



Springfield

CONNECTION

Franconia ♦ Kingstowne ♦ Newington

Boy and Girl Scouts groups were among the dozens of participants who made up the Orange Hunt Estates Independence Day parade last year, despite soggy conditions.

FOLLOW ON TWITTER: @SPRCONNECTION

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PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION



CONNECTION FAMILIES

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Celebrating Independence Day

AREA PREVIEW, PAGE 11

Summer Lunch Bunch
Transports Food to Children

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'Truly a Life-Changing
Experience for Kids'

NEWS, PAGE 8



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Ella Fox, winner at Ravensworth Elementary school, with her parents.

Sixth Graders Receive Youth Citizenship Medal

The Anna Maria Fitzhugh Chapter, National Society Daughters of American Revolution (NSDAR), presented the DAR Youth Citizenship Medal to 10 sixth grade students at Fairfax County elementary schools. The students were recognized for their qualities of honor, courage, leadership, service and patriotism. DAR Youth Citizenship Award Winners for

2016-2017 include: Kaitlyn Taylor, Cherry Run; Maxwell Loughmiller, Hunt Valley; Akash Pradeep, Rolling Valley; Ella Fox, Ravensworth; Marshall Brown, Orange Hunt; Alyssa Blake, Kings Glen; Dominic Holloway, Cardinal Forest; Rachel DeVan, West Springfield; Rohan Puri, Keene Mill; and Maddie Orchard, Sangster.

Springfield Man Dies in Two-Car Crash

One person is dead after a two-vehicle crash on Friday morning, June 23, in the southbound lanes of Fairfax County Parkway near Braddock Road. According to FCPD Media Relations Bureau, a preliminary investigation determined a 2003 Honda Civic was traveling northbound shortly before 7 a.m., when it crossed over the median into the path of an oncoming 2015 Volkswagen Passat. Three people were taken to the hospital; one was flown and two were driven by ambulance. Sayed Osman Sayed, 20, of Springfield, died of his injuries.

Crash Reconstruction Unit (CRU) detectives are investigating to determine what caused the crash and whether speed was a factor. Alcohol does not appear to be a factor.

If you have any information regarding the accident, contact the Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131, or Crime Solvers electronically by visiting www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org or text-a-tip by texting "TIP187" plus your message to CRIMES(274637).

FAITH NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

Burke Presbyterian Church, 5690 Oak Leather Drive in Burke, worship services are Sundays at 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m., and 6 p.m. www.BurkePresChurch.org.

One God Ministry Church, 4280/4282 Chain Bridge Road,

Fairfax, offers Early Morning Service at 8 a.m., Sunday School at 10 a.m., Sunday Worship Service at 11 a.m., and Wednesday Bible Study at 7 p.m. Women, Men, and Youth Bible Studies are on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. A Spiritual Gifts Service is the first Friday of every month at 7 p.m. One God Ministry has ministries for youth, men, women, couples, music and singles. 703-591-6161 or www.onegodministry.org.

SEE FAITH, PAGE 7



THANK YOU!

The Robert E. Lee Senior Class of 2017, their families, teachers, administrators and the All Night Graduation Celebration committee members gratefully acknowledge the following businesses, organizations and individuals for their support of the PTSA sponsored alcohol and drug free All Night Graduation Celebration held on June 19th at the South Run Recreation Center. We would also like to thank the volunteers who helped make the night unforgettable. We are grateful for your generous contributions and commitment to the young people of our community!

Corporate - \$500 and over

American Legion Post 176
Dwoskin & Associates, Inc - Springfield Plaza
Greenspring Village Senior Living

Lancer Lever - \$250-\$499

Lee High School Sports Boosters
Saint Bernadette Catholic Church
Saratoga Elementary School PTA

Gold Level - \$100-\$249

Jessica Abernathy & Pizza
Apple Federal Credit Union
Chic-Fil-A, Springfield
Domino's, Kingstowne
Marty Engel/Floorcraft
Garfield Elementary School PTA
Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce
Eddie Greenan's Jewelers
Gyzurcza Hartman Dentistry
David Hughes Orthodontist

Jones and McIntyre
Key Middle School PTA
Newington Community Association
Springfield/Lorton Dental Group
Springfield/South County Youth Club
Walker's Grille
Delegate Vivian Watts
Wegman's
Westwood Baptist Church
Women of the Moose Lodge

Blue Level - \$50-\$99

Chipotle, Springfield
Sandra Conklin
Einstein's Bagels
Franconia Family Medicine
Friends of Jeff McKay
Amy Haddock
Kiwanis Club of Alexandria
Malek's
McDonald's, Saratoga
Virginia O'Hara

Richard Priest
Donna Ruggles
B. Rushing Lawn and Landscaping
Saint Lawrence Catholic Church
William Shotwell
Subway, Springfield Plaza
Sweet Frog
Barbara Symons

Friends of the Class of 2017 - \$1-\$49

Delia's Pizzeria
Hard Times Café
Jersey Mike's, Brookfield Plaza
Mission BBQ
Murphy Staats Dentists
NOVA Pediatrics
Olam Tikvah Sisterhood
Popeye's, Springfield Plaza
Sandwich Republic
Jeffery Schulman
Tippy's Tacos, Brookfield Plaza
Trader Joe's, Springfield Plaza



FAIRFAX COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Braddock Road corridor goes from Guinea Road to Ravensworth Road inside the beltway.



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

Haiping Luo points out her bus concern on the project boards.

How to Ease Braddock Road Congestion?

Transit, biking and intersection changes discussed.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

It's going to take small changes in several areas to make a difference with the traffic on Braddock Road, and that was reflected in the Braddock Road Multimodal Study community information meeting #4, held on June 26 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

These changes involved bike lanes, crosswalks, bus stop consolidation and a willingness to accept the fact that something needs to be done to reduce the amount of traffic on the road while preserving the way of life for the residents in this part of the county. The stretch of the road included in the study was from Guinea Road to Ravensworth Road inside the beltway. The plan has evolved through the process and now involves an improved crossing at Guinea, on-road bike paths on both sides of Braddock, relocated bus stops to minimize traffic interruptions, a lighted portion of the Cross County Trail under Braddock, and the use of HAWK signals in a couple of spots. HAWK is an acronym for High-Inten-



Looking west at the Burke Lake Road intersection, the Kings Park shopping center is a focal point for the new plan.

sity Activated Crosswalk Signal that is "only used when pedestrians are there," said Becky May, a landscape design engineer on the project.

THE KINGS PARK Shopping Center is a pivotal point in the corridor, and Jim Sobecke was on the task force formed by Braddock District Supervisor John Cook. He looked at the Grantham and Burke Lake Road as a hot spot. "There's at least one accident there a day," he said.

Haiping Luo, a resident of Kings Park for the last 20 years, was worried about the 17G

bus that she catches to the Pentagon. By consolidating the bus stops, she won't be able to get the 17G on the side of the street where it is now. "If I wait here, there is no way to get the 17G," she said, pointing to one of the maps displayed around the room. "My wait time definitely will be longer," she added. Luo used a Post-It on the map to highlight her concern, a method used at transportation meetings like this to gather resident's concerns.

Then there's the transit center issue on a spot behind the shopping center that is better off a park and ride lot, according to some. "This is a difficult issue," said Cook.

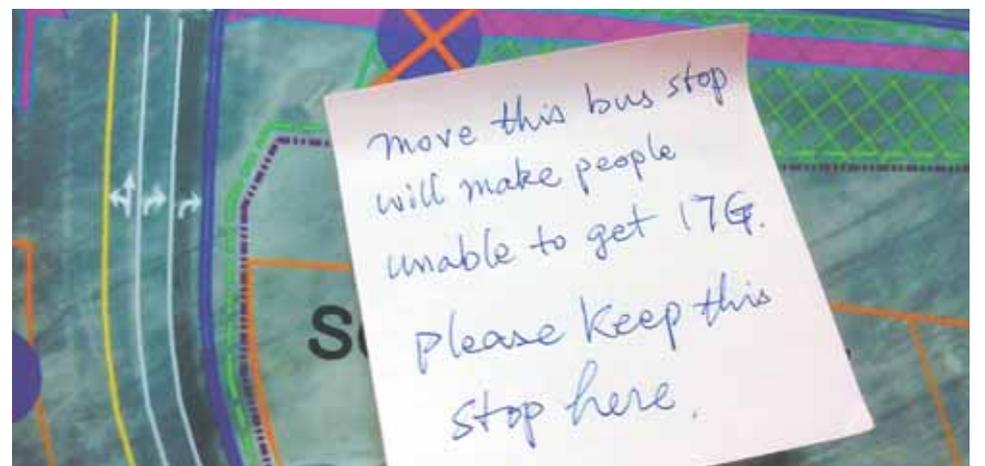
The task force did not choose the transit center, priced at \$22 million, but the technical team did pick that as the optimal way to enhance bus and carpool options. "It encourages carpool and ride-sharing," said Mike Guarino with the Fairfax County Department of Transportation. "We think it achieves a lot of advantages the transit center would bring," he said.

In August 2017, the transit center-park and ride lot decision will be released to the public, and Cook encouraged all to fill out an online survey, but noted that the \$9 million park and ride lot is probably the most favorable in this case. Then the microphone was turned over to the audience for questions. Topics included the "do nothing," option by a resident that looks at the gridlock every day, while another questioned park and ride lots in other parts of the county. "We live here, we're the ones that are going to have to live with it," said one speaker. "I live here too," Cook said.

