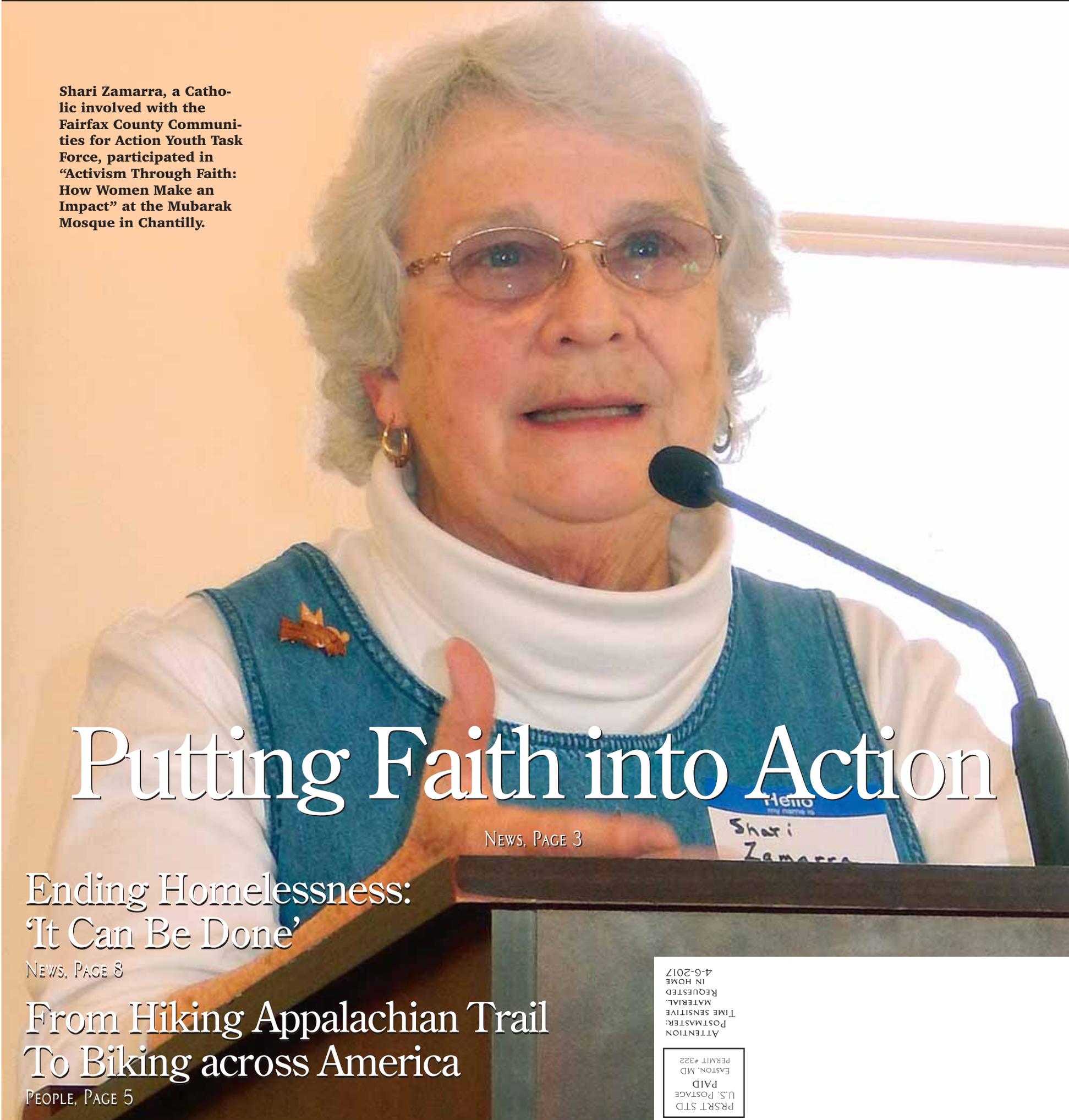


Shari Zamarra, a Catholic involved with the Fairfax County Communities for Action Youth Task Force, participated in "Activism Through Faith: How Women Make an Impact" at the Mubarak Mosque in Chantilly.



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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

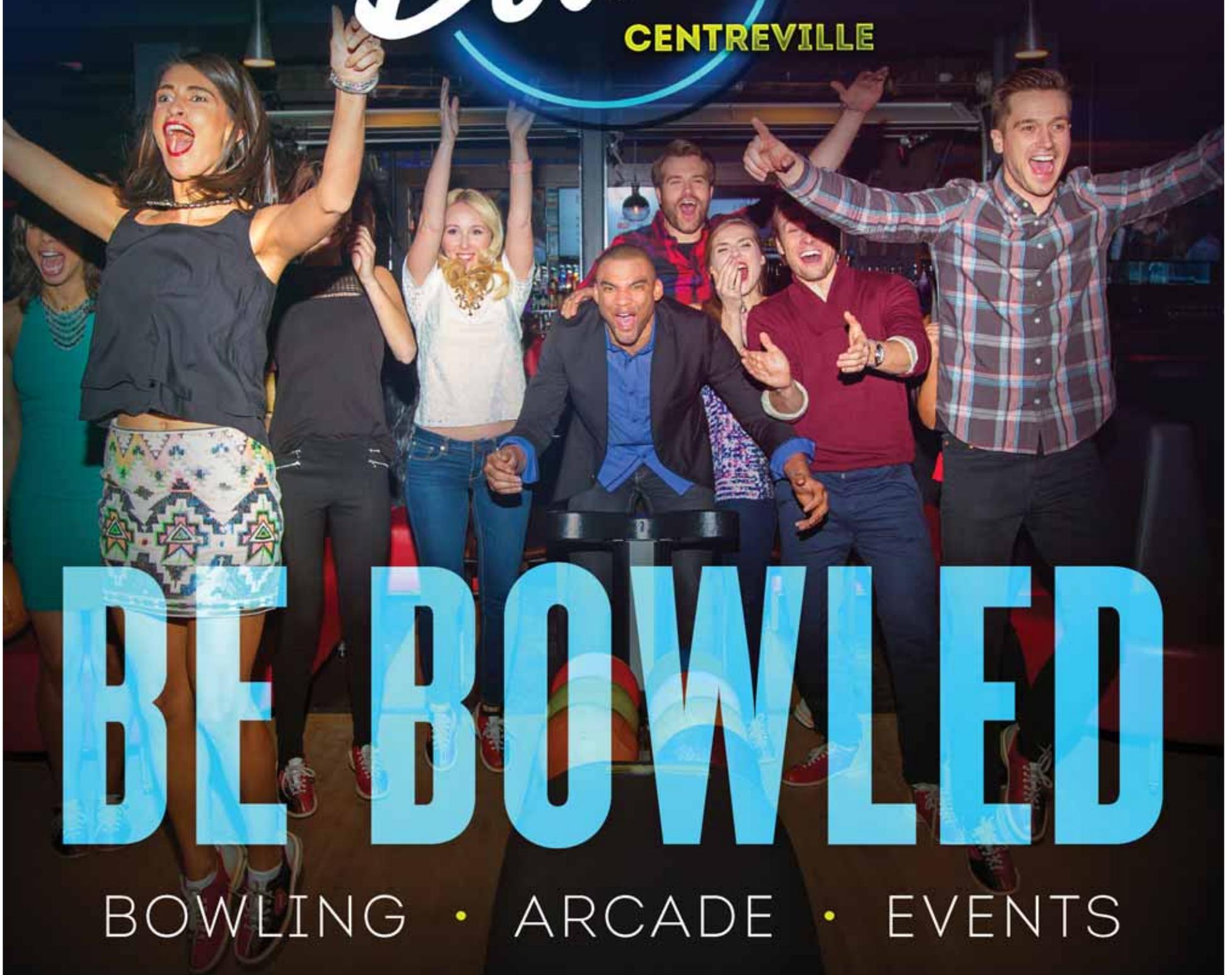
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Putting Faith into Action

