Jazz & Blues Festival Rained In

The musicians scheduled to perform at the 11th Annual Lake Anne Jazz & Blues Festival on Saturday, Sept. 2, were supposed to play outside on the plaza, but the area received 0.66 inches of rainfall and wind gusts of up to 16 miles-per-hour, according to the Weather Company, LLC. Instead, some of the musicians performed inside at Kalypso’s Sports Tavern, Lake Anne Coffee House and Wine Bar, and Lake Anne Brew House.
**Public Meetings**

**Fall Transportation Meeting**

You are invited to participate in public meetings held by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The meetings will begin with an open house followed by a town hall style meeting. The open house will provide information on various transportation initiatives including proposed changes to Virginia’s project prioritization process (SMART SCALE), recently funded projects in the Six-Year Improvement Program, Virginia’s Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan, and Scenario Planning and Freight plans. Representatives from the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment, Departments of Transportation and Rail and Public Transportation, along with Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Planning District Commissions, and other organizations will be in attendance to highlight their transportation programs and to discuss your ideas and concerns on Virginia’s transportation network. The open house will be followed by a town hall session, where you can engage in discussion and ask questions about the various initiatives. Comments will be accepted informally at the meeting and may also be submitted via email, or online.

**Meeting Dates and Locations**

Open House begins at 4:00 pm in each of the locations:

- **Tuesday, August 29, 2017**  
  Germanna Community College Center for Workforce & Community Education  
  10000 Germanna Point Drive  
  Fredericksburg, VA 22408

- **Thursday, August 31, 2017**  
  The Priory Center at UVA-Wise  
  437 Stadium Drive  
  Wise, VA 24293

- **Monday, September 11, 2017**  
  Culpeper District Office Auditorium  
  1601 Orange Road  
  Culpeper, VA 22701

- **Thursday, September 14, 2017**  
  Chesapeake Conference Center  
  700 Conference Center Drive  
  Chesapeake, VA 23320

- **Monday, September 18, 2017**  
  NOVA District Office  
  The Potomac Room  
  4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030

- **Wednesday, October 4, 2017**  
  Holiday Inn Lynchburg  
  601 Main Street  
  Lynchburg, VA 24504


If you cannot attend a meeting, you may also send your comments on highway projects to Infrastructure Investment Director, VDOT, 1401 E. Broad St., Richmond, Virginia 23219, or SixYearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov and on rail, public transportation and transportation demand management to Public Information Officer, DRPT, 600 E. Main St., Suite 2102, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or DRPTPR@drpt.Virginia.gov. Comments will be accepted until October 20, 2017.

The Commonwealth is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on these policies or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation’s Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-2730 or the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation’s Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-4440 (TTY users call 711).
Reston Sisters Spread Rays of Hope

Cara and Jenna Ainge create collection of jewelry to raise money for cancer research.

CancerFree KIDS, a nonprofit organization supporting pediatric cancer research, has benefitted from Rays of Hope Jewelry, an effort by Reston teenagers Cara and Jenna Ainge to create a collection of jewelry to raise money for cancer research.

To date, the girls have raised $990 for CancerFree KIDS by selling their jewelry collection at Duck’s General Store, owned by Bill and Kathy Nye, who return 100 percent of the proceeds they make from the jewelry back to Rays of Hope. The proceeds then get donated to CancerFree KIDS to fund life-saving research for children with cancer.

“We are so grateful to Cara and Jenna Ainge for creating Rays of Hope and donating their proceeds to CancerFree KIDS,” said Ellen Flannery, executive director of CancerFree KIDS. “It’s amazing to see these girls make such an incredible effort to support and make a difference in the lives of kids with cancer.”

Jenna, 12, and Cara, 14, of Reston, founded Rays of Hope in 2012 when they began making jewelry from shells they found on the beach. They decided to donate their proceeds to CancerFree KIDS because their cousin from Cincinnati, Thomas, was diagnosed with leukemia when he was 2 and a half years old. He is now cancer free after a more than three-year battle with leukemia.

“I know my generation can make a difference in the world and Rays of Hope Jewelry is a tiny example of what can be done,” said Cara, one of the co-founders of Rays of Hope. “We start by creating something beautiful out of something most people ignore as an ugly broken shell.”

Her sister and co-founder, Jenna, agreed. “It takes a lot of time, patience and love to create our pendants but it’s worth it. We know there is a cure for childhood cancer and we want to do our part to find it.”

To sell the jewelry, the Ainge sisters pitched their collection to Bill and Kathy Nye, the owners of Duck’s General Store, who sell the jewelry for $20 per pendant and return all of the proceeds back to Rays of Hope. They have sold all of the jewelry the girls have provided them thus far and have ordered more to sell in the future.

Each pendant goes through a special process to become a Rays of Hope piece. The girls pick specific shells to turn into jewelry through a more than two-hour grinding and polishing process. They look specifically for shells with stripes on them that resemble rays of the sun after they are polished.

For their efforts, the girls have received the Daily Point of Light Award (number 6006) from the George H.W. Bush Points of Light Foundation. The Points of Light Foundation celebrates the power of individuals to spark change and improve the world, which Cara and Jenna have done through their dedication to fund pediatric cancer research through CancerFree KIDS.

