti Khona: “We’re really lucky to have this film-production class here.”

County Recognizes Centreville’s Jim Hart

On Feb. 25, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors recognized Centreville’s Jim Hart (in front, with plaque) for his many years of service on the county Planning Commission. Hart, of Virginia Run, has been a Planning Commission member since January 2004, originally nominated as an at-large representative by then Board of Supervisors Chairman Gerry Connolly.

Previously, Hart served 10 years on the West Fairfax County Citizens Assn. (WFCCA) Land-Use Committee, including as its chairman from 1998-2000. He was also president of its umbrella organization, the WFCCA, from 1996-98. Hart still serves on the county’s Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) and has done so since 2000.

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HOME LIFESTYLE



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Aspire Design Home in McLean will be open to the public from May 9 through June 7.

Local Designers Donate Talent for a Cause

A home in McLean Gets a Makeover to Benefit Can- cer Support Community.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Some local interior design gurus are joining tastemakers from around the country to revamp the Aspire Design Home in McLean, Virginia, as part of an effort to raise money for charity.

The effort will give visitors a chance to see the latest trends in home design while supporting the Cancer Support Community, the largest professionally led, nonprofit network of cancer support worldwide dedicated to providing emotional support and navigation for individuals impacted by cancer, including their families and friends.

"I have had the enormous privilege of working with many of the talented creatives whose submissions and design work were selected to complete the interiors of this remarkable house," said Mary Douglas Drysdale, design chair of the McLean 2020 Design House.

"The final show house will be exceptional."

The makeover event has drawn 31 designers from around the world and local designers including Allie Mann of Case Design/Remodeling in Bethesda, MD and Falls Church, VA, Michael Winn of Winn Design + Build in Falls Church, Maria Galiani of Galiani McLean, Josh Hildreth of Josh Hildreth Interiors in Reston, Jonas Carnemark of Konst Siematic in Bethesda, MD, Paul Lobkovich of Lobkovich in Tysons, Federica Asack of Masseria Chic in McLean, and Pamela Harvey of Pamela Harvey Interiors in Oak Hill, Va.

The home itself is described as an innovative marriage of classical Monticello elements and on-trend materials and design techniques. Among those materials is a whimsical green hue, cheetah pattern wall covering created by Allie Mann of Case of Design/Remodeling for the upper level bathroom.

"Bathrooms in general are these little gems that

can be both public and private where great design can live," she said. "In this show house bathroom, the tile is the biggest part of the space where I'll incorporate materials that are a little edgier or unexpected in terms of color or saturation and that will really create a dramatic space. I also love the different play with the pattern of the tile."

It was a personal connection that influenced the upper level bedroom created by Josh Hildreth of Josh Hildreth Interiors.

"Our bedroom is dedicated to my inspiring mother and all of those who fight or have fought the brave fight against cancer," he said. "This enchanted aerie creates a quiet respite that exists for relaxation and renewal inside of a large and sprawling home."

He says that his design process is often instigated by the discovery of what he describes as animating objects. "For instance, in January I traveled to Paris and uncovered some wonderful items from some favorite sources," said Hildreth. "Our retreat reflects a love for the beauty of France and artfully mixes French and other design elements across the centuries into a jewel box space that delights the eye and promises hope for a better tomorrow."

While guest bedrooms often accommodate one's in-laws, Annie Elliott of Annie Elliott Design says that the space she is re-imagining doesn't fit that mold. "This isn't 'granny chic,' she said. "It's 'uncle chic, with masculine furnishings paired with traditionally feminine elements to create a warm and inviting retreat."

Wallpaper made of subtle pink grasscloth encompasses masculine, modern elements such as the quasi-industrial étagère, which has tiny brass rivets on metal strapping and a black-caned bench at the foot of the bed, says Elliott. "The bed is canopied, but in Cowtan & Tout's Rutland – a sophisticated woodland scene in browns, greens, and blues – to counter the sweetness of the pink walls," she said. "We repeat the fabric on the drapes, layering it over woven wood shades for depth and texture. The room is a mix of vintage, and vintage-look furnishings."

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'I No Longer Feel Like I Can Trust Anyone'

Judge, victim's family, unhappy about suspended sentence.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Thanks to a plea agreement between the prosecutor and defense attorney, Abelardo Daniel Medianero Salazar was sentenced for perpetrating two misdemeanors against a minor, instead of the felonies with which he was originally charged. The victim and her family went along with it – but it wasn't easy for them.