Women gather to share their wisdom.

BY BONNIE HOBBS

In today's political climate, women can often feel powerless. But more than 100 women of various faiths came to gether recently to learn how they can and are making a difference in the world around them.

Hosted by the Women's Auxiliary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the event was held March 18 at the Mubarak Mosque in Chantilly. It's presented each year in commemoration of Women's History Month, and the theme this time was "Activism Through Faith: How Women Make an Impact."

Welcoming everyone was Sahar Choudhary, regional president of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's Virginia chapter. She said her religion "categorically rejects terrorism in any form and endorses the separation of church and state. We champion universal human rights, protection of minorities and the empowerment of women through education."

Ananda Vrindavan, temple president of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness in Washington, D.C., was the first speaker. Born and raised in Ireland, she taught in India for 21 years. "It's sad that evil happens when good people don't stand up and say something," she said. "But you don't want to lose yourself in the process, so it's a balance."

In Krishna Consciousness and the

Bhagavad Gita (Hindu scripture), she said, "Sometimes activism may demand that we fight or that we walk away. Ultimately, we're souls beyond our bodies, and the Gita also teaches compassion — you can't even kill an ant. So the challenge for us as women is to discern the best impact we can have in any given situation."

So, said Vrindavan, "My faith is in both stepping back from the world and stepping into the world, from a place of good intention, and seeing where I can best serve. So how do you take the principles of your spiritual practice into the world? To help us decide, we have six Gita values: Equal vision — we're all equal; choice — we have free will and must live with the results of our choices, affection and humility — deal with each other with [both these things], live life without cruelty, and live by example."

"When you live in the real world, black and white disappear and there's a lot of gray," she added. "So be alive and awake and as active as you can."

Pediatrician Susan Kohn belongs to Temple B'nai Shalom in Fairfax Station and



Dr. Susan Kohn listens to a speaker.



Ananda Vrindavan makes a point.

is a member of the Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom — a group of Muslim and Jewish women. Representing the Jewish viewpoint, she said, "Women must not be silent in the face of discrimination or injustice to others. We believe in caring for the stranger and repairing the world."

Noting that Emma Lazarus was the Jewish woman who wrote the words inscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty, Kohn said many other Jewish women, such as [Supreme Court Justice] Ruth Bader Ginsberg, work to better people's lives every day. "We have to try to make a difference, even when the task is daunting," said Kohn. "And we have to speak up when our leaders don't. Salaam Shalom was founded to bring Jewish and Muslim women together and speak out against injustice."

Next came Shari Zamarra, a Catholic involved with the Fairfax County Communities for Action Youth Task Force. She's also a member of Virginians Organized in Community Engagement. She's also marched and protested and does so monthly outside the NRA building.

Matthew 25 is her parish's mission statement. "God judges us by asking what we've done for the poor and the most vulnerable among us," she said. "Now my work is serving poor pregnant women and supporting education in Guatemala."

Zamarra said she's inspired by Dorothy Day, a famous Catholic who helped establish special houses of hospitality to help those in need. Day was also an activist who worked for social causes such as pacifism and women's suffrage. Zamarra also follows the words of Pope Francis, who said, "Each person has a mission of social responsibility."

'We're Diverse, but One Human Community'

Women of different faiths discuss helping others.

BY BONNIE HOBBS

During the March 18 event at the Mubarak Mosque in Chantilly, women representing a variety of religions explained their beliefs to others. They also illustrated how what women do in their daily lives can impact the future.

Nakasha Ahmad, of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, has a master's in philosophy and is a former college professor. She said Ahmadiyya Muslims view activism as "campaigning for social change, social progress and a most just society to right wrongs and alleviate injustices."

She said the five pillars of Islam are a declaration of faith, prayer, giving to the poor, fasting during Ramadan and going to Mecca. Also important are connecting with others and being empathetic and sympathetic. For example, said Ahmad, "We fast to empathize with and be compassionate toward people who are hungry."

She also said criminal justice should be



Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova

aimed at reformation, rather than punishment, and mercy should be used to get people back on the right path. "Pardon and forgiveness are just as important as punishment," she said. Regarding racial inequality, said Ahmad, "We believe no one people has superiority over another. We are diverse, but we're one human community."

"So what is the role of women?" she asked. "Men and women have equal responsibility to work for social justice." In addition to the Holy Quran, she said Ahmadiyya



April Dalton is seeking baby items for Afghani women.

Muslims also rely on the hadith — oral traditions from their prophet. "It's important to speak truth to power," added Ahmad. "If you see something you disapprove of — and you see injustice — act and speak up against it."

While noting that Islamic women may go into whatever profession they want to, she

said the importance of motherhood is also emphasized. She said it's seen as a way "to create a more just and peaceful society by raising children who have a conscience and are morally engaged with their communities."

Citing activist Malala Yousafzai as an advocate for girls' education, Ahmad said women in general "write letters and op eds to make their voices heard. We also meet with people on Capitol Hill to discuss issues important to us."

She further noted Ahmadiyya Muslims' involvement in Humanity First, a non-religious, international nonprofit that runs programs such as Water for Life, which brings clean drinking water to poor areas of Africa. "We also believe that prayer is more effective than fire or water," said Ahmad. "And we all are able to pray to advocate for social change."

Next at the podium was county Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova. Recalling the vandalism to the Mubarak Mosque shortly after its specially made windows were installed, she stressed what happened afterward.

"The community came out with flowers

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CENTRE VIEW ♦ APRIL 5-11, 2017 ♦ 3

Another Step to Police Transparency

Opening up records of “unattended deaths” to families.