CancerFree KIDS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to eradicating cancer as a life-threatening disease in children by funding promising research projects. Since its inception in 2002, CancerFree KIDS has funded over $3.5 million in pediatric cancer research grants.

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Jenna, 12, and Cara, 14, of Reston sell their Rays of Hope Jewelry Collection at Duck’s General Store in Kitty Hawk, N.C. The girls have raised $990 for CancerFree KIDS.
State of the Commonwealth - 2017

By Kenneth R. “Ken” Plum
State Delegate (D-36)

Virginia’s population of 8,382,993 makes it the 12th largest of the states, but the median family household income of $66,262 in the Commonwealth makes it the eighth wealthiest state in the country. With that introduction of statistics at my most recent State of the Commonwealth Breakfast, one might expect that nothing but good news would follow. Rather, what followed was a list of what might best be described as missed opportunities.

While overall numbers are impressive, the wealth of the state is not uniformly enjoyed. There clearly is a “golden crescent” in the state that runs from Northern Virginia to Richmond and east to Hampshire Roads where it loses some luster. The crescent if considered would itself be one of the wealthiest and best educated in the country. With few exceptions, outside the crescent Virginians are struggling with incomes of one-half to one-third of that in its richest regions. Virginia as a state is doing well, but there are many within the state who are suffering. It would be impossible to replicate the advantages that Northern Virginia has been situated next to the Nation’s Capital nor can the misfortunes of the death of industries like tobacco, coal, and textiles be easily reversed. Given our overall wealth, there is a legitimate question as to whether we are doing as well as we should.

In public education funding, for example, the state direct aid per student has fallen. According to the Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis, per student funding of $5,966 in 2009 (in FY 17 dollars) is projected to be $5,326 in 2018. The result is that a greater share of educational funding has been shifted to localities. In the 2008-09 school year, the state provided 41.4 percent of public school funding; in the 2015-2016 school year, the state share dropped to 41.3 percent. In past decades when Standards of Quality (SOQ) for schools were first adopted, the expectation was that the state would fund 60 percent of education costs. At the same time funding has decreased, the SOQ’s have been reduced. In 2016 localities spent $3.5 billion above the required local effort to fund the operation of its schools.

The news does not get much better in other areas. Virginia’s Medicaid program is the 48th smallest among the states in providing benefits to those in need and one of the most difficult for which to qualify. At the same time, Governor McAuliffe reminded the legislative money committees that he has “called for Virginia to expand Medicaid for three and a half years now. In that time, we have forever forfeited a whopping $10.4 billion of our federal tax dollars. We have missed an opportunity to cover 400,000 low-income Virginians.”

How can we be so rich as a state and yet so poor in funding programs? Since 2004, Virginia has ranked in the lowest five states in state and local revenue as a percent of personal income. In state and local revenue as a percentage of gross state product, Virginia ranks 49. Our state sales tax rate is 4.1% lowest among the states. The state of the Commonwealth is that we get what we pay for.

Disparity, Poverty Hidden by Communities’ Wealth

“How hard would it be for someone to invite me in for a bowl of soup?”

By Stephanie Berkowitz
Northern Virginia Family Service

T he U.S. Census Bureau confirmed in July what we already know: many Northern Virginia residents are doing well financially. In fact, Loudoun County, the City of Falls Church and Fairfax County are the three wealthiest jurisdictions in the U.S. while Arlington and Prince William counties and the City of Fairfax also rank in the top 20.

The new Census Bureau numbers mask the fact that there are pockets of poverty throughout our region, and many of our neighbors are struggling.

Having worked at Northern Virginia Family Service (NVFS) for 18 years, I have met countless residents who come to us for help finding affordable housing, food, healthcare, medications and job training. Without support, these issues continue to negatively impact the families around us, creating larger barriers to self-sufficiency and the opportunity to thrive in our booming region.

I’m thinking of Zaheer Iqbal, who emigrated from Pakistan fighting the Taliban. In spite of his experience and education, the best job he could find was cleaning toilets and working as a cashier at an Annandale gas station. (Did I mention he also speaks seven languages?) Zaheer “graduated” to a job as a hotel night clerk in Fairfax, leaving that job every morning to go to our six-month Training Futures job program. Training Futures saw his potential and helped him make valuable connections within the business community. He recently landed a job with a government contractor. But it took Zaheer four years of sleepless nights and uncertainty about how he would support himself and his twin boys to get to that point.

When I think about the disparity in our region, I think of the 77-year old woman who has been coming to our Hunger Resource Center in Manassas on and off for 20 years as her situation changes. (She asked that I not use her name because she doesn’t want her family to know she continues to rely on the food bank.) When she was raising her son as a single mother and working as a waitress, there were times when she had to choose between paying the mortgage and feeding her family. At one point, her house was in foreclosure. Today, she is living off her monthly social security check, which doesn’t cover her basic expenses. She is drawn to the fruits and vegetables at the Huffington Park Farm Market.

The writer is president and CEO of Northern Virginia Family Service.
Rescue Reston
Committed to
Preserve Golf Course

Open Letter from Rescue Reston to RN Golf Management LLC and Eric Ekeroth, Mid-Atlantic Regional Director, Northwestern Mutual Real Estate, and Tom Zale, Vice President-Head of Real Estate, Northwestern Mutual, and John E. Schlifske, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Northwestern Mutual and Mark Anstine of ARA Newmark, the broker hired to sell the property at Reston National Golf Course.

