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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/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

FRIDAY/MARCH 27

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.

MAY 1-3

CVHS Spring Play. At Centreville High School, 6001 Union Mill Road, Clifton. In Ella Hickson's adapted version of J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan, when Peter Pan and Tinkerbell stumble into the Darling's home one evening, Wendy takes the lead on their journey to Neverland, facing pirates and the Lost Boys. See Wendy ultimately discover the key to her parents' floundering marriage and what it means to grow up in Centreville High School's production of Wendy and Peter Pan this spring. Cost is \$15. Visit the website: <https://www.theatrecentreville.com/wpa/>

SUNDAY/MAY 17

Red Shoe 5K. 9-11 a.m. At the Bull Run Special Events Center, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. The family-friendly event will include a 5K, a

Kid's Fun Run (ages 8 and under), and additional activities. Visit the website: <https://rmhcdc.org/news-events/red-shoe-5k/>
Wine, Whiskers and Wags Fundraiser. 1-5 p.m. At The Farm Brewery & Winery at Broad Run, 16015 John Marshall Hwy., Broad Run. Wine, Whiskers and Wags (and Beer) annual fundraising event to feature online silent auction, live music, and drinks and fare. Sponsored by Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, nonprofit 501(c)(3). Tickets are required and may be purchased in advance for \$50 at www.ffcas.org. Wine tickets may also be purchased at the event for \$60. Admission includes live music, outdoor games, heavy hors d'oeuvres, a ticket for a glass of wine, beer or wine slushy, a keepsake beer glass and Friends goodie bag, participation in the online silent auction and access to exhibitors. The event takes place on the Brewery & Winery's pavilion grounds with access to the farm surroundings. Guests are invited to bring well-behaved, friendly dogs and chairs and blankets for a picnic experience. Event sponsors are still needed. Interested businesses and individuals should contact Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter at 571-212-9858.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 27

2020 OAR Jazz and Wine Fundraiser. 7:30-9:30 p.m. At The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Guests will enjoy complimentary wine, hors d'oeuvres, and music from the Greg Byrd jazz band. The winery provides a beautiful setting for OAR to share its successes and present upcoming opportunities. Featuring Keynote Speaker Chris Wilson, whose book, The Master Plan, will be available free to the first 150 guests in attendance. Chris will be available for book signing after sharing his story about Life in Prison to a Life of Purpose.

SATURDAY/MAY 30

Bull Run Elem. Anniversary. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Bull Run Elementary, 15301 Lee Highway, Centreville. Bull Run Elementary is celebrating its 20-year anniversary. Featuring photo booth

and balloon art, moon bounce, musical showcase, opening of time capsule, Bach 2 Rock DJ, food trucks, face painting and spin art.

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.

Live After Five. Fridays at 5:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway, Centreville. Every Friday night a band plays on the patio of the winery. Free to attend. Visit www.wineryatbullrun.com for a full schedule.

Mondays are Family Night. 5-7 p.m. at Villagio, 7145 Main St. \$45 for a family of four. Call 703-543-2030 for more.

LIBRARY FUN

Toddlin' Twos. Tuesdays, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Early literacy storytime with songs and activities included. Age 2 with caregiver, free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Storytime for Three to Fives. Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Stories and activities for children age 3-5 with caregiver. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Plant Clinic. Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. A neighborhood plant clinic with horticultural tips, information, techniques, and advice. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a space.

Lego Block Party. Every other Saturday at 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Legos will be provided for an afternoon of building. Grades 3-6. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Duplo Storytime. Every other Wednesday, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Develop and reinforce early literacy skills for reading success. Ages 1-3 with adult. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Legos Kids Club. Every other Tuesday, 10:30 a.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Thousands of Legos for children to play with. Ages 6-12. Free. Call 703-830-2223 to reserve a space.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

CORONAVIRUS INFO CENTER

Fairfax County activated a Joint Information Center in response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) on March 13.

❖ **Fairfax County Health Department COVID-19 webpage** – www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus

❖ **Emergency Information Blog** (you can subscribe by email or follow by RSS) – www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog

❖ **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Call Center** – The community may call 703-267-3511 with questions. The call center is open from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekends.