During his sentencing, last Thursday, March 5, in Fairfax County Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court, the victim's mother read a statement her daughter wrote to him. "I trusted you," she said. "I no longer feel like I can trust anyone again because you took advantage of me. What happened left me angry, frustrated, confused, disgusted and outraged."

Police arrested Medianero Salazar, 32, of Falls Church, on May 23, 2019, charging him with several sex crimes. Detectives from the Major Crimes Bureau's Sex Crimes Squad had received a complaint of a sex offense involving a juvenile. They then charged Medianero Salazar with three counts of solicitation of a minor using a communication device and two counts of

indecent liberties with a minor.

However, in court last week, the solicitation charges were dropped. And the indecent-liberties offenses – both Class 6 felonies punishable by as much as five years in prison – were amended to Class 1 misdemeanors of contributing to the delinquency of a minor, punishable by no more than a year behind bars.

THE OFFICIAL WORDING of these misdemeanors was: "Willfully contributing to any act rendering [the victim] delinquent, in need of services, supervision, or abused and neglected." Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Kathryn Humphrey said the first such offense happened between Nov. 1 and Dec. 31, 2018, and the second one transpired from Jan. 1 until May 14, 2019.

Medianero Salazar pleaded guilty to both charges, and then Humphrey explained what the prosecution's case would have been had it gone to trial. "Both he and the victim worked at the Chick-fil-A at Fair Oaks Mall," she said. "He was her manager and she was 16 and, later, 17, when these incidents occurred."

"He asked her to go to his house for sex or send him pictures of her body," continued Humphrey. She then described in graphic detail how Medianero Salazar sexually assaulted the teen and the pleasure he

derived from it.

Afterward, Humphrey said the terms of the plea agreement were that Medianero Salazar would be sentenced to 360 days in jail on each charge, with the sentences running consecutively – but that all this time would be suspended. He is also to serve two years of active probation, undergo a psychosexual evaluation – and obtain any recommended, follow-up treatment – and have no contact with the victim for two years.

It was then that the victim's mother read her daughter's statement about the impact Medianero Salazar's actions have had upon her life. "I don't know what made me a target," she wrote. "Was it because I was young and vulnerable? I felt guilt, but I know that what you did wasn't right. You ruined my life. I forgive you – but I will never forget."

Judge Thomas Sotelo then asked if the plea was a recommendation or an agreement, and Humphrey said it was an agreement. But it was obvious that Sotelo was disgusted by the defendant's behavior.

He noted that Medianero Salazar was almost twice the teen's age "when he engaged in these acts. And he was in a custodial position as her manager." Therefore, the judge remarked, if the victim had refused him, she ran the risk of getting fired. And, said Sotelo, "If she's not working, she's not getting money."

Humphrey said that, by Medianero Salazar pleading guilty to the two misdemeanors, the victim was spared the ordeal of having to testify about such intimate details in open court. And, she added, "He gets two convictions and has to have a psychosexual evaluation, plus no contact with her for two years."

THE VICTIM and her parents were sitting in the courtroom's front row. And at that point, her father – who was also not happy with the outcome – spoke up to the judge. "My daughter's been through a whole lot, and a trial would make it a lot worse," he said. "But this also affected her education; she used to be an honor student, and now she's struggling – and he's not paying for it."

Sotelo said he'd accept the plea agreement and then addressed Medianero Salazar directly. "No one has the right to take advantage of another person," he said. "And I'm pretty sure you wouldn't want someone to take advantage of you."

Then, raising his voice, Sotelo asked the defendant, "So what makes it acceptable for you to do this to someone almost half your age, whose brain isn't yet fully developed? And in a supervisory role that has, as its worst outcome, a loss of income? How dare you?"

Finally, the judge gave Medianero Salazar a warning. "I remember all my cases and their facts and heartburn," he said. "And I guarantee you this: If you come back to me, you are going to receive jail time."