Sirs:

Rumor has it that you are encouraging speculative development of the Reston National Golf Course property, including that, through litigation, one might be able to build upwards of 4,000 units on this land. Northwestern Mutual and ARA Newmark personnel responsible for this should be ashamed to be willing to put Fairfax County taxpayers through years of litigation to defend the very definite land use designation of Open Space at the property located at 11875 Sunrise Valley Drive and 2018 Soapstone Drive, Reston, Virginia.

We direct your attention to your PR statement regarding strengthening local communities at northwesternmutual.com/about-us/what-we-believe. If Northwestern Mutual, the majority partner of RN Golf Management LLC, which is the owner of the property at Reston National Golf Course, truly believes its own statement, then NWM must stop. Reston is a Planned Residential Community. You can read the short version of what that means a bit.ly/PRC-Districts.

We request that NWM consider a tax efficient strategy which will preserve the golf course as open space involving the donation of the land to the Reston Association or a conservation group, or the creation of a perpetual conservation easement. Andrea Reese, St. Land Conservation Specialist at the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust stands ready to explore this option with you. She can be reached at 703-354-5093.

I close with our letter of May 16, 2017 to Mark Anstine, ARA Newmark:

Dear Mr. Anstine,

Rescue Reston is the grass-roots organization comprising dedicated community volunteers who oppose redevelopment of Reston National Golf Course into residential housing or any site development other than the currently approved golf course and recreational open space use. We are committed to defending this golf course/recreational open space and have proven ourselves over the past 5 years. Our supporters defend with their time and their money.

We strongly advise you to share the attached communication with all parties who request information regarding the property you have listed as “Reston National” in Reston, Virginia.

Reston is not your normal community and all those bidding for speculation on future development potential should be fully aware of the property’s approved zoning uses and land use limitations. They are buying a golf course or other open space. Period.

Yours respectfully,

Connie Hartke, President
Rescue Reston
Cooper's Hawk Brings Wine and Dine Experience to Reston

That’s “experience” in more than one sense of the word; “experience” in that the Cooper’s Hawk Winery and Restaurant that officially opened on Monday, Aug. 28, will be the company’s 30th location, so they probably know a thing or two about the business, and because a real winery “experience” — with “fantastic food” is what General Manager Ryan Delisi says the establishment is all about.

Delisi, Cooper's Hawk Marketing Manager Ami Vanderhoof, and Executive Kitchen Manager and culinary training guru Edmund Vogel hosted a “sneak peak” event the Thursday before the opening date.

What's the first thing you notice when you walk through the doors? Space!

With most restaurants, diners enter a crowded “holding area” — either smashed up against the hostess desk, or herded into an overcrowded bar, usually right off the front entrance. At Cooper’s Hawk, the hostess stand is located at the end of a modern, light-filled grand hall, where the “Napa Valley” feel is front and center, with the Tasting Bar on the right, running the length of the room.

Getting to the hostess stand is a pleasant adventure. First you have to pass through the artisanal gift shop area — wine-themed items, of course — and a glass cabinet featuring an array of their made-from-scratch truffle temptations. Surrounding you the whole way are wall-to-wall wine racks displaying Cooper Hawk’s collection of wines — the only wines they sell or pour.

The Hostess tells you there’s a 30-minute wait (you forgot to make a reservation), but who cares? Instead of cramping onto a little bench, or fighting your way to a spot at the bar, you get to happily wander that hall, checking out unique wine glasses, aerators, decanters, even handbags made with cork, while actually able to talk with your dinner companion(s). But avoid those truffles. Save them for dessert.

While you’re waiting — or “just because” — step up to that tasting counter. A mere $7 will get you a generous tasting of a variety of wines. If you’ve tried the wine before that hall, there’ll be no disappointment that it’s “just not to your liking” when you order a bottle at the table.

Cooper’s Hawk founder, Tim McEnery, opened the first location in suburban Chicago in 2005. According to the Cooper’s Hawk staff, the idea came to him when dining, after visiting a winery. McEnery wished that there had been a real food offering at the winery, not just the usual plate of crackers. A little more thinking, a lot of research, and the concept of Cooper’s Hawk, “the passionate belief that food and wine hold the power to forge lasting connections,” was underway.

As Executive Kitchen Manager Vogel explained during the menu sampling, the wine to complement the food, their mission is to invent recipes that pair with their wines.

That must have been a challenging task, since the company produces 50 different varieties, from sweet whites to super Tuscan reds, from light every-day bottles to higher-priced and more complex offerings from their “Lux Collection.” They even have sparkling wines, and home-made sangrias. The grapes come from select partnerships around the country and now, even internationally, but the winemaking is done by Cooper’s Hawk at their Chicago location.

“Actually, we are growing so much, that there had been a real food offering at the winery, not just the usual plate of crackers. A little more thinking, a lot of research, and the concept of Cooper’s Hawk, “the passionate belief that food and wine hold the power to forge lasting connections,” was underway.