THE PROJECT completion date is 2025, but that may be sooner, said Cook, although he didn't say how much sooner. There are a series of upcoming meetings though, starting on Sept. 18 when they have a workshop to look at Guinea Road, followed by Oct. 2 workshop on Wakefield Chapel Road and then Oct. 25 for Braddock and Burke Lake Road. Cook said that more information about these workshops will be listed in his newsletter.



The project boards were a gathering spot early on.



During the meeting, residents of the area wrote concerns on Post-Its and stuck them to the maps.



The cast of “The Complete History of Fairfax: The Musical” include (from left): Christopher McDonnell, Hillary Leersnyder, Jesse Pollack, and Alex Poirier.



Members of the company of “The Complete History of Fairfax: The Musical,” include (from left): Jesse Pollack, Christopher McDonnell, Chris Mayhew (pianist and arranger of the show), Alex Bulova, and Hillary Leersnyder.

A Musical About Fairfax History at Lorton Stage

Playwright Alex Bulova’s “The Complete History of Fairfax: The Musical,” comes to Workhouse July 13-15.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Alex Bulova, 20, of Fairfax, is the sole playwright, composer, and director of “The Complete History of Fairfax: The Musical,” an improvisational-like show with lots of singing and dancing that will be performed from July 6-8 in Falls Church, and July 13-15 in Lorton.

In case his name sounds familiar, Bulova is the grandson of Sharon Bulova, the chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, and son of Gretchen and David Bulova, who serves in the Virginia House of Delegates, 37th District, covering Fairfax. The rising junior attends the College of William and Mary, where he is a double major in film and media studies and government.

“For ‘The Complete History of Fairfax,’ I wanted to create a family-friendly celebration of Fairfax County. I wanted to leave partisan politics at the door,” he said.

The show is a musical summary of all 275 years of Fairfax County’s history, and Bulova took about a year to finish it. It begins in 1608 when John Smith sailed up the Potomac River to Mason Neck and it advances to the present day. It has 55 percent dialogue and 45 percent singing to create depictions of Fairfax’s history.

“I think that it’s very important that we remember where Fairfax County came from,” he said. “As recently as 40 years ago, Fairfax was a relatively rural community

and it has seen exponential growth. And I think that by seeing this show, [audiences] will gain a greater appreciation of how we got to an industrialized county of over a million residents today and where we’re going in the future.”

THE SHOW features four actors who play dozens of roles to portray some of the most famous figures of Fairfax’s history — including George Washington, Antonia Ford, and the Bunnyman. “However, tension between the cast members threatens to tear the show apart,” he said.

Instead of a big, lavish set, he uses various props and furniture pieces to create many historical eras. The costumes were designed by Sarah Marksteiner, who used minimalistic costuming to suggest a variety of historical figures.

The target audience is families with children ranging from ages 5-18, he said. “Not only is this a fun show, but it is also very educational. We go over a lot of facts about Fairfax, and we want as many young people to see it as possible — so they understand where the Fairfax County we know today came from,” he said.

Last year, he co-wrote and directed “Super Nova,” which took a satirical look at Fairfax and Northern Virginia culture. So with this summer’s 275th anniversary of the founding of Fairfax County, he was inspired to celebrate the history of the place he calls home.

When he began writing, he wanted to explore the lesser known events from



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Alex Bulova is the playwright, composer and director of “The Complete History of Fairfax: The Musical.”

Fairfax’s history, so he looked from town to town for the stories associated with each. “That’s how I found out such stories as ‘Sadie the Cow’ and ‘Lucy Burns,’” he said. “I then chose my favorite events from those towns and made songs out of them. My main goal was to represent as many parts of Fairfax as possible through song.”

Take “Burke 1970 or: A Matter of Private Property,” a song about the Bunnyman, for example.

He explained: “In 1970, a man dressed in a rabbit costume and terrorized the newly constructed Kings Park West, and to this day

Where & When

“The Complete History of Fairfax: The Musical” will be performed July 6-8, each night at 7 p.m., with a Saturday matinee at 2 p.m. at the James Lee Community Center, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church, VA 22042. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at www.fairfax275.org.

There is a second weekend showing on July 13-15 at 7 p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, W-3 Theater, 9518 Workhouse Road, Lorton, VA 22079. Tickets are \$12.

nobody knows who he was. In my song I try to imagine who the Bunnyman was and what led him to terrorize the neighborhood with a hatchet.”

In “Mount Vernon 1759 or: A Minuet for Sally,” he said it’s about George Washington a week before his wedding to Martha. “In my research, I found that one of Washington’s first romantic interests was a woman named Sally Fairfax, who was related to the Fairfax family, for whom the county was named after,” he said.

A 2015 GRADUATE of Robinson Secondary School, Bulova was active in theater where he performed in “Little Shop of Horrors” and “Macbeth,” and received the 2015 Cappies Award for Best Comedic Actor in a Play for “Nowhere.” In college, he’s appeared in “Picasso at the Lapin Agile” and “The Addams Family Musical.”

In addition to theater, Bulova was an Eagle Scout with Boy Scout Troop 1865 at St. George’s United Methodist Church in Fairfax, and studied music — taking vocal lessons, piano and cello. He even does tap dancing.

As far as future aspirations, he’s still trying to figure out whether he’ll go into politics or the arts. “I’m waiting once I graduate; I’ll see which path I go down. But in the meantime, I’m enjoying being involved in both,” he said.

NEWS

Military mother Dana Rhame is excited to receive a bundle of gifts for baby at Operation Homefront's Star-Spangled Babies shower presented by Booz Allen Hamilton on Saturday, June 10, at the Springfield Hilton.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



Star-Spangled Babies Shower Held in Springfield

One hundred pre-registered new and expecting military mothers received bundles of baby essentials made possible by the generosity of Booz Allen Hamilton at Operation Homefront's Star-Spangled Babies shower presented on Saturday, June 10, at the Springfield Hilton. Volkswagen and Singhal & Company presented the military mothers with additional gifts. Operation Homefront's Star-Spangled Babies program provides baby showers to support service members and their growing families. Roughly

42 percent of active-duty military children are 5 years old or younger, according to the Defense Department. Due to deployments and frequent relocation, military parents-to-be and new parents often live far from their extended families and support systems. The Star-Spangled Babies showers provide new and expecting parents with early childhood education tips and a support system, especially when loved ones are far away.

Visit OperationHomefront.org.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

From left: RE/MAX 100 Springfield Office Manager Matt Cockerham; RE/MAX Realty Group/100 Broker Ken Crowley; Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross; and NVAR 2017 Chairman of the Board Bob Adamson.

RE/MAX Realty Group/100 Hosts Grand Reopening

The recently renovated and revitalized offices of RE/MAX 100 in Springfield were celebrated with a ribbon cutting by Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross, Broker Ken Crowley, Northern Virginia Association of REALTORS Bob Adamson and other dignitaries.

The renovations, which were completed in May, were part of a new 10-year contract signed recently by Crowley for the office located at 5501 Backlick Road in Springfield.

"The RE/MAX 100 office is virtually a local landmark but had started to show its age," said Crowley. "We have completely redone both the space and the infrastructure to make it a state of the art real estate office."

New phones, computers, real estate software and client-friendly conference areas are all a part of the new look.

The RE/MAX 100 office and its renovation is part of an overhaul of the six RE/MAX 100 offices purchased by Crowley in 2015. The offices were previously owned by Denver-based RE/MAX, LLC, the international franchisor that sells more homes than any other real estate organization. He also owns two offices in Maryland that operate under the name RE/MAX Realty Group.

"We're really excited about this new office," said Matt Cockerham, the manager of the Springfield location who also participated in the ribbon cutting. "We have some of the best agents in the business, and they now have the best office to work from."

Also taking part in the ceremony were Trish Nicely, RE/MAX 100 vice president; and Char Melvin, director of operations for RE/MAX Realty Group and 100, as well as some 50 invited guests.

Visit www.ournexthouse.com.



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July 24-July 28.....	THE PEANUTS MOVIE (G)



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OPINION

Killing the Poor to Pay Millionaires

Even employer provided insurance would suffer; coverage caps and exclusions of pre-existing conditions could return.

The U.S. Senate bill to repeal the Affordable Care Act would take more than \$600 billion (yes with a B) from poor children, poor elders and people with disabilities to give a tax cut to people who make more than \$200,000 a year. Households with income of \$1 million, would gain \$50,000 in tax cuts per year. It is a massive transfer of wealth to the wealthiest households in America taken from the most vulnerable and neediest people. It would lead to more sick people and thousands of preventable deaths every year.

EDITORIAL While much of the damage is done by massive cuts to Medicaid, affecting poor children, people with disabilities and most people in nursing homes, some of the changes will result in damage to the quality of insurance for those who get their insurance from their employers as well.

What could go wrong?

- ❖ Millions of people lose their health insurance — 22 million fewer would have health insurance by 2026 according to the Congressional Budget Office analysis.
- ❖ Loss of coverage for pre-existing conditions, including cancer survivors, people who had transplants, people with asthma, arthritis, high cholesterol, hypertension, obesity, mental health issues, ADD, etc.
- ❖ States could opt out of the law's essential

health benefits measure, which requires insurers to cover 10 main benefits, including hospitalization, prescription drugs and other services. That is, companies could sell health insurance that wouldn't actually be health insurance. Would Virginia be a state that opts out? Quite likely.