The first paragraph of Virginia Freedom of Information Act, passed by the General Assembly in 1968, states that all public records “shall be presumed open.” But the legislation includes an exception that allows police to withhold “complaints, memoranda, correspondence, case files or reports, witness statements and evidence.”

EDITORIAL

As a result, many police departments around the Commonwealth, including Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax, have adopted what they call a “blanket” approach to using their exemption. That means they have decided to withhold any document they can without any analysis of whether they should. Police chiefs and prosecutors from across the commonwealth have spoken out against any effort to undermine their broad power of exemption.

To its credit, the Fairfax County Police Department has committed to “release police re-

ports with redactions rather than creating a summary document,” and the new policy is in progress.

During the 2017 session of the General Assembly, state Sen. Scott Surovell’s bill, SB1102, passed both the House and Senate without any votes in opposition. The bill would require police to release the records of investigations of deaths by suicide to the closest family member.

The bill summary: “Virginia Freedom of Information Act; completed unattended death investigations; mandatory disclosure. Requires that records of completed unattended death investigations be released to the parent or spouse of the decedent or, if there is no living parent or spouse, to the most immediate family member of the decedent.”

Gov. Terry McAuliffe proposes to gut the bill by amending it to only require the police to provide a summary of the report.

Families deserve to have access to completed police reports about the death of a loved one. (This is also an issue for murder victims and other situations, but is not addressed by this bill.)

The General Assembly meets for its veto session Wednesday, April 5, and we urge every member who voted in favor of Surovell’s bill

Tune into Budget Hearings This Week

❖ Tuesday, April 4, 4 p.m., Public Hearing before Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; School Board presents budget to Board. Fairfax County Government Center, Boardroom, 12000 Government Center Pkwy., Fairfax.

❖ Wednesday, April 5, 1 p.m., Public Hearing before Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

❖ Thursday, April 6, 1 p.m., Public Hearing before Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. All meetings streamed live online and available to view on demand.

Residents can listen to any meeting live in the Board of Supervisors boardroom by calling 703-324-7700.

to vote to block the amendment.

We note that police departments do not have to withhold these reports; nothing in the current law prohibits their release. Police departments could choose the compassionate and transparent approach by releasing reports, redacting the names of witnesses and other information as reasonably necessary. This is what the FCPD is working towards.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Celebrating Women of Character, Courage, and Commitment

To the Editor:

When it comes to women of character, courage and commitment, the first thought that comes to my mind is, “that’s the definition of practically every American Muslim woman I know.” Islam being a religion of peace consumes the character of these women. Attributes such as honesty, humility, a drive to seek education, helping others, and integrity in all aspects of life are just a few of the many traits that define Muslim women who follow the teachings of Islam.

This unique set of women is not afraid to stand out or stand apart. This era of Muslim extremism and its inseparable Islamophobia, only strengthens a cause to help society understand the true Islam. American Muslim women of today are not afraid of their hijabs (head coverings) or outer garments and they surely are not afraid to tell you that they do so in strict obedience to God’s commandments as laid out in the Holy Qur’an. Take a look around you — shopping malls, restaurants, the metro, buses, cars, universities, business complexes — you will see them all around you. They are the teachers at the child’s school, the doctor or nurse at your local hospital, the teller at the

bank, the pharmacists, the sales representative, or the engineer. And they are not afraid to stand out and excel to be the best that they can be and to be contributing citizens of this society. The courage to be different, especially when the majority of people will profile, stereotype and succumb to prejudice in a blink of eye, is not something to be taken lightly. These women are proud of their faith and wear it as their identity. The Holy Qur’an gives guidance on the various roles of Muslim women as daughter, wife and mother. It also gives them spiritual, educational, economic and social rights. It is this belief that drives these women to be the best that they can.

Being born and raised in the USA, I have never seen myself to be different than everyone else. I was an athlete in high school playing sports while wearing the hijab. Being a Muslim woman did not hinder me from graduating in the top of my class or going to a college on full scholarship where I received a bachelor’s degree with a double major which I completed in three years. I went on to get my master’s degree and graduated at the top of my class. I have been working as security en-

gineer consulting for the federal government for the last 8 years.

But if you were see to me on the street, what would my head covering say to you? What would the blocks on my calendar for prayer times say? Would you judge me to be ill-mannered if I didn’t shake a male boss’ hand? Or what if I told you that I had an arranged marriage and am madly in love with my wonderful husband? Would these differences speak volumes to the fact that it’s my faith that has set me free and enabled me to excel? To some, my declarations are a whole different perspective — but we are really not that different. In this life I expect good from others and do good; where I harness my equality, liberty, and courage into my every action. Where I am fully aware of my purpose in life and work every day to make a difference in this world. That it is my commitment to my faith and community that is my eternal drive to be the best daughter, older sister, wife, mother, friend and devoted Muslim.

Maliha Amjad Ahmad
Chantilly

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

BULLETIN BOARD

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Children who will be 5 years old on or before Sept. 30, 2017, are eligible to attend kindergarten. Find the correct neighborhood school by entering your address at <http://boundary.fcps.edu/boundary/>. Complete a packet of registration forms found at www.fcps.edu/it/forms/enroll.pdf or in the school office. Gather supporting documents: proof of residence in the school

boundary, a certified copy of the child’s birth certificate, parent/guardian photo ID, and any custody orders. Certificate of physical exam and immunization will be required before the student may start school, but is not required for registration. Parents who choose to delay enrollment in kindergarten by one year are required to notify the school in writing of their intent.

Greenbriar East Elementary

School, 13006 Point Pleasant Drive, Fairfax, is now accepting registration for rising Kindergarteners. Visit greenbriareast.fcps.edu to sign up for an appointment or call Melissa Dicker, School Registrar at 703-633-6400.

Greenbriar West Elementary School is now accepting information for next year’s Kindergarten classes. Call the school office at 703-633-6700 as soon as possible.

APRIL

Coffee for Campers. April is the Month of the Military Child, and to honor our nation’s littlest heroes, the National Military Family Association is asking if you’ll give up your coffee shop coffee and donate that extra \$5 a day to send a military kid to Operation Purple Camp. Visit www.militaryfamily.org/get-involved/donate/coffee-for-

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

PEOPLE

From Hiking Appalachian Trail

... to Biking across America.

BY NANCY YENKE

Ever wanted to hike the Appalachian Trail? Well, last February about this time, 18-year-old Greenbriar resident Jackson Clark decided to do just that. He wanted to find a purpose in life. He saw an article about people who hiked the trail, and looked into it. He decided to set off in search of his passion; and one more thing ... this tall, red-headed adventure-seeker had never backpacked before.

Since it was late February, the hikers start from the warmer climate of northern Georgia. Jackson came prepared with clothing for both warm and cold weather, food and water supplies, as well as water filters for use with natural water sources when bottled water runs out. He also packed first aid supplies, a tent, and a cell phone.