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“Actually, we are growing so much, that we need to move house,” said marketing manager Vanderhoof. In a few months, Cooper’s Hawk operations will move to a larger facility in Woodridge, Ill. When you’re the fifth largest winemakers in the country outside of California, you need a bit of room to get the job done.

Meloney is waiting to guide you through your wine tasting experience, and tell you all about the benefits of Wine Club membership. Cooper's Hawk has some 200,000 members already on board, but membership is not required to enjoy the tastings and the culinary treats.

Cooper’s Hawk folks do things in the reverse-than-usual order. Instead of finding a wine to complement the food, their mission is to invent recipes that pair with their wines.

There’s plenty of seating at Cooper’s Hawk — 196 seats indoors, and an additional 146 on the wrap-around patio, a large bar area, and a private dining room for special occasions and meetings. They also offer a comprehensive catering service.

“And don’t forget, we will have a Happy Hour on weekdays and complimentary valet parking on weekend evenings,” GM Delisi reminded his guests. “Maybe the best thing we offer,” he added, is a place that’s welcoming. We are not interested in the ‘turn and burn.’ Take your time, and enjoy yourselves. That’s what the Cooper’s Hawk community really all about.”

Cooper's Hawk Winery and Restaurant is located at 12130 Sunset Hills Road in Reston, serving lunch and dinner – and those tastings – seven days a week, starting at 11 a.m. Check out the website at www.coopershawkwinery.com.

By Andrea Worker
The Connection

Photos by Andrea Worker/The Connection
Healthy and in Season

By Marilyn Campbell

With her one-year-old daughter in tow, Ellen Knight poked at apples and caressed peppers on a Sunday morning at the Bethesda Farmers Market. The activity is part of her weekend ritual, searching for the freshest, most flavorful seasonal fruits and vegetables to use in meals throughout the rest of the week.

“I’m a little neurotic about produce and farmers markets,” she said. “I try to only buy at farmers markets and only buy what’s in season. I’m excited about fall and the new changes in what’s coming in from the local farms.”

As the weather gets cooler and temperatures drop, the bummer crops of fall can be found in flavorful abundance at farmers markets, grocery stores and even backyard gardens. Among the most nutritious and readily available produce are cabbage, peppers, squash, beets and other root vegetables, says Chef Pete Snaith of Culinaria Cooking School in Vienna.

“The fall harvest is a glorious time for peak-of-the-season vegetables and fruits,” he said. “Farmers markets will be piled high.”

With a flavor that can be the basis of both sweet and savory dishes, sweet potatoes are one of the most nutritious foods to debut in fall, says nutritionist Allison Speer of the Speer Nutrition Group in Alexandria. “They’re loaded with potassium and vitamin E,” she said. “In fall there’s a greater variety available like Purple Stokes, Garnet and Hannah.”

Choose small or medium-sized sweet potatoes that feel heavier than they look, advises Speer. “Store them in a dark place and keep them cool, but not cold,” she said. “Letting them get cold ruins the flavor.”

Winter squash is an umbrella term for a wide-range of squash varieties with thick, tough skins, such as butternut and acorn. Most readily available beginning in early fall and slow to go bad, winter squash can be stored whole for several weeks, says Arlington-based diettitian Melissa Hawkins, RD. “They are full of vitamins A and C,” she said. “The also have a lot of potassium and fiber, which can make you feel full and satisfied for a longer time.”

Hawkins also touts the versatility of winter squash. “I like to use butternut squash or pumpkin in soup,” she said. “Acorn squash can be made into a puree. One of my favorite things to do is to spiralize winter squash to make spaghetti or noodle-like strands that I use instead of pasta. It’s super easy and deeply satisfying.”

Though its tender cousins kale and Brussels sprouts get more hype, Hawkins says that cabbage is a versatile superfood that should not be overlooked. “There are so many varieties like Savoy and Napa and it’s full of vitamins C and B6 and fiber,” she said.

Cabbage and other greens are low in calories and can be prepared in a myriad of ways, adds Speer. “One of the simplest ways to cook them is to roast them or stir fry them,” she said. “Cabbage can also be stuffed or turned into slaw.”

Most commonly seen in dark red, beets come a variety of colors like white, pink and orange. They’re earthy, sweet and nutritious, says Hawkins. “Eating beets is almost like taking a big multivitamin,” she said. “You’re getting vitamins, A, B and C, plus iron, potassium, folic acid and beta-carotene.”

Beets can be eaten raw or prepared in a variety of ways, says Speer. “You can roast them, puree them or even make beet chips,” she said. “They can stain your hands and clothing so you have to be careful when handling them.”

1. Preheat the oven to 400˚ F.
2. Coat the beets with the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Place the beets in a roasting dish and cover. Place in the oven and roast for about 1 to 1 and a half hours or until tender. Remove from the beets from the oven and let cool. Peel when cooled. Cut into 1/2” pieces
3. While the beets are roasting, prepare the vinaigrette. Place the ingredients in a bowl and whisk to combine.
4. Place the beets, mango, orange, and pea shoots in separate bowls. Drizzle each with a tablespoon of vinaigrette and toss to coat.
5. Arrange the salad attractively on the plate. Top with pea shoots and drizzle with the vinaigrette and top with the mint.