- ❖ Ending annual and lifetime coverage caps would also impact people who get health insurance from their employers and the private insurance market. For example, a serious accident or an illness that requires repeated surgeries or bone marrow transplants could put any one of us over the coverage cap.

- ❖ Medicaid pays public schools for many services for special education students, but the Senate bill removes schools from eligible Medicaid providers, costing Virginia an estimated \$40 million annually; \$3 million in Fairfax County; \$2 million in the City of Alexandria.

- ❖ \$800 billion plus in cuts to Medicaid puts the funding for most people who are currently in nursing homes at risk. Many of these are people who were middle class and but outlived their savings and coverage.

- ❖ In Virginia, the proposed changes to Medicaid would cost the state \$1.4 billion over seven years.

- ❖ Medicaid pays for much of the fight against opioid addiction, including treatment. Cuts would be devastating to efforts to counter the

wave of overdose deaths and other effects of addiction.

- ❖ Coverage for mental health treatment, including addiction treatment, is threatened both by cuts to Medicaid and by changes in the private insurance market.

- ❖ There will be greater need for Medicaid over time. More seniors will be poor, as fewer people who are retiring have pensions or adequate retirement savings. The demand for nursing home beds will be increasing as the population ages.

(This is by no means a comprehensive list of problems.)

If a version of the Senate bill were to pass, the results will be harmful to tens of millions of Americans. Call your senators. Virginia's U.S. Senators, Tim Kaine and Mark Warner, are both Democrats in the forefront of pushing back against this bill. But let them know you expect them to do the extraordinary to hold this up. Call the senators listed below and tell them to vote against it.

Ask family and friends to call their senators today.

If you have family or friends who live in West Virginia, Louisiana, Maine, Nevada, Alaska or Ohio, their calls are especially important. Senators Shelley Capito (R-WV); Bill Cassidy (R-LA); Susan Collins (R-ME); Dean Heller (R-NV); Lisa Murkowski (R-AK); Rob Portman (R-OH) are among those reported to be possible opponents of this proposal.

The U.S. Capitol Switchboard number is 202-224-3121. An operator will connect you directly with the Senate office you request.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Wishing Everyone a Fun, Safe, and Musical Summer

BY SUPERVISOR
JOHN C. COOK
R-BRADDOCK DISTRICT

Summer has finally arrived! The kids are out of school, and neighbors are reconnecting at their local swimming pools, having barbecues with friends, or simply enjoying themselves outdoors. A sense of community is growing even stronger throughout the Braddock District. As the Braddock District Supervisor, and a Kings Park resident who loves community involvement and neighborhood events, I wanted to make you aware of several gatherings that are happening this summer.

For starters, Braddock Nights, a district favorite, begins on July 7 at both Lake Accotink and Rutherford Parks. These wonderful Friday night concerts will be held until Aug. 18 and include music from different genres including jazz, blues, swing, pop, and Afro-Cuban groups. Come out and unwind on Friday nights with your family, bring a picnic dinner and a blanket and enjoy the music from

7:30 – 8:30 p.m. A full schedule can be found online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance/braddocknights.htm.

If that's not enough entertainment for you, how about coming to the Braddock District Battle of the Bands at Lakeside Park/Royal Lake (5216 Pommeroy Drive) on Sunday, July 16, from 3-8 p.m. We'll have bands from across the District and County showcasing their talents. You, the audience, are the judges. The prize is an opportunity for a contract to play at one of the Braddock Nights concerts in 2018. This event is a great way to support youth music groups, as well as other bands in our area. Come join your neighbors for music, food trucks, and fun!

Finally, if you enjoy friendly neighborhood gatherings and want to meet your local law enforcement officers and find out more about community-policing, National Night Out is for you! National Night Out will take place on Tuesday, Aug. 1, and neighborhoods across the County will hold

block parties and other community-focused events. National Night Out is a campaign to build trust between the community and police through these gatherings. If your community is not planning an event, consider putting one together. Please let our office know (at 703-425-9300) if you are holding an event, and I will try to stop by with our district police captain or lieutenant.

Obviously, the Braddock District

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

One Value We Can All Agree On

To the Editor:

In our politically divided nation, I think there's one American value we can all agree on: everyone deserves to be free.

On Tuesday, the State Department released the 2017 Trafficking in Persons Report, which ranks 187 countries on their efforts to combat human trafficking, including the U.S.

This report sheds light on the hidden crime of modern-day slavery — a crime that holds more than 45 million men, women, and

has many fun events this summer, and there are more than enough ways to become engaged in your neighborhood. I encourage you to take full advantage of them. Each one of these events is an opportunity to come out, reconnect with neighbors, and perhaps meet some new ones. Remember — your community is only as strong as the people in it, and community-focused events are great ways to strengthen that bond.

children in bondage.

The 19th century abolitionist William Wilberforce said, "You may choose to look the other way, but you can never say again that you did not know." What does this mean for us? For one thing, our members of Congress should recommit themselves to protecting the integrity of this Report and the U.S. foreign aid programs that help rescue slaves and put traffickers behind bars.

Mark Campbell
Fairfax

Springfield
CONNECTION

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COMMENTARY

Stay with Paris Climate Agreement

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

Among the many actions of the new federal administration in Washington, few have drawn sharper disagreement around the world as has the unfortunate decision to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement. Only two nations of the world did not join, with the United States being the first and only to withdraw. The Agreement was difficult to reach and showed real promise to bring nations together to curtail climate change.

The response has been swift and determined among those concerned with climate change as to what can be done to stay the course on dealing with the issue. Recently I joined with more than 550 legislators from throughout the country, including 11 from Virginia, organized by the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators (NCEL, ncel.net) in sending a letter to the administration indicating our opposition to withdrawal from the Paris Agreement. Following is the text of that letter:

We are state legislators representing 45 states with a total population of over 298 million United States citizens and we stand united in opposition to the president's decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement.

We are committed to continuing the United States' leadership in working toward a clean energy economy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Now more than ever, in the wake of this short-sighted decision by the Federal Administration, it is important that state and local governments come together to strengthen our resolve to meet our regional goals to reduce carbon pollution and our national goals to achieve the reductions agreed to in Paris in 2015.

We stand with the 292 United States mayors representing more than 60 million Americans, the governors of 12 states with



a total population of over 102 million, and 194 countries committed to upholding the ambitious goals adopted in the Paris Agreement. At the same time, we explicitly refuse to stand with President Donald Trump, in his repudiation of the agreement.

Climate change is not a conspiracy, a hoax, or a partisan cause. Climate change will not affect just a few low-lying countries and the polar regions. Climate change is real and caused by human activity. People around the world and herein our own country, in our own states, in our own communities have already experienced the impacts and will see significantly increased impacts in the coming decades.

As state legislators, we declare our commitment to work with our legislative colleagues, our governors, and our constituents to ensure that we continue this country's leadership role to build a 21st Century clean energy economy and that we meet or exceed all of the deliverables in the Paris Agreement.

To this end, we will reach out across local, state, and federal borders to work together for our future. These ties will strengthen our economy as we build upon American ingenuity, entrepreneurship, productivity, and scientific and technological know-how to reduce carbon pollution while producing the next generation of clean transportation, clean power, and energy efficient devices and strategies.

With or without the president's leadership, our country must continue to lead the fight for climate action. Working together across multiple states, we will ensure our great nation does not go backward and meets or exceeds the Paris Agreement.

If you decide to write a letter as well, please feel free to borrow any or all of the text of this letter.

FAITH NOTES

FROM PAGE 2

Faith Communities in Action meets the first Wednesday of every other month from 2-4 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, Conference Rooms 2 and 3, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax.

The Bahá'ís of Fairfax County Southwest offers "Interfaith Devotions: World Peace and Unity" for the general public on Saturdays. These free devotional gatherings meet at the Pohick Regional Library, Room #1, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke, 22015.

St. Leo the Great in Fairfax hosts "Night of Praise" the first Saturday of each month, featuring praise music and Eucharist adoration at 7 p.m. Located at 3704 Old Lee Highway in Fairfax.

St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, 8617 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, offers a traditional service on Sundays at 8:15 and 11:15 a.m. and a

contemporary service on Sundays at 9:45 a.m. www.stmatthewsumc.org or 703-978-3500.

The Immanuel Bible Church MOPS group meets on Mondays at 7 p.m. at Immanuel Bible Church, 6911 Braddock Road, Springfield. MOPS is for pregnant or parenting mothers of children from infancy to kindergarten. 703-922-4295 or www.MOPS.org.

First Baptist Church of Springfield, 7300 Gary St., Springfield, has traditional and contemporary Sunday services at 10:30 a.m., Sunday school at 9:15 a.m. Special worldwide services offered at special times throughout the year in English, Spanish and Ethiopian. The pastors are Jim Weaver and Jason Mitchell. 703-451-1500 or www.fbcspringfield.org.

Mount Calvary Baptist Church, 4325 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax:

- ◆ Adult Bible Study every Wednesday starting at 7 p.m., Youth Bible Study at 7:15 p.m.
- ◆ Full Praise and Baptism Service at 7 p.m., the last Wednesday of every month

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Date: Saturday, July 8, 2017
Time: 9:00 a.m. – Registration
9:30-1:00 p.m. – Workshop
Place: **Duff Kronfeld & Marquardt P.C.**
Fair Oaks Commerce Center
11320 Random Hills Road/Suite 630
Fairfax, VA 22030
Fee: No Fee

Please join us for our Second Saturday Divorce Workshop and get the information, support and guidance from professionals: a family law attorney, a financial advisor, a mortgage broker and a family therapist.