Medianero Salazar

DAR Chapter Presents American History Awards

On March 7, 2020, the Lane's Mill Chapter, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) presented two DAR American History Awards at their chapter meeting. The winner for the sixth grade essay Sydney Moore, attends Virginia Run Elementary. The fifth grade essay winner, Siddhu Guggilam, attends Colin Powell Elementary. The essays were on historical accuracy, adherence to the topic, organization of materials, interest, originality, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and neatness. Both students read their essay at the chapter's meeting. The students were presented with certificates of participation and bronze medals by chapter regent Karen Burkett and the chapter's American History committee chairman Susan Doufuss



The winner for the sixth grade essay Sydney Moore.



The fifth grade essay winner, Siddhu Guggilam.

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SPORTS



Centreville's Mekhai Washington #20 led all scorers with 37 points in the state semi-final win over Lake Braddock.



John Hunter's winning three point shot goes in for Centreville.

PHOTOS BY WILL PALENSCAR/THE CONNECTION

**Centreville Wildcats Beat Bruins,
Advance to State's Round 2**

The Centreville Wildcats (19-5) and Lake Braddock Bruins (21-6) caught up in an energy filled environment at Westfield HS in Chantilly on March 6 for a first round Class 6 State Championship basketball game.

Holding a narrow 58-56 lead heading into quarter number 4, Centreville was again able to outscore Lake Braddock, 24-23 for a 82-79 win.

Now, Centreville was a step closer to a Virginia

Class 6 basketball title. In addition to Mekhai Washington's 37 points, John Hunter scored 16 and Avery Ford scored 15. Washington and Ford also had 10 rebounds each.. Centreville will take on Western Branch ,who were winners over Potomac School 66-56.Lake Braddock had 5 players score in double figures, led by Robert Seigles's 17, David Solomon's 16, Jamie Kaiser's 15, Jamie Anderson's 13, and Quincy Via's 12.

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THURSDAY/MARCH 12

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

MONDAY/MARCH 30

Human Trafficking Meeting. 7 p.m. At Chantilly High School Auditorium, 4201 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Presented by Just Ask Prevention, which is a U.S. registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit educational organization based in McLean, that is focused on ending human trafficking in the United States and around the world through education, prevention, and intervention.

MONDAY/MARCH 30

Kindergarten Registration. 4-5 p.m. Union Mill Elementary is currently registering new students for the 2020-21 school year. If your child will reach his or her fifth birthday on or before September 30, 2020, he or she is eligible to attend kindergarten in the Fairfax County Public School that serves your address. Please follow the following steps to register your child:

1. Find your neighborhood school by entering your address at <http://boundary.fcps.edu/boundary/>
2. Complete a packet of registration forms—you may obtain these in the Union Mill Elementary office or online at https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/forms/enroll_0.pdf. Feel free to call Union Mill's registrar at 703 322 8500 if you need help navigating the website.
3. Gather your supporting documents—proof of residence in the Union Mill boundary, a certified copy of your child's birth certificate, parent/guardian photo ID, and any custody orders. Certificate of physical exam and immunization will be required before the student may start school, but is not required for registration.
4. Call the registrar at 703-322-8500 or email lrnulla@fcps.edu to make an appointment to bring your completed registration forms and supporting documentation to school.
5. Bring your child to attend Kindergarten Orientation on Monday, March 30, from 4 to 5 p.m. Your rising kindergarten student will have the opportunity to visit a kindergarten classroom while parents attend an information session in the school cafeteria.

INDOOR PICKLEBALL FACILITY BREAKS GROUND

Locally-owned-and-operated Pickleballerz, broke ground on Feb. 3 as demolition efforts began on the interior at 14424 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. Pickleballerz is completely reconstructing the interior of the almost 20,000 square-foot space into the Washington DC region's first-ever dedicated six-court, indoor pickleball facility for players of all abilities to hone their skills, socialize, and be a part of an inclusive community within the fastest-growing sport in America. The groundbreaking begins what will be a multi-month design and build process for Pickleballerz, which will feature premium USA Pickleball Association-preferred indoor pickleball courts that enhance the playing experience. These specially made courts, the same as used at the world-renowned Australian Open tennis tournament, are designed to ensure superior traction and game play while being less stressful on players' knees and other joints. Visit www.pickleballerzusa.com or contact info@pickleballerzusa.com

DONATIONS

The **Student Auto Sales Program** operating from Centreville High School works in conjunction with the CVHS automotive technology classes to bring in donated automobiles, boats and motorcycles for students to work on. Some refurbished vehicles are sold, with 75 percent of the proceeds going back to the auto tech program. The program is in need of cars, trucks or motorcycles, which are fully tax deductible, for student training. Contact Lyman Rose at 703-802-5588 or by e-mail lyman.rose@fcps.edu for more.

