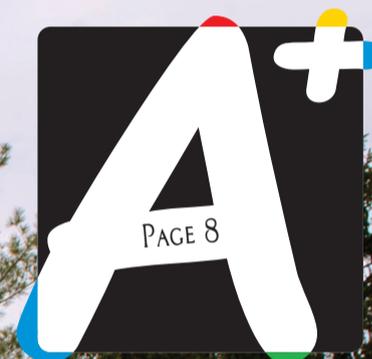


Fairfax Station CONNECTION Clifton & Lorton

Resident Curator To Renovate Stempson House

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The Stempson House, a historic property in Lorton, will be the first property renovated under the FCPA's new Resident Curator Program.



Recount Concludes, Reaffirming Hugo Election Victory

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Unbuilt Baseball Diamonds Get New Venue

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VIRGINIA

2017

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Recount Concludes, Reaffirming Hugo Victory

With the House of Delegates at 51-49 Republicans over Democrats, recounts are closely watched

Recounts for Virginia's 40th House District concluded Thursday, Dec. 14, more than a month after Nov. 7 election. After the recount reaffirmed his election victory over Donte Tanner (D), Del. Tim Hugo (R) will serve an eighth term in the Virginia House of Delegates. Hugo won by 99 votes, less than one half of one percent of more than 30,000 votes cast. On election night, he was projected to have won by 106 votes.

"I would like to thank the hardworking volunteers and recount officials who made

this recount go smoothly and without incident," according to Hugo. "As I said during the campaign, win or lose, we want to make sure that every lawful vote is counted and this process has ensured just that. I am honored to be re-elected and thank my constituents for their continued trust in me. My focus has always been on improving the lives of those I serve."

The 40th District includes parts of Fairfax and Prince William counties, including



Donte Tanner



Tim Hugo

Centreville, Fairfax Station and Clifton.

Hugo was first elected in a special election in 2002. He serves as the House Majority Caucus chairman and served as the vice chairman of the Transportation committee as well as on the Commerce & La-

bor, Finance, and Privileges and Elections committees.

"Our message of service to our community is why we received such bipartisan support and were ultimately successful. I look forward to building on our accomplishments and finding new ways to improve our community," said Hugo.

Tanner offered his congratulations to Hugo on Thursday, via Twitter.

"I wish him the best returning to the house. It's been an honor to run for office, and I'm deeply thankful to my staff, volunteers and supporters of my campaign," he said. "The fight's not over, and I look forward to continuing the fight as a citizen."

Before the November election, the Virginia House of Delegates was 66-34 Republican, and now appears to be 51-49 Republican with two more races close enough for recounts planned this week.

First Lease Signed Under Resident Curator Program

Resident Curator Steven J. McCullough to renovate Stempson House

On Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2017, a ceremonial lease signing was held between the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and Resident Curator Lt. Cmdr. Steven J. McCullough in the Herry Building at the Fairfax County Government Center. The Stempson House, a historic property in Lorton, will be the first property renovated under the FCPA's new Resident Curator Program (RCP) is designed to preserve historic properties by offering long-term leases to qualified tenants who agree to rehabilitate and maintain these historic resources in exchange for rent-free accommodation. A curator can be a private citizen, a non-profit entity, or a for-profit entity.

McCullough was selected as Resident Curator for the Stempson House following an application process and evaluation by FCPA's multi-disciplined administrative and financial team. McCullough plans to rehabilitate the house, garage and grounds for use as a private residence. The renovations will occur over the lease term of approximately nine years, while ensuring construction complies with the terms of an FCPA-approved work plan, as well as the federal standards for the rehabilitation of historic properties. McCullough has created a pictorial blog (www.stempsonhouserestoration.com/) to document the rehabilitation process along the way and will act as an informational resource for other prospective curators. During renovation, the Stempson House will occasionally be open for public viewing.

THE STEMPSON HOUSE property is located at 9501 Furnace Road in Lorton, in Laurel Hill Park. It was built in 1937 by inmates of the nearby Occoquan Workhouse



Stempson House

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



A ceremonial lease signing.

and Reformatory, later known as the Lorton Prison, for use by prison employees as a residence, and later as a security office. The original construction materials and methods used are typical of residential housing construction in the early 1930s. As part of the rehabilitation process, the Park Authority expects to make an investment in an archaeological survey, electrical upgrades and connections to public water and sanitary sewer systems at the site.

McCullough has been an Active Duty Coast Guard officer and pilot for more than 19 years and is currently assigned to the Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C., as the Senior Watch Officer of the Coast Guard National Command Center. Growing up in Hagerstown, Md., close to many Civil War era battlefields, combined with having a father who was a history buff and attending school in one of the oldest cities in the country peaked McCullough's interest in American History at a young age. He then graduated with a B.A. in history and economics and lived in Arlington for several months before joining the Coast Guard.

Traveling frequently and owning several homes along the way, McCullough honed his do-it-yourself skills and gained experience dealing with aged structures and dated materials. His most recent restoration/renovation was a 1930s farm house in upstate New York, which included gutting a bathroom and laundry room, a major kitchen renovation, creation of a modern luxury master suite, hardwood flooring, ceramic tile, drywall and roof repair, mold remediation, a carpenter ant infestation and major landscape improvements.

McCullough learned of the RCP when he was looking for homes in the area, after receiving orders to report to Coast Guard

SEE STEMPSON HOUSE, PAGE 9

Unbuilt Baseball Diamonds Get New Venue

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

From eight previous rezoning cases, \$1,346,459.52 in proffered contributions to build baseball diamonds in Springfield remained unused.