Registration at the door; however, pre-registration is recommended as space is limited.

Online Registration: www.secondsaturdaynova.com
Email: nancy@secondsaturdaynova.com
Phone: (703) 591-7475

You've come to the right place!





Adult and children WWAST members during the softball game's opening ceremony.



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Eyes on the ball, the player at bat prepares to take a swing.

'Truly a Life-Changing Experience for Kids'

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Some of the children swung the bat with one hand; others hopped to first base after getting a hit. But in the end, it didn't really matter how they played softball – or even who won the game – just that they did it.

These boys and girls were participating June 17 in the Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Game at GMU's softball complex. And unlike in traditional competitions, the people in the stands cheered for every player on both teams.

One of those exuberant fans was Michelle Robertshaw, whose son Hunter, 13, was playing with a running blade on his right leg. He, like the other children on the field, had come from all over the country to take part in the Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team (WWAST) Kids Camp, June 12-16, that culminated in the softball game.

"This is beyond words, this is fabulous," said Robertshaw. "It's helped Hunter gain confidence; and it's been great having someone with the patience to work with him so he can adapt and play with his friends."

Actually, it was game one of a double-header that day; playing in the second game would be the adult WWAST. It's comprised active-duty and veteran soldiers with missing limbs, and the members vie against able-bodied teams to inspire and educate others about how much they're still capable of doing. Not only have these wounded warriors served their country but, during the Kids Camp, they gladly give their time to work with and pass on their knowledge to children with missing limbs or amputations.

"As a team, we all look forward to Kids Camp," said Bucky Weaver, 1976 Fairfax High grad and the WWAST coach. "To be able to witness the bond between the children and the wounded warriors is such an inspiration. This is truly a life-changing experience for these kids, as America's heroes continue to serve their country in a special way."

The adult WWAST members travel throughout the U.S. playing softball and



During this point in the game, the blue team has runners at first and second.

raising awareness of and money for wounded-veteran causes. This was the fourth year of the Kids Camp and its second time at GMU.

"We bring in 20 kids [plus one parent each] from around the country for a week," said local attorney and Kids Camp committee member Brian Drummond. "And the adult, wounded warrior players serve as mentors and coaches for the kids, ages 8-12. But it's not just about softball; during the week, we took the kids on a bus tour of [Washington,] D.C., saw all the monuments and spent an evening at the Udvar-Hazy Center [National Air and Space Museum Annex]."

Yet the experience is about even more than that – it's about the intangibles that mean so much to the families. "It's hard to put into words how inspiring this week is for the kids, parents and players," said Drummond. "It builds camaraderie among everyone involved, and parents can share information about prosthetics and what their kids go through at school. And many stay in touch long after they leave here."

ENJOYING THE GAME, he said what gives him the most satisfaction is "watching how the kids grow in confidence and

skill in just these few, short days." He's also touched by the strong bonds everyone forms. Said Drummond, "There'll be a lot of tears shed tonight at the final party before everyone goes home."

Before taking the field, some of the young players spoke with the Connection. Jack Finney, 8-1/2, of Neoga, Ill., has played baseball for four years and is equally at home pitching or playing second base or left field. He gets his love of baseball from his dad, a lifelong Chicago Cubs fan, and he planned to pitch in the Kids Camp game.

"I'm the best player on the team because I hit balls into the outfield the most often," he said proudly. And that's pretty special, considering Jack was born missing his left forearm. He's attended the Kids Camp before and said an adult WWAST player taught him how to tie his shoes and play softball.

Jack likes the camp because "Each year, you get to meet new people, and it's fun playing with kids without hands or legs. We're all different – that's how God made us. It's like, if we all rooted for the same baseball team, that would be boring because we wouldn't know about the other teams." Jack plays basketball, too, and hopes to someday be a professional athlete.



Running blade on, Brooklyn Olin is ready to leave the dugout and play ball.

Also playing in the youth game in that day's 90-degree heat was Brooklyn Olin, 11, of Grant, Mich. Enjoying her visit to the nation's capital, she said, "I liked seeing the Washington Monument, the White House and the Capitol – and it was cool seeing the space shuttle." As for Virginia, she said, "It's really hot."

At home, Brooklyn usually plays second base or shortstop; but in this game, she was slated to man first base. She, too, called herself a good hitter. "I like baseball because it shows a lot of teamwork and I get to hang out with cool people and make a lot of friends," said Brooklyn.

She was born without a left arm from the bicep down, and her left leg was twisted at a 90-degree angle and had no knee or ankle joints. "It got in the way of everything and would have fallen off if it wasn't amputated when I was 10 months old," she explained. "Then when I was 11 months old, I got a leg made out of two pieces of wood with elastic and hinges. But I couldn't move very well."

Things changed, though, when Brooklyn was 9 and got a running blade below her

NEWS



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Cheered on by a wounded warrior, this boy heads to first base after getting a hit.

Amputee children, veterans bond over softball.

left knee. "I can actually run," she said. "Before I had it, I couldn't run or hop. That's why I wanted a running blade – so I could run to first base. Before I got it, I could only run half way and would then get tagged out."

For Brooklyn, it meant freedom to move around easily. "As soon as I put on the test, running-blade socket for the first time, I took off running down the street," she said. "It felt great – amazing."

For the softball game at GMU, half the WWAST team played the other half. "We're the Red Dragons and the other team is the Blue Strikers," said Brooklyn. "I like it that all the kids here are amputees and we get to play softball together. We're all alike in many, different ways."

Cheering from the stands, her dad, Tim Olin, said, "I think it's great; she couldn't be with a better group of people. And going to camps like this, we can pass on information to other parents about issues we've faced and resources available for them and their kids regarding things like prosthetics and counseling."

As for Brooklyn, he said, "I'm proud of her, every day, anyway, for all she's accomplished. But for her to keep progressing and learning from these veterans here – who've been through so much – and for them to take the time out to work with her, is just amazing."

DESCRIBING HIS DAUGHTER as smart and outgoing – "just a great kid" – Olin said she gets straight "A's in school, especially in science and reading. "Deciding to amputate her leg was the worst thing her mom and I ever had to do, but it was best for Brooklyn," he said. "Her blade came from Nashville, Tenn., and she'll get a

new one – or adjustments will be made to that one – as needed. Seeing her move around like she does, I couldn't be happier for her."

Robertshaw, of Downingtown, Pa., feels similarly about her son, Hunter, born without a tibia bone in his right leg and two fingers of his right hand fused together. "He got his first prosthetic at a year old, walked at 18 months and then was able to do and learn things on his own," she said. "As he grew, he ran with his friends and could climb on the playground equipment."

Hunter also played soccer and karate and is currently the goalie for a sled hockey team in Arlington. He uses a regular, prosthetic leg for daily activities, including hockey, and a running blade for softball. He even does adaptive skiing in Maine.

"We've never been a family that said he couldn't do something – we've always figured out a way," said Robertshaw. "Hunter's in regular gym at school and does everything every other kid does. We know it's a hard battle, but we're very proud of him. His leg doesn't slow him down; and every day, we're amazed at his willingness to keep going."

She called the WWAST program "the support we started looking for, the year Hunter was born. And each year, we find different people to connect with, including the parents on this team," she said. "Wherever they live, we can discuss different issues and they understand. And we now have the support of the wounded warriors, who've been such good mentors." So regardless which team won the game, she said, "We're just happy the kids are out there."

To contribute to the nonprofit Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team, go to www.wwast.org.



Programs include inspirational music, meditation, spiritual discourse, and personal blessings

July 4 – FREE PROGRAM
10:00am, morning program
7:30pm, evening program

July 5 – FREE PROGRAM
10:00am, morning program

July 5 – DEVI BHAVA
FREE PROGRAM
A celebration devoted to world peace
Program begins at 7:00pm

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Arlington, VA 22202

PARKING / TRANSPORTATION

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ENTERTAINMENT

Send entertainment notes to the Connection at connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ or call 703-778-9416. The deadline is the Friday prior to the next paper's publication at noon. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

ONGOING

Senior Line Dancing 1-2 p.m. Little River Glen Senior Center 4001 Barker Court, Fairfax. Line Dancing is a gentle, social form of aerobic activity. Studies have shown it aids in warding off Alzheimer's disease. No previous experience needed. Cost: \$5 per 8 week session. barbriba@hotmail.com 703-524-3739

Fairfax Pets on Wheels New Volunteer Orientation First Wednesday of each month. 7:30-9 p.m. 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax. An orientation for new volunteers interested in visiting residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities with their approved pets through the Fairfax Pets On Wheels program is held the first Wednesday of every month starting at 7:30 p.m. Visit www.fpow.org for each month's location. Prior to attending, please complete the online application found at www.fpow.org/volunteer. Please do NOT bring pets to this orientation. Also, see weather policy for possible cancellations. www.fpow.org, 703-324-5424 or dfspetsonwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Carolina Shag. Wednesdays. 6:30-10 p.m. Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m. No partners needed. Dinner menu. \$8. Under 21 free. nvshag.org.

FUN-Exercise Thursdays, noon-12:50 p.m. Grace Presbyterian Church Family Room, 7434 Bath St., Springfield. Inova certified exercise instructor leads a moderate level exercise class with music and current events conversation. Muscle, Balance, Strength Training using stretch bands and weights both standing and seated exercises. Instructor donation is \$5. moorefitt@yahoo.com or 703-499-6133.