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Now Where Was I Again?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

And here I was thinking I was such a big shot, a thyroidectomy patient with nary a blemish on his body 30 days out from surgery. Metabolic balance? Ha! What metabolic balance! I was having none of it. A month into my post-surgical recovery and all I had to show for my troubles was one extra lab visit to measure/adjust my calcium and magnesium levels. Other than that, as Brooks said in "Shawshank Redemption" to Andy DuFresne about delivering library books to their fellow inmates: "Easy peasy." No fuss, with no muss whatsoever. Famous last words, or in my case, infamous first words.

It all began innocently enough with some bilateral shaking of my arms and some associated dropsies: items seemed to just slip from my grasp with no apparent reason - or awareness on my part. Then I began experiencing some "wicked," as we say in New England, pain in my lower back by my kidneys. Next came some forgetfulness and bouts of confusion. I knew who I was and I knew where I was but I definitely knew something had happened to me. I just didn't know if I was simply a victim of my own circumstances, so to speak, or had something more insidious taken root. I mean, I am a cancer patient with two types of cancer now.

I decided to email some of my doctors and share these new symptoms. My oncologist, in conjunction with my otolaryngologist responded. He arranged for me to see a neurologist which I did so the next day. The neurologist gave me the once over twice and ordered some additional lab work which I completed the next day after a 12-hour fast. Later that same day, Friday, Feb. 28, I received a call from my oncology nurse. She had received my lab results and after discussing them with my oncologist, advised me to go to Urgent Care immediately as I was at risk of a possible heart attack. My calcium levels, a previously well balanced component of a functioning thyroid gland had levels nearly off the chart, literally, 40% above normal. And since we couldn't exactly put my thyroid back in, off to Urgent care I went.

After excusing myself to the front of the waiting line, I was led back to an examining room where I was treated pending transportation - or not, to somewhere else. After spending an awkward night on site, I was eventually transported by ambulance to a local hospital where I would spend the next four and a half days trying to wean my body off its own elevated calcium. Finally, on Tuesday, I was pronounced fit enough to be released. My ordeal seemed nearly over. By late Tuesday afternoon, I arrived back home where I collapsed in my own bed for the first time in nearly a week and began to recover once again. The rest of the story consists of bits and pieces, fragments of recollections and words-to-the-wise in an attempt to prevent a recurrence.

I can't really say that I've learned my lesson because I did nothing wrong. I was simply following doctor's orders. Adjusting one's calcium and magnesium levels is a proactive part of life without a thyroid gland, though it's hardly a matter of routine, and I have no doubt there's still some tinkering yet to occur. Nevertheless, onward and upward I go. with hopes that future episodes will be met with similar vigilance.

Now, back to the previous cancer-themed column. I'm meeting with the endocrinologist on Tuesday to determine a course of action to eliminate the remaining 10% or so thyroid cancer embedded under my collarbone. Once we get that process straightened out then we can get back to treating my underlying non small cell lung cancer.

I imagine I'll live to write about it, but I'd be lying if I didn't admit to being a bit scared. When one treatment is delayed due to the treatment of another, I can't help thinking there should be penalty called for piling on. I don't mind carrying my share but two cancers is hardly share and share alike. Too much of a bad thing is just plain bad.

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.

ONGOING

Beginning English Conversation. Fridays 10:30-12:30 p.m. At Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive, Centreville. Drop-in conversation group for ESL speakers who want to improve their skills. Adults. No registration required. Fridays 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Free. Call 703-830-2223. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/6119888>

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 11

Learn Photography. 7-8:30 p.m. At Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive, Centreville. This class will focus on exposure and obtaining properly exposed images. Teens and adults.

SATURDAY/MARCH 14

Travel the Forgotten Road. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. These one-hour, outdoor walking tours cover the original outbuildings and slave quarter at Sully that were used during the late 18th century. Tours take place at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. daily, except on Tuesdays, during special events, or when there is severe weather. Call the site to confirm the tour status. The tour cost is \$8 for adults; \$7 for students age 16 and older with ID; \$6 for children age 5-15; and \$6 for seniors age 65 and older. Tours of the historic house will not be available through May because of ongoing structural repair and maintenance work. The rest of the historic site is open. Call 703-437-1794 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully-historic-site.