❖ Residents may also text FFXCOVID to 888777 to receive updates from Fairfax County about COVID-19.

❖ **Twitter** – @fairfaxcounty and @fairfaxhealth

❖ **Facebook** – www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty and www.facebook.com/fairfaxcountyhealth

GRAB AND GO MEALS

Beginning Thursday, March 19, Fairfax County Public Schools buses will begin delivering grab and go meals along some bus routes. School buses will stop at designated intersections to deliver grab and go meals. Bus 1 Schedule: Serving the Virginia

Run and Bull Run areas.
STOP — LOCATION
7:35 a.m. — Airline PKWY and Clubhouse
7:54 a.m. — Trinity PKWY and Trinity PL at Rental Office
8:10 a.m. — Trinity PKWY and Wood Meadow Way
8:20 a.m. — Paddington CT and Paddington Court
8:35 a.m. — Lee Overlook RD and McCoy RD

PARKS, LIBRARIES CLOSED

Effective Monday, March 16, all Fairfax County Park Authority (indoor) parks, libraries and community facilities are closed to the public until further notice. This includes recreation (RECenters), nature, community, resource and teen centers, golf courses, historic sites, athletic fields and picnic shelters. SACC will not offer any spring break services, as previously planned.

SHOPPING HOURS FOR SENIORS

Giant Food Store will offer dedicated shopping hours for senior citizens 60-and-older and individuals with compromised immune systems, effective March 20. Every store in our operating areas will reserve 6-7 a.m., every day of the week for this vulnerable population to shop and practice social distancing. The stores will operate on regular hours of operation during all other times. We continue to work on restocking our shelves and will be ready to serve to the best of our ability.

SERVICE DISCONNECTION

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and the

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(From left) resident Meet Gill and VDOT's Sid Siddiqui discuss the re-vamped-roundabout alternative for Braddock and Old Lee roads.



A view of the notorious, Braddock Road S curve, on the east side, looking west.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

‘Alternative 3 is the Worst of all the Plans’

Meeting about Braddock, Old Lee roads stirs controversy.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

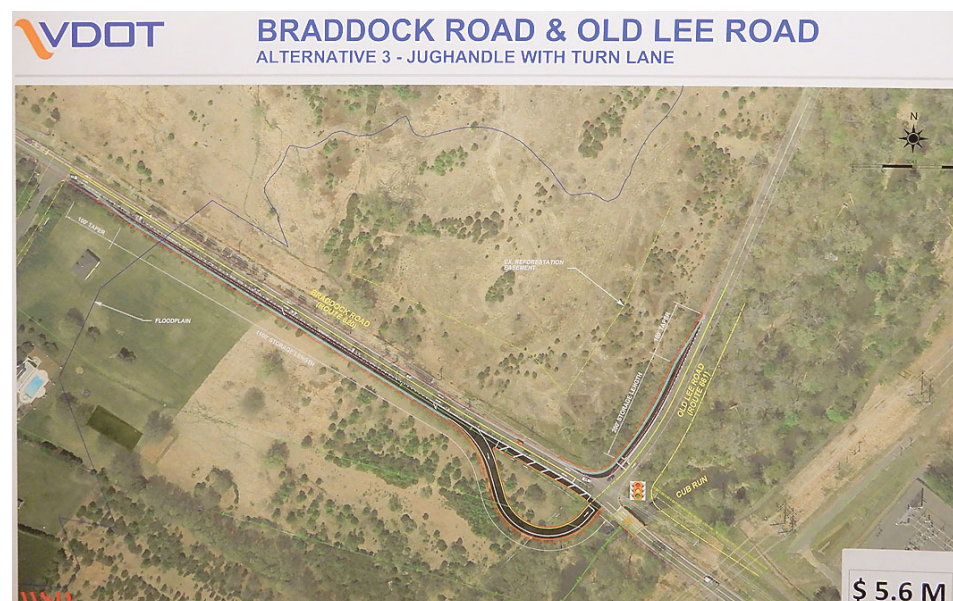
Feelings ran high during VDOT's recent meeting about potential changes to Braddock and Old Lee roads in Centreville. Some 65 local residents filled the lecture hall at Westfield High, and to say they were upset about the ideas presented would be an understatement.