The Appalachian Trail is 2,189 miles through 14 states from Georgia to Maine. When Jackson started out in Georgia, his parents went with him to see him off and say good-bye. He admitted to being a little nervous. Asked about his parents' reaction, he replied without hesitation, "My mom was a wreck." He texted his parents every few days, so that helped them keep in touch.

Jackson remarked that about 50 people leave that north Georgia starting point each day. He explained that you'll always run into people on the trail eventually. There are others along the way who will offer help to the hikers by leaving food supplies in large buckets on the trail. "These people were called Trail Angels," he said. "There was one crossing near a road on the trail in Pennsylvania during the drought last summer where they left 30 [single] gallon jugs of water for the hikers. That was a lifesaver."

He talked about the kind of food one takes on such a hike as this. "When it came to food I was boring. In the beginning I would cook a little bit like oatmeal for breakfast and ramen or mashed potatoes for dinner with Clif [protein] Bars thrown in throughout the day. I would focus on cooking simple foods that wouldn't require too much effort and that were easy to clean up. After a while I decided to ... just eat cold meals. I would make tacos that would consist of a tortilla with peanut butter, honey, and cream cheese (yummy!). For snacks I would eat Pop Tarts and granola bars and Peanut M&M's. The thing I ate the most throughout the trail was almonds. They are extremely high in calories and not too heavy. The only problem with eating almonds so



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Jackson Clark on the Appalachian Trail.

often is you start to hate almonds with a passion."

Jackson learned he needed to make changes along the way. He only really needed two changes of clothes, a better water filtration system, and a much lighter tent. He found other ways to cut even small amounts of weight to lighten his load, even to the point of cutting the handle off his toothbrush and only keeping the brush end to use. He also left some of his extra clothing in boxes along the trail just for that purpose. It was a way to share with other hikers. He wanted to be one of the 30 percent who actually succeed in "thru-hiking" the whole trail.

Jackson related a few encounters with the wildlife in the mountains. He explained that bears won't bother you, if you don't bother them. Otherwise, if you see a cub with its mother roaming around, you just have to wait them out, let them go where they want, then move on. Any pictures are taken from a healthy distance, no close-ups. He mentioned that some hikers had a bull horn-type device to scare bears or other predators away, but Jackson didn't. He just used common sense.

Asked if he had hiked with anyone he made friends with on the trail, whether for all or part of the trip, Jackson said, for the first month or so, he hiked with a friend who went by the "trail name" Casey Jones. Jackson's was Nutella. Trail names are acquired like any nickname.

"My favorite views would have to be in New Hampshire or in Maine. Those two states have some of the highest mountains on the whole AT (Appalachian Trail) and you are rewarded with the best views," Jackson said. "If I had to pick one spot on the AT I would say Mt. Katahdin had the best view. At 5,269 feet you [get] one of the best views on the whole AT. On days where the skies are clear and visibility is high you can



Jackson Clark

SEE JACKSON CLARK, PAGE 11



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Awareness in the Midst of an Epidemic

Thriving Family Summit addresses drug addiction.

BY ASHLEY CLAIRE SIMPSON

Even though heroin was once considered a drug more prevalent in lower income communities, addiction to this substance is now epidemic in affluent Northern Virginia. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the use of heroin and other opioids has increased significantly across all demographics of the United States over the last decade. The amount of 18- to 25-year-old heroin users has more than doubled.

"A lot of people don't realize the magnitude and severity of the opiate addiction crisis in Fairfax County," said Lucy Caldwell, director of communications at the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB). "What's going on here mirrors what's going on around the rest of the country."

Since awareness is the first step in confronting the problem, the Western Fairfax Church Coalition and the Christian non-profit organization, One Heart DC, collaborated with Fairfax County law enforcement and the CSB to host the first Thriving Family Summit on March 11.

"The Western Fairfax Church Coalition was inspired to put this event together after the drug-related death of a young woman from Centreville High School last spring," Caldwell said. "The event was a response to that community, where many people were obviously distraught. It was a tragedy. This was the first time we've ever had a summit like this in Fairfax County. And, we really did raise awareness of ad-

diction, we introduced resources available, and then representatives from the faith community were able to give people hope."

About 200 people attended the Thriving Family Summit, an all-day event held at Centreville's Korean Central Presbyterian Church. Since emotional health, substance misuse and substance use disorders are linked, the summit was planned so that attendees confronted it all.

"Throughout the day, we addressed general mental health issues, but the focus of the event was drug addiction," Caldwell said. "It was a beautiful day. There were teens, parents, and even some individuals who just wanted to learn about what is going on."

The day started with four speakers to shed light on the summit and its intended purpose, as well as to highlight the role of awareness in the reversal of drug trends in Fairfax County, and the world at large.

"According to Jim Cox, second lieutenant of the Fairfax County Police, the epidemic is exploding," Caldwell said. "It will take all of us as a community to get us out of this hole. He's been on the force for 29 years, and he's never seen anything like this."

Ginny Atwood Lovitt, one of the introductory speakers and executive director of the Chris Atwood Foundation, addressed the audience not only as the founder of an organization that provides resources for substance misuse and use disorders, but also as the sister of a young man who lost his own related battle.

"My message was one of tragedy and hope," Lovitt said. "My brother lost his life to an overdose in 2013, but out of that loss we started a foundation that helps other families and has rescued almost 50 people from potentially fatal overdoses. This epidemic is complicated and scary, but we all have incredible power to combat it just by going out into our community and being a voice for hope and recovery, not stigma and judgement."

Following Lovitt's comments, each attendee attended two breakout sessions of their choosing. There were discussion topics designed for teenagers, and a different selection of topics specifically for parents. Still, everyone who attended — whether parents who spent their breakout time learning new ways to thwart the dangers of cyberspace, or teenagers who chose to open up about depression or addiction with a smaller group — was a part of something bigger.

"We are looking at this as a crisis,"



At the Thriving Family Summit are, from left, Heather Davies, Fairfax County Unified Prevention Coalition board member; Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) and Gemma Sohn, Fairfax County Unified Prevention Coalition board member.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Ginny Atwood Lovitt, executive director of the Chris Atwood Foundation.

Caldwell said. "There is no way the government alone can solve this. The government has to work with the community at the roots. That's what this whole event was about for everyone who came. Everyone who was there spent the day considering how to mobilize everyone in Fairfax County."

Caldwell said events like this will certainly save lives, even if there's no way direct way to see prevention.

"Many people who lost their young adult children due to death weren't even aware that their loved ones were using," Caldwell said. "When a police officer handles an overdose, they can't always inform families of what happened."

