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Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

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“Keira loves the snow, but she turns into a big snowball,” said Tom Speirs of the Town of Herndon after he and his Kerry Blue Terrier, Keira walked from home to the downtown district via the W & OD Trail.

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NEWS

It's Snow Fun in Herndon

First accumulation of the season brings work and play.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The first snowstorm of the season unexpectedly persisted through the weekend in the local area. After the first snow late Saturday, the storm ramped up Sunday, dumping a total of 9 inches of the powdery white stuff according to the National Weather Service, creating work and play for those living in Herndon.

On Monday, Tom Speirs of Herndon sat at Green Lizard Cycling, a local gathering spot on the W&OD Trail known for its "Bikes, Beer and Coffee." Beside him sat his dog Keira, a Kerry Blue Terrier. Snow clung in icy clumps to her soft, dense, wavy blue coat. Speirs and Keira had walked into downtown Herndon via the plowed W&OD Trail and stopped for a few minutes to play on the Town Green.

While some people let others do their shoveling, Speirs said even though he's 70-



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION
Tom Speirs of the Town of Herndon and his dog, Keira, romp and play in the snow on the Town Green beside the W & OD Trail after the first snowfall of the 2019 season.

ish, he knew that over the weekend and into Monday, as the snow accumulated he'd be out there shoveling it himself.

"I started about 10 yesterday morning," said Speirs. "I do my driveway and five others - my elderly neighbors, family and good friends. I shoveled for about two hours. Then, this morning I did my second pass." Speirs decided to reward himself for his work with a little treat, a glass of beer.

Asked how Keira liked the snow, Speirs said, "Keira loves the snow, but she turns into a big snowball."

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The line to vote at the Unassembled Democratic Caucus for VA House District 86 held at Dranesville Elementary School in Herndon on Jan 12, 2019, moved quickly.



PHOTOS BY
MERCIA HOBSON/
THE CONNECTION

Ibraheem Samirah of Herndon Wins Democratic Nomination for 86th District

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Minutes into the second hour of the six-hour Unassembled Democratic Caucus for Virginia House District 86, held Jan. 12, 2019, a woman dropped her ballot into the ballot box at Dranesville Elementary School in Herndon, one of the two polling places in the district. The official clicked her tally counter.

“What number am I?” the voter asked the official.

“Yours is the 242nd ballot,” the polling official said.

For registered voters in the VA District 86 who self-identified as a Democrat and pledged to support the eventual nominee, less than five hours remained to cast their ballots at either of the two polling places, Dranesville E.S. or Franklin Middle School in Chantilly.

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS, FIREHOUSE PRIMARY

Ibraheem Samirah, 733 votes
Kofi Annan, 615 votes
Mike O'Reilly, 503 votes
Chad Thompson, 196 votes

Outside, voters and candidates spoke out about the apparent high voter turnout, why they participated and shared their viewpoints about the firehouse primary for VA House District 86.

Ibraheem Samirah won the four-way primary with 733 votes. A dentist who commutes daily from Herndon to D.C., Samirah writes on his campaign website that he is running for Virginia Delegate, “to give back—by helping families stay healthy, with more opportunities to succeed, and more time to spend together.” Samirah states transportation, education, jobs and economy, healthcare, drug policy reform and protecting the environment are his priorities.

“As a Delegate, I will fight to make our commutes better by decreasing travel times, lowering toll costs, expanding our public transportation systems, and encouraging public partnerships with the private sector to make sure that all Northern Virginians benefit from our area’s rapid development.”



“The turnout today has been incredible—a testament to the excitement surrounding this election and to the hard work of the Democratic Party officials who organized this primary to ensure everyone in the 86th District has a say in who their nominee will be.” - Candidate Ibraheem Samirah, Herndon. Samirah won the Democratic nomination for the VA House 86 District race later that evening.