VDOT is currently assessing potential safety and operational improvements it could do at the intersection of Braddock and Old Lee, plus the S-curve on Braddock just west of Old Lee. The concepts being studied include intersection enhancements such as turn lanes, a jug handle and a roundabout, as well as realignment of the S-curve.

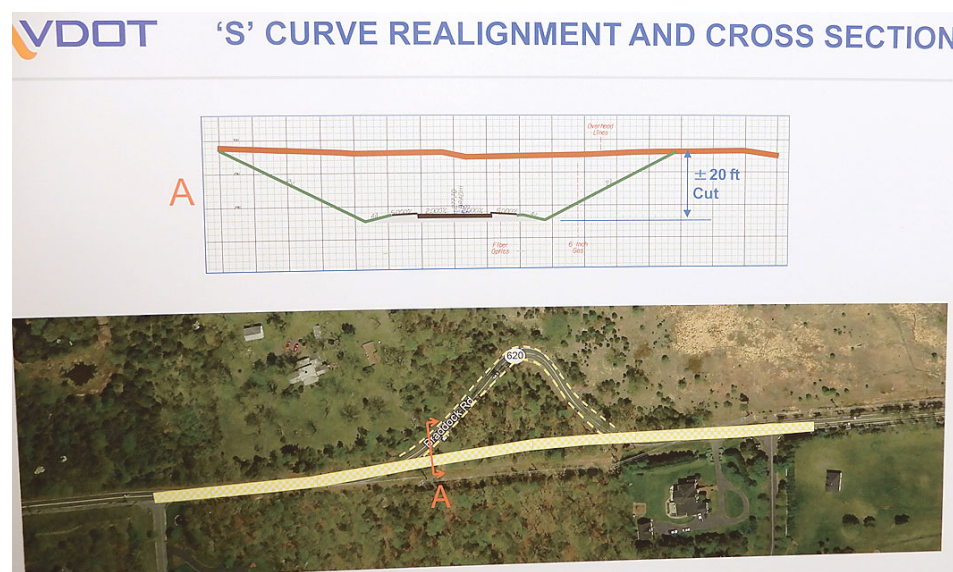
Ultimately, VDOT's preferred alternative was the one that everyone at the Feb. 13 meeting hated the most. And, as one resident said, "All the proposals you recommend add more traffic to Braddock and benefit Loudoun County."

At the outset, VDOT Preliminary Engineering Manager Andy Beacher gave a slide presentation explaining the five alternatives under consideration and telling why some action is needed. "At this time, there are no funds to do it," he told the crowd. "But your comments will inform our decisions, moving forward."

PRESENTLY, that section of Braddock carries 9,200 vehicles a day, with 8,200 on Old Lee. Eastbound Braddock has heavy traffic congestion and queuing during the morning rush, with southbound Old Lee experiencing the same thing in the afternoon – in



Alternative 3 is VDOT's preference, much to the dismay of local residents.



A diagram of VDOT's plan to realign the S curve on Braddock Road.

addition to people trying to turn onto Braddock.

As for the S curve, between 2010-2017, some 18 large trucks have gotten stuck there. And from 2006 to now, there have

been 115 accidents – and that's only the number that's actually been reported, so it could be higher.

Fairfax County's current master plan calls for realigning Braddock and Old Lee to go

into Rock Hill District Park and out again, with Braddock ending in a T at Old Lee. But, said Beacher, "That would cost \$70 million-\$80 million. So we're looking for interim, low-cost improvements until that could be done."

❖Alternative 1: Signalizing the Braddock/Old Lee intersection without turn lanes. It would have the least impact on right-of-way, utilities and the environment, but poor traffic operation. Estimated cost: \$400,000.

❖Alternative 2: Also adds a traffic signal, plus a 200-foot, southbound, right-turn lane. There would still be eastbound morning queues, plus more impacts to the right-of-way. Estimated cost: \$2.2 million.