So, it's vital for parents to know what to look for and get involved. A lot of parents might think experimentation is a part of growing up, and that it's none of their business, but, frankly, your children's lives are your business."

Lovitt agreed that an event like this could possibly have made a difference to those who have fallen victim to addiction, like her own brother.

"Events like this are crucial for two reasons," she said. "One, because the deadly stigma around addiction has to be addressed on a community level to be effective, and two, because the family is the best protective force against addiction. The whole family needs to be educated to pre-

vent addiction, and if addiction does occur, then the whole family needs to be treated to achieve the best chance of recovery."

While the Thriving Family Summit is a major step in the right direction, experts say that Fairfax County must wake up to reality and do a lot more to effectively combat mass addiction and the fallout that comes with it.

"Fairfax County is slowly heading in the right direction, but we can do better," Lovitt said. "When something tragic happens, there is a public cry for something to be done, and incremental changes are made, but it's not enough. We are in an unprecedented epidemic. Small actions don't fix huge problems. Swift and comprehensive action is the only thing that's going to be effective — actions like the safe stations started in Manchester, New Hampshire, that have reduced overdoses by 50 percent in a year's time. We need to look at what is working elsewhere and bring it here."

The hosts, speakers and resource tables at the summit last month drove home

the point that there is hope for people struggling with substance use disorders, as long as they come forward and seek out assistance. At the same time, the only surefire way not to succumb to drug addiction is to simply avoid drugs all together — even the seemingly harmless ones.

"Even in the case of marijuana, experimentation should never be encouraged as being OK," Caldwell said. "We're not saying marijuana or underage drinking are officially gateways, but a lot of the serious drug addictions we see started with pot or underage drinking. The statistics we've seen have proven that, the younger a person starts using, the more likely it will lead to heroin."

Because substance misuse is an element of mental health, Lovitt said parents can stop the crisis at home long before it might begin.

"Teach your kids healthy coping skills very early on," she said. "The best way to do this is to demonstrate it yourself. Show them that the answer to stress, depression, or other negative feelings is to ask for help and practice self-care, not pick up a glass of wine. When you have teenagers — listen more than you lecture. Ask open ended questions and make them feel truly heard, even if you don't always like what you hear. They need to know that they can talk to you about anything. That could save their life when it really counts."

Senior Living

Elaborating a Log Cabin

Retirees find satisfaction in a pair of art studios, and a front porch with a view.

BY JOHN BYRD

Blissful retirement often validates of the old homily: “Busy hands mean happy hearts.” On this point, it is hard to imagine a more fruitful environment than the home of Kirby and Helen Thornton, two 70-something retirees who recently completed focused renovations to a log cabin style home in Lorton they have occupied for more than 20 years.

The changes were all about tweaking to even higher relevance aspects of the home that had gradually become a sources of distinctively personal satisfaction to both seniors.

Kirby Thornton, a former electrical engineer, has been exploring his passion for woodworking for many years. Helen Thornton, a one time research analyst, revels in creating shimmering objets d’arte from fused glass. When not pursuing their hobbies, the couple might otherwise be found taking in the scenery from the wide, rustic-style front porch that now graces the home’s front elevation.

For all the quiet simplicity that abounds in every direction though, the Thornton’s lifestyle accommodation has been decades in the making, beginning with purchasing the 2,900 sq foot house and garage in the late 1990s.

“We were attracted to the relaxed ambiance of a log home,” Kirby Thornton said. “There were changes we wanted to make from the first, but since we were both busy, modifications would have to occur in phases.”

The first step was acquiring more storage space.

As Kirby Thornton tells it, the couple hired Foster Remodeling Solutions of Lorton to remove an unneeded balcony, add a floor above the open garage and apportion the space for storage and other uses to be determined.

Soon Kirby Thornton decided that the windowless garage loft would work fine as a place to take up woodworking. He had actually purchased a lathe from the home’s previous owner. Helen Thornton, seeing the loft’s potentials as a studio, acquired a kiln and began fusing glass.

The pursuit of one’s muse being all-absorbing, the pair spent little time worrying about the fact that the workspace provided zero natural light, or that it was hard to stand erect under the four foot high ceiling that dominated much of the floorspace.

About the only change to the physical space in this interval was the introduction of a partition designed to keep wood dust on Kirby Thornton’s side of the studio.

Even so, as full retirement dawned, both saw there was now time to reconsider the larger “wish list” of remodeling preferences.

“We knew we would have to change the studio roof line to get the head room and natural light we wanted,” Kirby Thornton said. “About this time, Helen was looking into front porch ideas in log home magazines. We sketched out several designs of what we



PHOTO BY LARRY GOLFER

By raising the roof above the garage studio six feet (right) and adding windows, the remodeler freed up 770 square feet of floorspace which is now used for two art studios and storage space.

thought we wanted. That’s when we called Foster Remodeling back in.”

But the first surprise inspired another pause: Turned out the front porch seen as spanning the entire front elevation couldn’t be built because of its proximity to a part of the home’s septic system.

“The symmetry, the curb appeal, was important to us,” Helen Thornton said. “We wanted a balanced facade on both the house and the garage. We were kind of at a loss.” Fortunately, Foster’s team led by Chris Arnold came up with an innovative solution.

Foster’s architectural concept call for a faux peak on the main house at exactly the same pitch as the one above the garage which is, in turn, reinforced by the peak of a front-facing archway that defines the ground-level entrance to the porch.

A porch swing occupying the far corner now fleshes-out the portrait of a restful carefree idyll amidst flowers and trees. For an expanded view, there’s a large Velux skylight overhead.

Rough-hewn timbers, the handiwork of Foster master carpenter Mike Borman, is integral to the aesthetics of a new front elevation that is both inviting and whimsical. Red cedar trim and molding, meanwhile, provide sympathetic color accents.

To fashion studio space useful to all, Foster found a way to elevate the headroom to fully six feet, freeing up all 770 square feet of floorspace. A front-facing dormer featuring a pair of double hung windows invites generous southerly light. Kirby’s wood shop — equipped with a lathe, a drill press and table saw — is tucked snugly behind a new partition. Helen Thornton uses two kilns to produce her work.

Matching the logs needed to “pop up” the second level also entailed a close look at existing details.

“We spent quite a while researching options with various vendors, which is a challenge when you’re working with a 30-year-old exterior,” said project manager Chris Arnold.

Summarizing the well-planned lifestyle shift, Kirby Thornton says the couple are frequently in the studio at the same time. A window in the interior partition allows each spouse to witness the other’s progress, if so inclined. It’s a working environment, but also a place of interaction and play.

The distinctive by-products of the Thornton’s labors are mostly donated to friends, children and grandchildren. Kirby Thornton is keen on picture frames and book cases; Helen Thornton recently completed a glass bird bath.

“This is a very sweet place to be spending this time in our lives,” Kirby Thornton said. “Perfect in fact.”

