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Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

Cast members of
Herndon High School's
20th Anniversary Cabaret,
"Back to Broadway 2018"
rehearse a week before their
high-energy performances
scheduled for Friday, Feb. 23
and Saturday, Feb. 24 at 7:30
p.m. in the school auditorium.

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Purim Palooza in Northern Virginia
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PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

NEWS



Cast members of the 20th Anniversary Herndon High School Cabaret, “Back to Broadway 2018” gather on stage before rehearsal. “We started [the Cabaret] to provide an opportunity to many, with some of the music we love the most,” said co-director and pianist, Jim Van Slyke.

A Must See Show to Fire the Soul Herndon High School’s Cabaret “Back To Broadway 2018” is Friday and Saturday, Feb. 23- 24.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
 THE CONNECTION

From the Herndon High School Choir comes one of their most exhilarating annual events, Broadway Cabaret. Celebrating its 20th Anniversary season, “Back To Broadway 2018” features energetic songs from musical classics such as, “The Pajama Game”, as well as exuberant songs from adrenalin-rushed contemporaries “Hamilton” and “Dear Evan Hansen,” a musical which was acclaimed by ABC’s “Nightline” as, “... an emotionally charged phenomenon that has taken Broadway by storm.”

This year’s “Broadway Cabaret 2018” will take place in the Herndon High School Auditorium, Door # 6, 700 Bennett Road, Herndon on Friday, Feb. 23 and Saturday, Feb. 24 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased at the door: adults \$10; students and seniors \$5. Cash and checks accepted. According to Sara Metcalf HHS Choral Boosters, VP of Fundraising, proceeds from Cabaret will go to the booster’s general choir fund.

Herndon High School choir and drama departments join forces at the high energy “Back to Broadway 2018.” The cast delivers music and theatre into everything one would hope it to be and more. The event is under the direction of Dana Van Slyke, choral director at Herndon since 1995 and Jim Van Slyke, co-director, and pianist.

Dana Van Slyke said, “This is one of my favorite performances of the year because we get to feature so many students and their individual talents.” Auditions for participation in the extracurricular event were open to all students. Jim Van Slyke added, “We started [the Cabaret] to provide an opportunity to many, with some of the music we love the most.”

A week before their first performance, students took a break during rehearsal and told what is it like to be cast member. Many students described their participation in “Back to Broadway 2018” as something they will remember forever; for others, the experience develops technical skills; and for some, Cabaret offers to heal.

Gabriel Carrillo, 16, Herndon, said, “This once in a lifetime opportunity enriches you with many different styles of songs, music, and dances from a whole range of different Broadway performances.”

Teddy Robertson, 17, Herndon, said, “To be a Cabaret is to be free to a singer, a dancer, and extension



From left: Teddy Robertson, Allie Lytle, Erin Maxwell, Vaheed Talebian, Morton Stokes, Juliette Darmofalski, Allen Truong, and Sean Sullivan give it their all during a rehearsal one week before the 20th Anniversary Herndon High School Cabaret “Back to Broadway,” scheduled for Friday, Feb. 23 and Saturday, Feb., 24 at 7:30 p.m. in the school auditorium.

of me. Every one of my parts is my own. I love you, Cabaret 2018.” Juliette Darmofalski, 16, Herndon, said, “This is my second time participating in Cabaret. I absolutely love working with the cast.”

Selina Shupp, 17, Herndon, said, “Music is food for soul, said my geometry teacher. Only through these productions have I really understood what that means...This production helps us grow as musicians and people.”

James Hitchings, 17, Herndon, said, “The reason I’m doing Cabaret is for two particular reasons, to get more associated with more people and to practice my musical skills.”

Isabella Hollenbeck, 15, Herndon, said, “Theatre, music, the arts bring healing. If there’s anything we need right now, it’s healing. One of my close friends was in Parkland High School during the shooting, and I sent her one of the songs we’re singing, ‘You Will be Found,’ (a song to be performed at Cabaret from the Broadway musical ‘Dear Evan Hansen’). I think we both needed to hear it.”

For more information about “Back to Broadway 2018” and Herndon Choir or to donate to the non-profit organization that serves as the Herndon High School Choral Boosters, visit herndonchoir.org.

East Spring Street Widening Town of Herndon Design Public Hearing

Thursday, March 8, 2018
 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Herndon Community Center, Gym
 814 Ferndale Avenue
 Herndon, VA 20170

If the meeting is cancelled due to inclement weather, the alternate date and location will be **Thursday, March 15, 2018** in the lobby of the **Herndon Municipal Building, 777 Lynn Street, Herndon, VA 20170**.