❖Alternative 3: Adds a traffic signal, plus a 200-foot, southbound, right-turn lane and a 1,100-foot jughandle lane to accommodate the existing, eastbound left turns. It would impact the gas line in that area and the south side of Braddock. Estimated cost: \$5.6 million.

❖Alternative 4: Would be a signalized intersection with multiple turn lanes. It would result in good traffic-performance, but significant, environmental impacts. And it could lead to the Cub Run Bridge having to be replaced. Estimated cost: \$9.5 million.

❖Alternative 5: Replaces the current, roundabout configuration with a single-lane roundabout with one bypass lane in all directions. It would impact park property, and both alternatives 4 and 5 would take four to six years to complete. Estimated cost: \$11.2 million.

In addition, Beacher said realigning the S curve on Braddock would cost an estimated \$9 million. The work there would require a deep, 20-foot cut in the ground and a large section of rock removed. Furthermore, fiber optics and a gas line both run through that area, making the job even more difficult.

"We're recommending Alternative 3, plus the S-curve fix," said Beacher. "It's a good balance between performance and im-

SEE RESIDENTS, PAGE 6

OPINION

‘Our Priority Is to Save Lives’

Governor Northam orders statewide closure of certain non-essential businesses: all public and private schools K-12 closed for the rest of the academic year.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

“COVID-19 is serious, and we must act. Unfortunately, the virus does not respect national borders or state borders. It is now everywhere, or it will be soon. That is what happens when a global pandemic hits a nation. With this pandemic, states have been left to figure out this on our own, and I’m acting to protect Virginians,” said Virginia Governor Ralph Northam who issued statewide Executive Order Number Fifty-Three (2020) in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on Monday, March 23. It ordered the closure of certain non-essential businesses, bans all gatherings of more than 10 people, and closes all K-12 schools for the remainder of the academic year. The Order goes into effect at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2020. It remains in place until 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, April 23, 2020.

Northam said, “Nonessential retail establishments can remain open if they allow 10 or fewer patrons and adhere to social distancing and increase sanitizing procedures. Essential services like grocery stores, health services and businesses in our supply chain will remain open, but they must adhere to social distancing and increased sanitizing procedures. Gatherings of more than 10 are banned. We do not make these decisions lightly.” He stressed there would be expectations for essential businesses that remained open. Social distancing mattered, and businesses that remained open had a responsibility to adhere to social distancing recommendations. “You need to step up sanitizing practices on common service surfaces...Make no mistake. If you are essential and open, you have a special responsibility to do the right thing,” he said.

As for schools, Northam said that closures were necessary to minimize the speed at which COVID-19 spread and protect the capacity of the healthcare system. Northam said, “By tomorrow, our Department of Education will issue guidance to help school divisions think through those decisions and ensure that every student is served equitably. We’re already working on waivers to relieve testing requirements and ensure that our students who were on track to graduate can do so.” He added that according to a Yale study estimate, 80,000 of students statewide may be the children of health care workers and urged a public-private response. “Today I’m calling on our local communities, private daycare providers, community childcare partners, and public schools to rally together to provide childcare for the young children and school-aged children of essential personnel. Our childcare providers are also essential personnel,” Northam said.

Northam said individuals were moving into a period of sacrifice. “Most of us have already begun to experience this. Many businesses are closed already because their owners have done the responsible thing...Today, thousands, thousands of people are without work here in our Commonwealth. About 40,000 people have filed for unemployment just last week. That number will, unfortunately, go up. More families will be out of work that has serious health consequences too. It will lead to anxiety; it will lead to fear. It is difficult to live with uncertainty. We can expect to see more depression, alcoholism and domestic violence. But the sooner we all take these necessary steps to slow the spread, the sooner we will all get through this,” said Northam.

In closing, Northam acknowledged the health crisis and economic crisis and said that the sooner that we can get this health crisis under control, the sooner our economy will recover. “So I asked every Virginian to stand with me as we fight this battle. Do your part. Stay home, when you can, and social distance and wash your hands when you must go out for supplies. I know that the next several weeks, the next several months will be difficult. They will require everyone to change the way that we live and the way we interact with each other. We have not been called upon to sacrifice this in many, many years. But I am calling on you to do just that. We must put aside what we want and replace it with what we need... It will take time, but we can, and we will get through this together.”