But the Fairfax County Park Authority and Board of Supervisors called up a new Virginia Code that allows for reallocation of funds where construction could go forward.

"I think this is the first time that we've used this new section of the Virginia Code," said Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herry.

Virginia Code 15.2-2303.2 "allows a locality to use any cash payments proffered for capital improvements for alternative improvements of the same category within the locality in the vicinity of the improvements for which the cash payments were originally made."

The money originally intended to build baseball diamonds at Patriot Park at 12111



Suzianne Battista,
Planning and
Development
Division, Park
Authority, presented
the staff report.



Pat Herry,
Springfield Dis-
trict Supervisor

Braddock Road will now be reallocated to build baseball diamonds at Patriot Park North, west of Patriot Park, at the intersection of Braddock Road and Willow Springs Road.

"This clearly makes a lot of sense and it

has community approval," said Herry. "The proffers were for baseball fields and they are going to be used for baseball fields in the vicinity of where they were originally expected to be."

The Park Authority predicts construction will start in 2019.

"The community's got a severe shortage of 90-foot diamonds," said Herry. "It also clusters with a pair of 60-foot diamonds which makes for a great baseball facility."

If the Board didn't approve the Park Authority's request, "the funds proffered to Patriot Park will remain un-

available to be used for other improvements at nearby Patriot Park North and will remain unutilized until VDOT and FCDOT transportation improvements, including road

alignments that will impact Patriot Park, are finalized," according to planning and zoning documents.

Development on the original park plan was delayed indefinitely, said Suzianne Battista, of the Department of Planning and Zoning, because of uncertainty of VDOT and FCPT road improvements, including lack of an entrance to the planned baseball diamonds.

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.

Christmas Holiday Services at Historic Pohick Episcopal Church, 9301 Richmond Highway Lorton. Visit www.pohick.org or call 703-339-6572.

❖ Sunday, Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve — at 10 a.m. will be a Service of Lessons and Carols. Evening services begin at 6 p.m. with a Family Holy Eucharist with Children's Choirs. At 10:30 p.m. is a Christmas Carol presentation with choir and brass ensemble, followed by the 11 p.m. Festival Holy Eucharist.

❖ Monday, Dec. 25 – Christmas Day — at 10 a.m. will be a Christmas Day Holy Eucharist.

Christmas Eve Celebrations. Celebrate Christmas in a positive, welcoming and inclusive spiritual community. Sunday, Dec. 24 — Meditation service at 9 a.m., family-oriented service at 11 a.m.; candlelight service at 7:30 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, Oakton. Free. Visit www.unityoffairfax.org/events.

Christmas Eve Service. Sunday, Dec. 24, 8-9 p.m. at Harvester Presbyterian Church, 7800 Rolling Road, Springfield. Join in a traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service. Free. Call 703-455-7800 or visit www.harvesterpca.org.

Burning Bowl Ceremony. Sunday, Dec. 31 at 9 and 11 a.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Experience this ritual of releasing what no longer serves you and envisioning the year ahead. Free. Visit www.unityoffairfax.org/events.

New Year's Labyrinth. Monday, Jan. 1 at noon-4 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Set your intentions for 2018 while walking Unity's indoor labyrinth. Free. Visit www.unityoffairfax.org/events.

Congregation Adat Reyim, an independent Jewish congregation, offers services Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 9:30 a.m. and Maariv minyan at 7:30 p.m. Hebrew School is Sundays from 9-11:15 for K-6th graders and Mondays from 5:30-7:30

p.m. for 3rd-6th graders. Adat Reyim is located at 6500 Westbury Oaks Court in Springfield. 703-569-7577 or www.adatreyim.org.

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.

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'í Community of Fairfax County Southwest offers Interfaith Devotions, Children's Classes, Junior Youth Groups and Study Circles, which are open to all. For more information on these or to know more about the Bahá'í Faith, go to www.bahai.us or 571-320-5274.

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.



Artist rendering of the proposed commuter parking lot on Old Keene Mill Road in Springfield.

Transit Center Moves Closer for Commuters in Springfield

A place where commuters in Springfield can park and ride into points north came closer to reality on Nov. 8 when transportation officials and residents gathered to hash out more details on a multimodal garage across the street from the current impromptu slug line area at Springfield Plaza.

Currently Fairfax County is leasing 532 spaces in the central Springfield area that are designated commuter spaces but the new lot will consolidate this effort. Under the proposal, the new commuter center will have increased parking for park and ride, spaces for bike commuters, a pedestrian bridge to Springfield Plaza and community event spaces available

for evening and weekend activities. Currently the lot is in its design phase and construction is tentatively scheduled to start in late 2019 and be completed in 2022.

The proposed lot will be a six-level structure with 1,100 parking spaces, seven bus bays, a commuter drop off area (i.e. slug line) and short term parking for carpoolers. Possible uses for the community event area include Springfield Days activities, the bridge walk, a farmers market, arts and crafts fairs, Boy Scout yard sales, Springfield Chamber events and yoga classes.

Officials are currently seeking comments on the proposal. For more information, call 703-877-5600.

AREA ROUNDUPS

Food, Grocery Gift Cards Needed

The Lorton Community Action Center is in need this holiday season and is short of food supplies to help feed local residents. Many of the people they help are military families or working families that rely on assistance.

Help by donating food items (breakfast cereal, box; canned fruit/apple sauce; canned tuna/chicken; pasta sauce in plas-

tic jars; pasta; 1-2 lb. bags of rice; peanut butter/jelly; cooking oil; snack foods for children) or by donating Grocery Gift Card to Shopper's Food Warehouse or Food Lion.