VIEWPOINTS

“True democracy begins at the grass roots level.”
- Vicky Robertson, Town of Herndon



“I’m here for the primary because of its importance. Whoever wins here, will run off against someone else. Make your vote count. It all begins in the primary.”
- John Leach, Town of Herndon

“I’m volunteering for my brother because he is the most experienced and will get things done in Richmond.”
- Peggy O’Reilly, Town of Herndon



“I think that our current national state of awareness has elevated the social responsibility for expressing one’s viewpoint and social needs through the election of government representatives at all levels.”
- Keven Leblanc, Town of Herndon

“Voting is a privilege. I want to be part of positive change.”
- David Lickwar, Herndon



“It’s the 100th Anniversary this year of Women’s Right to Vote, so I’m representing.”
- Susan Murray, Town Herndon



“Exercising my civic responsibility.”
- Richard Brown, Herndon



“To be part of the community, you have to participate.”
- Candidate Kofi Annan, Herndon



“Very excited to cast my vote in today’s election where the Democrats have several very qualified candidates willing to serve the 86th District.”
- Candidate Mike O’Reilly, Town of Herndon

Candidate Chad Thompson, Oak Hill stands with his son, Tyler, 12 in front of Dranesville ES, one of two polling places for the Democratic caucus. Thompson said, “Congratulations Ibraheem Samirah on Democratic Nomination for the 86th District. The turnout yesterday was extraordinary, and it shows the power of the Democratic party in Northern Virginia. I pledge my support for him (Dr. Samirah) in the upcoming special election on Feb. 19.”

Impacted? How to Survive the Shutdown

Dulles Regional Chamber presents panel to advise individuals and businesses.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Both businesses and people need to prepare for the extended federal government shutdown. “The impact to federal contractors and their workforce, as well as impact to local retail, is already being felt,” said John P. Boylan, President & CEO, Dulles Regional Chamber. The Chamber hosted a free panel, “Survival Guide for Businesses Impacted by the Federal Government Shutdown” at the Hilton Washington Dulles in Herndon on Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019.

Membership heard from CPAs, bankers, insurance experts and lawyers on steps to protect themselves, their families and assets, businesses and employees. Presenters discussed the direct and indirect costs of the partial shutdown, advised how companies could remain solvent, provided options for employees and employers, described remedies available to government contractors and more. “We will be practical, not political. We will talk about solutions,” Boylan said in his opening remarks.

Boylan explained that while people talk about the partial government shutdown that’s left 800,000 essential and non-essential federal employees without a paycheck, federal contractors are also impacted. In addition, the missed payments on Friday will begin to ripple down to affect local retail, restaurants and entertainment. “We need to get ahead of the problem and allow people to ask questions,” Boylan expressed.

Jeff Bentley, CEO & President Northwest Federal Credit Union (NWFCU) spoke first at the panel. “We’ve kind of jumped into the fray ... We are in the community, and we’re here to help,” he said. Bentley outlined NWFCU’s Furlough Relief line of credit available to members and prospective members given a credit check for up to \$10,000 at an introductory 0% APR for 90 days after which it converts to 7.00% APR for the life of the balance. Bentley added that for those who already have a loan with NWFCU, it is offering a “skip a pay ... put that payment at the back of the loan.”

Michael T. Westwick, Senior Accountant Stitely & Karstetter, PLLC provided financial guidance for small government businesses with contract workers. “The name of the game is cash flow,” he said. Income is not coming in so watch expenses, Westwick cautioned. As for retaining key employees not being paid now, Westwick said, “Let them go...and have them file Virginia unemployment. They will receive some money there; then you can rehire them right back.” Westwick noted that the Virginia Unemployment Tax would go up, “maybe a couple hundred a year,” but it may be worth it to retain the employees.

Maureen Schultz, McLean Insurance Group, spoke about business and personal



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION
John Boylan, President & Chief Executive Officer-Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce: “We will be practical not political. We will talk about solutions.”

solutions. She said that if companies with contractors see a big drop in employees, call the insurance agent; they can decrease the Workers Compensation exposure. If insurance is based on sales, give a call too. “Have that talk,” Schultz said.

ON A PERSONAL LEVEL, Schultz did not recommend individuals impacted by the partial government shutdown cancel their life, auto, homeowners or health insurance policies. “I do not recommend that ... disasters happen every day, bad disasters. Instead, increase the deductibles on your auto or homeowners. Have the conversation with your agent,” she said. Inquire if benefits can be reduced, not canceled for a time.

Schultz cautioned those present not to miss an insurance payment because the policy would be canceled. She stated whole and variable life insurance policies can have very low-interest loans at 3 and 5 percent that can be paid off at any time. “Tap into that,” Schultz said.

Lavanya K. Carrithers, Attorney at Law, The Carrithers Law Office in Reston provided strategies for employees and employers. For employees, she urged them to review contracts and talk to the other party in the agreement about temporarily renegotiating the contract in light of the partial

shutdown.