Find out about plans to widen East Spring Street from four to six lanes from just west of Herndon Parkway to Fairfax County Parkway. The project also includes intersection and sidewalk improvements.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR 771, a Categorical Exclusion is being prepared for this project. Pursuant to Section 6009 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) and 23 CFR Part 774, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will make a Section 4(f) impact finding for proposed right-of-way acquisition from parkland and historic sites. In compliance with the Section 106 provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR 800, information concerning potential effects on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places will also be included in the environmental document.

Stop by between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. to view displays and learn more about the project. Project staff will be available to answer your questions.

Review project information at the VDOT project website (www.virginiadot.org/projects), at the information meeting, or during business hours at VDOT’s Northern Virginia District Office at 4975 Alliance Drive in Fairfax. Please call ahead at 703-259-1795 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions.

Give your written comments at the meeting, or submit them by **March 19, 2018** (March 26, 2018 if the meeting is held March 15) to Hamid Misaghian, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030, or email meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference “East Spring Street Widening” in the subject line.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT’s Civil Rights Division at 703-259-1775 or TTY/TDD 711.

State Project: U000-235-354, P101
 UPC: 105521
 Federal: STP-5A01 (749)

Wexton, Boysko Hold Legislative Town Hall Meeting

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

State Sen. Jennifer Wexton (D-33) and Del. Jennifer Boysko (D-86) hosted a Town Hall Meeting in the Herndon Council Chambers Building, 765 Lynn St., Herndon on Saturday, Feb. 17. Boysko and Wexton were there to give a mid-session legislative overview of what has been happening in Richmond and answer questions from constituents.

Mayor of Herndon Lisa C. Merkel introduced Wexton and Boysko to the assembled crowd and thanked the legislators for coming. "You are such great supporters of the town," Merkel said.

Wexton explained that in the Senate they are dealing with the budget and now there is a new governor, who was a physician. "People spoke strongly in 2017 about health care."

Wexton said there had been no gains in gun safety legislation. The Republican-led Senate blocked a bill to increase background checks. She added, "That has been a source of disappointment for me."

Boysko told those assembled that although one-quarter of the membership in the House has changed and there are more women, "Everything is changed, but every-



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

From left: Del. Jennifer Boysko (D-86) and state Sen. Jennifer Wexton (D-33) at the Legislative Town Hall Meeting held Saturday, Feb. 17, in Herndon.

thing is the same." Boysko detailed bills killed quiet deaths in sub-committees, rolled into other bills and "party shenanigans." She said the Virginia Senate passed legislation

aimed at allowing guns in churches. The state House still has to approve the bill though.

Boysko said the gun control agenda took a hit when the bump stock ban bill died in a House subcommittee. The guns in churches bill has been pulled, she said. Boysko urged those at the Town Hall Meeting with gun safety T-shirts on, "You keep on doing what you are doing...the makeup of the General Assembly must change."

Metro, Medicaid, domestic violence, animal testing, the "Me Too" movement, LGBTQ+, so many topics updated but in the end when asked what the private citizen could do, Boysko and Wexton echoed each other: Stay informed. Let your voices be heard. Write your legislators. There is now live streaming of the Virginia General Assembly that previously never was broadcast publicly. Check out eyesonrichmond.org. Write to the editor of local/regional papers. "The only way to change things is change," said Boysko.

Reaction from audience members revealed how the town hall meeting affected them.

Willow G. Woycke said, "The Senator Wexton and Delegate Boysko town hall filled in much of the information I was lacking from this legislative session in Richmond

around Medicaid expansion, the Dominion bill, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), gun control, and my main area of concern, LGBTQ+ equality. I thanked both legislators for their support of LGBTQ+ equality in the General Assembly. I also pointed out that there were no anti-LGBTQ+ bills introduced this session. This lack of attacks on equality is tremendous progress. Wexton's LGBTQ+ equality in housing bill (SB 423) and the other equality bills were killed in a House of Delegates committee hearing on a party-line vote."

Signe Friedrichs said, "Delegate Boysko and Senator Wexton are brilliant, principled, generous and dedicated. We are in good hands."

Herndon Town Councilmember Sheila Olem said, "The Town Hall meeting with our state Senator Wexton and Delegate Boysko reported that the Republican-controlled Virginia House of Delegates Committee voted down a series of gun control measures including a move to expand background checks to all firearm transfers, ration handgun sales to once a month, and ban bump stocks. Also, the Republican-controlled Senate committee killed numerous anti-gun bills that were part of Gov. Ralph Northam's political agenda but moved forward a bump stock ban proposal."

