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Fairfax CONNECTION

Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) spoke at the Moms Demand Action meeting at Frost Middle School in Fairfax on Feb. 28, where some 300 people attended.

WELLBEING

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300 Gather for Moms Demand Action

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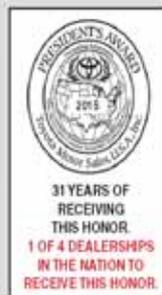
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PHOTO BY SARAH RAMIA/THE CONNECTION

Sen. Tim Kaine (center) spoke at the Moms Demand Action meeting at Frost Middle School in Fairfax on Feb. 28, where some 300 people attended.

300 Gather for Moms Demand Action

Sen. Tim Kaine attends event on common-sense solutions to gun violence.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) was the keynote speaker at a Moms Demand Action meeting held at Frost Middle School in Fairfax on Feb. 28, 2018, addressing a crowd of 300 like-minded women seeking common-sense solutions to gun violence.

“This is a growing and powerful movement. But it’s been a movement waiting for a moment. You don’t know when the moment’s going to come. It should have come a long time before now,” said Sen. Kaine. “We have to look for the moment now and see what we can do to make our schools safer, our communities safer, make our children safer, and our neighbors safer.”

After the tragedy in Parkland, Fla., Kaine asked: “What is it about this that we did not learn after Pulse, that we did not learn after Las Vegas, that we didn’t learn after Columbine, that we didn’t



Kim Perks from Moms Demand Action addresses the crowd.



Jennifer Herrera, the Virginia Chapter Leader for Moms Demand Action, speaks to the crowd.



Allison Kaye, a teacher from Fairfax, asks a question at the Moms Demand Action meeting.

learn after Virginia Tech, that we didn’t learn after Sandy Hook — and I would have to say that I think it is the (Parkland) kids. I think it’s the kids,” he said.

Kaine said what’s happening in

the U.S. as a result of the Parkland shooting is that the tectonic plates are shifting. “It’s like tectonic plates in California where the tension is building up because of a

SEE MOMS, PAGE 7

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

(From left) Fairfax City Police Chief Carl Pardiny and Fairfax County Police Chief Ed Roessler hold a press conference Monday evening about the arrest of a teen who allegedly threatened Fairfax High School.

‘This Could Have Ended in Tragedy’

Police arrest teen who allegedly threatened harm at Fairfax High.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Teens tweet often; but the anonymous tweets sent out Feb. 21 struck fear and dread in everyone connected to Fairfax High and launched an all-out police effort to find the sender. That’s because the person who sent them threatened an attack on students, school personnel and police, the next day.

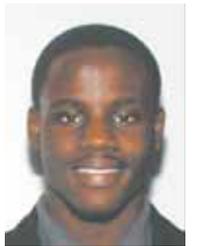
Fortunately, the threat never materialized, but police continued investigating. And Monday afternoon, March 5, with the authorities closing in, the alleged tweeter, Ishmael O’Brien Lionel Harrison, turned himself in.

An 18-year-old senior at the school, he was charged with one count of making threats to commit serious bodily harm to persons on school property. Community members breathed a collective sigh of relief; but until he was arrested, many were terrified for their children. The tweets (minus some profanity, but typed as they were) read as follows:

“2/22/18 i am coming and no one can stop me, be prepared. I SWEAR ON MY DAMN LIFE I AM COMING AND THE COPS CAN GET IT TOO.

“I hate that damn school so much. i hate the people and all the students there. You guys suspended me for skipping. I

have been planning this for months now and now i am going to act. Better watch out Fairfax.”



Ishmael Harrison

ACCOMPANYING THE TWEETS was a picture of an AR15 assault rifle, and Fairfax City police say they found 200 rounds of ammunition for an AR15 in his home when they executed a search warrant there last Friday, March 2. City Police Chief Carl Pardiny said they also discovered a video of Harrison doing target practice at a shooting range.

So he was especially thankful that students who read these tweets immediately told the school’s police student resource officer, administration and their parents. The tweets went out Feb. 21 at 3:41 p.m., and Fairfax High Principal Dave Goldfarb then emailed parents to say the school was aware of the threat and was “fully cooperating” with police in their investigation.