Location: 9506 Richmond Highway (behind Lorton library); Monday-Friday 10-5; Saturday 11-4; and Sunday 12-4. Visit lortonaction.org/ or call 703-339-5161.

Parking Comes in Various Forms for Holiday Shoppers

Focusing on convenience and security.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

Parking at the shopping mall can be challenging at any time of the year, but during the holiday season, it takes time and a certain amount of work to find a good spot. There are lots of cars, new rules and entrances, so forgetting where the car is happens more than once.

At Tysons, there are 11,500 parking spaces, divided between a few multi-level parking garages and open air lots. The valet parking specialist at the valet lot right outside Nordstroms can't keep tabs on everyone, so he focuses on the clients that pay the \$10 Holiday Parking special to use his lot. "They keep asking me, they don't know where they parked," he said.

Diane Peratt came in from Leesburg and didn't balk at the \$10 special. "I'm very short on time," she said, as she looked around at the big roped off area that was empty on a Wednesday afternoon. "I'm glad they have this option, this number of spots is a bit much," she added.

Over at Springfield Town Center, the number of shoppers waxes and wanes during



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON

At Springfield Town Center, Hayden Basse monitors valet spaces and uses a cell phone feature to retrieve cars when needed.

the week, but the weekends are big, said Hayden Basse, a college student that operates the valet stand at Springfield. On one evening shift in early December, he parked 75 cars in either the 15 spots up front or the auxiliary lot that is off along Loisdale Road. "You get a lot of families, especially in colder weather," Basse said.

Joshua and Jessica Ball are new to the area, but have been to Springfield Town

Center a few times. "It's a nightmare on Fridays and Saturdays," Joshua Ball said. Parking on the weekends craziness is no secret, but Basse is happy to help out, saying: "Our job is to provide convenient parking to the mall and restaurants," he said. Basse gets the shopper's cell phone number upon arrival, enters it in his iPad and when the customers are ready, a signal is sent and Basse retrieves their car. "Makes it super quick," he said.

Valet spots are \$6 at the Springfield Town Center and \$7 at Tysons Corner, but in the Nordstroms lot, the \$10 Holiday Parking Special includes money-saving coupons.

Nordstrom employee Christina Curtis never has a problem even in the holiday season. "There's plenty of spaces, eventually you do find a parking space," she said, but has seen the shoppers that can't find their car at the end of the day. "A lot of people get confused with the exits, they don't know where they parked," she said.

The Tysons security office is always helping find cars. "We do that a lot," said Security Officer Rivas.

To accompany all the specialty shops that open and close around the holidays, there are a number of specialty spots for restaurant patrons, electric vehicles, pregnant

women, military veterans and big spenders. What's an average Joe to do in situations like this? Go to the back of the lot, hope for a spot, and take the hike back to the shopping center, keeping an eye out for drivers who aren't being attentive.

Becca Willcox, the Tysons events and communications manager, noted that there are a certain number of spaces dedicated to electric and hybrid vehicles, valet parking and 20 VIP spots for their top 50 money spenders. On the weekends in December, there are "parking directors," maintaining order around the lots and for the specialty spots, the Tysons security "patrols them to make sure they're [specialty spots] being used correctly," Willcox said.

Parking lot safety is another concern around the holidays. The Fairfax County Police Department has a Christmas Anti-Theft Team, known as the CATT, "watching for people breaking in cars and taking merchandise," said officer Bob Otten.

According to the police, "over the 2016 holiday season, our teams collectively recovered over \$315,000 in stolen property and seized assets." In addition, there are police officers in the lots keeping the peace and making sure cars are not blocking the fire lanes or illegally parking in the disabled parking spaces, noted with the blue signs. "We ask them to move along," he said. It's a \$50 ticket if they don't, said Otten.

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OPINION

Merry Christmas

Whether you believe the Christmas story literally or in spirit, you know it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption.

The pages of the Connection Newspapers (including the Alexandria Gazette Packet, the Mount Vernon Gazette, the Potomac Almanac and the Centre View) have been full of holiday spirit beginning before Thanksgiving. Group and individual efforts to help the needy, holiday parades, Santa arriving by boat, Santa arriving by horse-drawn carriage, Santa arriving at the Malls, tree lightings, Menorah lightings, stories of giving, secular celebrations, religious celebrations. Shopping locally. Giving locally. Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ. Whether you believe the Christmas story literally or in spirit, you know it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption.

EDITORIAL

It is also about embracing the teachings of Jesus: to love thy neighbor as thyself; to help the needy; to feed the hungry and clothe the poor; to care for those who are sick; to invite and welcome strangers; to treat others as you would have them treat you.

Matthew 7:12:

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 25:35-40:

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one

of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

SO LET US SHARE the verse relating the birth of Jesus from the Bible, Luke 2: 4-19:

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

“And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

“And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.”

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Editor's Note About the Rest of 2017

This is our last regular edition of 2017. Next week, after Christmas, we will publish our annual Children's Issue, devoted entirely to the artwork and writing of local students. We have more submissions from local students than ever, and so some children's and teens' artwork and writing will spill over into the first week of the new year.

Our next regular edition will publish Jan. 3-4, 2018, with deadline for content and advertising of Dec. 30 (late ads accepted).

In the meantime you can reach the editors

at editors@connectionnewspapers.com and sales/marketing/advertising at sales@connectionnewspapers.com.