As for employers, review contracts and communicate with third parties and employees Carrithers said. Government contracts that are funded and funds received should be performed unless there is stop work status.” Know your burn rate obligations, she said. As for compliance with the law during the shutdown and how to prepare for shutdowns in the future, Carrithers said, “Talk to an attorney...see what your obligations are.”

Fairfax County government and Fairfax County Public Schools are aware of the challenges that lie ahead and are preparing said speaker Supervisor John Foust, (D-Dranesville). “We have an infrastructure in place to deal with the challenges that we think will get much worse over the coming weeks if the shutdown does not get resolved.”

FOUST said there are about 361,000 federal workers in the Washington Metropoli-



Jeff Bentley, President/Chief Executive Officer Northwest Federal Credit Union: “NWFCU is offering a Furlough Relief Line of Credit to their members and potential new members...for up to \$10,000 at an introductory 0% APR for 90 days.”



Michael Westwick, Senior Accountant Stitely & Karstetter, PLLC: “Now is the time to get your stuff together [for the IRS]. Put that money back in your pocket now, so you are not going through your vacation pay, savings account. That’s the easiest money.”

tan region, and about 40 percent of those, which is 145,000, are impacted by the partial shutdown. There are 400,000 contract workers Foust reported. “The ones you see that work till 9 at night. They are cleaning your office. They are really low paid,” he said. “They do not have the resources to get through losing a paycheck for long.”

Fairfax County Public Schools are offering support to families though. “They came right out front and said, they are not going to let any kid go hungry,” Foust said.

Foust detailed information about hiring fairs offered by Fairfax County Public Schools for furloughed federal employees interested in substitute teaching positions.



IMAGE COURTESY OF PARTNERSHIP FOR DRUG-FREE KIDS

E-cigarettes come in a variety of forms.

How to Talk About Vaping

Approaching conversation about dangers of e-cigarettes.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Jessica DeBoer's 13-year-old son just returned to school after a six-day suspension because he was caught vaping in the boys bathroom of his elite private school. Until she received a call from one of the school's administrators, DeBoer was not familiar with the practice and never dreamed her son would partake in it.

"Now I feel like I might have been naive considering how widespread it seems to be," she said. "My son told me that many of the kids in his school have tried vaping and some even do it regularly."

Vaping is the use of e-cigarettes to inhale and exhale an aerosol, often referred to as vapor, which is produced by an e-cigarette or similar device. The term is used because e-cigarettes produce an aerosol that consists of fine particles, many of which contain varying amounts of toxic chemicals.

For parents like DeBoer, keeping the line of communication open is a key weapon in keeping kids away from e-cigarettes, says therapist Lisa Baguio, LCSW. "Before talking with your

teen about vaping, or any sensitive issue for that matter, educate yourself and make sure you know what you're talking about," she said. "Kids know more than we give them credit for. Be prepared with unrefutable facts and scientific evidence because you can guarantee yourself that your kids will have their own set of facts, which are often false."

Once you have those facts, be prepared to share them during a conversation with your teen. "It's important that parents are open and honest with their

children," said child psychologist Laurie Jones, Psy.D. "You first have to tell them your expectations. For example, 'In our family, we have zero tolerance for e-cigarette or tobacco use of any kind.' You then should explain the dangers and risks involved and make sure that your teen knows that this is not your just opinion, but proven hazards."

A teen might be less likely to engage in vaping if they can connect it to negative consequences that affect them personally, advised marriage and family counselor Joyce McCarry, M.A. "One thing that teens value is their image among their peer group," she said. "If vaping a substance causes bad breath, that will deter a teen from using it. If getting caught vaping means that they are kicked off a sports team, that will be a deterrent."

A parent's best tactic is creating an environment where one's teen feels comfortable sharing information about vaping and working with them collaboratively to find ways to avoid it, says McCarry. "You want your child to let you know if they're vaping or have friends who are doing it," she said. "You can also let them know that if they're ever in a situation where they're being offered an e-cigarette, real cigarettes or drugs or anything dangerous, that they can call you and you will pick them up immediately with no questions asked."

"You also want you to give your child a way to get out of a risky social situation without feeling embarrassed."

— Joyce McCarry, M.A.