Exercise Program Mondays and Fridays at 9:30 a.m. year-round at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. The exercises are for strength, balance and maintaining limberness. Contact SCFB office at 703-426-2824 for more information.

Cafe Ivrit (Hebrew Cafe). Wednesdays. 8:15-9:15 a.m. Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Shalom (hello) Did you always want to converse in Hebrew? Join Na'ama each week for conversational Hebrew. You will learn and practice Hebrew in a fun and interactive way while learning more about Israel. Free, however we ask that you try to attend regularly. RSVP.Naama.Gold@jccnv.org.

Smoke Free Bingo. 7 p.m. Every Friday. Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Free coffee, entertaining callers, \$1,000 jackpot (with breaks for smoking friends). www.fairfaxvd.com. 703-273-3638.

English Conversation Groups weekly at George Mason, Burke Centre, and Lorton Libraries Practice and improve your English. Day and start times vary. Visit: va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/eventcalendar.asp

Stories From Strawberry Park 10-11 a.m. Tuesdays in Mosaic, Strawberry Park, 2910 District Ave., Fairfax. Enjoy a live interactive performance each week. For ages 10 and under. Held outside in Strawberry Park. In inclement weather and October through April, storytime will be held in Angelika



'Desire'

Cheryl Wilson "Desire," is part of an art exhibition on display July 1-30 at Fairfax Art League, Gallery Wing, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. Cheryl Wilson's abstract acrylic and mixed media collection of art entitled "Remembering Alice" is in honor of the artist's mother. Visit www.cherylwilsonart.com/ for more.

Film Center. Visit www.fxva.com/listing/mosaic-district/2326/.

Funday Monday 10:30 a.m., every Monday at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. There will be music, movement, storytelling, performances, crafts, and more. It is open to children of all ages, however especially for those who haven't yet started school. Programs are free and open to the public, donations are gratefully appreciated. There is ample free parking in the downtown area, and stroller access at the rear of Old Town Hall on Main St. 703-385-7858 www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts

Kingstowne Farmers Market opens. 4-7 p.m. every Friday through Oct. 27, at Kingstowne Giant Parking Lot, 5870 Kingstowne Center, Alexandria. Freshly picked, producer-only vegetables and fruit, from-scratch bread (including gluten free), baked goods, kettle corn, salsa, hummus, cake pops, fruit popsicles, and ice cream. Email Chelsea.roseberry@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-642-0128 for more.

CAMPS & CLASSES

Art Camp. Various times July 3-7, July 24-28, and July 31-Aug. 4 at the Woods Community Center, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke or the second location is Burke Presbyterian Church, 5690 Oak Leather Drive, Burke. Lessons by Carol Zeitlin. Call 703-250-6930 or visit www.czartlessons.com for more.

JUNE 21-JULY 18

Snoopy and Belle in Fashion. Various times in Fair Oaks Mall, 11750 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. A celebration of Washington D.C.'s political style, dolls will feature presidential outfits. Visit www.shopfairoaksmall.com/ for more.

THURSDAY/JUNE 29

Pleasure Train Concert. 6:30-8:30 a.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Local band, family friendly event. Free. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

FRIDAY/JUNE 30

Adidas Sunglass Show. 2-5 p.m. at the Primary Eyecare Associates, 9530 Burke Road. View an extensive collection of Adidas Sports and Optical Eyewear. Exclusive offers, refreshments, and raffle prizes. Email primaryeyecare@pecavision.com or call 703-272-2880.

Music on the Plaza. 7 p.m. at the Old Town Plaza, 3955 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Music and dance performances. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 1

Art Exhibition. 10 a.m.-9:30 p.m. at Fairfax Art League, Gallery Wing, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. Cheryl Wilson's abstract acrylic and mixed media collection of art entitled "Remembering Alice" is in honor of the artist's mother. Visit www.cherylwilsonart.com/ for more.

Kidz Korner. 10:30-11:30 a.m. in Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Summer in the City shows, every Saturday into September, weather permitting. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov for more.

Declaration of Independence

Reading. 1 p.m. at Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Public reading of the Declaration of Independence at Historic Pohick Church by historical re-enactor, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Costa, portraying the Rev. Mr. Massey, rector of Pohick Church in 1776. Call 703-339-6572, or visit www.pohick.org for more.

Independence Day Celebration. 5-9:30 p.m. at Lorton Workhouse, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Community, family friendly, music. Call 703-584-2900 or visit workhousearts.org for more.

SUNDAY/JULY 2

Yoga on the Square. 10 a.m. in Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Bring a yoga mat and water bottle. Weather permitting. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7858 for more.

MONDAY/JULY 3

Funday Monday for Children. 10:30 a.m. in Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Mr. Skip: fun and songs. Weather permitting. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7855 for more.

JULY 3-7

Drawing Plus Color and Craft Fun Camp. 9:30-11:45 a.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin. Ages 5-8. Visit www.czartlessons.com or call 703-250-6930 for more.

Drawing Camp. 12:30-3:15 p.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin. Ages 8 and up. Visit www.czartlessons.com or call 703-250-6930 for more.

TUESDAY/JULY 4

Independence Day Parade. 10 a.m. On Main Street in downtown Fairfax. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7855 for more.

Holiday Crafts Day. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Crafts will highlight the holiday and the railroads. Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2; ages 16 and older, \$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, or call 703-425-9225 for more.

THURSDAY/JULY 6

Summer Under the Stars concert. 8 p.m. Veterans Amphitheater (adjacent to City Hall), 10455 Armstrong Street, Fairfax. Main Street Community Band. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7855 for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 8

Historic School Bus Tour. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Tour will begin at Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St., Fairfax. "Bus Tour to Three Historic Fairfax County Public

Schools." Bring a bag lunch and closed drink. \$45/county residents, \$47 non-residents. Register at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes. Code: 3163926301

Community Blood Drive. 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Patriot Harley-Davidson, 9739 Fairfax Boulevard in Fairfax, Virginia. Donors should allow one hour for the process, and each will receive a complimentary Super Donor t-shirt courtesy of Inova Blood Donor Services. Visit inova.org/donateblood using sponsor code 5255 or call 703-352-5400.

Lesson Zero Concert. 8-midnight at The Epicure Café, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax. This band is from Springfield. Free. Visit www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero for more.

SUNDAY/JULY 9

Mason Family on Roosevelt Island. 2 p.m. at the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St., Fairfax. Bradley Krueger, a National Park Service Cultural Resources Specialist for the George Washington Memorial Parkway, will tell the little-known history of George Mason's family on the island. Free admission. Call 703-385-8414 for more.

JULY 10-14

Vacation Bible School. 9 a.m.-noon at Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. For 3-year-olds through 5th-grade. Free. Call 703-339-6572 or visit www.pohick.org for more.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 12

Tai Chi. 6:30-7:30 a.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a mat, weather permitting. Free. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

Fashions and Tea. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Springfield Golf & Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Springfield Christian Women Connection sponsoring fashion consultant, Dana Elmini, exploring the notion of "Simply Comfortable." In addition Gail Alicia will speak about "Surviving the Grand Canyons of Life." \$20. Call 703-922-6438, 703-913-9844 or email SpringWmConn@yahoo.com for more.

THURSDAY/JULY 13

Draw/Paint Live Model. 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3990 University Drive, Fairfax. A clothed model will pose for artists to draw or paint for three hours at the Fairfax Art League's Art&Lunch. Bring art supplies and lunch or buy at local restaurants. Call 703-385-7858 for more.

Yoga. 7-9 p.m. at Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a mat, weather permitting. Free. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net or call 703-587-9481 for more.

Summer Under the Stars Concert. 7:30 p.m. Veterans Amphitheater (adjacent to City Hall), 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax. Children's Concert - City of Fairfax Band. Visit www.fairfaxband.org or call 703-385-7855 for more.

JULY 13-15

Fairfax Musical. 7 p.m. at Lorton Workhouse Art Center, 9518 Workhouse Road, Lorton. The Class Act Players Theatre Company presents "The Complete History of Fairfax: The Musical" as a part of Fairfax County's 275th anniversary celebration. Visit www.workhousearts.org for more.

CONNECTION FAMILIES

A Week of Area Independence Day Celebrations

FRIDAY/JUNE 30

Independence Fireworks. 6-9:45 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. Fireworks with Mansion Tour: \$34 for adults; \$24 for youth; No Mansion Tour: \$30 for adults; \$20 for youth. Call 703-780-2000 or visit www.mountvernon.org.

SATURDAY/JULY 1

Fireworks at Lake Fairfax Park. 10 a.m.-10 p.m. at Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. The Water Mine Park, boat rentals, live music, food, puppet show, camping and fireworks. \$10 per car. The rain date is Sunday, July 2. Call 703-471-5414 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lakefairfax/.

Workhouse Arts Center Festivities. 5-9:30 p.m. at The Workhouse, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. \$20. Golf course lecture, hole-in-one challenge, fireworks. Visit www.workhousearts.org.

Independence Fireworks. 6-9:45 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. Fireworks with Mansion Tour: \$34 for adults; \$24 for youth; No Mansion Tour: \$30 for adults; \$20 for youth. Call 703-780-2000 or visit www.mountvernon.org.

MONDAY/JULY 3

History Day Tours. Tours at 11 a.m. through 3 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Test your knowledge of U.S. history at Sully Historic Site with political trivia, games and fun facts. \$7 for adults, \$6 for students, and \$5 for seniors and children. Call 703-437-1794 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

TUESDAY/JULY 4

Firecracker 5K. 8-10 a.m. Reston Town Center, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. Live music and American flags while rooting for the runners in the "Battle of the Branches" competition. Call 703-912-4062 or visit restontowncenter.com.