Find digital replica editions of recent papers at www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/PDFs

Past issues of the Connection back to 2008 are available at connectionarchives.com/PDF/Advertising information, Special Section details here www.connectionnewspapers.com/advertising

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Islam Recognizes Jesus As a Prophet

To the Editor:

I want to wish all my Christian friends Merry Christmas. I would also use this opportunity to highlight that Islam recognizes Jesus (peace be upon him) as a Prophet. Muslims believe that Jesus was a prophet who was given a special message — the Gospel — to convey to all people. This message both confirmed what was taught in the Torah and foretold the coming of Prophet Muhammad. Thus,

Jesus has a vital and unique role to play in the Muslim faith.

The Qur'an mentions Jesus, or *Isa*, 25 times, but differently each time. The Qur'an explains that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary (19:20-21) and is “highly honored in this and the next world” (3:45-47). Thus, he is called *Isa ibn Maryam*, or Jesus son of Mary. The Qur'an also refers to him as *ruh min Allah* (“Spirit from God”), *mushia bi'l baraka* (“the Messiah—someone blessed by God”), *kalimah min Allah* (“Word from/of God”), and *rasul* (Prophet-Messenger) of God.

It is part of my faith to accept Jesus as a pious and righteous

man. He, like all Prophets of Islam, brought a message of peace, love and brotherhood for the world. While Christians and mainstream Muslims are still waiting for the second coming of Jesus (peace be upon him), tens of millions of Ahmadi Muslims have accepted Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the Messiah, who claimed in 1889 to have come in the spirit of Jesus to reform the world.

Nevertheless, the holiday season is a source of joy and celebration for all Christians. Please accept my humble wishes for the season. I would end my note by reaffirming that Jesus (peace be upon him)

is not only the beloved of Christians, but also of all Muslims.

Sumra Zafar

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Virginia

Write The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Send to:

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ENTERTAINMENT



"The Nutcracker"

On Thursday and Friday, Dec. 28 and 29, The Virginia Ballet Company is presenting its 68th annual production of "The Nutcracker." Shows at 2 and 7 p.m. at the Ernst Community Cultural Center, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. This is a full-length, professionally-staged ballet. \$30 for adults and \$20 for children, seniors and students at VABallet.org. Email vbcoffice@vaballet.org or call 703-249-8227 for more.

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

ONGOING

Santa's Flight Academy. Through Dec. 24, at various times at Fair Oaks Mall, 11750 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. Santa surrounded by a space motif. Visit www.santaexpresslane.com.

"Peekaboo! A Nativity Play." Through Dec. 24, 8 p.m. at The John Swayze Theatre, New School of Northern Virginia, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. The Hub Theatre presents "Peekaboo! A Nativity Play." Call 703-674-3177 or visit www.thehubtheatre.org.

THURSDAY/DEC. 21

Friday Morning Music Club. noon-1 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fmmc.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 24

Celtic Carols by Candlelight. 9:30-10 p.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Hear Celtic instruments and sing Christmas carols featuring the hammered dulcimer, Irish flute, pennywhistle; harp-guitar, cittern, mandolin, fiddle and Celtic harp. Donations go to FACETS and ECHO. Christmas Vigil Service will follow. Visit www.standrews.net.

THURSDAY-FRIDAY/DEC. 28-29

The Nutcracker. 2 and 7 p.m. at the Ernst Community Cultural Center, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. The Virginia Ballet Company is presenting its 68th annual production of "The Nutcracker." This is a full-length, professionally-staged ballet. \$30 for adults and \$20 for children, seniors and students at VABallet.org. Email vbcoffice@vaballet.org or call 703-249-8227.

FRIDAY/DEC. 29

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Call 703-219-2200.

SATURDAY/DEC. 30

Early New Years Party. 11 a.m.-noon at Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Ctr. All ages. Come out a few days early to celebrate the New

Year with arts and crafts and a count down to noon. Call 703-339-4610.

Art and Lunch. noon-3 p.m. at Village Gallery, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. Bring lunch and enjoy the company of other artists. Free and open to the public. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net or call 703-587-9481.

SUNDAY/DEC. 31

Fairfax 4 Miler. 6 p.m. at Pacers Running Fairfax, 10427 North St., Fairfax. Celebrating their ninth year, the Fairfax Four is a favorite for its post-race pizza party and sweatshirt premium. Call 703-537-0630.

TUESDAYS/JAN. 2-FEB. 13

Art Lessons for Youth. 5:15-6:15 p.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin drawing and watercolor. 8 years and older. Visit www.czartlessons.com. Call 703-250-6930.

TUESDAYS/JAN. 2-FEB. 13

Drawing Plus Color Class. 6:15-7 p.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin, drawing and watercolor. Visit www.czartlessons.com. For 5-8 yrs. Call 703-250-6930.

FRIDAY/JAN. 5

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Call 703-273-3638 or visit www.fairfaxvfd.com.

SATURDAYS/JAN. 6-FEB. 17

Art Lessons for Youth. 9:15-10:30 a.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin drawing and watercolor. 8 years and older. Visit www.czartlessons.com. Call 703-250-6930.

SATURDAYS/JAN. 6-FEB. 17

Art Workshop for Teens/Adults. 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Woods Community Centre, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Instructor Carol Zeitlin, drawing, watercolor, Chinese Brush & portfolio development. Visit www.czartlessons.com. Call 703-250-6930.

MONDAY/JAN. 8

Funday Monday. 10:30 a.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive,

Fairfax. Sponsored by the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts. Funday Monday will offer a variety of children's activities and entertainment in Old Town Hall. Free. Call 703-385-7858.