According to the Executive Order, violation of paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 6 of the Order shall be a Class 1 misdemeanor pursuant to § 44-146.17 of the Code of Virginia.

Paragraph 1-Effective 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, 2020 until 11:59 p.m., Thursday, April 23, 2020, all public and private in person gatherings of 10 or more individuals are prohibited.

Paragraph 3-Closure of all dining and congregation areas in restaurants, dining establishments, food courts, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, tasting rooms, and farmers markets effective 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, 2020 until 11:59 p.m., Thursday, April 23, 2020. Restaurants, dining establishments, food courts, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, tasting rooms, and farmers markets may continue to offer delivery and take-out services.

Paragraph 4-Closure of all public access to recreational and entertainment businesses, effective 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, 2020 until 11:59 p.m., Thursday, April 23, 2020 as set forth below:

❖ Theaters, performing arts centers, concert venues, museums, and other indoor entertain-

ment centers;

❖ Fitness centers, gymnasiums, recreation centers, indoor sports facilities, and indoor exercise facilities;

❖ Beauty salons, barbershops, spas, massage parlors, tanning salons, tattoo shops, and any other location where personal care or personal grooming services are performed that would not allow compliance with social distancing guidelines to remain six feet apart;

❖ Racetracks and historic horse racing facilities; and

❖ Bowling alleys, skating rinks, arcades, amusement parks, trampoline parks, fairs, arts and craft facilities, aquariums, zoos, escape rooms, indoor shooting ranges, public and private social clubs, and all other places of indoor public amusement.

Paragraph 6 Effective 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, 2020 until 11:59 p.m., Thursday, April 23, 2020, any brick and mortar retail business not listed in paragraph 5 may continue to operate but must limit all in-person shopping to no more than 10 patrons per establishment. If any such business cannot adhere to the 10 patron limit with proper social distancing requirements, it must close.

Paragraph 5

❖ Grocery stores, pharmacies, and other retailers that sell food and beverage products or pharmacy products, including dollar stores, and department stores with grocery or pharmacy operations;

❖ Medical, laboratory, and vision supply retailers;

❖ Electronic retailers that sell or service cell phones, computers, tablets, and other communications technology;

❖ Automotive parts, accessories, and tire retailers as well as automotive repair facilities;

❖ Home improvement, hardware, building material, and building supply retailers;

❖ Lawn and garden equipment retailers;

❖ Beer, wine, and liquor stores;

❖ Retail functions of gas stations and convenience stores;

❖ Retail located within healthcare facilities;

❖ Banks and other financial institutions with retail functions;

❖ Pet and feed stores;

❖ Printing and office supply stores; and

❖ Laundromats and dry cleaners.

To read Executive Order visit [https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-53-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorviriniagov/executive-actions/EO-53-Temporary-Restrictions-Due-To-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf)

Worried about not being able to get food or unsure where your next meal will come from, text “food” or “comida” to 877-877 to connect with nearby resources & help.

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

SENIOR LIVING

Social Distance Without Social Isolation

Options for staying connected while maintaining safety.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Social distancing is now the new normal as COVID-19 barrels its way through communities, with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommending that those age 60 and older avoid crowds and stay home as much as possible.

This safety measure can also create social isolation.

"This is a huge concern for our elder population on many different levels," said Phyllis Miller Palombi, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist with the Fairfax Commission on Aging. "Creating activity and maintaining social contact with others is crucial to avoid depression. Loneliness especially if sudden, creates a high level of stress as one tries to cope."

Like stress, loneliness and fear can compromise one's immune system, advises Palombi. "A physical activity can boost immune functioning," she said. "Going for a walk, doing yoga, lifting very light weights, will help reduce the negative effects on the body."

A group of family members and close friends can offer support and prevent feelings of desolation. "People should know that social distancing doesn't have to mean social isolation," said Bethesda psychologist Holly McNamara, Ph.D. "Positive connection with others is always important, but now more than ever, we need to make sure we maintain them."