"You also want you to give your child a way to get out of a risky social situation without feeling embarrassed," continued McCarry. "I have a patient whose parents tell him to text them a numerical code whenever he's in a precarious situation with friends. The parents know to call his cell phone and tell him that there's a family emergency and he needs to come home right away. This gives the child an excuse to leave without feeling embarrassed or like he'll be ridiculed for not engaging in risky behavior."

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Public Hearing Scheduled on E-Bike Use on Park Trails

A public hearing will be held in Lorton, Va., on Thursday, February 7, 2019, on proposed changes to regulations on the use of Electrically Assisted Bicycles, or e-bikes, in Fairfax County and NOVA Parks.

The hearing will cover proposed changes to Park Authority Regulation §1.14 Motor Vehicles and Traffic. Under the proposal, the regulation would define an e-bike and clarify distinctions between e-bikes and mopeds. E-bikes would be allowed anywhere traditional pedal-powered bikes are allowed. Mopeds would be allowed only where motor vehicles are permitted.

As part of the proposed change in regulation, draft guidelines for the use of e-bikes within Fairfax and NOVA Parks will be presented. These guidelines outline the type and level of performance for e-bikes that are suitable for use within Fairfax and NOVA Parks. Draft guidelines define e-bikes as a "wheeled vehicle equipped with (i) pedals that allow propulsion by human power and (ii) an electric motor with an input of no more than 750 watts that reduces the pedal effort required of the rider. This applies to both road and mountain style (e/MTB) e-bikes." These use guidelines will be recommendations only and will not be enforceable by law.

The guidelines for e-bike riders would call for them to yield to pedestrians and equestrians and keep e-bike speeds below 20 miles per hour. In addition, e-bike riders would be strongly encouraged to operate only in areas where traditional bicycles are allowed and to not disturb wildlife, livestock or domesticated animals on park property. E-bike riders would be expected to follow the same regulations and rules regarding access to the parks as other visitors. Riders would assume responsibility for the safe and respectful operation of their e-bike. For more information, visit online at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/e-bikes>

The joint hearing to be held by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority Board and the Fairfax County Park Authority Board will begin at 7 p.m. at The Jean R. Packard Center at Occoquan Regional Park, located at 9751 Ox Road, Lorton, VA.

Please contact the NOVA Parks Operations office at 703-359-4612 or NOVAParks@nvrpa.org to sign up to speak at the public hearing, or the Fairfax County Park Authority Public Information Office at 703-324-8662 or via email at Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov All speakers are welcome; it is not necessary to sign up in advance.

Written comments must be received by March 11, 2019 to be included in the official public record. Please send your feedback to either the Fairfax County Park Authority or NOVA Parks: Email (preferred): Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov or NOVAParks@nvrpa.org



To request reasonable ADA accommodations, call 703-324-8727, TTY 711, at least 10 working days in advance of the registration deadline or event.

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration



PHOTO BY SPITZ

DeRay Mckesson

Reston Community Center will have a full slate of community events Jan. 19-21 as it presents the 34th Annual Reston Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration. DeRay Mckesson, organizer, activist and author of the new book *On the Other Side of Freedom: The Case for Hope*, will deliver this year's keynote address.

❖ Saturday, Jan. 19 – Community Service Projects 9 a.m. at Southgate Community Center, 12125 Pinecrest Road, Reston or 1 p.m. at North County Government Center, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. All ages. Free. Registration required at 703-435-7986 or habrock@reston.org.

❖ Saturday, Jan. 19 – 4 p.m., Reston Community Orchestra 13th Annual Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at RCC Hunters Woods - Community Room. Free, donations appreciated. Visit reston.org for more.

❖ Sunday, Jan. 20 – 2 p.m., Singer-Songwriter Crys Matthews at RCC Hunters Woods – the CenterStage. \$15, Reston; \$20, non-Reston (tickets sold through the CenterStage box office).

❖ Sunday, Jan. 20 – 4 p.m., Voices of Inspiration at Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation, 1441 Wiehle Ave., Reston. All ages. Free.

❖ Monday, Jan. 21 – noon, Keynote Address by DeRay Mckesson followed by community lunch at RCC Hunters Woods: the CenterStage and Community Room. \$5 Reston; \$10 non-Reston (tickets sold through the CenterStage box office)

❖ Monday, Jan. 21 – 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Especially for Youth (grades 1-6) at RCC Hunters Woods, for 6-12 years old. Children will rotate through a series of activities including a performance, an age-appropriate video, and arts and crafts. Free. Registration required. Reg. #704750-8A at reston.org. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com or call 703-476-4500.