MONDAYS/JAN. 8-MARCH 26

Exercise Classes. 9:30-10:30 a.m. at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. \$30. Call 703-323-4788 or visit www.scfbva.org.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 10

Earth Fare Opens. 7 a.m. at Fairfax Plaza, 11054 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Specialty organic and natural foods grocery store. Visit www.earthfare.com.

THURSDAY/JAN. 11

Art and Lunch. 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. The Fairfax Art League will be hosting, bring lunch and enjoy the company of other artists. Free. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net or call 703-587-9481.

FRIDAY/JAN. 12

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Call 703-273-3638 or visit www.fairfaxvfd.com.

THURSDAY/JAN. 18

Lunch N' Life. noon-2 p.m. at the Fairfax Presbyterian Church, 10723 Main St. John Cox, who was a guide at the U.S. Capital Building will speak on the history of the building. \$10. Call 703-323-4788 or visit www.scfbva.org.

FRIDAY/JAN. 19

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Call 703-273-3638 or visit www.fairfaxvfd.com.

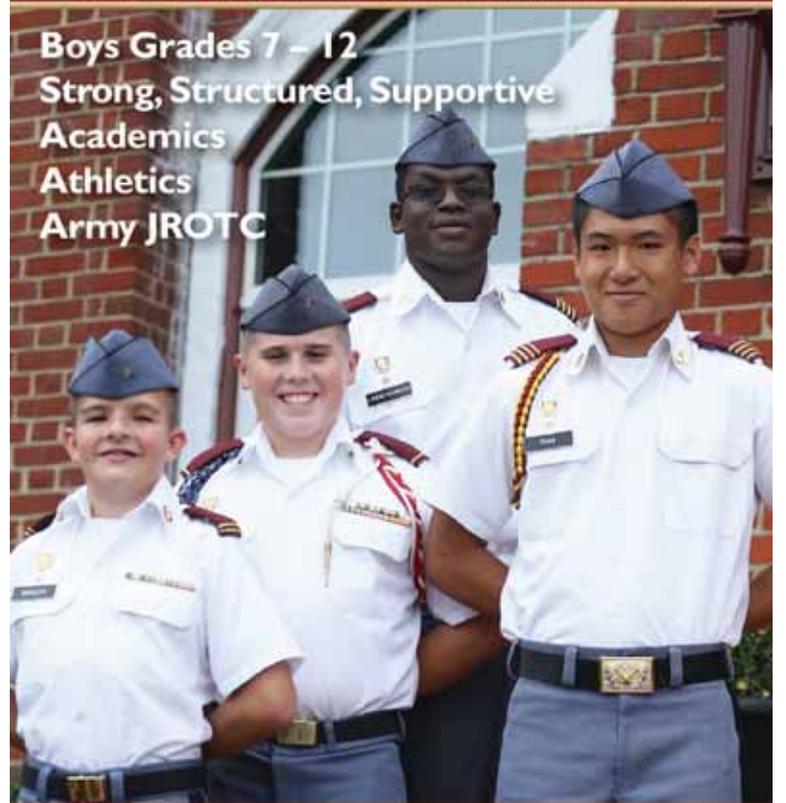
Sherwood Family Movie. 7 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway. Featuring "Smurfs Lost Village." Participants may bring their own snacks. Britepaths will accept donations of non perishable food. Call 703-385-7858.

Dance Fest 2018. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Harris Theatre at George Mason University, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. The Virginia Dance Coalition presents DanceFest 2018 Gala Performance highlighting 12 member companies. Visit www.virginiadancecoalition.org.

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Finding Peace and Joy

Relieving stress and finding meaning in the holiday season.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

When artist Kathryn Coneway is feeling overwhelmed by the stress of the holiday season, she heads outside to find peace and calm in nature.

"I get easily overwhelmed by the crowded parking lots and busy stores," she said. "When I'm feeling overwhelmed, I'll go to Huntley Meadows Park and walk around. The beauty of nature restores me. You're with other people when you're there, but there's still solitude."

From those who are dashing to finish holiday shopping and those who are financially strapped to those grieving a loss or dreading dealing with strained familial relationships, the stretch of time between Thanksgiving and Christmas is often hectic and emotionally charged. Recharging and infusing the holidays with joy and peace might mean redefining the holiday season.

"Research shows increased happiness after thinking of three good things that happened to you today and what caused them," said Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at George Mason University. "Also, people report improved mood from doing five kind acts in a day, expressing gratitude, pursuing important goals, and playing sports."

An evening of music and quiet creativity is one method that Elizabeth Rees, associate rector

at Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church in Alexandria uses to recharge during the holiday season. The event called "Healing Arts" is held at the Center for Spiritual Deepening at St. Aidan's. "Sometimes for me, meditative art helps me to get into a different space," she said. "And with instrumental cello and guitar music in the background, it [is] beautiful."

Visual imagery is another technique Rees employs. "I went to a... prayer-yoga-dance gathering this week, and [the instructor] had us physically pretend to pick up things that we want to let go of or that are weighing us down to place on an imaginary fire," she said. "I loved the imagery: my burdens and distractions going up in smoke along with my prayers rising to God to make space in me for something new."

Coneway uses the season's natural surrounding to inspire her art, which is another way in which she finds joy and relaxation. "The gift of this time of day is the display of light and colors of early morning and evening," she said. "I encourage families to gather around the table and [create] art together. Whether its parents addressing Christmas cards while children are drawing or making a collage out of wrapping paper or tissue paper, I encourage families to work on something together."