Celebrate Pi Day with Pie. 3:14 to 5 p.m. At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Sully Historic Site is hosting a “Pi Day Pie Celebration” for visitors of all ages to mark the return of 3.14 day. See historical interpreters in 18th-century clothing bake over an open hearth with pie recipes dating from the Lee time period through the 19th century. The cost, of course, is \$3.14 per person. Call 703-437-1794.

Following Mosby Thru Fauquier County. 4-6 p.m. At the Sully District Government Center, Frank Room, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Join authors Don Hackenson and Chuck Mauro as they describe the exploits of Colonel John S. Mosby in Fauquier County during the Civil War and discover sites that still remain today. Mosby is among the more complex historical figures of the Civil War. Known as the “Grey Ghost” the romantic lore surrounding him is consistent with the “Lost Cause” interpretations of the war. Yet

Mosby himself denied this view of the war and suffered for it. Presented by the Historic Centreville Society. Light refreshments will be served. Free. Email CentrevilleFHC@gmail.com

St. Patrick’s Day/St. Joseph’s Day Party. 6-9 p.m. At St. Veronica’s Church parish hall, 3460 Centreville Road, Chantilly. This is a family event that includes food, drink, sing-alongs, Irish dancers and plenty of smiling Irish eyes. Adults \$8, Children \$6, drinks extra. Visit the website: <http://www.stveronica.net/> or 703-773-2000.

MONDAY/MARCH 16

Centreville Garden Club Meets. 7-9 p.m. At Sully Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Guest speaker Ginger Piper will discuss “Mason Bees and Worm Castings”. Meeting generally 3rd Monday each month. Learn more at CentrevilleGardenClub.blogspot.com, the Facebook page or email: centrevillegardenclub@gmail.com. Visitors and new members Welcome. Free.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 18

Climate Change Forum. 7:30-9:30 p.m. At Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Sully District Democratic Committee sponsoring a Hot Topic Forum on Climate Change - A Message of Urgency and Hope featuring Molly Bakal, Earth Rise Indivisible/Climate Reality Project, and Karen T. Campblin, Green New Deal Virginia. For details, email: LizWalker2@iCloud.com.

MARCH 20-22

Super Pet Expo. At Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. Fri., Mar 20 – 3-8 p.m.; Sat. Mar. 21 - 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sun. March 22 - 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission: Adults \$13; Children age 4-12 \$8, age 3 and under – Free. The family-friendly event will feature more than 200 pet-related exhibits along with entertainment and educational activities. Dogs, cats, Champion Trainer, hermit crabs and reptiles will highlight this show. Tickets: www.superpetexpo.com



Second Berlin Airlift

Col. Hork Dimon (USAF, ret.), who was there on the ground.

SUNDAY/MARCH 15

Second Berlin Airlift. 2-4 p.m. At Old Bust Head Craft Brewery, 7134 Farm Station Road, Warrenton. You know about the Berlin Airlift of 1948. There was a secret Second Berlin Airlift in 1961. An eyewitness describes the second one, with serious Sov opposition. Cost is \$35. Visit the website: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/in-the-shadows-the-secret-struggle-to-mount-a-second-berlin-airlift-tickets-95959243681>

FRIDAY/MARCH 27

Bake Old-fashioned Biscuits. 5:30-7 p.m. At Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Fairfax County parks preserve history, as well as nature. Get a taste of that history at the “Cooking Biscuits” program at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park. Come to the park and learn to cook the old-fashioned way — over a fire – the way Virginians did for generations before us. Cook biscuits and top them with fresh-made butter and jelly. Discover the kinds of tools that were once used in the kitchen and the safety measures required when cooking with open flames. This program is designed for participants age four to adult. Call 703-631-0013.

Daffodil Shabbat. 7:30 p.m. At Temple Beth Torah, 4212-C Technology Court, Chantilly. At this special Shabbat service, recognize people both in and outside of the congregation who are “survivors” of cancer. The term “survivor” encompasses person, family member, or friend whose life has been touched by cancer. The daffodil is one of the first flowers of spring and a worldwide symbol of hope. Named accordingly, Daffodil Days— is an annual American Cancer Society program—which has helped spread cancer awareness and raise money towards a cure for more than 40 years. Come on your own or bring friends and caregivers — anyone whose presence gives you support. Contact rabbiblock@hotmail.com.