Autism Speaks 5K. 8 a.m. at Potomac Library, 10101 Glenolden Drive, Potomac, Md. Fundraiser for autism. Registration, packet pick up at 6:30 a.m. Call 202-955-3111 or email AutismSpeaks5K@AutismSpeaks.org.

Great Falls Hometown Celebration. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at at Great Falls Village Centre, 776 Walker Road, Great Falls. Great Falls 5K Walk/Run starts at 8 a.m. and then view the floats, antique cars,



People capture the firework display on cell phones and cameras during the 2016 celebration of Alexandria's birthday.

horses and the bike brigade in the 4th of July Parade at 10 a.m. After the parade, food, music, field games and festivities on the Village Centre Green. At 6 p.m., the gates open at Turner Farm Park featuring music, games, contests and food trucks until the Fireworks Show gets underway just after dusk. Visit www.celebrategreatfalls.org.

Mount Vernon Independence Day. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. Troop inspection, wreath laying, citizen naturalization, music, fireworks and cake. Call 703-780-2000 or visit www.mountvernon.org.

Fairfax Independence Day Parade. 10 a.m. On Main Street in downtown Fairfax. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/special-events/independence-day-celebration.

City of Fairfax Evening Show. 5:30 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run. Children's activities (inflatables, face painting, and balloon artists), on-stage entertainment with a fireworks display that follows. The rain date for the fireworks only is July 5. Items that may puncture the synthetic turf, smoking, alcohol and animals (except service animals) are not permitted on the football field. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7855.

Fairfax Station Holiday Crafts Day. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Crafts will highlight the holiday and the railroads. Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2; ages 16 and older, \$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, or call 703-425-9225.

Great Falls Fireworks. 6 p.m. at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 10550 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. As part of the Village of Great Falls Independence Day celebration, Christ the King Lutheran Church invites members, friends, and members of the community to gather on the church's front lawn to enjoy the fireworks from this premium vantage point. Visit www.gflutheran.org or call 703-759-6068.

Arlington Independence Day. 5-10 p.m. at the Long Bridge Park, 475 Long Bridge Drive, Arlington. Family-friendly activities including live music, food vendors, games, and a view of the Washington, D.C., fireworks display. Games and activities will include face painting, balloon art, moon bounces (weather permitting), cornhole, bocce, and more. No on-site parking at the event. Free event shuttles will run continuously from 4:30-10:30 p.m. between Long Bridge Park and the



Celebrate Independence Day at 144 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Food, water games, pie eating contest and more. Visit www.viennava.gov or call 703-255-6360.

Pentagon City and Crystal City Metro stations. Free. Visit parks.arlingtonva.us/july-4th/.

Vienna July 4 Festival and Fireworks. 6:30 p.m. at at Yeonas Park, 1319 Ross Drive SW, Vienna. Food available from the Vienna Little League snack bar, those who register can get their taste of America in the form of two eating contests: Children ages 5-10 can sign up onsite to participate in a pie-eating contest. Adults can give their chomping skills a try in Vienna's second annual hot dog-eating contest. Visit viennava.gov or call 703-255-6360.

McLean Independence Day. 6:30 p.m. at Churchill Road Elementary School, 7100 Churchill Road, McLean. Musical entertainment by a local disc jockey, as well as food trucks selling a variety of entrees and snacks. Off-site parking and shuttles available. Admission is free. In case of inclement weather, the fireworks show will be presented at 8 p.m. on the rain date, Wednesday, July 5. Call 703-790-0123, or visit www.mcleancenter.org.

Herndon Independence Day Celebration. 6:30-9:30 p.m. in Bready Park at the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave. Family-fun event featuring games, patriotic arts and craft activities, live music, family games,

bingo, food, balloon artists and more. Visit herndon-va.gov/recreation/special-events/4th-of-july.

Falls Church Celebration. 7-10 p.m. at George Mason High School, 7124 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Live music. Visit www.fallschurchva.gov/.

Montgomery County Sparkles. 7:30 p.m., Albert Einstein High School, 11135 Newport Mill Road, Kensington. Montgomery County celebrates Independence Day with live music featuring Gringo Jingo. Fireworks are at 9:15 p.m. Shuttle bus at Westfield Wheaton North Building. Handicap parking only available at Einstein High School. Food vendors on site. Raindate is July 5 for fireworks only. Call 240-777-0311.

Free Sober Rides. Tuesday, July 4, 7 p.m. through Wednesday, July 5, 2 a.m. Area residents, 21 and older, may download Lyft to their phones, then enter the code SOBERJULY4 in the app's "Promo" section to receive a no cost (up to \$15) safe ride home. The SoberRide code is valid for the first 1,500 Lyft users who enter the code. Visit www.soberide.com.

THURSDAY/JULY 6

Patriotic Music. 1-2 p.m. at Holiday Park Senior Center, 3950 Ferrara Drive, Wheaton. \$2 or free for residents. Visit www.holidaypark.us/.

Summer Under the Stars Concert. 8 p.m. Veterans Amphitheater (adjacent to City Hall), 10455 Armstrong Street, Fairfax. Main Street Community Band. Visit fairfaxva.gov or call 703-385-7855.

SATURDAY/JULY 8

USA/Alexandria Birthday Celebration. 5-10 p.m. at Oronoco Bay Park, 100 Madison St. Event to celebrate the 241st birthday of the USA and the 268th birthday of the City of Alexandria, featuring entertainment, cannon salute during the 1812 Overture, food and beverage sales, and fireworks at 9:30. Call 703-746-5592 or visit www.visitalexandriava.com/alx-bday/.

Riverfront Fundraiser. 7:30-10:30 p.m. Del. Mark Levine's house, at 805 Rivergate Place, Alexandria. Refreshments include "impeachment punch," "Orange Russians," wine and beer, soft drinks, and food. And great views of the fireworks which begin at 9:30 p.m.

Come early to get a good lawn seat or come later after the festivities next door at Oronoco Park.

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Summer Lunch Bunch Transports Food to Children

New program caters to food needs of FCPS students during summer.

BY BASMA HUMADI
THE CONNECTION

Summer Lunch Bunch begins its first term this year as a newly established initiative that aims to positively impact and cater to the food needs of FCPS students out of school for the summer.

Started by Chad Simpkins, Associate Pastor at The Journey Church in Springfield, Summer Lunch Bunch brings meals to children Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.. The program began Monday, June 26 and will end Friday, Aug. 25 and has the potential to feed approximately 600 children.

The program brings prepackaged meals made by Fairfax County Food and Nutrition Services (FCFNS), children's books, and "fun buckets" to three apartment complex sites in Springfield: Chelsea Square, Springfield Gardens and Springfield Square. The "fun buckets" contains games and toys such as jump ropes, coloring books, and playground balls.

The aim of Summer Lunch Bunch extends a lot farther than simply passing out meals said Kathleen Ambroso, a member at The Journey Church and volunteer for Summer Lunch Bunch.

"One of the things I like about this is we're not just handing out meals and walking away, but we're also trying to play with the kids and develop relationships with the people here," Ambroso said.

"We live in what people consider a very wealthy area, so these little pockets of neighborhoods where people are struggling kind of go overlooked. Bringing attention to it and being able to partner with our



PHOTO BY BASMA HUMADI/THE CONNECTION

Adults, from left: Meishah Hatfield (Dumfries, Government Contractor), Kathleen Ambroso (Franconia, stay at home mom), Glanatta Kay Carter (Woodbridge, System Analyst), Lilli Mitchell (Burke), Jason Mitchell (Burke, Pastor at First Baptist Church Springfield) and children (from left) JD, Jesse, Ada and Izze join together at Springfield Gardens to pass out meals to children.

church so that more of the congregation can come out and discover that a couple blocks away from where they live is a community that really needs some help [is important]."

SUMMER LUNCH BUNCH comprises volunteers who sign up and attend a training session in order to pass out meals at different sites.

Children were notified about the program through their school district as emails and letters sent out to parents and families.

The three sites were chosen based on advice by social workers and administrators in FCPS.

"We live in a very educated, very rich county but something few people know is 30 percent of people are food insecure,"

said Simpkins.

Food insecurity describes the condition of uncertainty from not being able to have or provide nourishing food — which is a harsh reality for some families living in Fairfax County. Summer Lunch Bunch plans to address the issue by helping to close that gap through transporting packaged lunch meals directly to children living in affected areas.

Summer Lunch Bunch is sponsored by eight different organizations which include: The Journey Church, Richard Byrd Library, United States Department for Agriculture (USDA), FCFNS, Virginia Department of Health and Second Story.

Prior to living in Springfield, Simpkins lived in Chapel Hill, North Carolina as a pastor for seven years — which helped in inspiring the establishment of Summer Lunch Bunch. In Chapel Hill, No Kid Hungry established itself in 2011. The program is dedicated to making children and families proactive about food and nutrition and meet hunger needs by similarly giving meals to out-of-school children during the summer.

Once Simpkins moved back to Virginia, he wanted to carry on the initiative into Fairfax County and began to pull the ropes together to get the program rolling.

"Research shows when people eat meals and read books their chances of success increase dramatically," Simpkins said.

"The plan is to start small and make this something bigger in Fairfax County. Our hope is that people get attached to the organization and adopt us. That would be a huge win because it leads to growth."