Roasted Beet Salad

2 each, red and golden beets, wash but not peeled
2 TBSP., olive oil
3 oranges, peeled and segmented
1/4 cup, fresh mint, chiffonade
4 oz., feta cheese, sliced into 1/2” cubes
1/4 cup, fresh mint, chiffonade
3 oranges, peeled and segmented
2 TBSP., olive oil
2 each, red and golden beets, wash but not peeled

Vinaigrette

1/2 cup, olive oil
2 TBSP., balsamic vinegar
1 TBSP., orange juice
salt and pepper to taste

For Join the Fight for Alzheimer’s First Survivor.

At the Alzheimer’s Association Walk to End Alzheimer’s®, people carry flowers representing their connection to Alzheimer’s — a disease that currently has no cure. But what if one day there was a flower for Alzheimer’s first survivor? What if there were millions of them? Help make that beautiful day happen by joining us for the world’s largest fundraiser to fight the disease. Register today at alz.org/walk.

Walk to End Alzheimer’s in Northern Virginia Reston Town Center September 24 | 2:00 pm

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

Wellbeing
School Community Fights Hunger

South Lakes PTSA kept students in need fed all summer.

By Fallon Forbush
The Connection

On a summer afternoon in July, people are bustling in and out of Room 372 at South Lakes High School. Members of the school’s parent-teacher-student association transformed the room into a food pantry last school year and decided to keep it open throughout the break to keep students in need from going hungry during the summer. Shepherded by parents Roberta Gosling, Abbe Pascal, Andy Sigle and Amy Shaw, the South Lakes High School PTSA began collecting food in February and started distributing food to students in March — serving 25 to 50 students per week.

Since March, the pantry has served about 100 students and their families and more than 350 people have come through its doors. At two bags per guest, that is more than 350 people have come through its pantry in July.

The pantry has received great support from the community:
❖ Local dentists have donated toothbrushes and toothpaste
❖ Harris Teeter and Trader Joe’s grocery stores have donated bags
❖ Herndon-Reston FISH, Inc. donated 800 boxes of macaroni and cheese
❖ The congregation of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Herndon and A Simple Gesture Reston regularly donate food through the “cool, green bag” program
❖ The high school’s music and theater programs collect donations at performances and concerts
❖ The high school’s teachers and staff donate items
❖ SLHS alumni and employees of Copper River Information Technology in Chantilly regularly donate money
❖ Girl Scouts from Troop 5185 in Reston and the Reston Swim Team Association’s Dolphins and Sharks teams collect donations
❖ Vendors from the Herndon Farmers’ Market donate unsold produce
❖ Catchin’ ‘Roads, a Reston-based band comprising SLHS students and alumni, performed a benefit concert at Ned’s Irish Sports Pub in Herndon on July 16 and raised more than $1,000
❖ Every week, we put out a call for the things we need [in the school’s newsletter], and by the next week we’ve got plenty of it,” Gosling said.

Gosling and Shaw were nervous about running out of supplies during the summer because the students weren’t in school, but they always found “a ton of food” waiting for them to collect from the main office, which people dropped off during summer office hours.

“The community has just been amazing,” Gosling said. “Sometimes I cry when I come here.”

During the school year, students pick up shopping lists that are available in English, Spanish and Arabic. The students then drop off their list on Thursdays in a box. “There’s an anonymous box and it’s by their student ID number, so they don’t have to put their name on it,” Shaw said.

Volunteers then come in on Thursday night and Friday morning to pack the bags for the students, which are picked up on Fridays at the end of the school day.

“They pick up their bag by student ID and they just kind of walk through and walk out the door,” Gosling said. “They get to walk right to the busses, so it’s pretty anonymous.”

“We just line everything up by student ID and we have volunteers that help kids pick ‘em up and they head right out to their bus,” Shaw added.

Gosling and Shaw describe Kimberly Retzer, the high school’s principal, as a “super cheerleader and champion” of the pantry.

“She helps send a text out every week to remind the kids to turn in their slips and she tweeted, “She’s totally into it.”

On July 19, the southlakeshs Twitter handle tweeted: “SL PTSA food pantry open each Thurs 3-6 p.m. during the summer.”

Students participating in the high school’s Work Awareness Transition program collect food donations from the main office, check for expiration dates, inventory and stock the shelves of the pantry, according to Shaw.

Excitement for the pantry spread beyond the walls of the school.

“People just on their own had big birthday parties — like 50th birthday parties — and just asked people to bring donations for the pantry instead of presents,” Shaw said. “So, the whole front office was just full of food after these parties, which was just awesome.”

The PTSA parents who helped start the pantry hope it goes strong well after they leave.

“We’re doing what we can to make it institutional,” said Gosling, whose child just graduated from the school. She and some other parents will not be members of the PTSA this school year because their children will have moved on.

See Food Pantry, Page 9
South Lakes High School PTSA members Roberta Gosling (left) and Amy Shaw (right) help during a food distribution on Thursday, July 27.

Food Pantry Stayed Open Throughout Summer

As Reston parents worked to solve a problem at their school, their students are not the only ones who suffer from food insecurity in the county. A total of 50,668 students or approximately 27 percent of students who attended Fairfax County Public Schools during the 2016-2017 school year were eligible to receive subsidized meals through the National School Lunch Program, according to the Virginia Department of Education Office of School Nutrition Programs.