ONGOING

Diabetes Sisters PODS Meetup. Meets the first Monday from 7-9 p.m. At Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. An evening of sisterhood, encouragement, and peer support. Opportunities to share experiences, peer support, and lived expertise with others who have been there too. Meet with other women living with diabetes for encouragement, education, and empowerment. Women age 18+ living with any type of diabetes or prediabetes are welcome, regardless of whether they were diagnosed yesterday or 40-plus years ago. They strive to create an open, respectful environment for women with diabetes or prediabetes to truly focus on their health. Free. Visit the website: <https://diabetessisters.org/pods-meetups>

Fitness for 50+. Daytime hours, Monday-Friday at Sully Senior Center, 14426 Albemarle Point Place, Chantilly. Jazzercise Lite, Zumba Gold, Hot Hula Fitness (dancing Polynesian style), Strength Training, Qi Gong, Tai Chi and

more. Membership is \$48 a year, and waivers are available. Email lynne.lott@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-322-4475 for more.

History Volunteers Needed. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum needs history buffs. The Museum offers a variety of volunteer opportunities in Museum events, programs and administration. Email volunteers@fairfax-station.org or call 703-945-7483 to explore opportunities. The Museum is located at 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. It is open every Sunday, except holidays, from 1-4 p.m. www.fairfax-station.org, 703-425-9225.

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

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

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

Ethiopian Temptations in Centreville

BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY
THE CONNECTION

DINING

Growing in popularity it seems, Ethiopian cuisine is now available in about 20 Northern Virginia restaurants. That reflects that locals are discovering this seemingly exotic and very non-Western style of cooking: each entrée comes with a flat, grayish bread called injera, and pieces of that are used to scoop up the meal—assuming one eats like a native. (Note: Be sure to order a side of injera, even if you only tear off pieces to eat...it is slightly tart and delicious.)

For a tempting meal, patrons should head to Centreville, and drive into a shopping center to find Manna Bistro & Bakery. Management serves up truly au-

thentic Ethioipain food, since the staff is Ethiopian. But they also serve a typical Western-style breakfast of eggs, eggs with cheese, eggs on bread, bagels with cream cheese, waffles, and surprisingly, tacos.

In fact, the restaurant seems to have a steady flow of Latinos who look for their native cuisine. That part of their menu includes an extensive collection of offerings, such as pupusas, carne asada, tamales, tostadas, fajitas, and quesadillas. Surely the cook turns out tasty Latino fare, but if you are in the mood for authentic Ethiopian, scroll down the menu.

Starters include sambusas (fried dough triangles stuffed with lentils and veggies), sinig (jalapeño stuffed with cooked tomato

and onion), and qategna (lightly toasted Ethiopian injera bread basted with butter and berbere).

While these are tempting, save your appetite for one of the vegetarian- or meat/poultry/seafood-based entrées. Perhaps the most well-known dish is called doro wat, usually a drumstick, breast, or thigh simmered in berbere sauce. That is delicious but step up to other choices too. For example lamb lovers should select one of their two options, the begue tibs (cubed lamb sautéed with onion, jalapeños and green pepper or the outstanding (but not always available) lamb keay, or diced lamb cooked in a slightly spicy tomato-based sauce.

Seafood options include sautéed shrimp with lemon juice, onion, and jalapeño pepper, a whole fried fish, fried whiting filets, or ground fish cakes. Beef is also prepared

in numerous ways, including steak tartare kitfo, which is freshly minced lean beef seasoned with chili powder, and may be served raw or lightly cooked.

But vegetarians also have plenty of options: miser watt (red lentils simmered in berbere sauce), gomen (cooked collard greens stirred with onions and garlic), defin mier alcha watt (green lentils simmered with garlic, onions, and turmeric) and other vegetable or other legume-based dishes.

In the end, consider ordering a cup of their dazzling chai latte with a swirl of whipped cream on top and one of their French desserts, including a rum-soaked tiramisu.

Manna Bistro & Bakery, 1415x Centreville Square, Centreville. 703-534-6990. Hours: Mon.- Sat., 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Sunday, noon to 8:30 p.m. www.mannabistro.com