THURSDAY/JAN. 17

Basic Fundamentals of Figure Drawing. 2:30-4:30 at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Basic Fundamentals of drawing will be taught and demonstrated, to include the principal application of contour line, gesture and shade while performing exercises in drawing from life. With John Koebert. \$175 for eight-week session. Call 703-956-6590 or visit www.artspaceherndon.org.

Buying and Using a New T.V. 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Discover the latest features of TVs, including "streaming" of movies and other programming, "Smart TVs," and free programming available for analog TVs, in this presentation by the Fairfax County Dept. of Cable and Consumer Services. Adults, teens. No registration required. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

FRIDAY/JAN. 18

Baby and Me Yoga. 10:30 a.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. A nurturing yoga workshop is designed for the two of you. No experience needed. Please bring a towel or yoga mat. Age 6 weeks - 16 months with adult. Register beginning Jan. 4. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

The Storytime Social Hour. 11 a.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Every Friday, moms, dads, caregivers and kids are invited to join a Storytime Social Hour. Scrawl will provide coffee and treats for the adults; stories and fun for the little people. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com or call 703-966-2111.

SATURDAY/JAN. 19

Arts Herndon Reading Nook. 11 a.m.-noon at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Read Surf's Up by Kwame Alexander and complete a Paper Frog Project. The Reading Nook by Valerieanne reading activities and crafts are appropriate for children up to 5 years old. \$10 per family. Call 703-956-6590 or visit www.artspaceherndon.org.

Fantastic Films at Reston: A Wrinkle in Time. 11 a.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Warm up with hot cocoa and a literary movie – *A Wrinkle in Time* (2018, PG), based on the classic book by Madeleine L'Engle. All ages. No registration required. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

Light Painting. 2 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Create a parallel circuit that illuminates LEDs on a seasonal card or a glowing gift of a personal creation. All projects go home. Age 6-11. Register beginning Jan. 5. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

MONDAY/JAN. 21

Children's Performing Arts Series: Rocknoceros. 10:30-11:15 a.m. at Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Coach Cotton, Williebob, and Boogie Woogie Bennie perform popular award-winning music for the whole family. Ages 1-10. \$4 in advance, \$5 at the door per person, per show. Children under the age of one are free. Call 703-787-7300 or visit herndon-va.gov for more.

TUESDAY/JAN. 22

Baby Lapsit. 10:30 a.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Enjoy nursery rhymes and songs while building early literacy skills for your child. Age Birth to 11 months with adult. Register beginning Jan. 8. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

INOVA Blood Drive. 1-6 p.m. beside the Pavilion at Reston Town Center. Schedule Bloodmobile appointments at 1-866-256-6372 or at inova.org/donateblood. On-site registration available.

THURSDAY/JAN. 24

Tai Chi Fitness. 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Join a fun new Tai Chi fitness class for the new year, led by local instructor Susan Shen. Adults, teens. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/events or call 703-689-2700, ext. 4. Free.

FRIDAY/JAN. 25

Family Yoga. 10:30 a.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Explore yoga poses and movement while enjoying books and songs with a children's yoga instructor. Age 2-4 with adult. Register beginning Jan. 11. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JAN. 25-26

"Just Be" — An Evening of Musical Favorites. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Herndon High School Auditorium, 700 Bennett St., Herndon. Let Herndon High School students raise the audience up as they present their 2019 cabaret "Just Be." An annual highlight, each year's cabaret features students singing and dancing to favorite pieces from popular musicals. Students and seniors, \$5; adults, \$10 at the box office. All proceeds support Herndon High School Choir.

SATURDAY/JAN. 26

"Making Stone Soup." 10-11:30 a.m. in the historic Floris Schoolhouse kitchen at Frying Pan Farm Park, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Discover how easy and satisfying it is to prepare home-cooked soups in winter. Learn the history and origins of several different ethnic soup styles and sample each style featured. Create a new soup with members of the group based on the story of "Stone Soup." Participants will get to take home a serving of "Stone Soup" to enjoy. \$10 per person, designed for participants age 7-adult. Call 703-437-9101 or visit fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park.