Children qualify for free or reduced-price school meals based on household income and family size. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for free meals, according to the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Children who are part of households that receive SNAP benefits or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families are automatically eligible to receive free meals. Those with incomes between 130 and 185 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals, which may not cost more than 40 cents.

The 2017 federal poverty levels, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, are:

- $12,060 for individuals
- $16,240 for a family of 2
- $20,420 for a family of 3
- $24,600 for a family of 4
- $28,780 for a family of 5
- $32,960 for a family of 6
- $37,140 for a family of 7
- $41,320 for a family of 8

Federal poverty level amounts are higher in Alaska and Hawaii.

To fill the void during the summer, the county participated in the Free Summer Meals for Kids Program, which provides free meals to children aged 5 to 18 years old from June 26 to Aug. 25, except July 3 and 4, at three locations in Reston and Herndon: Dogwood Elementary School, Hutchison Elementary School and Herndon High School.

A video about the program, “Food and Friendship with Summer FEEDS,” which was published on June 30, featuring FCPS Deputy Superintendent Steve Lockard, Mount Vernon Woods Elementary School Principal Clint Mitchell and Virginia’s First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe, can be viewed on the Fairfax County Public Schools YouTube channel.

PARTICIPATING SITES were either open or closed. Open sites served free meals to all children and are located where 50 percent or more of the students receive free or reduced-price meals at school, according to the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services. Closed sites served free meals to children who were eligible for the National School Lunch Program and are located in areas where less than 50 percent or more of the students receive free or reduced-price meals at school.

Open sites in Reston and Herndon were: Herndon Neighborhood Resource Center, Southgate Community Center and West Glade Apartments. The single closed site in Reston and Herndon was Cedar Ridge Community Center.

The Fairfax County Public Schools Office of Food and Nutrition Services also put on the Food for Every Child to Eat During Summer (FEEDS) BBQ program at various schools across the county during the summer. The USDA-funded program was free for all children 18 years old and younger and $2 for adults. Meals were served from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. from June 26 to Aug. 25, except July 3 and 4, at three locations in Reston and Herndon: Dogwood Elementary School, Hutchison Elementary School and Herndon High School.

A video about the program, “Food and Friendship with Summer FEEDS,” which was published on June 30, featuring FCPS Deputy Superintendent Steve Lockard, Mount Vernon Woods Elementary School Principal Clint Mitchell and Virginia’s First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe, can be viewed on the Fairfax County Public Schools YouTube channel.

The South Lakes High School PTSA Food Pantry provided guests with fresh produce this summer that it gleaned from the Herndon Farmers’ Market. During the summer, students and their families could pick up two bags of food and toiletries each Thursday, 3-6 p.m.
News

Democratic-Endorsed School Board Candidate Wins

Karen Keys-Gamarra overcomes Republican-advantage in low-turnout August.

By Michael Lee Pope
The Connection

Guardian ad litem and Fairfax County Planning Commission member Karen Keys-Gamarra swamped Republican Chris Grisafe and two other candidates in a special election Aug. 29, one that Democrats say is a sign of strength for their party heading into the fall. The seat was vacated by Republican-endorsed former School Board member Jeanette Hough in May, days before the deadline for the race to be on the ballot in November. Democrats cried foul, attacking the Republicans throughout the campaign for trying to rig the vote by engineering an August special election so the voters would be older and whiter and ostensibly more inclined to vote Republican than the much larger pool of voters in November.

“It backfired,” said at-large School Board member Ryan McElveen, adding that the cost to taxpayers was about $300,000 for the special election. “That became the narrative, and it’s what people were talking about.”

After it was clear that she had won more than 60 percent of the vote, Keys-Gamarra arrived to a raucous crowd of campaign volunteers and party faithful assembled at the Ells Lodge in Pine Ridge. Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam introduced the victorious Democrat with a speech that some in the crowd compared to the kind of delivery popularized by professional wrestlers, a newfound sense of ebullience for the typically buttoned-down candidate for governor. Keys-Gamarra thanked those who worked on her campaign without the benefit of a list, which she said she had been too busy to write.

“Today is so much bigger than me,” said Keys-Gamarra. “This sends a message that every student, every citizen, deserves a voice.”

ON THE CAMPAIGN trail, Keys-Gamarra focused on a theme of leveling the playing field for students across the county. She would frequently say that all students deserve the same opportunities no matter what ZIP code they live in.

Karen Keys-Gamarra won the special election for the open school board seat vacated by Jeanette Hough.

Election Results

Karen Keys-Gamarra: 41,436 votes, 64 percent
Chris Grisafe: 21,315 votes, 33 percent
Michael Owens: 1,408 votes, 2 percent
Sandia Allen: 787 votes, 1 percent

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The televised forums at Fairfax County Public Access are on Channel 10 and 10 evening on YouTube "Inside Scoop LiveStream." The public can submit questions for email: theinsidescooptv@gmail.com or call 571-749-1142 between 7-9:30 p.m. Tune in on Monday, Sept. 11 at 8 p.m.; Monday, Sept. 18 at 8 p.m.; and Monday, Oct. 2 at 8 p.m.