Mayor Merkel to Seek Fourth Consecutive Term

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Mayor Lisa C. Merkel of Herndon announced on Saturday, Feb. 17, her intention to seek a fourth consecutive term for the office of Mayor of the Town of Herndon. She did so during the Jimmy's Old Town Tavern Mayor's Opening Reception, held by Jimmy Cirrito and his wife, Maureen. The reception was a "thank you gathering" for individuals and businesses to celebrate the opening of The Buffalo Wing and the new Beer Garden at Jimmy's Old Town Tavern. With a crowd of approximately 75 people looking on, Jimmy Cirrito invited Merkel to take the microphone at which time Merkel announced her intention to seek public office as Mayor of the Town of Herndon for her fourth term. Afterwards, Merkel said, "It has been my honor to serve as Mayor since 2012, and am grateful for the trust that Herndon has placed in me."

According to the Virginia Board of Elections, at the November 2016 election, candidate Merkel received 5,928 votes, 68 percent of votes cast while her challenger received 2,786 votes, 32 percent, resulting in Merkel being re-elected as Mayor for her third consecutive term.

As of Feb. 19, 2018, no other candidate had publicly announced the intention of running for Mayor in the Town of Herndon. However, the State Board of Election reports the Declaration of



Candidacy Form Filing Deadline for completed Petitions is June 12, 2018.

During her terms as Mayor, Merkel has been a key-player and avid advocate for Herndon's long-awaited downtown redevelopment. Merkel said, "My primary focus every day has been to maintain our small town feel while achieving the town's decades-long vision of a downtown development...full of activity, the arts, and great places to meet your neighbors for dinner and other events. We are finally ready to break ground on our downtown, and I hope to have the opportunity to see it through." The tagline on Merkel's Twitter account, @MayorLisaMerkel, is "Preserving our History. Shaping our Future. I'm honored to serve as your Mayor. Stay in touch!" The Town of Herndon is the third largest town in the Commonwealth of Virginia and home to more than 23,000 residents. As Mayor, Merkel is the Chief Executive Officer of the Town, and her power and authority of the office are derived from the Town Charter and the general laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Merkel presides over Town Council and has the same right to speak and vote as the other members. According to the town website, the Mayor and the six councilmembers of the Herndon Town Council. "...establishes Town government policy, acts on local resolutions and ordinances, sets tax rates, approves the annual Town budget, appoints members to the town's boards, and provides policy guidance for the Town Manager."

Herndon Mayor Lisa C. Merkel (second from left) announces her intention to seek her fourth consecutive term for the office of Mayor of the Town of Herndon during the Jimmy's Old Town Tavern Mayor's Opening Reception, held by Jimmy Cirrito and his wife, Maureen (far right). Merkel is accompanied by her husband, David (left).

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Homegrown Yoga. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Alison Adams is bringing Homegrown Yoga to ArtSpace Herndon. All levels welcome. Drop in and take a class. \$25 two week unlimited pass or drop-in available. Visit homegrownpoweryoga.com to sign up.

The Elden Street Tea Shop.

Saturdays in ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Sip tea and enjoy a variety of locally made snacks and pastries while enjoying the latest art installations in the gallery. Visit www.eldenstreettea.com.

Small Business Support Sundays.

Visit independent stores and restaurants, and those that support small businesses at Reston Town Center, offering specials, discounts, tastings, and localized treats every Sunday. Visit SmallBusinessSupportSundays.com.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 21

Book Club. 12:15-1:15 p.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston Town Center. Scrawl Books is hosting a lunch-time book club on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. The first book is Girl Waits with Gun by Amy Stewart. Visit scrawlbooks.com or call 703-966-2111.

Author Discussion. 7 p.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston Town Center. Scrawl Books is hosting a live video discussion with Amy Stewart, the author of Girl Waits

with Gun.

THURSDAY/FEB. 22

Jazz Night. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Lake Anne Coffee House/Wine Bar, 1612 Washington Plaza N., Reston. Patrons may enjoy Mykle Lyons and company as they wine and dine in the cozy second floor wine bar. Admission is free. Call 703-501-6289 or email maurisapotts@gmail.com.

THROUGH FEB. 23

Diva Central Dress Drive with Reston Community Center collection in building lobbies at Reston Town Center. The annual Diva Central Dress Drive' mission is to promote confidence and self-esteem by providing high school students a free prom dress and other accessories. Donate new or lightly used formal dresses, shoes, jewelry, handbags and accessories, collected in boxes located in building lobbies. Visit restontowncenter.com.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/FEB. 23-24

Cabaret: "Back to Broadway." 7:30 p.m. at Herndon High School (Auditorium), 700 Bennett St., Herndon. 2018 marks the 20th Anniversary producing this Broadway Cabaret under the direction of Dana and Jim Van Slyke. This family-friendly night is always a winner, and all proceeds go directly to the Herndon High School Choir. Tickets are sold at the door (\$10 adults/\$5 students and senior citizens; cash or checks accepted).

SUNDAY/FEB. 25

Purim Palooza. noon-2 p.m. at

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 6

New Therapeutic Massage Studio Opens

The Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce is hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony for Meg Donnelly, LMT, LLC, a new therapeutic massage studio in the Town of Herndon at noon Thursday, Feb. 22, 2018. The studio is located at Springwood Professional Center, 464 Herndon Parkway, Suite # 116, Herndon.