Foster Remodeling Solutions will be holding an open house in its expanded design and selection center Saturday, April 22 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be three seminars. A workshop on Aging-In-Place will be held at 1 p.m. The design center is located at 7211-H Telegraph Square Drive, Lorton, VA 22079. To RSVP call: 703/550-1371, or contact us at www.fosterremodeling.com

John Byrd (byrdmatx@gmail.com) has been writing about home improvement for 30 years.

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THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

Dentist Corner

...Evelyn Samuel, DMD

Q. I have TMJ and the presenting symptoms (jaw pain, clicking, etc.) are text book. Will I have to have major in patient dental surgery? Are there any new innovative procedures like laser technology or less invasive procedures to correct and or alleviate TMJ problems?

A. You have brought up a very involved topic. The Temporomandibular Joint (TMJ) connects the mandible (lower jaw) to the skull. TMJ can also stand for Temporomandibular Joint Disorder or a group of problems that are related to the joint. Symptoms include but are not limited to clicking and/or popping in the joint, muscular pain, temporary locking of the mouth, facial pain, and headaches. It can be caused by clenching and grinding of the teeth, malocclusion (off bite) arthritis, injury, stress, and muscle tension. Treatment usually begins in a conservative manner with oral medication. In situations where patients clench or grind their teeth at night, splints or occlusal guards may be prescribed. Surgery is often a last result. In many instances the condition is temporary and improves on its own. Question? Email: info@drevelynsamuel.com

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Ending Homelessness: 'It Can Be Done'

Housing and homeless services providers discuss “Complex needs and promising solutions.”

BY ANDREA WORKER

HomeAid Northern Virginia (HANV) brought together about 100 housing and homeless service providers from a variety of public, nonprofit and faith-based organizations at its annual Housing Forum on March 30, giving them the opportunity to share their challenges and best practices with their peers, while learning about some of the latest trends in the fight to end homelessness.

Newly appointed HANV executive director Kristyn Burr opened the event before turning the program over to moderator Karen Cleveland of the Cleveland Group.

Samantha Batko, director of the Homeless Research Institute, National Alliance to End Homelessness, was the program's keynote speaker and started her section with positives, noting that Virginia was the first state to functionally end homelessness among veterans. “On Tuesday,” she added, “Bergen County, New Jersey announced that they were the first to end chronic homelessness. We know it can be done.”

How were these successes achieved? “Through ‘Rapid Rehousing,’ the value of data, and a determined community-based partnership,” said Batko.

The switch to a focus on the Rapid Rehousing model was a major topic at last year's forum and the cause for considerable concern among some of the providers. The strategy represents a paradigm shift in previous methodologies to end a person's or family's homeless situation by pulling out all the stops to first find suitable housing for the client(s) and then wrapping any services they may need — financial assistance, help finding employment, overcoming past credit problems, mental health treatments, etc. — around them once they have been placed in a stable housing environment.

THE TRADITIONAL APPROACH to helping the homeless in the past has been to take them into shelters and then work with them to resolve issues and obstacles before placing them in an independent living situation. While this strategy can make finding them suitable housing less challenging, the process could take months, sometimes years. Remaining in shelter for that long creates a different set of problems, from overcrowding or impossible waiting lists for shelter placement, to potentially exacerbating the anxiety of the homeless, particularly children and youth, who find it difficult to adjust and face the stigma of their situation at school or during other social activities.

Rapid Rehousing also put further pressure on service providers. It's easier to provide services and to monitor progress when the clients are grouped in shelter facilities and have the benefit of supervision and readily-accessible support. Monitoring hundreds of



Newly appointed HomeAid Northern Virginia executive director Kristyn Burr welcomes the participants to the organization's annual Housing Forum for housing and homeless services providers.



Shelter House chief operating officer Jamie Ergas presents the summary from the round table discussion on “Implementing Coordinated Entry” while program moderator Karen Cleveland captures the key points on the flip chart.

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER

people scattered around the region in a variety of housing situations can be a challenge.

But the housing and homeless service providers have, for the most part, risen to the challenges. The official statistics for the homeless population for 2016 are not yet available, but the anecdotal evidence shared by the attendees indicate a positive result to the shift in strategy.

“Trust and a good relationship with landlords is essential,” said one attendee. When trying to place clients who are still working through obstacles, or who have credit problems, who have been evicted — possibly more than once — who have served prison terms, or who may be registered sex offenders, requires getting out into the rental community and honestly addressing the landlord's concerns and responding swiftly

and appropriately when there are problems.

Batko also commented on the current political climate, highlighting several topics of much discussion by groups like the National Alliance to End Homelessness. According to Batko, although federal dollars allocated toward homeless prevention and remediation make up the smallest percentage of the federal budget at approximately \$2.5 billion, predictions for the FY2018 budget call for the lowest level of financial support since 1962.

Potential cuts to the agencies that help provide services to the homeless or those who are only a step away from that condition, changes in health care laws and in other social safety net programs could greatly increase the numbers of people that suddenly find themselves without a place to live.

Batko stressed two main points before concluding her remarks. First, she noted, “Efficiency. Agencies have to use the data, work together, re-think strategies” to decrease the length of time that people spend homeless, she said, and the organizations must be prepared to validate the outcomes of their efforts.

Secondly, Batko called upon the attendees to learn how to advocate. Many nonprofits operate under the misconception that they risk their exempt status if they take, and voice, a position on politically controversial issues. There are rules and limitations, but Batko urged the attendees to speak out and find ways to magnify their voices. “You are the experts,” she said, and should be able to offer that expertise to the lawmakers.

Batko suggested developing stronger relationships with local elected officials to inform them and to ask for their support, and the support of faith-based communities, in advocacy efforts. “Call now,” she said, to ask Virginia lawmakers to pass the extension of Medicaid in the state. Start efforts now to protect funding and to resist “block grants” as funding solutions, since they are often seen as “funding cuts.” In their take-home packets, the attendees received a primer on how to avoid any pitfalls when publically addressing policy issues.



Attendees at the Housing Forum divided into round table groups to tackle some of the issues they all face, like “Landlord Engagement,” and “Resource Gaps and Needs.”

BEFORE THE PANEL DISCUSSION got underway, there was a reminder that as of June 30, organizations seeking HUD funds will have to have adopted the standards of practice set forth by the National Alliance to End Homelessness — a requirement of which not everyone in the audience seemed to have been aware. The Alliance has toolkits for implementation and measurement available on their website at www.endhomelessness.org.

ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

- 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.
- 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.
- English Conversation Group.** Thursdays, 7 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Practice English with a group of students and adults. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a space.
- English Conversation Group.** Selected Saturdays, 3 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Practice English with a group of students and adults. Free. Call 703-830-2223 for dates.
- English Conversation Group.** Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Practice English with a group of students and adults. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a space.
- 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.
- ESL Book Club.** Mondays, 7 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Meet and discuss a book chosen by group. Free. Call 703-830-2223 with questions and to reserve a spot.
- ESL Book Club.** Every other Saturday, 11 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Adults learning English are welcome to meet and



On Sunday, April 9, the Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold an N gauge T-TRAK model train show, 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

discuss a book chosen by the group. To find out book title, call 703-502-3883.

Lego Block Party. Every other Tuesday, 3 p.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.

Live After Five. Fridays at 5:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway. 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.

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.

Starlight Storytime. Every other Wednesday, 7 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Stories under the stars for ages 4-8. Wear pajamas and bring stuffed friends. Free. Call 703-830-2223 to reserve a space.

Over-40 Softball League. A Fairfax-based league is looking for enough players to form another team. Players must be at least 40 years of age to be eligible. All games are doubleheaders -played on Sundays at Bready Park in Herndon between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. If interested, email skeduman@aol.com for more.

SATURDAY/APRIL 8

Easter Eggstravaganza Wagon Rides. 10:30 a.m. at Frying Pan Park, 2709 West Ox Road. Start with

the egg hunt and then ride around the crop fields. \$2. Ages 2 and older. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks.

APRIL 8-9

Mother's Day Art Show. 1-6 p.m. at 6540 Jerome Court, Manassas. Original paintings, photography, fused glass, prints, and hand-crafted jewelry. Visit visitmanassas.org.

SUNDAY/APRIL 9

Festival of Color. noon-7 p.m. at Bull Run regional park, Centreville. Celebration of festival of colors, Holi, with the sensational Bollywood singer Mika Singh. Visit womenpower.org/ for more.

Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold an N gauge T-TRAK model train show. Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2; 16 and older, \$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

SATURDAY/APRIL 15

Celebrate 275 Years of History. 1-4 p.m. at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. It's a party to celebrate 275 years of history at the site, mingle with historic reenactors, enjoy visits with the Walney Visitor Center animals, play historic games and try your hand at woodworking. Delve into the past with history tours, archaeology talks, and Civil War drilling demos. Call 703-631-0013 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence.

Civil War Soldier Campfire. 5:30-7 p.m. at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Learn about the lives of the soldiers who fought during the Civil War. Practice drilling with a soldier and see a musket firing demonstration. \$10. Call 703-631-0013 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence.

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Sick & Tired



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Man o' man was I sick last weekend (that was not a question). It began as a runny nose, followed by an annoying hacking cough, compounded by sneezing and watery eyes, an occasional headache, with zero interest in food and hardly any energy to get myself out of bed where I spent practically the entire two days. I haven't been that sick/incapacitated since, I don't know when. Thankfully, there was no temperature, sore throat or nausea to further complicate my inability to move off the bed. And most thankfully, there was no urgency to visit the bathroom (I don't know if I would have had the wherewithal to even get there). Otherwise, I might have actually had to call/email the doctor and/or make an appointment at the Emergency Room. After all, I do have cancer so I really shouldn't ignore — totally — the times when I'm feeling uncharacteristically bad. This past weekend, had I gone from bad to worse, I would have called.

However, my symptoms, as miserable as they were, especially for two days, didn't meet the this-is-it threshold as set forth by my oncologist. Though the symptoms were new and different versus the everyday norm, they certainly weren't uniquely different (lung cancer related) for a seasonal-type cold. Moreover, the pain/discomfort/cough wasn't coming from my lungs, and the symptoms had only lasted a few days, not a few weeks. I therefore determined that unlike Babe Ruth who felt "just as bad" as he sounded in his famous Babe Ruth Day farewell speech at Yankee Stadium on April 27, 1947, I wasn't dying. I was just sick with a bad cold, one that was worse than any I remember (although maybe I've forgotten. See column titled "I Can't Forget What I Don't Remember" published 3/22/17).

Nevertheless, since I'm not a doctor, just a patient, presumably I should know what my body is telling me. However, I may not be so inclined to listen (fear mostly). Though my life may occasionally be at stake, I still struggle with the facts of my case. I delude myself into thinking that if I don't give in to the pain and suffering — as rare as they usually are, then I won't suffer the consequences: dying before my time. I don't want to believe the worst so I don't. I wouldn't attribute my above-average life "unexpectedness" since diagnosis (eight years — AND ALWAYS COUNTING) as the power of positive thinking since I never read the book written by Norman Vincent Peale. But I try not to focus too much on my diagnostic reality.

I mean, it's not as if I laugh in the face of death; heck, I cry more than ever, especially while watching programs on television when heartstrings are pulled. Somehow though, I try not to take my cancer personally, if that makes any sense? I try to take it the same way Curly Howard of The Three Stooges took his many slapstick pratfalls: "I'm a victim of soycumstance."

But when I get sick, whether or not I feel anything in my chest/lungs, I cross over into an entirely new realm. No more am I able to talk/humor myself into or out of things, no more am I able to deny my cancer reality and no more am I able to pretend that all is right in my world. It's during these situations when the metaphorical/proverbial you know what hits my emotional fan that I suffer the most. Unfortunately, there's not a shut-off button. I just have to ride it out, as bumpy as it typically is, and hope I come out the other end in better shape than when I went in.

So far, so good. Although I'm still coughing a bit and blowing my nose, all the other symptoms have subsided and no more do I feel worse for the wear. I don't suppose it's cancer-related, but of course, what do I know? What I do know is this: if the remaining symptoms linger, I'll worry, and on Wednesday, April 19 — and for the following week, I'll worry even more awaiting the results from the CT Scan and lower abdomen MRI I have scheduled that day (it's a special: two for one). Granted, these tests are not any newer than catching a cold, but still, I can't help wondering: since I was diagnosed as "terminal," this can't keep going on forever, can it?

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

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-Werner Heisenberg

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Jackson Clark takes a break from hike.

Jackson Clark Aims To Give Back

FROM PAGE 5

see all the way to the ocean.”
At one point Jackson got so sick, with headache, and soreness, that it was difficult to even walk, but the closest town was 10 miles away. Jackson explained that when you first start on the trail as an inexperienced hiker, they tell you to pace yourself, don't try to go too fast — no more than 8-10 miles a day. After you get your “trail legs” you can pick up the speed or hike longer periods. The best advice, Jackson said was “to listen to your body.”

For the last month of his trip he hiked with a group of people who he said helped to support each other, shared supplies if others ran short, and were basically like a family for each other. Throughout his hike, he saw wonderful natural sights, and learned to appreciate the simplest things of life, “like a dry pair of socks and a warm bed.” He came away from the experience feeling lucky for the help he received all along the way, and decided he wants to start on another journey of a different sort this year.