SUNDAY/JAN. 27

YA Book Trivia. 3:30 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Join in for an afternoon of YA book trivia with refreshments and prizes for the winning team. Age 12-18. No registration required. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

Capitol Steps 2019 Fundraiser. 6 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Reston, 1800 Presidents St., Reston. Annual fundraising benefit that helps individuals and families at Cornerstones' Embry Rucker Community Shelter on their journey toward stability. In addition to a night of comic relief, the evening includes desserts, wines, and chances to win silent auction items and raffle prizes. \$100. Visit www.cornerstonesva.org/2019-capitol-steps/ for tickets.

Live Music: Only Lonesome. 7 p.m. (doors open at 6) at Frying Pan Farm Park Visitor Center, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Make plans to "hitch up the team" and head to Frying Pan Farm Park this season for Bluegrass Barn. Food and beverages available for purchase. \$18 in advance, \$20 at the door. Purchase tickets online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park/bluegrass-barn or by phone at 703-222-4664 or 703-437-9101.

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BULLETIN

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

Prescription Drug Take Back Box Program.

Fairfax County announced the expansion of the Prescription Drug Take Back Box Program Countywide. The boxes are available 24/7/365 at each district police station for any person to anonymously and safely dispose of their prescription medications 24/7/365 - no questions asked. It is important to get unused medicines, especially opioids, out of your medicine cabinets to prevent accidental or illicit use. Several Fairfax County pharmacies also take back unused prescription drugs. For a current list, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news2/4-ways-to-safely-dispose-of-unused-medications/.

DONATION REQUEST

Support Reston Historic Trust & Museum.

The Reston Historic Trust & Museum has launched a GoFundMe campaign with the goal to raise \$15,000 to go towards the repair, cleaning, and installation of icons on the façade of the former Lakeside Pharmacy, an original Lake Anne Plaza store, in a new permanent exhibit. The new exhibit will be unveiled during Reston's annual Founder's Day event, April 6th, 2019. Read more about their history and donate at www.gofundme.com/preserve-lakeside-pharmacy-icons to assist in their preservation.

INPUT SOUGHT

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Program.

Fairfax County is developing a comprehensive Public Safety Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) program and would like to hear from residents. Each of six public information meetings will include a static display of unmanned aircraft followed by a presentation outlining the program. After the presentation, there will be an opportunity to ask questions. The formal presentation will begin at 7 p.m. To find out more about the UAS program go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/uas. Send feedback or questions to uas@fairfaxcounty.gov or through the link located on the UAS webpage. Written comments on the draft program must be received by the close of business Feb. 8, 2019, to be included in the official public record.

- ❖ Wednesday, Jan. 16, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at South County Governmental Center (Room 221C), 8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria.
- ❖ Wednesday, Jan. 23, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at McLean District Governmental Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean.
- ❖ Thursday, Jan. 24, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd, Chantilly.
- ❖ Monday, Jan. 28, 2019, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Reston Community Center – Hunter Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road.
- ❖ Wednesday, Jan. 30, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Braddock Hall – Kings Park Library, 9002 Burke Lake Road, Burke.

TUESDAYS THROUGH FEB. 19

Workshop Series: Mind in the Making. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 – Room 100, Dunn Loring. Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs by Ellen Galinsky, encompasses an evidence-based list of life skills that are essential for children to succeed socially, emotionally and intellectually in the short and long term. Participants may register for one or all of the workshops and do not need to attend the previous class. Registration is limited. Call 703-204-3941 or visit www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center for more or to register.

- ❖ Tuesday, Jan. 22 – Communicating (part 3)
- ❖ Tuesday, Jan. 29 – Making Connections (part 4)
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 5 – Critical Thinking (part 5)
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 12 – Taking on Challenges (part 6)
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 19 – Self-Directed, Engaged

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What To Right About



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Today, Jan. 12, 2019 is National Glazed Donut Day and the day after my most recent post-scan appointment with my oncologist. A day when, if I'm lucky – as I have been for the past 10 years – my world will change for the better (donut consumption notwithstanding). However, the 'world' to which I refer is one fraught with danger and offers no more guarantees than I've been accustomed to.

To invoke the late, great Rod Serling: I am now entering "The Immunotherapy Zone."

Yes, a brand new – for me – treatment protocol: new drug, new side effects, new frequency, new lifestyle/fewer hassles (potentially), and most importantly: shrinkage (possibly), of my tumors, especially my "Adams Apple" tumor, as I've come to nickname the mass just below my Adams Apple (which is sort of bothering me, if you want to know the truth).