Serving others and expressing gratitude are research-driven techniques for finding happiness says Dr. Lois T. Stover, Ed.D., dean, School of Education and Human Services at Marymount University.

"Make holiday cards and send them out. It's fun to drop a word of kindness anonymously to someone in the neighborhood and then tell that person to pass along the idea, leaving words of kindness or gratitude themselves for someone else," she said. "Create an 'I am

thankful for ...' wall and cover it with sticky notes that complete the sentence as new thoughts come to mind each time you pass by."

There's plenty of holiday joy that comes without a price tag, suggests Stover. "Drive through various neighborhoods just after dark and exclaim 'Oooh - aah' over homes or other buildings that have particularly fun



Artist Kathryn Coneway and her family spend time in Huntley Meadows Park when they're feeling overwhelmed by the holiday rush.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHRYN CONEWAY



Sylvain Richard, Pat Keithly and Eileen Myers attended a "Healing Arts" event at the Center for Spiritual Deepening at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church in Alexandria. Such activities can bring peace and joy during a hectic holiday season.

"Moments of quiet and rest and being able to be present in the moment help me to get through the frenzy."

— Elizabeth Rees, Associate Rector, Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church

or beautiful displays of lights," said Stover. "Listen to holiday music in a variety of genres and make play lists of favorites. Sing along loudly. It's hard to feel down while belting out anything from 'Frosty the Snowman' to 'Joy to the World.'"

For those looking to maintain the religious meaning of the season, Rees suggests daily devotions sent electronically. "I've found

some wonderful daily prayers that arrive each day by email. Just a minute or two of focus on what is deep and joyful and holy help center me for the day," she said. "For me, Ignatian prayer has been speaking to me lately, imagining myself into the stories of scripture. Moments of quiet and rest and being able to be present in the moment help me to get through the frenzy."

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PEOPLE

Lorton Teen Named Cadet Officer of the Month

In recognition of his academic and military performance, Cadet Capt. Chimere Jonathan Nzedu, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jasper Nzedu, has been named Fishburne Military School's Cadet Officer of the Month for November 2017.

Nzedu, a senior from Lorton, is in his second year at Fishburne Military School.

The announcement, which reads in part: "Through outstanding performance of duty and dedication to the Corps of Cadets and Fishburne Military School, Cadet Captain Chimere Nzedu is hereby awarded Officer of the Month," was made earlier last week in a formation before the entire assembled Corps of Cadets.

Cadet Officer of the Month is selected by a board of Cadet Officers, and is approved by the Commandant of Cadets. A Cadet Officer of the Month is selected based upon his academic, military and

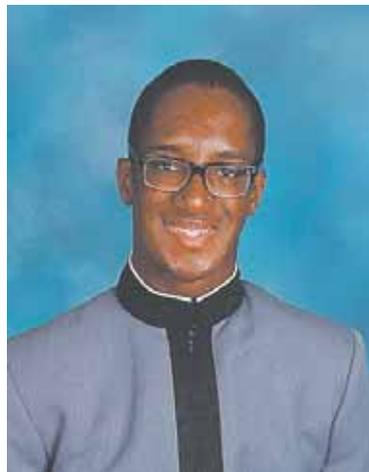


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

community achievements throughout the previous month.

Cadets earning Officer of the Month enjoy special privileges including 10 Superintendent Merits, 10 Commandant Merits, one special meal and one Four Day Pass from 6:30 p.m. Thursday to 7 p.m. Monday.

Recognized for 'Exceptional Performance'

Monique Craft of the Burke/Fairfax Station office was recognized for exceptional performance in November by Mark Ackermann, president of Weichert, Realtors' Capital Region.

Craft led her Weichert sales region, which comprises locations throughout Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Orange, Prince William and Warren counties, in resales for the month.

Craft can be reached in Weichert's Burke/Fairfax Station office at 9299 Old Keene Mill Road, or call 703-569-7870 for more information.



Monique Craft

Stempson House

FROM PAGE 3

headquarters for his last and final tour on active duty. After some deliberation, he ultimately decided he was interested in and felt well suited for the program. McCullough is a single father of a 16-year-old daughter.

SUPERVISOR Dan Storck thanked McCullough for his service to this new and innovative program, stating, "I look forward to following this project

and hope that you will chronicle your progress, sharing these findings with others who may be interested in this program, as well as with the local community."

When asked about the RCP, McCullough said, "This program is a unique opportunity and I am very excited to be the pilot curator. I look forward to helping build the program in its early stages, as well as, hopefully, becoming a valued member of the Fairfax County and Lorton communities."

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NEWS

Planning Commissioners Appointed

**Four new members
named to Fairfax County
Planning Commission; one
vacancy remains in Sully.**

Members of the Board of Supervisors appointed four new planning commissioners this month to begin serving on the 12-member commission.

The Planning Commission advises the Board of Supervisors on all matters related to land use in Fairfax County, a particularly busy time right now reviewing redevelopment along the Silver Line. The commission holds public hearings, often multiple times a week, and often brings together residents, developers and county planners to work through concerns and conflicts.

This includes the location and character of public facilities; amendments to the Comprehensive Plan; amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, the Public Facilities Ordinance, and the Subdivision Ordinance; rezonings and special exceptions; approvals of final development plans; and also sometimes advises the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Each of the nine supervisory districts has a representative, and three members are appointed at-large. Planning commissioners are appointed by the Board of Supervisors for four-year terms on a staggered basis.

