

# Springfield CONNECTION

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During the Women's History Month 2020 Celebration presented by the Fairfax County Commission for Women on March 10, coinciding in the same year as the Centennial of the 19th Amendment, members of the Commission and others celebrate after honoring three women, Jane Barker, Cypriana McCray and Laura McKie who did much for the 100th anniversary cause.

2020 General Assembly:  
39 Surovell Bills Passed

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Wildcats Beat Bruins,  
Advance to State's Round 2

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Celebrating  
Women's History  
Month 2020

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# ENTERTAINMENT

**Editor's Note:** Be aware that many events could be cancelled as precaution to the spread of COVID-19. Please check before heading to events.

Submit entertainment announcements at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## ONGOING

**Monday Exercise Classes.** Now thru March 30. 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.

**Wednesday Exercise Classes.** Now thru May 27. 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)

**The Color Green.** Now thru March 29. 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.

**Friday Exercise Classes.** Now thru April 3. 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).

**Lines and Pauses.** Now thru April 5. At Arches Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. "Lines and Pauses" is the culmination of the works of Marc Pachon captured over the last years with local and international dancers and models, tied together with a common thread of fabric moving from one shot to the next, interspersed with his freeze-frame captures of moments in time that disappeared as soon as the photograph was taken. Free. Visit the website: [www.byondhelp.com](http://www.byondhelp.com)

## MARCH 13, 14, 20, 21 & 22

**"Anything Goes."** At The Church of the Good Shepherd, 9350 Braddock Road, Burke. Tickets: \$10/\$15. The Good Shepherd Players and the Church of the Good Shepherd present "Anything Goes."

## SATURDAY/MARCH 14

**Archaeology Symposium.** 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. At George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Mason Neck. This year's theme is History in Transit. Learn more about recent archaeological developments and discover what is happening in the region from archaeology professionals. Participate in discussions and learn how you can be involved in local preservation. This event is in partnership with Friends of Fairfax Archaeology. Cost is \$45; \$35 for members of Gunston Hall & Friends of Fairfax Archaeology. Visit the website: [www.gunstonhall.org](http://www.gunstonhall.org)

**Peace and Justice Conference.** At Nativity Catholic Church, 6400 Nativity Lane, Burke. 5 p.m. Mass; 6:15 p.m. Dinner; 7 p.m. Keynote; 7:45 p.m. Panel and Q&A with Archbishop Gregory and Bishop Burbidge, and the diocesan parishioners responding. Named the

2020 Peace and Justice Conference – Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love. Panelists include: Emelda August, parishioner of Holy Family Catholic Church in Dale City; Alexandra Luevano, Program Director, Catholic Charities Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic; Jose Aguto, Associate Director of the Catholic Climate Covenant in D.C. To register for the conference, provide your first and last name in an email to [peace@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:peace@arlingtondiocese.org). Visit [arlingtondiocese.org](http://arlingtondiocese.org).


## Metro School of the Arts Company

**Project: Upgrade.** 7-9 p.m. At Ernst Community Cultural Center, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Upgrade under the artistic direction of Sara Hart, Charles Renato, and Roxanne King features innovative choreography by Metropolitan faculty, students, alumnus, and renowned guest artists. Join the pre-professional dance companies, iMpulse, MYTE, and dynaMYTE along with special guest performers, as they explore the peaks and valleys of life, discover the strengths and weaknesses of each other, and challenge us all to an upgrade. Upgrade will be an evening of electrifying performances featuring some of the area's most incredible youth dancers in tap, jazz, contemporary, music theater, and hip hop. Cost is \$20. Visit the website: <http://metropolitanarts.org>


**Beethoven at 250 "Soulmates."** 8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Dr, Fairfax. Featuring the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra with Christopher Zimmerman, conductor, and Philippe Bianconi of France on piano. The program features Brahms: Piano Concerto No. 2 and Beethoven "Symphony of Symphonies." Hear the

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# NEWS

## Celebrating Women's History Month 2020

Fairfax County Commission for Women honors "Valiant Women of the Vote."