The nature of cancer treatment as I've experienced it – and learned from my oncologist is – if the drug is working, you continue it until it isn't (sounds simple I know). When it stops working, you change as the cancer has figured out the drug's intent. (Cancer cells are smart that way.)

Generally speaking, the cancer drug doesn't start working (shrinking, stabilizing) after it has stopped working (growth). Over my nearly 10 years, I have switched drugs upwards of a dozen times.

Now, I am switching again: to Opdivo, an immunotherapy drug, a class of drugs that didn't even exist a decade or so ago when I was first diagnosed, and one that has only been approved for the treatment of lung cancer since 2015. A drug that, to quote the television advertisement: "offers a chance at longer life."

And so, Team Lourie, two-thirds of it anyway, made the decision to switch and fight. Starting this Friday, I will be infused into the great unknown.

From what my oncologist explained yesterday, aside from the possible benefits, Opdivo has some potentially unpleasant side effects. However, continuing with my present infusion drug, Alimta, now that there's been some growth, is also likely to produce some unpleasant side effects: growth and movement.

And more growth/movement is the worst side effect, relatively and comparatively speaking. So we chose a definite over a maybe. If we continue with Alimta, there will be growth – definitely (that's how cancer works). If we opt for Opdivo, maybe there won't be growth, and maybe there might even be some shrinkage (the good kind).

As for lifestyle changes, there are, according to my oncologist, some quality of life improvements as well, or at least, more weeks in the month when potentially I'll be less impacted by my disease/treatment. Which along with my quality of life has always been a concern of my oncologist.

And, without getting into the details, I'm ready for a change.

Combined with the possibility of tumor shrinkage and fewer/different side effects (some patients report few side effects from Opdivo), I wouldn't say switching to an immunotherapy drug was enticing/a "no-brainer," but it does offer an alternative of sorts. And given where I've been treated from and where I'll be treated now, I am ready for something different.

Changing drugs is always a risk though; it could improve my life or it could make matters worse, a 'worse' from which quite frankly I might not recover (do you remember my yo-yo down-the-stairs visual from a few columns ago?). And I am familiar, unfortunately, with some less-than-encouraging accounts of patients not faring so well.

I just hope there's not a hole in my thinking. Oh wait. That's a hole in my donut. No worries. I'm happy to buy the donut and I never complain about the hole. That's the trade-off. I'm hoping, given the potential benefit of Opdivo, I can likewise live/trade-off with side effects.

My philosophy has always been to take the good with the bad – and vice versa, and after almost 10 years of rolling with the punches, I see no reason to change now.

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

Pay Attention, State Legislature Not Gridlocked

Thousands of bills considered over 45 days could have a big impact on your life, for better or for worse.

A week is already completed in the short (45-day) session of the Virginia General Assembly, and so many important things are in the works, in danger of happening or not happening, that no one can have a clear view of it all.

An example: The Senate Courts of Justice Committee voted for a bill 8-6 that would bar the execution of people with serious mental illnesses. Possibly you didn't realize that it is legal to execute someone with serious mental illness, because it makes no sense. But this bill failed last year.

Another success for the moment: increasing the minimum wage to \$15 over several years also cleared Senate committee.

Do you know who your Virginia delegate and senator are? Every resident of Virginia gets one of each. Enter your address here: <https://whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov/> to find out all of your representatives, plus contact information. Call and tell them, or leave a message, about what matters to you. Send an email. Connect to them on Facebook and watch for live Q&A sessions.

Here you can search legislation by bill number or keyword, find video and streaming: <https://virginiageneralassembly.gov/>

Last week's editorial, a long legislative wish list, <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2019/jan/08/opinion-editorial-wish-list-things-session-general/> still omitted many important actions, despite its length. One in particular made it into some editions and not others: To establish equal rights for LGBT Virgin-

ians, especially in housing and public employment.

Here are a few more important items:

The Virginia State Conference NAACP Criminal Justice Committee supports the passage of the following bills that are up for debate in this legislative session:

- ❖ HB 1651 - Raises grand larceny limit from \$500 to \$750 (Del Hayes)

- ❖ HB 1642 - Increases data collection on use of solitary confinement (Del Hope)

- ❖ SB 1013 - Repeals suspension of drivers licences for not paying fines (Sen Stanley; Del Kory)

- ❖ SB 1053 and HB 1745 - Makes juvenile offenders sentenced to life automatically eligible for parole after serving 25 years. (Sen Marsden; Del Lindsey)

- ❖ HB 2616 - Raises the minimum age a child can be tried as an adult from 14 to 16 (Del Guzman) (And this is still far too low.)