Hunter Mill Supervisor Catherine Hudgins appointed John Carter to replace Frank de la Fe as the Hunter Mill District Planning Commission. De la Fe, the vice chairman of the commission, served as the Hunter Mill planning commissioner since 2001. The Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations named him 2001 and 2012 Citizen of the Year.

"Commissioner de la Fe has been involved with every major task force and committee dealing with planning and land use," said Hudgins. "His strength has been an ability to hear all sides of an issue and come to a decision that best serves the community and Fairfax County.

"Most significantly, he worked with the Planning Commission on the approvals to bring rail to the Dulles Corridor that has changed the culture from a rural/suburban area to a vibrant urban district," she said.

Carter was a former chief of community-based planning in Montgomery County, Md., overseeing the county's master plan and development review processes, and has more than 35 years experience as a planner, urban designer and architect, according to Hudgins. Carter has a Master of Planning degree from the University of Virginia; a Master of Architecture in Urban Design from Virginia Tech and a Bachelor of Architecture with Distinction from Arizona State University.

"Mr. Carter has lived in the Hunter Mill District for over 44 years and has extensive community involvement. I believe Mr. Carter is an excellent choice for

this position," said Hudgins.

SHARON BULOVA appointed Mary Cortina in November to replace Janyce Hedetniemi as an at-large member.

Cortina currently serves as vice chairman of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board. She grew up in West Springfield in the 1970s, said Bulova.

Cortina is a graduate of George Mason University with a B.S. in Business, majoring in Decision Sciences/Management Information Systems and Marketing. She also attended the Leadership Development Program at the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, N.C.

MOUNT VERNON Supervisor Dan Storck appointed Walter C. Clarke to replace Earl Flanagan on April 18, 2018.

Clarke is a current co-chairman of the EMBARK Richmond Highway Advisory Group and played a substantive role in the revisions to the Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan, according to Storck.

"The selection of Mr. Clarke as the next commissioner is a natural next step in his service to the Mount Vernon District," said Storck.

Clarke is also vice president at Burke & Herbert Bank and has lived in the Mount Vernon Community for more than 15 years.

Current Planning Commissioner Earl Flanagan "has agreed to work closely with Mr. Clarke over the coming months to ensure a smooth transition of upcoming matters and continued support, as needed," said Storck. "[Flanagan] provided invaluable direction in land use cases for the District. As a steadfast leader in our community, he is highly respected for his in-depth knowledge of zoning, as well as his ability to work with community leaders, individual residents, working groups and builders."

SULLY DISTRICT planning commissioner remains vacant after Karen Keys-Gamarra announced her resignation effective Oct. 25, 2017. Keys-Gamarra won a special election in August to fill the at-large School Board seat vacated by Jeanette Hough.

THE OTHER planning commissioners are:

- ❖ Peter Murphy, chairman, Springfield District, appointed December 1982 (appointed by Marie Travesky), current term expires December 2018
- ❖ Jim Hart, at-large, appointed Jan. 2004 (Gerry Connolly), term expires December 2019
- ❖ Tim Sargeant, at-large, appointed January 2007 (Connolly), term expires December 2018
- ❖ John Ulfelder Dranesville, appointed December 2013 (John W. Foust), December 2020
- ❖ Ellen Hurley, Braddock, appointed December 2011 (John Cook), December 2019
- ❖ Julie Strandlie, Mason, appointed December 2014 (Penny Gross), December 2018
- ❖ James Migliaccio, Lee, sworn in July 2010 (Jeff McKay), December 2019
- ❖ Phillip Niedzielski-Eichner, Providence, 2017 (Linda Smyth).

SCHOOL 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.

Jazz Band and Ensemble include **Charlie Gorham** from South County High School.

Vocal musicians from 14 Fairfax County public schools have been named to the Virginia Honors Choir for 2017. Thirty-four Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students were selected for the choir, and five students

were named as alternates. This select choir is open to the top 125 singers from around the Commonwealth of Virginia, and is the highest honor a choir student can attain during his or her high school career. FCPS students named to the 2017 Virginia Honors Choir include: **Olivia Chaves** and **Michael Reinhardt** from South County High School.

BULLETIN

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

HOLIDAY SOBER-RIDE

Free Sober Rides. The annual Holiday SoberRider program will operate 8 p.m.-4 a.m. each night from Friday, Dec. 15, 2017-Monday, Jan. 1, 2018. Area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download Lyft to their phones, then enter the code in the app's "Promo" section to receive their no cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's weekly Holiday SoberRide promo codes will be posted at 2 p.m. on Dec. 15, Dec. 23 and Dec. 31 on www.SoberRide.com.

BLOOD DONATIONS NEEDED

The American Red Cross urges eligible donors to give more life by giving blood this December. In December, donations decline but the needs of patients remain steady. During the holiday season, set aside an hour to give the most important gift – give blood and give more life. All those who come to give blood or platelets Dec. 21, 2017, through Jan. 7, 2018, will receive a long-sleeved Red Cross T-shirt, while supplies last. Make an appointment to give blood by downloading the free Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting redcrossblood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

- ❖ Springfield
Dec. 26: 1-5 p.m., South Run RECenter, 7550 Reservation Drive
- ❖ Fairfax - Fairfax Blood Donation Center, 2720 Prosperity Avenue, Suite 200 (unless otherwise noted)
Dec. 21: 12:45-5:45 p.m.
Dec. 22: 7:45 a.m.-3 p.m.
Dec. 23: 7:45 a.m.-3 p.m.
Dec. 24: 7:45 a.m.-2:45 p.m.
Dec. 26: 10:45 a.m.-5:45 p.m.
Dec. 27: 12:45-8 p.m.
Dec. 28: 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Pennino Building 10th Floor Conf Rm, 12011 Government Center Parkway
Dec. 28: 12:45-5:45 p.m.
Dec. 29: 7:45 a.m.-3 p.m.
Dec. 30: 7:45 a.m.-3 p.m.
Dec. 31: 7:45 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