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

In concert with their Women's History Month 2020 Celebration, the Fairfax County Commission for Women honored three "Valiant Women of the Vote," Jane Barker of Clifton, Cypriana McCray of Reston and Laura McKie formerly of West Springfield at a presentation and reception held in the forum of the Fairfax County Government Building on March 10 immediately preceding the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors meeting. Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Jeff McKay (D), Vice Chairman Penny Gross (D-Mason), Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville), Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill), Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D-Lee) and Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon) attended the celebration.

"2020 will not only go down in history as the 100-year Anniversary for the constitutional guarantee of women's right to vote but also as...ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment," said Lisa Sales, Chair of the Fairfax County Commission for Women to the crowd of approximately 75 viewers seated in the forum rotunda and gazing down from upper walkways. "We (Virginians) are the final in 38 states. And we have a lot to celebrate...The Commission has chosen to recognize three women who have strong ties to winning the right to vote and who have personally dedicated themselves over many years to preserve and tell the suffrage story," she said.

Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Jeff McKay, stepped to the podium. In his remarks, McKay referenced a recent conversation he had with his daughter as they viewed the Lisa Burns Museum to, as he said, "See it with her own two eyes and not take for granted, any of the rights we have and the fight we put in to get to this point." McKay said that he wanted his daughter "...to feel empowered by that, to use what others have done for them to make the world a better place and step up and demand equality...As I always tell her, Virginia is finally embracing Fairfax County's values." McKay committed to making the Suffragist Memorial happen. "I will step up and ensure that happens," he said.

**IN RECOGNIZING** the three 2020 award honorees, McKay said, "What a year to be recognized...Looking back on history, to be able to...say this was the year that so many great things happened, and the year we got awarded for all the efforts that we've done to get us to this point."



Honoree Laura McKie formerly of West Springfield and Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon)



Cypriana McCray of Reston displays her award.



Jane Barker of Clifton thanks the members of the Fairfax County Commission for Women.

**"2020 will not only go down in history as the 100-year Anniversary for the constitutional guarantee of women's right to vote but also as...ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment."**

**Lisa Sales,  
Chair of the Fairfax County  
Commission for Women**

McKay described the first honoree of the Fairfax County Commission for Women Jane Barker, as a "valiant woman of the vote." He said that through her leadership, Barker led the creation of the National Turning Point Suffragist Memorial to honor those suffragists, who worked for over 72 years to win the legal right to vote for women.

Honoree Barker said, "As we learned the story, it became apparent that the little wall that we had planned at Occoquan Regional Park would not be enough...We needed to do it right...We have broken ground. We are building a memorial to these brave suffrages." Later, she added: "The entire story of woman's suffrage is one of the greatest secrets of American history...First, we must teach."

McKay described the second honoree Cypriana McCray as a "valiant woman of



Lisa Sales, Chair of the Fairfax County Commission for Women

the vote." McKay said that as President of the Reston-Dulles Section of the National Council of Negro Women, McCray led the Council that had as one of its members (Mary McLeod Bethune, who served as president) of the National Association of Colored Women, a leading suffragist organization.

Honoree McCray said she wanted to be sure to leave a legacy of doing something right, "right now." "I think we are in a time where we as women are empowered to make a difference in all our communities. One difference is to change societies'

view of the power of women."

McKay introduced Fairfax Commission for Women's third awardee, Laura McKie. McKay described McKie as a "valiant woman of the vote." According to McKay, McKie was the central leader in the development of the Lucy Burns Suffragist Museum in Lorton that opened Jan. 25, 2020. The museum engages visitors in an exploration of the 91 years of prison history at the Lorton Correctional facilities from 1910-2001. It displays artifacts and pivotal moments in women's history, critically important to understanding what women endured for the right to vote and led to a turning point in the Women's Suffrage Movement.

According to honoree McKie, after she retired, she looked around for something to do. "And what did I discover, there was a museum to build," she said. One with an enormously important story to tell, of the women willing to give their lives for the vote.

**GUEST JOHN HOUSER**, retired Park Manager at Occoquan and current Board Member of Turning Point Suffrage Memorial Association Commission for Women, said, "You can drive into D.C. and see monuments and memorials to men who did nothing more than lead the charge up a hill, yet there is no memorial to the women who were arrested, tortured and force-fed to obtain the right to vote for 27 million Americans."