Herndon Mayor Lisa Merkel, several members of the Herndon Town Council, John Boylan, President and CEO of the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce and Dulles Chamber members are scheduled to participate in the ceremony. The event coincides with Meg Donnelly, LMT, LLC, Grand Opening and Open House 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. There will be food, door prizes, raffles, and a gift for the first 20 guests.

Meg Donnelly LMT, LLC is one of six individual companies housed in Suite #116, 464 Herndon Parkway, Herndon. Donnelly welcomes the public to the festivities to meet her and the other health and wellness professionals in the suite, Netta Pope Riley MEd, LMT- Massage and Lymphatic Therapy; Nour Zibdeh, MS, RDN, CLT- Functional Nutritionist; Cheryl Toner, MS, RDN- Registered Dietitian; Heather Waugh, LMT-Spectrum Healing Arts; and Virginia Mitchell MAC, L.Ac, Dip'l Ac (NCCAOM)-Licensed Acupuncturist.

In discussing her business, Donnelly states on @megdonnelleylmt facebook.com, "Massage therapy is an important, integrated part of our



Meg Donnelly, licensed massage therapist, offers massage therapy for the Weekend Warriors and others with personalized sessions based on client's specific goals "... whether it be improved movement, increased performance, a faster recovery time, or just some much-needed downtime."

overall health & wellness. I create personalized massage sessions based on each client's specific goals to provide comfort, relieve pain and improve movement with a strong focus on the pain science, movement physiology and research into the nervous system's role in pain management."

Visit massagetherapybymeg.com/ribboncutting.

— MERCIA HOBSON



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Cheese & Beverage Reception

Wednesday, Feb. 28 at 3:30 pm • featuring pianist/vocalist Yvonne Johnson

International Women's Month Tour: "The First Ladies"

Sunday, March 4 at 2:30 pm • hosted by Natalie Neviasky

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Publishes: Feb 28, 2018 • Ads close: Feb 22, 2018

Connection readers love their pets. This keepsake edition will feature photos, anecdotes, advice and more about beloved family pets.

The Pet Connection will publish on February 28, 2018, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by February 16.

This edition provides a great advertising opportunity to reach pet owners where they live in a section sure to attract and hold their attention - be sure to take advantage of our different advertising options.

Find more information about submissions online at www.connectionnewspapers.com/pets.

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Tell us what you think

submit your Letter to the Editor to editors@connectionnewspapers.com



Diving into Black History with Books

Local educators suggest books to read in celebration of African American History Month.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Throughout the year, but more intensely during February, Vincent Intondi, Ph.D., uses literature to teach aspects of African American history that are often overlooked or forgotten.

While slavery and the Civil Rights Movement are two of the most poignant periods of Black history, Intondi, a professor of history and the director of the Institute for Race, Justice, and Community Engagement at Montgomery College, and other educators say reading books about lesser known figures and periods in African American history is one way to paint a complete picture, not only of the history of African Americans, but American history as a whole.

"For example, while we focus on Malcolm X, after spending time with his daughter, Ilyasah, I came to realize just how much his wife Betty did and what she meant to the family. Therefore having a book that focuses on her is important," said Intondi, who is the author of "African Americans Against the Bomb: Nuclear Weapons, Colonialism, and the Black Freedom Movement."

"One could argue that there wouldn't

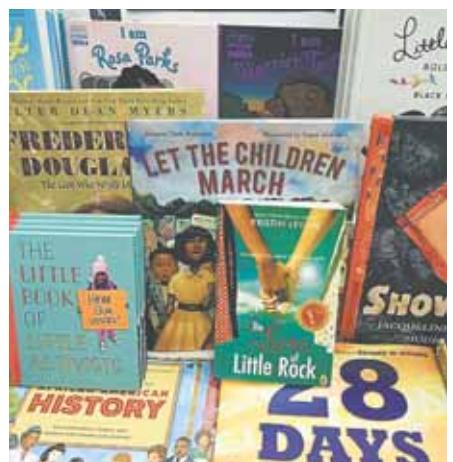


PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

have been a March on Washington were it not for Bayard Rustin, but we don't learn about him because he was gay," continued Intondi. "So part of what's important about these books is not only that they are well written and have amazing illustrations, but because of who they specifically focus on."

Infusing reading with dramatization and memorization, particularly with young children, is a technique that Ana Lado, Ph.D., professor of Education at Marymount University uses in her lessons. "I like to recommend award-winning books or books by

award-winning authors," she said. "I also pick books that can be part of a program [and] can be recited, can be dramatized, can be retold."