TUESDAY/JAN. 9

American Legion Post 177 Luncheon. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. Presentation on "Advanced preparation and arrangement for funeral/memorial" by Peter Hause, Fairfax Memorial Funeral Home. \$11. Call 703-280-2356 for more.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke sponsors a monthly meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, noon-1:30 p.m., for caregivers to learn and to share with others experiencing similar challenges. Before attending, contact the facilitator, Eileen Thompson at 703-451-8626 or eileen.thompson1@gmail.com.

Haven of Northern Virginia provides support, compassion, information and resources to the bereaved and seriously ill. To become a Haven volunteer, please call 703-941-7000 to request an orientation. Volunteers must complete a 30-hour training and commit to one year of service answering Haven phones (2.5 hours weekly). Next training is scheduled for fall 2017.

ONGOING

Volunteers needed at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Museum offers a variety of exciting volunteer opportunities in Museum events, programs and administration. Contact volunteers@fairfax-station.org or 703-945-7483 to explore services that will fit your schedule and interests. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, or call 703-425-9225 for more.

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"Suit Yourself, Biscuit"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Talk about a superfluous statement. I was asleep in bed and awoke to find one of our five cats, Biscuit, the oldest at 11+, lying sphinx-like on the front right of our bed. Though it was dark, I could see in his yellow eyes that he was awake.

Wanting to feel a cat against my body, I said, "Biscuit, come here. Come lie against my chest." No response so I repeated the request. This time with a bit more conviction: "Biscuit, come here. I want to feel you next to me." Again, no response. In fact, no reaction whatsoever. So I muttered, without thinking even: "OKAY, Biscuit, suit yourself."

And then I laughed. Of course he's going to suit himself. That's what cats do. I should be grateful he didn't jump off the bed. After all, he was minding his own business.

And that business is the entire philosophy of the feline species captured in two words. If any of you has ever owned a cat and been sensitive to and appreciative of their differences with the canine population, cats don't really come when you call them. Nor do they respond to a million other things you ask of them. If you understand and embrace that behavior, you'll likely begin to see this non-responsiveness as part of their charm.

However, when they do come when you call them, or when they climb uninvited onto your chest while lying in bed or snuggle with you on the couch; oh, how special you feel. And if you don't feel put upon or tolerated and can instead savor the uniqueness of their knead (and do everything you can to encourage its repetition), then you can indeed find pleasure and purpose in that moment, rare though it may be – or maybe not.

Accepting the parameters of the relationship with your cat, and managing your expectations, will go a long way toward understanding what your cat is able to give you. And what cats can give you is companionship and love – on their terms of course. The mere fact that Biscuit is lying on the bed should be enough to make me happy. Expecting that he would rise due to my beck and call, at night, especially while he's cat-napping is unreasonable on my part. Biscuit is not being difficult in the least. He is simply adhering to a non-responsive-type behavior that generations of cats – and generations of cat owners, should be accustomed to, not questioned or even curious about.

As an extraordinarily experienced cat owner (almost 40 years), I should have known better. Yet I couldn't resist the temptation/control the urge to give Biscuit (a cat) the chance to change the course of presumptive cat history and come to me when I asked. The problem is, once in a blue moon – or was that a red moon (it certainly appeared to be above the fold on the front page of The Washington Post the other day), cats will break with historical convention and respond/react/reply in kind with both word and deed. They'll come, they'll snuggle, they'll talk, they'll nuzzle, they might even lick. In fact, they'll do everything they can to endear themselves to you.

But it doesn't happen often or rather it doesn't happen consistently. Yet it remains the goal of every committed (or rather should be) cat owner to make every attempt to induce their cats to succumb to their cat-seducing charms. Like right now, Twinkle, our white, five-and-half-years-old domestic medium hair, is doing everything she can to get my attention. She's walking back and forth across my note pad (as I'm trying to write; I'm busy), she's rubbing her head against my face and using the top of my pen as some sort of head scratcher, she's lying on her left side with as many as four paws outstretched across my left arm as I use it to block her advance and she's talking non-stop.

She's being such a pain, but you have to love them. If you can't appreciate their untimely intrusions and instead expect some kind of predictable dog-like obedience, you need more than "The Cat Whisperer," you need "The Cat Screamer," because it's NOT HAPPENING.

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



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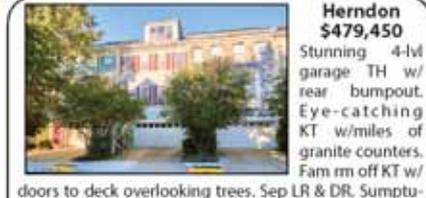


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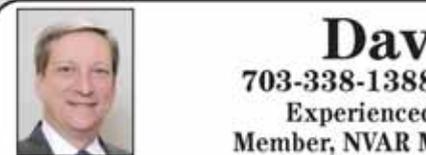


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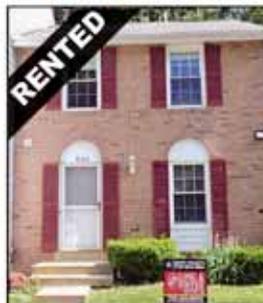
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