So far, the program has made an impact on its community at the Springfield Gardens apartment complex.

"Yesterday we gave out every meal we had," Ambroso said. "I think [it was] about 85 meals."

Forestdale Elementary's Merrell Dade Honored as 2017 Outstanding Principal

Merrell Dade, who has served as principal at Forestdale Elementary School since 2014, has been named the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) 2017 Outstanding Principal. The announcement was made by FCPS Interim Superintendent Steve Lockard at FCPS Honors, a ceremony that recognizes the winners of FCPS employee awards.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FCPS

Merrell Dade

"Many people draw inspiration both professionally and personally from influential people they have met in their life. For many educators, it is a former teacher. For me, I had no former teacher or superior that I so greatly admired until I met Merrell Dade," said teacher Vanessa Simon. "Merrell is the model of compassion, intelligence, innovation, and strength that

so many strive to be.

"Merrell has the ability to balance the many demands of being an administrator with remarkable grace. Many of the educators, families, and students of Forestdale talk about how unique and loving the community is. A lot of this can be attributed to the efforts of Merrell to bring people together. She encourages and supports any efforts to launch events to boost the morale and school spirit of Forestdale," Simon added.

Dade is praised for leading by example and creating a vibrant learning community for all. She has participated in professional development workshops side-by-side with specialists and teachers in order to deepen her own understanding of new educational

concepts and to ensure teachers are able to provide a student-centered environment that promotes curiosity and innovation.

"During Merrell's tenure at Forestdale, she has ignited a culture of learning by being a learner herself," said Jordan Moore, instructional coach. "She works with teachers and students in a responsive way that allows them to reflect on their actions and grow from their experiences."

Beyond the classroom, Dade supports any opportunity to involve parents and the community in the school. Throughout the year, there are many assemblies and opportunities for engagement, such as coffee talks with parents, full STEAM ahead, math scholars, and young scholars. Nominator Rachel Spica says one specific example of Dade's dedication to the relationship between the school and the community was when the Parent Teacher Association did not have the funds needed to hold a Bingo Night. "Merrell became aware of the situa-

tion and worked with others to finance this event from her personal funds. The items purchased to support this event overflowed the tables and created a memorable event. This type of relationship between a principal and the community is invaluable."

Dade began her career in FCPS as a teacher at Hollin Meadows and Kings Park Elementary schools. She then served as a LEAD administrative intern at Lemon Road Elementary, as an assistant principal at Wakefield Forest and Kings Park Elementary schools, and as principal at Franconia Elementary prior to being named principal at Forestdale Elementary.

Finalists for the Outstanding Principal award included Dave Jagels of Centreville High School; Teresa Johnson of Chantilly High School; John Banbury of Oakton High School; and Penny Gros of Stuart High School.

NEWS

The Netcasters Rise Hope in Area Churches

Musicians provide worship music to small congregations.

BY SUSIE NUÑEZ

Lead Pastor Keary C. Kincannon was not just preaching to the choir at Rising Hope Mission Church on June 11, but his message resonated with The Netcasters, the visiting musicians who provided worship music at the Sunday morning service.

Stephanie Bianco, one of the newest vocalists to join the Springfield-Burke group, said, "I loved a quote from [Kincannon's] sermon that 'In God's Kingdom there is no unemployment; God has a job for you.'" Considering the demographics of the Rising Hope congregation, that was a very relevant message.

This small mission church is a United Methodist-affiliated congregation located on the Route 1 corridor in Alexandria. It focuses its outreach on the immigrant and disadvantaged populations in the nearby neighborhoods. Rising Hope is active with several local food banks, manages a clothing closet and serves as a hypothermia shelter in winter months.

The Netcasters wrapped up the fourth season of their independent ecumenical music ministry by providing the service music for these worshippers. Since this congregation generally relies on singing with praise videos, the live ensemble presenting gospel favorites elevated the spirit as well as the tone of the morning's worship service.

"We loved seeing the smiles on peoples' faces and hearing them singing and clapping along with our music," said co-director Kathryn Boudreau. "It was a joy for us to be with the members of Rising Hope that morning."

Kincannon remembered that "toe-tapping" songs like "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" were especially well received and that the passing of the Peace, a standard part of most Protestant worship services, was more inspired than usual.

The Netcasters began offering their music four years ago to small churches that have no live music



Lead Pastor Keary Kincannon (second from left) and the staff of Rising Hope Mission Church.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RISING HOPE



The Rags to Riches Clothing Closet is open Tuesdays through Fridays for the benefit of families in need in the community. Last year Rising Hope provided 11,086 clothing closet and 2,962 toiletry assists.

for their weekly services. Since then, the group has grown from a few singers, guitar and flute players, and one keyboardist to a roster of 22. Their current members include those same musicians, plus a much expanded vocal section, a back-up keyboard player, and an electric bassist and his 8-year-old son on snare drum and cajón.

All Netcasters are volunteers, although some have formal musical credentials. Co-director Ether Smith, who does all arrangements for the group, served for six years as the commander of an Air National Guard band and played in television studio orchestras.

The June 11 service at Rising Hope was followed by lunch and fellowship, and Kincannon has already requested another Netcaster performance for this fall. The group takes a summer hiatus, but will be available for presentations at similarly small churches, retirement centers and rehabilitation centers starting in October.

Performances are tailored to each congregation or audience, with the standard repertoire including gospel standards, "songs of yesteryear," and folk music favorites.

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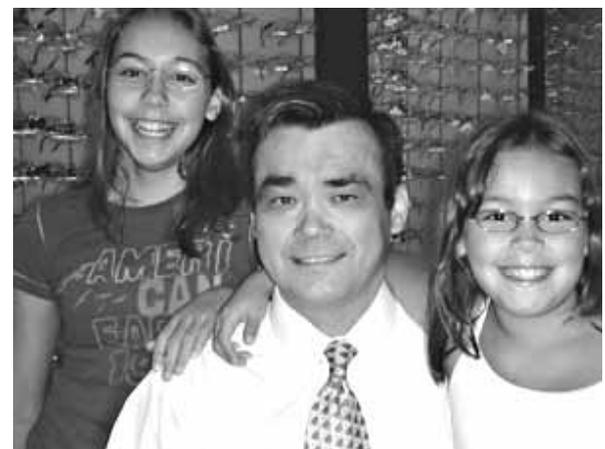
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NEWS

Britepaths Launches School Supply Drive

Goal to provide supplies to 2,500 school children in central Fairfax.

Fairfax-based non-profit Britepaths (formerly Our Daily Bread) is seeking volunteers from the community to donate funds, backpacks and calculators to assist students in need who attend schools in the Fairfax County area as part of its annual Collect for Kids Back to School Program.

Britepaths' goal is to provide supplies for at least 2,500 students who attend schools in the Fairfax High School pyramid, J.E.B. Stuart High School pyramid, and a few other central Fairfax schools. Britepaths provides the supplies to its partner schools for distribution to students with demonstrated need. In 2016, Britepaths assisted 2,600 children.

Community members interested in helping may make a donation through Britepaths' secure on-line donation page at britepaths.org or mail a check to 4080 Chain Bridge Road, 2nd Floor, Fairfax, VA 22030. Write "BTS" in the memo line. Donations of new backpacks and scientific calculators are also welcome. They may be brought to Britepaths' offices through Aug. 5, Mondays through Fridays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. (office is closed on July 3 and 4).

Additional local donation drop-off sites are listed below and on Britepaths' web site. Backpacks may also be ordered and shipped directly to Britepaths through "wish lists" on Amazon.com and DollarDays.com. For more information on donating or sponsoring the program, contact Joanne Walton at 703-273-8829 or jwalton@britepaths.org, or visit britepaths.org.

Britepaths is collaborating with Fairfax County's Collect for Kids partnership, which includes Kids R First, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), the Fairfax County Office of Public-Private Partnerships

and a variety of local non-profit organizations and businesses, to serve as many FCPS students in need as possible by purchasing high-quality school supplies at discounted prices.

The partnership allows Britepaths to provide all the supplies a student needs for approximately \$15 per student (and often \$10 or less for elementary students), where it can often cost \$40 or more per child to purchase all the necessary supplies from retail stores.

These businesses are partnering with Britepaths this summer to serve as donation drop-off sites:

- ❖ Gathering Grounds Cafe (At University Mall, 10637 Braddock Road, Fairfax)
- ❖ Dr. Gene Sweetnam, OD (5204A Rolling Road, Burke)
- ❖ Quest Diagnostics (14225 Newbrook Drive, Chantilly)
- ❖ Solaris Laser and Skin Care (513 Maple Ave. W, Vienna)
- ❖ Spine and Joint Institute (9990 Fairfax Blvd. #115, Fairfax)
- ❖ STEM exCEL (4010 University Dr. #104, Fairfax)
- ❖ Sugar Mama's Ice Cream (11208 Lee Hwy, Fairfax)
- ❖ Union Bank Burke (6050 Burke Commons Road, Suite A, Burke)
- ❖ Westminster School's Camp Griffin (3819 Gallows Road, Annandale)

Britepaths is grateful to its flagship sponsor of the 2017 Collect for Kids Back to School Program, MAXIMUS Foundation, which provided a \$3,000 grant that will assist more than 200 students, as well as the American Association of University Women, Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church and Our Lady of Good Counsel for sponsoring the program. And a special thank you to the Rotary Club of Bailey's Crossroads, which for the sixth year is partnering with Britepaths to help fund and deliver supplies to Bailey's Elementary, Glasgow Middle School and JEB Stuart High School.