In fact, there are a wide variety of coping mechanisms that can help seniors stay connected in ways that are safe. "Social visits with friends, say over coffee, are not recommended," said Trina Mahan-Webb, Director, Adult and Aging Services of Fairfax County's Department of Family Services. "However, coffee and a phone call is an option."

Creating a buddy system is one of the recommendations made by the CDC to make sure people stay connected and get updates on new developments with the pandemic. Becoming familiar with and using new technology like FaceTime, Zoom and Skype can offer virtual social connection without posing a health risk, advises Mahan-Webb. "Video chatting is encouraged," she said.

"In this day and age of technology many seniors are able to use computers and cell phones to access



COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY DIVISION OF ADULT AND AGING SERVICES
Trina Mahan-Webb, a volunteer with the Fairfax County Division of Adult and Aging Services, delivers meals to elderly residents.

"Social visits with friends over coffee are not recommended. However, coffee and a phone call is an option."

**— Trina Mahan-Webb,
Director of Fairfax County Adult and Aging Services**

social media connectivity" added Palombi. "Those that cannot use technology, talking and sharing concerns, thoughts with others is essential for optimal health."

Even filling time with activities that are done solo can ease the feelings of loneliness and stave off despair. "We also recommend revisiting hobbies such as reading, art and crafts or preparing new recipes and then baking and freezing your creations," said Mahan-Webb. "You can also consider online courses or getting a head start on spring cleaning your home."

For those with mobility issues, Palombi recommends other activities. "Practicing mindfulness is another stress reliever and can be learned on many smartphone apps," she said. "Doing something for somebody else which gives a sense of purpose and can relieve stress."

"The bottom line is to consider doing things to stay safe while remaining active and engaged," said Mahan-Webb.

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News



VDOT's Andy Beacher.



Resident Meet Gill (blue jacket) and VDOT's Sid Siddiqui discuss one of the alternatives for Braddock and Old Lee roads.

Residents Debate Braddock, Old Lee Roads Alternatives

FROM PAGE 3

pacts." Total cost would be an estimated \$14.6 million – \$5.6 for the alternative plus \$9 million for the curve. However, meeting attendees were none too pleased with that idea. "I live right off there, and if they straighten out the S curve, it'll turn into a steep slope and a speedway," said Chris Terpak-Malm of Pleasant View Estates. "People speed there now, except for when they get to the S curve. Otherwise, I can't get onto Braddock to go right. And if you want to go left, forget about it."

She also noted that a new roundabout or an added lane would be in the floodplain and wouldn't help the environment. "They need to stick with the county's master plan to realign Braddock and Old Lee into a T," said Terpak-Malm. "The [proposed] improvements would cause other problems."

Another woman said, "If we could get a short, right-turn lane, it would help immediately, in the interim. Four to six years is a long time to wait."

But VDOT traffic engineer Sid Siddiqui replied that "It would encroach upon the park property and might cost half a million dollars because of drainage concerns. That entire intersection floods badly."

Beacher said the design work, right-of-way phase and construction all take time. And, he reminded attendees, "This is purely a study, at this time."

"What about just doing something about the S curve?" asked another resident. "Because that's a safety issue. The school system won't let buses stop there for fear of them getting rear-ended by a driver flying down the hill."

But Beacher said VDOT's trying to "combine efforts so there'd be less impacts to drivers" by doing both the intersection and curve at the same time.

"The good plan is the county's plan," said Mubarika Shah. "Your other plans all have problems. These alternatives are like putting Band-Aids on the traffic problem, and all the homes they're building in Loudoun County will add to the traffic on Braddock Road." But Beacher told her the county's plan is "quite expensive and would take a longer time before it could get done."

Regarding the jughandle proposal, one man said, "Two left-turn lanes would be a better solution." However, replied Beacher, "The storage lane for left-turning vehicles would be really long."

Yet another man asked, "If these are only short-term fixes and they're so expensive, why not just do the Comprehensive Plan? Why throw almost \$20

million into something that's not a long-term fix?"

Residents also noted that big, commercial trucks aren't supposed to drive there, "but no one enforces that." And, they added, "People are already driving too fast on Braddock."