"Books that I made students memorize [include] 'I, Too, Am American' and 'My People,' both books of poetry by Langston Hughes; 'I Have a Dream,' [speech by Martin Luther King, Jr. published as a book]; 'Lincoln's Gettysburg Address,' [speech by President Abraham Lincoln published as a book], 'Martin's Big Words: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.,' 'Tar Beach' and 'Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky,' [both by Faith Ringgold] and 'If a Bus Could Talk, the Story of Rosa Parks' are books that my youngest students can dramatize," said Lado.

"Underground: Finding the Light to Freedom" by Shane W. Evans is another book that Lado encourages students to read. "This is the absolute easiest way to dramatize the Underground Railroad," she said. "I even use it with students with special needs and beginning English learners."

One quality to look for is books about modern day African American heroes who will likely go down in history. When compiling recommended books for African History

Month displays, Henrik Sundqvist of the Arlington Public Library said, "We try to pick titles which have been published within the last five years."

Among the books Arlington County Libraries is recommending are: "Firebird: Ballerina Misty Copeland Shows a Young Girl How to Dance Like a Firebird" by Copeland.

One book that offers a historical perspective and deeper understanding of a current issue, says Intondi, is "The John Carlos Story" by Dave Zirin and John Carlos. "There is arguably no one better to write about sports, race, and politics than Dave Zirin," he said. "The book is great for a wide range of audiences. If one wants to understand Colin Kaepernick and what is happening today in sports then they should read this book."

Using such narratives offers a deeper understanding of America's past and puts current happenings into perspective. "Students can learn and appreciate those who came before them, sacrificed, fought, put themselves on the line and paid with their freedom and lives for equality," said Intondi. "Students will learn that they are part of the long movement for freedom and they too can change the world."

Let us know about an upcoming event
www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

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NEWS

Tax Relief Workshops To Be Held in McLean, Reston and Vienna

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors announced they are hosting a series of free 2018 Tax Relief Workshops for older adults and people with disabilities in late February and March at several locations throughout the county. Both real estate and vehicle tax relief are available for adults over 65 years of age and people with disabilities who meet certain qualifications.

The fairfaxcounty.gov website states staff from the Fairfax County Department of Tax Administration (DTA) will be at the locations to assist with filling out the application form, as well as answering questions. No appointment is necessary.

Two workshops will be hosted by Supervisor John W. Foust (D-Dranesville), March 12 and March 14, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the McLean District Office, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean. Call 703-356-0551.

Three workshops will be hosted by Supervisor Catherine Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill), two in Reston and one in Vienna. The Reston workshops are March 8, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at South Lakes High School, 11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston - 703-478-0283 and on March 20, 10 a.m. to noon at the North County Government Center, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. A Vienna workshop is on Feb. 24, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Madison High School (Lecture Hall), 2500 James Madison Drive in Vienna.

According to the Fairfax County Government, "To qualify for real estate tax relief, you must be at least 65 years of age, or permanently and totally disabled...The gross income from all sources of the owners of the dwelling and any relatives of the owners who reside in the dwelling may not exceed \$72,000...The total combined net assets of owners of the dwelling and of the spouse of any owner who resides in the dwelling may not be greater than \$340,000, not including the value of the home, its furnishings and the homesite (up to one acre of land)."

Renters, who meet the age, disability, residency, and income requirements, as well as other require-

ments, can qualify for tax relief under the Tax Relief Program. The county reminds applicants when they come to a workshop to be sure to bring with them a copy of their lease agreement and rental receipts or canceled checks for each month of the previous year documenting the amount of rent paid.

As for vehicle ("car") tax relief, the county states applicants must be at least 65 years of age, or permanently and totally disabled, as of Jan. 1 of the application year and reside in Fairfax County; the exempted vehicle must be owned and used primarily by the applicant, and tax relief will only be granted on one vehicle. Also, the gross income of the applicant may not exceed \$22,000. The total combined net assets of the applicant and spouse may not exceed \$75,000. Other conditions also apply.



Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust (D)



Hunter Mill Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D)

Tax relief is available on mobile homes used as full-time residences.

Fairfax County reminds individuals that returning applicants must file between January 1 and April 1.

For more detailed information and qualifications go to fairfaxcounty.gov/taxes/relief/tax-relief-seniors-people-with-disabilities.

— MERCIA HOBSON

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 4

Congregation Beth Emeth, 12523 Lawyers Road, Herndon. Fun for all ages. Carnival, crafts, gift shop sale, costume contest, raffle, lunch, hamantaschen plus. Special program for pre-schoolers to 1st graders with families at 10:45 a.m. \$10-\$25. Visit www.bethemeth.org/purim or call 703-860-4515, ext 101.

Author Event. 4 p.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston Town Center. Author Dennis Woods will be discussing his memoir Black Flag Journals. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com/event/black-flag-journals-dennis-woods.