- ❖ SB 1551, HB 1685, HB 1873 and HB 1688 - Limits the scope of what School Resource Officers can get involved, prohibits students from being charged with disorderly conduct, and mandates data collection of use of force against students. (Sen Surovell, Del Schuyler T. VanValkenburg, Del Bourne; Del Mullin)

- ❖ SB 997 - Decriminalizes simple marijuana possession. (Sen Ebbin)

- ❖ SB 1008 - Bans mechanical devices designed to increase rate of bullets firing. (Sen Ebbin)

- ❖ SB 1013 - Repeals the requirement that the driver's license of a person convicted of

any violation of the law who fails or refuses to provide payment of fines be suspended. (Sen Stanley)

- ❖ SB 1034 - Prohibits any person who is not a licensed firearms dealer from purchasing more than one handgun in a 30-day period. (Sen Locke)

- ❖ HB 1991 - Labels violent hate groups as domestic terrorists (Del Price)

- ❖ HB 2472 - Adds gender, disability, gender identity, and sexual orientation to the categories of victims whose intentional selection for a hate crime results in a higher criminal penalty for the offense. (Del. Kenneth R. Plum)

House Courts of Justice members: Robert B. Bell (chairman), Leftwich (vice chair), Kilgore, Gilbert, L.R. Adams, J.L. Campbell, Collins, Miyares, Ransone, R.R. Campbell, Watts, Toscano, Herring, Hope, Mullin, Bourne, Simon, Carroll Foy.

Senate Courts of Justice members: Obenshain (chairman), Saslaw, Norment, Howell, Lucas, Edwards, McDougle, Stuart, Stanley, Reeves, Chafin, Deeds, Sturtevant, Petersen, and Peake.

Find contact information <https://virginiageneralassembly.gov/>

See our website www.ConnectionNewspapers.com for many stories from the General Assembly from the Capital News Service, written by journalism students from VCU.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

General Assembly Agenda

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



COMMENTARY

In a recent social media post, I indicated that the annual General Assembly session would be underway very soon. AutoCorrect changed the text to be "underwater very soon." My son alerted me to the change, and I made what I thought was a correction. As the General Assembly

session has gotten underway I am starting to wonder if AutoCorrect knew something that I am now coming to realize: The General Assembly may well be underwater! The session is scheduled to go until Feb. 22. Meeting five days a week means 38 actual days for work on more than 2,000 bills and resolutions. While I have highlighted big issues like redistricting reform, preventing gun violence and ERA ratification, there are many more issues large and small that make up the agenda for the session.

Virginia has always conformed its income tax policies to the federal system. With the massive changes that have been made in federal tax law, the General Assembly will wrestle with what we will do in Virginia. There will

be an effort to resolve the issue early in the session to accommodate taxpayers who want to file their returns early. Part of the tax policy debate will be making the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) refundable as promoted by the Governor in a bill that I have introduced. The purpose would be to allow persons of low income to keep more of the money they earn and be more self-supporting.

As a Dillon Rule State meaning local governments have only the powers granted to them by the state, dozens of bills, called local bills, are introduced to extend powers some of which are very minor to a particular locality. Another group of bills is called housekeeping to make corrections or clarifications to legislation that passed in previous sessions. All these bills are important but add to the workload of a session.

Challenging environmental issues will be coming before the legislature many of which relate to energy. There are proposals to increase

the required uses of alternative and renewable fuels. Cleaning up from the past use of fossil fuels and the resulting growth in coal ash ponds will be taken up.

There is strong need to deal with the degradation of water quality in the Chesapeake Bay area. The Tidewater area is subject to recurrent flooding coming about with climate change that needs addressing now rather than later.

There are many bills dealing with criminal justice reform including bills intended to reduce the school to prison pipeline. The Governor has announced his support of decriminalizing possession of small quantities of marijuana. A bill that has been introduced would allow casino and sports gambling.

There will be a number of dog and cat bills that include high levels of emotion from interested parties. Being able to limit dogs running across the properties of land owners is a big concern in rural areas.

To review all the bills on the agenda of the General Assembly go to <http://lis.virginia.gov>

If you have not done so already, let me know your positions on issues by going to my website (www.kenplum.com). Click on Legislative Session Survey.