A woman who lives on the Cox Farms side of the S curve wondered when VDOT would let property owners know how their property would be affected. "Not until we get funding," answered Beacher.

"Why not make no left turns during certain hours?" asked another man. But Beacher said, "It would be challenging to implement that restriction because so many people need to turn left."

A SULLY ESTATE RESIDENT asked, "If this is a study and no decision has been made, then why are you saying Alternative 3? With this alternative, I'm the lady who loses all her land. And it's a floodplain that rises 10-15 feet when you're not making your study." Beacher simply responded that it's VDOT staff's recommendation.

"The S curve needs a study, itself," said Meet Gill, also of Sully Estates. "And Alternative 3 is the worst of all the plans. You're blocking the through traffic so [just] one way can go through. The S curve needs to be taken more seriously than the rest of this project."

Agreeing, Sully Estates II resident Weldon Regan said, "All those 'solutions' will invite more traffic on a two-lane road. If you straighten the S curve on the dog-park side of the road and put in a walking path, you'd be able to tie into the road more easily."

"Did you do an intensive study of [Fairfax County's] Comprehensive Plan, as much as you did of the other alternatives?" asked Jim Mitchell. "The county bought that land to put that road across it, and you guys are just rejecting it outright." Others then piped up, "I agree" and "Me, too."

Fairfax County Transportation Director Tom Biesiadny said it would take a longer time to get the money to do the Comprehensive Plan's idea. Still, Mitchell was doubtful. But Siddiqui said that, even if only fixing the S curve were chosen, "It would still take two to four years to complete, after we got the funding." Now that it's received residents' comments at the meeting and online afterward, VDOT will next determine the preferred alternative to build. It will then hold more discussions with Fairfax and Loudoun counties to identify potential local, state and/or federal funding sources. For further information, go to www.virginiadot.org/projects/.

BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 2

financial hardships the illness is causing, Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative (NOVEC) is suspending electric service disconnections for nonpayment for 60 days, effective March 16, 2020. The suspension delays, but does not cancel, payment of outstanding balances. Levelized Billing — NOVEC offers levelized billing to customers to prevent spikes in charges during the coldest and hottest months of the year and help with budgeting. Customers can sign up at www.novec.com or by calling 703-335-0500 or 1-888-335-0500.

SBA OFFERS DISASTER ASSISTANCE

The U.S. Small Business Administration is offering low-interest federal disaster loans for working capital to Virginia small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The disaster declaration makes SBA assistance available in the entire state of Virginia. Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information on SBA disaster assistance. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may call (800) 877-8339. Completed applications should be mailed to U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155. The deadline to apply for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan is Dec. 21, 2020. For more information about Coronavirus, visit: Coronavirus.gov. For more information about available SBA resources and services, visit: SBA.gov/coronavirus.

ORANGE LINE CLOSURES

Beginning this Memorial Day, the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) will be closing three Metrorail Orange Line stations for full platform reconstruction and major station improvements. To expedite construction and minimize customer inconvenience, Vienna, Dunn Loring and East Falls Church Metrorail stations will be closed from Saturday, May 23 through Monday, Sept. 7, 2020, to allow for around-the-clock work. The station closures are part of WMATA's three-year Platform Improvement Project that will completely reconstruct the outdoor platforms at 20 Metrorail stations, making them safer and more accessible for customers with disabilities, while also addressing safety concerns and longstanding structural issues.

During the shutdown, Metrorail service will be reduced between Ballston and West Falls Church on the Orange Line, and between Ballston and Wiehle-Reston East on the Silver Line, as trains will be required to single track through the work area:

- ❖ West Falls Church Station will serve as the western terminus of the Orange Line.
- ❖ Orange and Silver line trains will pass through East Falls Church station, which will be closed to customers, using a single track.
- ❖ Between West Falls Church and Ballston-MU on the Orange Line, and between Wiehle-Reston East and Largo Town Center on the Silver Line, trains will operate every 16 minutes throughout the day, and every 20 minutes during late night hours.
- ❖ Extra Orange Line trains will be deployed at Ballston-MU, so Orange Line service will increase to every 8 minutes between Ballston-MU and New Carrollton (Monday – Saturday only).
- ❖ Blue Line trains will operate every 8 minutes throughout the day to coordinate service (Monday – Saturday only).