MONDAY/FEB. 26

Photography Critique. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at the Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. The Reston Photographic Society invites photography enthusiasts to attend the club's critique. Ellis Rosenberg and Carla Steckley, experienced photographers and exhibit judges, will critique member photos. Nonmembers are welcome. Visit www.leagueofrestonartists.org.

THURSDAY/MARCH 1

Opening Reception. 6-8 p.m. at

Signature at Reston Town Center, 11850 Freedom Drive, Reston. The first exhibit features artwork by Craig Moran, a DC-based painter known for his boldly patterned canvases. Free and open to the public. Call 703-471-9242, ext. 114 or visit restonarts.org.

MARCH 1-APRIL 1

"Godspell." Thursdays through Sundays at NextStop Theatre Company, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. NextStop opens "Godspell" with a modern twist to the musical, setting the new production in a coffee shop. Tickets, \$35-\$65, at www.NextStopTheatre.org or by calling 866-811-4111.

THURSDAY/MARCH 1

Jazz Night. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Lake Anne Coffee House/Wine Bar, 1612 Washington Plaza N., Reston. Patrons may enjoy Mykle Lyons and company as they wine and dine in the cozy second floor wine bar. Admission is free. Call 703-501-6289 or email maurisapotts@gmail.com.

FRIDAY/MARCH 2

Open Mic Poetry Night. 7-9 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Featured members of the Poetry Society of Virginia will share their poetry. An open mic will follow, allowing for anyone attending to

have a moment on stage. Free and open to the public. Visit artspaceherndon.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 3

Out of the Shadows. 4-5:45 p.m. at Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Highlighting music by female composers, from Hildegard of Bingen and Lili Boulanger to Cecilia McDowell and Moira Smiley. Featuring special guest Ysaye Barnwell, formerly of Sweet Honey in the Rock. A reception will follow the concert. \$20-25; free for 17 and younger, active duty military. Call 703-834-0079 or visit www.restonchorale.org.

"Phenomena." 6-7 p.m. at The Atlas Performing Arts Center, 1333 H St. NE, Washington, D.C. Reston-based Gin Dance Company presents "Phenomena." Gin Dance Company will be celebrating the legendary Leonard Bernstein Centennial. \$30. Visit www.gindance.org.

SUNDAY/MARCH 4

Indigo T-shirt Dyeing. 2-4 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Indigo T-shirt Dyeing with Elizabeth Gibson. Ages 7-13. \$20 per student. Visit artspaceherndon.org.

BULLETIN

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

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Child turning 5 years old by Sept. 30? If so, contact your child's school to make arrangements for kindergarten enrollment. Most schools begin getting information together now for parents of incoming kindergartners, and many host an orientation or open house. All kindergarten programs are full-day and located in FCPS elementary schools. Check your school's webpage or contact the school directly for specific enrollment information and dates of orientation or visit www.fcps.edu/registration/kindergarten-registration.

THROUGH FEB. 28

Diva Central Dress Drive. Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sundays, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. at its RCC Hunters Woods, Hunters Woods Village Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road and RCC Lake Anne, Lake Anne Village Center, 1609 Washington Plaza N., Reston. Reston Community Center is now accepting dresses, shoes, jewelry, handbags, shawls and other accessories for its 16th annual Diva Central Dress Drive. Call 703-390-6158 or email LaTanja.Jones@fairfaxcounty.gov.

TUESDAY/FEB. 20

Land Use Committee Meeting. 7:30 p.m. at North County Governmental Center Community Room, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. On the agenda: Virginia Electric and Power Company. Call 703-478-0283 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/huntermill/.

THURSDAY/FEB. 22

Dollars and Sense. 7 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Monthly group discussion focuses on business leaders and markets. We will be discussing "Outliers" by Malcolm Gladwell. The event is free and open to the public. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

SATURDAY/FEB. 24

Hunter Mill District Community Meeting. 9
11 a.m. at James Madison High School, 2500
James Madison Drive, Vienna. Hear
presentations from County and Public Schools
staff on the FY2019 proposed budget. Visit
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/huntermill/.

Free Dentistry Day. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Smile Wonders, 11790 Sunrise Valley Drive, Suite 105, Reston. Dr. Rishita Jaju of Smile Wonders, a local pediatric dentist, is hosting a free day of dentistry for infants to preteens in need. First come, first serve. Children do not need to be established patients of Smile Wonders or provide proof of income or dental insurance to be treated. Free. Call 571-350-3663 or visit www.smilewonders.com/give-kids-a-smile.html.

MONDAY/FEB. 26

NARFE Dulles Chapter 1241 Luncheon Program. 11:30 a.m. at Amphora Diner, 1151 Elden St., Herndon. Richard Twombly, Crime Prevention Officer, Fairfax County Police Department will talk on: Crime Prevention – What can we do? Luncheon is \$18, and includes tax and a small gratuity. Additional tips are welcome but not required. Call your reservation and choice of entree to Shirley Boning at 571-442-8910 or e-mail Shirley.boning@comcast.net no later than Thursday, Feb. 22.