“The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority,” he wrote.

“As a precaution, there will be an increased presence of the Fairfax City Police visible at our SEE POLICE, PAGE 5

No Guns in the Classroom

Gun safety is an American value.

BY MONTE F. BOURJAILY, IV

In the aftermath of the horrific school shooting in Parkland, Florida, the President of the United States and the head of the National Rifle Association, have advocated arming teachers and hardening schools in other ways. These are shriveled, reactive measures that appeal to fear and rely on the false statement that “to stop a bad guy with a gun, you need a good guy with a gun.”

Introducing guns into the classroom doesn't demonstrate the virtue of the Second Amendment, it poisons the educational environment, increases the risk that innocents will be hurt and simply challenges “the bad guy” to creatively get around the armed target. We can uphold the Second Amendment, and the rule of law, and ensure Americans' safety and sense of security with common sense measures, like repealing the Dickey Amendment, that focus on preventing unsafe and malevolent use of firearms.

Arming teachers is a terrible idea. First, it changes the dynamic in a classroom, placing

the weapon between the teacher and the students. Even if its purpose is to protect students, the weapon is a distraction and a barrier. Second, and more importantly, you are introducing more projectile weapons into a chaotic environment, dramatically increasing the likelihood of friendly fire killing children, other teachers and law enforcement seeking to assist. How well do police and soldiers perform in the high stress conditions of an actual confrontation? Does the stress and opportunity for errors increase or decrease when multiple shooters (friend and foe) are added to a situation? Third, in response to the argument that a shooter will avoid schools knowing that teachers are armed, what is to prevent the shooter from wearing body armor? It is easy to buy. We need to stop reacting and problem-solve and innovate, which is our true nature.

Guns are tools, like cars, that can cause serious injury or death when used improperly or with ill-intent. I also am a hunter who grew up respecting guns.

Why is there a “gag rule” (the Dickey Amendment of 1996) on Centers for Disease Control research into the effects of gun violence? How are guns different than cars? The National Highway Transportation Safety Commission collects data on motor vehicle fatalities through the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS).

Gun owners have a Second Amendment right to own and use guns responsibly, not unconditionally. All Americans have a right to gain a better understanding of how guns are used in ways that harm other Americans and in ways that can pose a risk to all of us.

We must respect the Second Amendment, like we uphold all of the Constitution as the rule of law. However, there are few absolutes under the Constitution, including how far we interpret the right to bear arms. Freedom of Religion does not permit the practice of human sacrifice and Freedom of Speech does not permit fighting words. In short, my right to swing my arms ends at the tip of your nose. We Americans are at our best as problem solvers and innovators. We use data and common sense to find solutions. We confront threats, rather than fearfully wait for them. Can we find common ground on reasonable gun control by listening to each other and recognizing reasonable rights and reasonably accepting certain limits in respectful recognition of the rights of others?

Monte F. Bourjaily, IV is a lawyer who teaches US Government, American History and Philosophy at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. All submissions are in his personal capacity.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Less Talk and More Action

To the Editor:

The recent shooting of a police officer in Prince George's County offers the most striking example of why teachers should not be expected to bring weapons to class to protect students.

If a police officer, who is skilled in using a weapon, enters a home with an awareness of an impending life-threatening situation is killed by the assailant, how can a teacher, with limited weapon experience, be expected to react to a spontaneous life-threatening situation? He or she can't maintain perpetual vigilance. What if the teacher mistakenly kills a person who is making threats but has no weapon? This too has happened with police officers. Who assumes this liability?

The NRA would like everyone to carry a gun. More profits for gun dealers. Yet what have any of the gun advocates done to help families who have lost their loved ones or to help injured victims. They simply become very devout and patriotic, offering their prayers and preaching their rights.

They should put their money where their mouth is. If they won't do this, it confirms their lack of compassion for these victims and perhaps the need to heavily tax

bullets to fund programs of compensation to victims, security measures, etc.

If legislators are too intimidated by the NRA and other gun advocates to enact any gun control measures, yet are comfortable in raising taxes, then taxing ammunition might be a good start in passing some of the cost of these programs on to the users, just like other citizens pay tolls for roads.