# OPINION

## 2020 General Assembly: 39 Surovell Bills Passed

BY SCOTT SUROVELL  
STATE SENATOR (D-36)



**T**he 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@scotturovell.org](mailto:scott@scotturovell.org) with your comments.

### COMMENTARY

### 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 length, libel, civility, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

Letters to the Editor  
The Connection  
1606 King St., Alexandria VA 22314  
By e-mail: [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com)

## Springfield CONNECTION

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# CALENDAR

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stories behind the music with music director Christopher Zimmerman and special guests before the concert at 7 p.m. Visit the website: <http://cfa.calendar.gmu.edu/fairfax-symphony-orchestra-beethoven-at-250-soulmates>

## SUNDAY/MARCH 15

**Talking to Strangers: An Evening with Malcolm Gladwell.** 6 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Join GMU's Department of Criminology, Law and Society and esteemed guest Malcolm Gladwell for "Talking to Strangers." An Evening with Malcolm Gladwell. Robinson Professor of Public Affairs Steven Pearlstein and Criminology, Law, and Society Distinguished Professor David Weisburd will be in conversation with bestselling author, journalist, and speaker Malcolm Gladwell on his new book "Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know."

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

**Capitol Steps Perform.** Dessert Reception: 3:30 p.m.; the Show: 4:30-6 p.m. At Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Benefit for the Shepherd's Center Serving Oakton-Vienna-Reston-Herndon. Folks at the Shepherd's Center serving Oakton-Vienna-Reston-Herndon are gearing up for another sell-out crowd for this event featuring the comedy troupe Capitol Steps. Tickets: \$35; day of: \$40 cash/credit only. Student (18 and under) Tickets: \$15 Day of: \$20 cash/credit only. Groups of 10 or more: \$30. To purchase tickets: <https://www.scov.org/capstepstickets> or call the hotline at 703-281-0601.

## WEDNESDAY/MARCH 18

**Talk on Cyber Security.** 7:30-8:30 a.m. At Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. "Cyber Security: It's Importance to the Nation and the Economy" is the subject of a talk that Joel Scharlat, Director of Operations of the Cyber Bytes Foundation, will give to the Rotary Club of West Springfield [www.rotaryofwestspringfield.org](http://www.rotaryofwestspringfield.org) Email [rotarywestspring@yahoo.com](mailto:rotarywestspring@yahoo.com) no later than Monday, March 16.

**Education Recruitment Day.** 9:30-11 a.m. At Dewberry Hall, Johnson Center, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. This annual recruitment event is a career fair for jobs and internships in the field of education! Network with recruiters from the D.C. Metro area and surrounding regions seeking candidates for a wide range of education roles. Free. Visit the website: [https://mason360.gmu.edu/Career/rsvp\\_boot?id=682099](https://mason360.gmu.edu/Career/rsvp_boot?id=682099)

## THURSDAY/MARCH 19

**Lunch N' Life.** Noon to 2 p.m. At Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. Are You 50 or Better? Sponsored by the Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke. Jim Radigan, U.S. Navy Retired will discuss his experiences as the Commanding Officer, U.S. Navy Antarctica Squadron. For reservations, call Bea Stephenson at 703-273-5730, by March 13. The cost is \$10.; checks payable to SCFB. If transportation is needed, call the SCFB office 703-323-4788. See [www.scfbva.org](http://www.scfbva.org).

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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.**



**David Solomon #22 powers his way to the basket for Lake Braddock.**

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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# BULLETIN BOARD

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

## THURSDAY/MARCH 12

**CASA Info Session.** 7-8 p.m. At Fairfax CASA Office, 4103 Chain Bridge Road, Suite 200, Fairfax. Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) provides volunteer advocates to abused and neglected children referred by the Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. The first step to becoming a CASA volunteer is to attend an information session. RSVP to [sgoldberg@casafairfax.org](mailto:sgoldberg@casafairfax.org) as space is limited.

## 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](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax) or [www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html](http://www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html). **Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke** sponsors a monthly meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, noon-1:30 p.m., for caregivers to learn and to share with others experiencing similar challenges. Before attending, contact the facilitator, Eileen Thompson at 703-451-8626 or [eileen.thompson1@gmail.com](mailto:eileen.thompson1@gmail.com).

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

## ONGOING

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

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

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

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

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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.



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