Reston Planning and Zoning Committee
Meeting: 7:30 p.m. at North County
Governmental Center, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive,
Reston. On the agenda: TH Holding Company
LLC (vote) and CRS Sunset Hills, LC (vote). Visit
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/huntermill/.

TUESDAY/FEB. 27

INOVA Blood Drive. 1:30 p.m at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. More than 250 units of blood must be collected daily to meet the needs of patients in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C. INOVA Blood Donor services will be partnering with Reston Regional. Consider donating today. Call 703-689-2700 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov.

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His Pillow



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Either it was the programming on CBS we were "demanding," or the recorded programming we were watching from PBS; but for the week it was, repeatedly, and I mean REPEATEDLY, we were subjected to the same commercials over and over again. Torture doesn't begin to describe the excruciating reaction I had every time I saw the same people saying the same words. Instead of turning me on to the product or services, it had quite the opposite effect: it tuned me off. Buy what they were selling? More like good-bye.

Not that I understand the strategy behind television and/or radio advertising/promoting as I have zero experience. But I do have some experience, 21 years in fact, selling newspaper/display advertising. And what knowledge I've gained says advertising frequently in multiple media platforms is the key to success. Picking and choosing results in hitting and missing. But hitting me constantly without missing a beat is hard to take too, and not necessarily managing the consistency desirable for most businesses to thrive. Moreover, bludgeoning me into submission/buying is not creating a positive experience either and one not likely to lead to repeat business.

With respect to this test – of will power, I can't help wondering if there's a tipping point of sorts when the consumer/watcher/listener becomes less interested/more antagonistic to the message and by association, perhaps even less tolerant of the medium. Not that one can, generally speaking, blame the messenger, but when under the constant barrage of repetition, which in this instance I was forced to endure ("on demand" disables the fast-forward function so it forces you to sit and squirm), you want to blame someone, anyone. Too much of a good thing is not, after awhile, a good thing; and I'm being kind in my characterization.

Having seen the same commercial for what seemed like a dozen times, over a condensed period of time, during nearly every commercial break, I can't imagine how I could place my head on this pillow and not see this man from Minnesota, his warehouse staff, and most disturbingly, his presence when I open my medicine cabinet. Sleep? Hardly. More like shock and not awe as I lay my head down to rest. Visions of sugar plum fairies or sheep prancing over a fence I'm accustomed to, but a man with a moustache telling me what he knew he would about my reaction to his pillow. I can't quite abide

Relax? More like reacts. Presumably if the message, messenger or medium is somehow disturbing in its consumer/market penetration; rather than being clear, concise and effective, all that was hoped to have been gained is lost in the muddle. And precious dollars wasted in the process. I imagine the question becomes: How much is too much, and how much is not enough? (Other than sports and chocolate, I wouldn't know.)

All I know is what my reaction has been to seeing and hearing endless (or so it seemed) repetition: almost visceral. I'm sort of angry and put upon for having had to listen so much to learn so little. And though I can certainly appreciate its context and presumptive strategy, I still can't help feeling like a victim of sorts; the cost of doing business, I suppose. I understand that watching what I want requires watching some of what I don't want; it's a trade. A trade I can balance except when what I don't want to watch has a stronger/more negative impact on me than does the programming I want to watch.

Remember the goal is to capture my attention, not abuse it.

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

OPINION

Another Assault on Common Sense

Perhaps this time
might be different.

You can feel the change in the air. This time the victims — teenagers — are outraged out loud about the deaths and wounding of their fellow students, the terror, horror and trauma that will haunt each of them in different ways for the rest of their lives.

Instant activists from last week's school shooting massacre in Florida, now connected to so many others around the country, know that this was preventable, that mass shootings can be stopped.

EDITORIAL Common sense tells them that the shooter, a former classmate, shouldn't have had access to guns of any kind, never mind an assault rifle. Common sense tells them that the absence of the most reasonable safeguards is a failure of elected officials at both the federal and state level. Common sense tells them it's time for real accountability.

Gun control of course will be complicated. No one is trying to take guns away from the millions of Americans who are gun owners, but the mavens of divisiveness, seeking to stoke the ire of gun owners, will tell them that what activists, what Democrats, what moms want is to take their guns away. It's not true. But gun reform is more complicated and runs deeper than donations from the NRA to elected officials.

Anyone with common sense knows that if we don't have systems in place to keep weapons capable of so much carnage in three minutes out of the hands of someone so openly troubled as the teenage shooter in Florida last week, then we are doomed to relive that day in other tragedies, over and over.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Congress's Failure on Mass Shootings

To the Editor:

Congress sits on its hands while the latest school shooting takes the lives of more innocent children and school personnel.