At 19 now, Jackson hopes to raise enough funds to go on a Bike and Build trip across the country this spring. He found out about it through a coworker at REI. All bikers start

from Virginia Beach on May 22 and bike through 12 states for a total of 3,875 miles to end in Oregon on Aug. 6.

Besides the adventure part of the trip, Jackson and other participants will be giving back to the common good. Along the way, he and the group of bikers will stop to build 12 affordable houses at predetermined sites in coordination with other organizations such as Habitat for Humanity. This is Jackson's chance to see the much of the rest of America. Jackson cited a few facts about the affordable housing crisis in our country.

Affordable housing is that which the monthly mortgage payment is 30 percent or less of a person's monthly income. Forty million households in the country do not fall within those parameters. Twenty million pay more than 50 percent of their monthly income to meet the monthly mortgage payment. So the need is great.

Jackson said he will be posting periodically on his blog for those who wish to follow his progress. To support his efforts, visit <https://classic.bikeandbuild.org/rider/9240>.

This story was originally printed in the Greenbriar Flyer.

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BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 4
campers.html to learn more.

VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTORS NEEDED

The Sully Senior Center in Centreville is looking for the following instructors: Zumba gold, basic art, Tai Chi/Qigong, and a personal trainer. Meals on Wheels drivers, substitute drivers, and co-coordinators are needed for routes throughout the county. Much of the coordination can be completed via phone and computer. Call 703-324-5406, email VolunteerSolutions@fairfaxcounty.gov or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/volunteer-solutions.htm VolunteerSolutions@fairfaxcounty.gov.

FRIDAY/APRIL 14

Westfield Mulch Order Deadline. Have your mulch delivered right to your driveway on April 21 or 22. Your order will raise the funds needed to provide a safe and sober All Night Grad Party for Westfield Seniors and support other vital PTSA programs. Order

early, there is a limit on the total number of bags that can be delivered. \$5 per bag. \$2 per bag, for students to spread mulch, also limited number of slots. Order today at bit.ly/2kAh4fb.

MONDAY/APRIL 17

Emergency Preparedness Lecture. 7 p.m. at the Cale Community Center, 4615 Stringfellow Road. Guest speaker is Grelia Steele, the new Community Outreach Manager for the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management. Visit www.wfcwc.org or call 703-378-4250.

SATURDAY/APRIL 22

7th Annual Immigration Forum. 5:30-9 p.m. at Korean Central Presbyterian Church, 15451 Lee Highway, Centreville. Join the Centreville Immigration Forum in celebration of the dance, music, food and diverse community of Northern Virginia. Free. Visit www.centrevilleinternationalshowcase.org.

Women of Different Faiths Discuss Helping Others

FROM PAGE 3

and wishes of good will, as did the county government," she said. "And that speaks toward the type of people we have here in the county; activism was when our neighbors spoke up [against the vandalism]. And when, more recently, threatening phone calls were made to Jewish community centers, all religions came out to express their support and concern."

Bulova said all issues are women's issues and require "a moral prism through which we look at them. But a key element in activism is also listening and understanding where other parties are coming from."

A teacher in the audience told Bulova that, over the past few months, she'd been "bombarded with national issues" and wondered how to respond on a local level. "Right now, the Board of Supervisors is con-

sidering the FY '18 budget, so we're hearing from people concerned that finances won't be provided for the services important to them," replied Bulova. "But it's also about what we don't hear; and if we don't hear from people, we assume everything is OK."

As for the larger issues, she said, "I'm also concerned about what's happening nationally. I'm glad people in Fairfax County are speaking out against hate speech when others feel liberated to say ugly things they never would have said before. And when they hear it, they need to say, 'That's not OK; that's not the way I feel.'"

Pediatrician Susan Kohn belongs to Temple B'nai Shalom in Fairfax Station and is a member of the Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom – a group of Muslim and Jewish women. She said, "Doing little kindnesses to people you see every day" is also activ-

ism.

And April Dalton, of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, shared that, a year ago, her church was called on to help refugees fleeing to Greece. "I was so upset and wanted to help them," she said. "I got a list of things to do from Catholic Migration and Refugee Services, and it's been so empowering to bring an international issue to our, little city. We now need 20 cribs and other baby items for 20 women who just got here from Afghanistan." Anyone wishing to donate toward this effort may contact her at aprialdalton6@gmail.com.

Dalton said she can also do her part to help the world by going to PTA meetings, writing her congressmen and raising her children to be nice to people who aren't nice to them. Agreeing, Ananda Vrindavan, temple president of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness in Washing-

ton, D.C., said, "Conversation is a powerful thing. And creating opportunities for children to talk to others can help them become independent [thinkers]."

"We tend to hang out with our own groups," added Kohn. "But we can teach children there are lovely people outside their own group. After 1-1/2 years of existence, the Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom brings people together who wouldn't normally talk to each other. And in the past few months, our membership has grown because they know this is an organization that watches each other's backs. So I encourage people to find organizations like this."

Summing up, Ahmadiyya Muslim Fazeela Wadan said, "We need to feel the pain of others, create compassion in our children and become advocates for them in the world."

ROUNDUPS

Learn about Addiction

The Sully District Police Station's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) will meet Wednesday, April 12, at 7:30 p.m. in the Sully District Governmental Center, 4900

Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly.

Does someone in your life struggle with addiction? Wonder how it begins? Attend this meeting to learn about the power of addiction and how one local woman turned her life around. This is an opportunity to speak with someone who fought heroin

addiction at a young age and won. Learn about Nora's story and how those in her life impacted her recovery. Experts will be on hand to answer questions and address current trends. The public is encouraged to bring loved ones, friends and family who may benefit from hearing her story.

Free Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will perform free, child safety carseat inspections Thursday, April 13, from 5-8:30 p.m., at the station,

4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. But residents should install the child safety seats themselves so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed.

The first 35 vehicles arriving on each date will be inspected so inspectors have time to properly instruct the caregiver. Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140, to confirm dates and times.

Prepare for Emergencies

The GFWC Western Fairfax County Woman's Club (WFCWC) will host a presentation on "Emergency Preparedness" on Monday, April 17, at 7 p.m. Guest speaker Grelia Steele is the new community outreach manager for the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management. She will discuss personal preparedness and provide an overview on family and emergency preparedness resources to help people become ready for unforeseen disasters.

Steele is an emergency management professional with six years of experience in two Northern Virginia jurisdictions and international experience. She holds two Bachelor Degrees from Virginia Commonwealth University in Homeland Security and Emergency Management and in Political Science. She also holds numerous local, state, and federal certifications in public safety.

WFCWC usually meets at 7 p.m. on the third Monday of the month, September through May, at the Cale Community Center, 4615 Stringfellow Road. Guests are welcome and admission is free. Visit www.wfcwc.org or 703-378-4250.

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