The following organizations are running donation drives to support the Program: Deepwood Pool, Girls Inspired and Ready to Lead, Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia Camps Achva and Kadima, Laurel Ridge Elementary Student Council Association, Lake View Pool and Unity of Fairfax.

More information is available at britepaths.org.

Talk with Children about Social Media Dangers

With summer break here, children and teens have more free time to explore, learn and grow; but the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB) asks parents to be mindful and keep a vigilant watch over social media apps and games on their children's phones and devices. There are some unhealthy "games" reportedly present in our community, some involving forms of aggression, bullying or threats.

Among these is the "Blue Whale Challenge," as well as copycat versions, that have recently been reported to local school personnel here in Fairfax County.

These "games" reportedly target children between ages 10-14 and encourage them to complete a series of progressively more intense tasks over a 50-day period, including self-harm and, finally, suicide.

While many reports indicate that this "game" is a hoax; it is more important than ever for families to increase their digital literacy

Available Resources

Mental health resources available to students and families throughout the summer include:

- ❖ FCPS School Counseling Services at 571-423-4420 or www.fcps.edu/resources/student-safety-and-wellness/school-counseling-services
- ❖ School Psychology Services at 571-423-4250 or www.fcps.edu/resources/student-safety-and-wellness/school-psychology-services
- ❖ School Social Work Services at 571-423-4300 or www.fcps.edu/resources/student-safety-and-wellness/school-social-work-services

- ❖ PRS CrisisLink Hotline at 703-527-4077, text "CONNECT" to 855-11 (available 24/7) or prsync.org/crisislink/services/crisislink-hotlines/
- ❖ Merrifield Emergency Services 703-573-5679 (available 24/7) or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/services/acute-care.htm
- ❖ CSB Entry and Referral during business hours at 703-383-8500 or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/services/assessment.htm.
- ❖ More about the Blue Whale Challenge is available from FCPS at fcpsnet.fcps.edu/ssse/documents/BlueWhaleChallenge.pdf.

and do their research on such potentially deadly "games" children may be invited to "play."

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for young people in Virginia between ages 15-34 and the third leading cause of death for ages 10-14.

The CSB urges adults to:

- ❖ Talk to your children about responsible cyber safety.
- ❖ Check phones or other devices for signs of a hashtag or communication

with anyone telling your children to do specific tasks.

- ❖ Discuss websites, links and social media apps your child is using.
- ❖ Know warnings of psychological distress. Signs may include changes in behavior (e.g. outbursts or being withdrawn) or physical health (e.g. weight loss or gain; loss of appetite), hopelessness, sadness, boredom and depression.
- ❖ If you see signs of distress, ask if they are considering suicide. Asking about suicide does not increase risk of suicide.
- ❖ Be aware of suicide prevention information and resources.

BULLETIN BOARD

Send notes to the Connection at connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ or call 703-778-9416. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Free Sober Rides. Tuesday, July 4, 7 p.m. through Wednesday, July 5, 2 a.m. Area residents, 21 and older, may download Lyft to their phones, then enter the code SOBERJULY4 in the app's "Promo" section to receive a no cost (up to \$15) safe ride home. The SoberRide code is valid for the first 1,500 Lyft users who enter the code. Visit www.soberride.com.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke serves those 50 and older who no longer drive. **Volunteer drivers** are needed for trips (Monday-Friday) to medical appointments and companion shopping within the Fairfax/Burke area. **Office workers** are needed to answer phones in the SCFB office (Monday-Friday) to match drivers and those who need rides. Call 703-323-4788.

THROUGH AUG. 25

Summer Lunches. The Fairfax County Public Schools Office of Food and Nutrition Services will be hosting the FEEDS (Food for Every Child to Eat During Summer) BBQ program, a USDA-funded program is free to all children 18 years and under and \$2 for adults. There is no registration involved, and open to everyone. Meal service will be provided at the following sites Monday-Friday, 11:30-1 p.m. No service on July 3 and 4. In the Springfield area, FEEDS is offered at the following schools:

- Springfield Gardens Apartments, 6116 Cumberland Ave.
- Springfield Square Apartments, 7000 Rhoden Court, starts at noon
- Chelsea Square Apartments, 5734 Backlick Road, starts at noon

THURSDAY/JULY 20

Lunch N' Life. noon-2 p.m. at Burke Presbyterian Church, 5690 Oak Leather Drive, Burke. The guest presenter will be Elizabeth Gray, Esq. to speaking on legal issues for older adults. \$10. Sponsored by Shepherd's Center. Call 703-273-5730 or see www.scfva.org for more.

ONGOING

Positive Parenting Strategies Course. At PHILLIPS, 7010 Braddock Road, Annandale. A series of classes and in home consultations taught by PHILLIPS' counselors. Open to all local families. Call Stacy Stryjewski at 703-658-9054.

Thermal Camera Loan Program. Learn where the energy is leaking out of the home with a special attachment for the iPhone or Android. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/energy or call 703-324-5955 for more.

Master Gardener Training. The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit fairfaxgardening.org or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

Fairfax Rotary Club Meeting 12:15-1:30 p.m. Mondays. American Legion, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. Meetings with luncheon and program. fairfaxrotary.org.

NARFE Monthly Meeting Every Second Tuesday 11:30 a.m. American Legion Post 177 located at 3939 Oak Street, Fairfax. NARFE Fairfax 737 monthly luncheon meeting. Enjoy lunch accompanied by a special program. Lunch at noon. Cost: \$11 Speaker/Program-12:45PM. rrharney2@cox.net 703-501-0020

Civil War Research scholarship to a public or private high school senior who resides in Fairfax, Fairfax City, Prince William County, Manassas City, or Manassas Park from the Bull Run Civil War Roundtable in Centreville, Va. Visit bullruncwrt.org for more.

Fairfax-based non-profit Britepaths offers free Financial Education Classes Sessions at various locations in the Fairfax County area to low- and middle-income adults who reside throughout Northern Virginia. The offerings are free and open to the public, but reservations are required. <https://britepaths.org/news/get-financially-fit-new-year>

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Infusing is Rarely Amusing



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Four weeks out of every five, it appears as if I don't have cancer. Fortunately, I don't look the part. Nor do I act the part – in my opinion. However, there is one week out of every five when I most definitely feel the part: the week after my chemotherapy infusion, when eating is a particular challenge. The look, feel, taste and thought of food and/or drink is nearly impossible to swallow – literally and figuratively. And though I'm not in any pain during this post-chemotherapy weak, I am compromised nonetheless.

Friends and family who are familiar with my "normal" eating habits (I'd order off the children's menu if I could) have joked that since I'm unable to eat any of the usual and customary Kenny selections, perhaps I should try eating foods that I would never select: Brussels sprouts, grapefruit, tuna fish in a can, fresh fish on a platter, all condiments other than mayonnaise, all legumes and a million other foods that you probably love. Plain and boring is how I roll (a potato roll is my preference), repeatedly.

The problem is that when I'm post chemo, nothing satiates: salty, sweet or "snacky;" hot, cold or medium; fast or slow; store-bought, home-made or restaurant-ready. It's all merely a variation on a theme where my back stiffens, my head tilts back and down and my eating mind says "no." It's been this way for about two and a half years now. And though I don't look the least bit undernourished, I am overwhelmed by these week-long post-chemotherapy eating fits and non-starts.

Naturally I have discussed this side effect with my oncologist. When asked how long this situation lasts, my seven-ish day struggle seems about average, according to my doctor, maybe even slightly shorter than some other patients he treats who are infused with the same chemotherapy drug as I am. Apparently, there are other patients where the eating challenges last even longer than mine. And since there's nothing to be prescribed/recommended to affect this eating problem/lack of outcome, all I can do is live with the consequences of my treatment. Live being the operative word. So unless I stop treatment, this eating challenge will persist, presumably. (Although, there's scant clinical information regarding side effects on stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer patients still living after eight years and four months as we're a patient population that doesn't much exist. We're not exactly unicorns, but neither are we ponies at the Fair.)

Fairness – and normalcy for me was officially gone on Feb. 27, 2009, the date of my diagnosis and the initial Team Lourie meeting with my oncologist. But so what. As of that date, my perspective/orientation became about living forward, not recriminating backward. Sure, the present was important, but the future was more important, and the past, well, it had passed. No more could I afford to consider who, what, where, when, why and how I ended up in this predicament. My goal was to remain positive, take the bad with good, survive until the next drug approval by the FDA (of which there have been half a dozen in the last two years specifically for the treatment of lung cancer) and try not to impose my problems on anyone else.

Which I believe I've succeeded in doing. Oh sure, I've imposed myself on you regular readers, but what I've imposed on you have been my experiences. Considering the context, I'd like to think I've shared, not self-indulged. Moreover, I'd like to think we're all better off for the 'experience.' I know I am.

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

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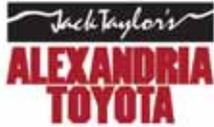
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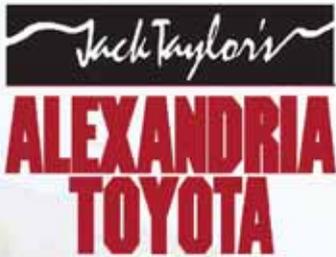


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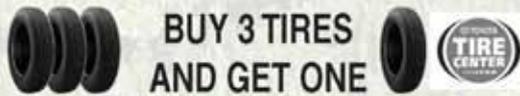
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