If members of Congress do not believe in protecting the health, safety and welfare of the American people, why do they hold their office? They swore to defend the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic — "So help me God."

We need legislation, not hollow platitudes. Congressmen can support the Second Amendment and still support reasonable gun control, such as universal background checks, and controls on automatic weapons and bump stocks.

The vast majority of Americans

— Democrats, Republicans and NRA members alike — all support such policies. But members of Congress are too afraid of the NRA's threats to fund a primary candidate against them lest the Congressmen even talk about any form of gun control.

Congressmen should get wise and relish such a debate, because the voters would support them.

If Congress does not do anything then We The People certainly can. We can exert our own Constitutional power and vote for candidates in the upcoming 2018 election who have the courage to stand up to the NRA.

Barbara Glakas
Herndon

Terrifying Talk

To the Editor:

I remember having drills in my school when I was young, hiding

under desks in case a nuclear attack was unleashed. I remember wondering if my family would be alright and if they could find me after the bomb, and if my desk would protect me.

And now we have these nervous and easily irritated world leaders who talk so casually about starting a nuclear exchange. Terrifying. Let us hope that cooler heads will prevail. There are no desks big enough to protect us from a nuclear war.

Meg Wallace
Herndon

Protections Dismantled

To the Editor:

The following open letter was addressed to Our Elected Representative:

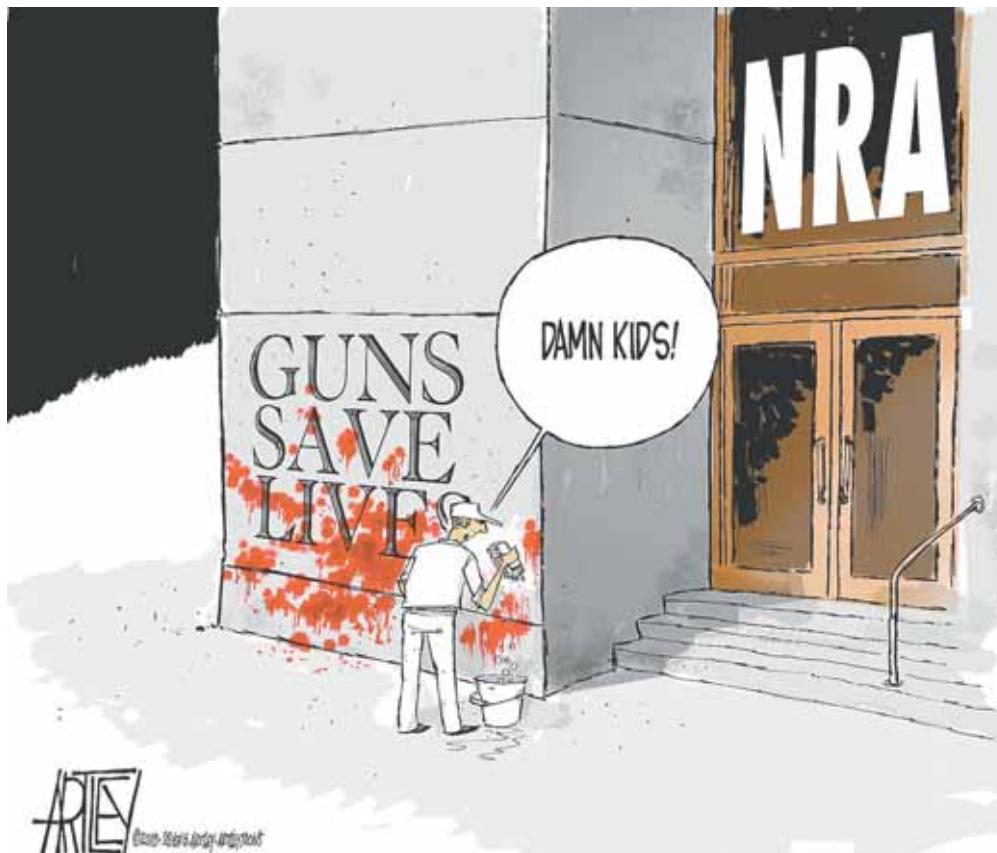
It is not hysterical to suggest that every protection the aver-

age American has is being systematically dismantled. The environment, civil liberties, health care, safe infrastructure guarantees, financial oversight — everything of value that we have achieved is being thrown open to the markets, which are not noted for considering anything beyond profit.

Please vote your conscience when it comes to leaving behind a world in which your children can live and prosper. Our futures are in immediate jeopardy. We need to be guided by something other than greed. This is a time for statesmen, not yes men or women.

There is only one America. Please protect what keeps us unique and irreplaceable in the world.

Lynn Mobley
Great Falls



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