WMATA will be providing free shuttle bus service in the impacted area partially replacing the trains along the Orange Line. Fairfax County commuters should also consider using Fairfax Connector express bus routes:

- ❖ Fairfax Connector Express Route 698 - Vienna Metrorail Station to the Pentagon
- ❖ Fairfax Connector Express Route 699 - Fairfax County Government Center to Downtown, D.C.
- ❖ Additional trips to this route are pending Board of Supervisors approval
- ❖ Fairfax Connector Express Route 697 - Stringfellow Park and Ride to Downton, D.C.

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Risking a Reward



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

In my 11-plus years as a lung cancer “diagnossee,” I’ve done a pretty good job of facing the facts and acting/planning accordingly. I’ve accepted my reality and somehow managed to live so long beyond the original “13 month to two year” prognosis I was given by my oncologist that he has introduced me to some of his students as his “third miracle.” Unfortunately, this characterization is not the end of the story.

In retrospect, dealing with/being treated for one type of cancer (non small cell lung cancer) seemed easy enough. Soon, I’ll be getting treated for two types of cancer: papillary thyroid cancer stage 2, in addition to my pre-existing stage 4 lung cancer. And since the treatments are not identical and cannot occur simultaneously, I’ll be receiving treatment for my thyroid cancer first and deferring treatment for my lung cancer until at least mid April. That’s when I have my next scheduled appointment with my oncologist when no doubt we’ll discuss strategy and all treating me forward.

In the interim, to address the thyroid cancer, I will be spending a night at the Washington Hospital Center. This will occur after I receive a dose of radioisotopes, a type of nuclear medicine designed to target and kill any remaining thyroid cancer in my body wherever it might be located. What happens after my “overnight” and subsequent follow-up appointment with my endocrinologist has yet to be discussed. What little I know is that I’ll need a pre- and post-procedure CT scans and that upon release from the hospital, I’ll need to be quarantined for a few days (away from children and pets primarily).

Hoping my body responds as anticipated, I’ll presume there will be some kind of maintenance-type of treatment for my thyroid cancer which will likely be combined with the restart of my lung cancer treatment. But I don’t really know. But what I really do know is that doctors, generally speaking, don’t want to consider scenarios about what might happen if such and such or so and so happens, or not. Though I’m sure there’s a reasonable expectation of something or other happening, my experience has been that doctors divulging what might happen (treatment/procedure etc.) next, since there are so many variables/results yet to be considered, is unlikely. Though I will still ask my fair share of questions about my future, ultimately, all I can do is wait and see.

Ordinarily, as in how I’ve managed since my diagnosis, being uncertain about the next medical step has been no problem. I realize that answer would likely be somewhere between a house of cards and definite maybe anyway, always depending. Now add to the mix of uncertainty, the coronavirus that has “pandemicked” the country. As a result of its spread, will I be prevented/rescheduled because the hospitals are overwhelmed? After all, I am the poster child for possible victims: male, over 60, weakened immune system with a severe underlying medical condition. I’m the exact person they don’t want to see at the hospital. Yet, if I don’t go/receive approval to go, I doubt I’ll get any better at home without treatment. In my case, I don’t believe leaving well enough alone is going to work very well.

Still, my choices feel almost counterintuitive. I have to risk my life (leave my home) in order to possibly save my life (cancer treatment) away from home. I can’t do one without the other. To receive treatment, I’ll have to expose myself, potentially, to the exact complication that my lung cancer diagnosis makes me most susceptible to: breathing issues. However, if I don’t/can’t, I’ll be worse off than if I hadn’t. Nor do I feel as if I can wait until the virus is more under control. Control which seems unlikely in the near term. And in every term (short, medium or long), the cancer is not going to wait. I sure hope I won’t have to either.

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



Springtime's Beauty Comes to Fair Oaks

Whether it's via springtime flowers and cherry trees in bloom, children's chalk art on a sidewalk or colorful decorations in a yard, the local area is bursting with the beauty of the season.

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THE CONNECTION