Senior Volunteers
RSVP: volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria. Offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group outings and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation email Carly Shulkin at cshulkin@volunteersfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

ONGOING
Sunrise at Reston Town Center offers a monthly Caregiver Support Group on the fourth Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8 p.m. Monthly support group offers a safe place for family caregivers to share the emotional and physical challenges and gain support and information. Call 703-956-8930 or email: Ed@sunriseseniorliving.com to RSVP.

Herndon Adult Day Health Care Center offers programs to enable me to organize my thoughts and ask all the few questions I’d like answered — you know, to optimize the benefits/coordinate the timing of our vacation. But the ‘unsolicited’ nature of the call didn’t enable me to organize my thoughts and ask all the appropriate questions. Nevertheless, the opportunity seems worthy of a follow-up phone call.

Ideally, what I’d like to do is bracket my vacation/sun care and the miscellaneous travel expenses I’m undoubtedly going to incur around the respective properties’ availability. Meaning, I’d like to fly once and stay twice; staying in their respective properties in the same city/country switching out of Marriott after my first free weekend stay and then booking into the Hilton for my next free weekend stay (and I’d be willing to pay for my mid-week excursion during the transition). In effect, making the trip a two-for-one opportunity. That’s my best travel plan so far.

As I have come to learn, the quality of our life is very important to my oncologist. And as I have come to learn, the quality of your life is very important to your oncologist.

At that time however, I didn’t feel the need and/or wasn’t motivated to follow my oncologist’s suggestion; I wanted to get started on my treatment. Now, eight and half years later, perhaps the timing is better, I’m not really in the mood to tangle with a fast-talking, smooth operator, who though he/she may have my best travel plans at heart, may not exactly be feeling the same. More to the point, I’m going to have a few days until I regain my bearings — and patience, and tolerance, and call them back unannounced at a time convenient for me but possibly not for them and see if we can make a deal.

Because, to tell you the truth, I could coordinate two hotel reservations — along with all the amenities with which I’m likely to be showered for accepting these extraordinarily generous offers, combined with some free air miles I’ve accumulated with United Airlines/travel partners, this indeed take the “trip we’ve always dreamed of.” I of course would love to have my best travel plan at heart, may not exactly be feeling the same. More to the point, I’m going to have a few days until I regain my bearings — and patience, and tolerance, and call them back unannounced at a time convenient for me but possibly not for them and see if we can make a deal.

Nothing To Do With Cancer, Almost
By KENNETH B. LOUIRE

How lucky am I? In the last two days, I have been the extremely lucky, though presumably random, recipient of not one but two unsolicited phone calls offering me free accommodations at any number of Marriott and Hilton hotels, fairly reputable brands, I’d say. I have all I need to transport my wife, Dina, and myself to the agreed upon hotel during the designated window of opportunity, and a semi-unencumbered vacation for two awaits. And believe me, the offer couldn’t have come at a better time. Let’s be honest, what more than a cure does a “terminal” cancer patient need than a reasonably priced, stress free get away from his every day? Need I even characterize this previous question as rhetorical?

Now since I hung up rather quickly, I don’t have all the details, other than their phone numbers of course. Because, as you might imagine, I still have a few questions I’d like answered — you know, to optimize the benefits/coordinate the timing of our vacation. But the ‘unsolicited’ nature of the call didn’t enable me to organize my thoughts and ask all the appropriate questions. Nevertheless, the opportunity seems worthy of a follow-up phone call.

Ideally, what I’d like to do is bracket my vacation/sun care and the miscellaneous travel expenses I’m undoubtedly going to incur around the respective properties’ availability. Meaning, I’d like to fly once and stay twice; staying in their respective properties in the same city/country switching out of Marriott after my first free weekend stay and then booking into the Hilton for my next free weekend stay (and I’d be willing to pay for my mid-week excursion during the transition). In effect, making the trip a two-for-one opportunity. That’s my best travel plan so far.

As I have come to learn, the quality of our life is very important to my oncologist. And as I have come to learn, the quality of your life is very important to your oncologist.

At that time however, I didn’t feel the need and/or wasn’t motivated to follow my oncologist’s suggestion; I wanted to get started on my treatment. Now, eight and half years later, perhaps the timing is better, especially given that it presents itself at the beginning of a new Redskins football season. And if I may quote myself, “A great, hero head coach of the “Over the hill gang,” George Allen: “The future is now.” So let me start this offering the week of September 2nd and if I indeed take the “trip we’ve always dreamed of.” I know it’s often said that you can’t go back. Maybe we can still go forward.

Kenny Louire is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac, Almanac & The Connect Newspapers.
**Four events in Reston, Herndon and North Point Village.**

**TUESDAY/SEPT. 12**

Rehearsal Starts. 7-9 p.m. at Herndon Middle School, 901 Locust St., Herndon. For beginners or competitive runners, come out for a fun, low-key run that is safe and social. Call 703-689-9999 potomacriverrunning.com. 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 skedumans@aol.com for more information.

**WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 13**

Contact Center Nation. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Hidden Creek Country Club, 1711 Clubhouse Road, Reston. Networking and call-center professionals meeting. Visit www.contactcenterinfo.com for more. Elections Have Consequences 7:30-9 p.m. at Hidden Creek Country Club, 1711 Clubhouse Road, Reston. Networking and call-center professionals meeting. Visit www.contactcenterinfo.com for more.

**THURSDAY/SEPT. 7**

Lunch Bunch Thursdays. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. BYO lunch and see different entertainment in the Pavilion at Fountain Square each week. Rain or shine. Visit restontowncenter.com for more.

North Point Village Fall Kick-Off Event. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at North Point Village Center, 1492 North Point Village Center, Reston. Meet former Redskin Dexter Manley, test skills on The Gauntlet Obstacle Course, bounce and slide for hours, balloons, and face painting. Visit www.northpointvillage.com for more.

**SATURDAY/SEPT. 9**

Food For Neighbors. 9:30 a.m. at the Collection Spot, 17110 Plaza America Drive, Reston. Collecting food to provide nutritional support to students at multiple area schools, including Herndon High School and Herndon Middle School. Visit www.FoodForNeighbors.org. Fairfax County Brewfest 2017. noon-6 p.m. at Mustang Sally Brewing Company, 14140 Parke Long Ct A-C, Chantilly. Featuring live music and food. Visit www.mustangsallybrewing.com.

**SUNDAY/SEPT. 10**

DogFest. noon-3 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. 4th annual Washington DC DogFest Walk’s Roll with festivities, graduate students, dog demonstrations, music, food, and more. Celebrate the community of people and dogs that show the most advanced technology for transforming the lives of people with disabilities. Free. Proceeds benefit Canine Companions for Independence – Capital Chapter. Visit ccicci.org.

**SEPT. 9-20**

Northern Virginia Senior Olympics. Various times and locations, more than 50 different events taking place at more than 25 venues across Northern Virginia. Call 703-403-5360 or visit www.nvso.us for more. Fairfax County Brewfest 2017. noon-6 p.m. at Mustang Sally Brewing Company, 14140 Parke Long Ct A-C, Chantilly. Featuring live music from Scott Kurt and Memphis 59 and The Blues Buckets. A portion of the proceeds will benefit KO for Warriors,$10 pre-sale online; $15 at the door (while tickets last) includes admission and logo tasting glass. Visit www.mchbrewing.com.

**SEPTEMBER 24**

International Women's Day. Learn about the county’s nine dog parks, find out how to volunteer as a dog park volunteer and learn about dog park etiquette. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec/watermine/ or call 703-326-8662. Fairfax County Breezefest 2017. noon-6 p.m. at Mustang Sally Brewing Company, 14140 Parke Long Ct A-C, Chantilly. Featuring live music from Scott Kurt and Memphis 59 and The Blues Buckets. A portion of the proceeds will benefit KO for Warriors.$10 pre-sale online; $15 at the door (while tickets last) includes admission and logo tasting glass. Visit www.mchbrewing.com.

**SEPTEMBER 29**

Reston Town Center Fall Celebration. Noon-6 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Networking and call-center professionals meeting. Visit www.contactcenterinfo.com for more.

**Food for Neighbors**

At the sorting location, volunteers prepare food for delivery to participating schools. On a weekly basis, the schools then distribute the food to participating teens, so on Saturday, Sept. 9 at 9:30 a.m. the upcoming drive is at the Collection Spot, 17110 Plaza America Drive, Reston. Visit www.FoodForNeighbors.org for more.

**Kathmandu Fruit Sellers**

Photographers are invited to the Reston Photographic Society’s monthly gatherings at the Reston Community Center Hunter Woods. RPS member, Dawn Murphy, captured the vibrant colors and street life in Nepal’s cities in “Kathmandu Fruit Sellers.”

**Art Crawl**

Music is part of the Third Thursday ArtCrawl, Sept. 17 at 750 Center St., Herndon.

**Kathy Kim**

Send event announcements to cevon@connectionnewspapers.com. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

**ONGOING**

Jazz in the City Exhibit. Various times at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Kristine Keller and Robert Gilbert paint with an interest in New York. Call 703-956-9560 or visit www.artspaceherndon.org for more. All-comers’ Group Fun Run at Potomac River Running. Thursdays and Thursdays: Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. For beginners or competitive runners, come out for a fun, low-key run that is safe and social. Call 703-689-9999 potomacriverrunning.com. 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 skedumans@aol.com for more information.

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Fashion Tip Thursdays. 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. This week, learn the Fall 2017 color palette. Call 571-326-4185 or visit restontowncenter.com/restonscoutandmollys.com.

**SUNDAY/SEPT. 10**

DogFest. noon-3 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. 4th annual Washington DC DogFest Walk’s Roll with festivities, graduate students, dog demonstrations, music, food, and more. Celebrate the community of people and dogs that show the most advanced technology for transforming the lives of people with disabilities. Free. Proceeds benefit Canine Companions for Independence – Capital Chapter. Visit ccicci.org.

**HERNDON**

**Herndon High School and Herndon Middle School students at multiple area schools, including Herndon High School and Herndon Middle School. Visit www.FoodForNeighbors.org.**

**Forrest City**

**Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave. Tour of nine dog parks, find out how to volunteer as a dog park volunteer and learn about dog park etiquette. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec/watermine/ or call 703-326-8662.**