Elaine Miletta
Fairfax Station

It's the Culture, Not the Weapon

To the Editor:

I sincerely appreciate the groundswell of youth and others in the country saying “never again” to the violence that we've repeatedly seen in our schools, our churches and our neighborhoods. But I fear the proposed “fix” of banning some or all guns is missing the underlying cause of the problem. Our problem in America is a culture of death.

It's a culture where we provide our children with “games” that seek to immerse them in full virtual reality as they kill and maim, rape and ravage. In America we call that entertainment.

It's a culture where we go to movies that encourage us to cheer

or laugh as the “bad guy” gets shot in the head. We call that entertainment too. That guy deserved to die. Our movies, our games, our culture teaches us that some people simply deserve to die. So why are we surprised when our kids decide that some classmates, neighbors, parents or others deserve to die? Particularly kids who may be especially vulnerable to those messages because of mental illness.

If we really mean “never again,” we need to change our culture and start teaching our kids the every human life is precious. We need to teach them that even the child that results from an unplanned pregnancy or a child with Down syndrome is precious. We need to teach them that an aging parent with dementia is precious and needs to be visited and cared for, not warehoused, forgotten or helped to an early death. We need to teach them that even a prisoner who commits a heinous crime may be able to change, that we have no right to decide who can be rehabilitated and who should be put to death because they're not just worth the effort.

When we start to value every human life, then things will change. Until then, we can ban AK-47s, and someone will pick up a different rifle. We can ban every gun, and someone will drive their car into a crowd or build a pipe

bomb, or use a machete. It's not the weapons people choose, it's the culture we need to change.

Randy Robish
Springfield

Medicaid Expansion Important to All Virginians

To the Editor:

Mary Kimm got it so right in the Feb. 28 editorial that clearly laid out many important – some would say critical – reasons for expanding Medicaid in Virginia (“Hope for Expanding Health Care”). I want to add a few more points that folks should consider at this critical moment when state senators' decisions yea or nay will soon be made in Richmond.

We need to let state senators know where we stand, and here is why.

Do you think Medicaid funding only applies to ‘other people’ or people who some might not see as a priority for government help? The truth is it is helping people with disabilities and pregnant women seeking the care necessary to have healthy babies. What's

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Police Praise Students' Response

FROM PAGE 3

school tomorrow. We thank everyone who has brought this concern to our attention. We are grateful to be part of such a caring community."

Then that evening, Goldfarb told parents he understood they were "very anxious in light of recent events" and he would honor and respect all parents' decisions about whether to send their students to school the next day. And, indeed, some parents did keep their children home, while others – reassured that police would be on the scene – let their children attend.

On Feb. 22, police posted on Facebook that they were continuing to "aggressively investigate the threat, with the assistance of FCPS safety and security, school administrators and other outside resources." Police also posted officers at all City schools.

Then on Saturday, March 3 – in both a press release and a wanted poster with his photo on it – police identified Harrison as the person who allegedly sent the tweets from his cellphone. They provided his age, descriptions of both him and his car, plus his license-plate number. They'd also obtained arrest warrants for him and said Harrison "should be considered armed and dangerous" and that anyone seeing him or knowing of his whereabouts should contact police.

In a March 4 news release, police said they were appealing to Harrison to turn himself in; and the next day, around 3 p.m., he did. He was then arrested and is being held without bond in the Adult Detention Center. Police also charged him with one count of possession of child pornography.

Monday evening, in front of the City police station, Pardiny and Fairfax County Police Chief Ed Roessler held a joint press conference. "Children reported this threat they saw on Twitter," said Pardiny. "And had it not been for these tips, this could have ended in tragedy. This threat created a tremendous amount of fear and anxiety in our small, tight knit city. But we're absolutely committed to the safety and welfare of our community. We take things like this very seriously."

Saying how "incredibly proud" he was of his detectives and all the hard work they put into this case, Pardiny also thanked the City and county school administration, plus county police, for all their help, as well as members of the community "for their patience while we investigated."

But most of all, he said, "The



Fairfax City Police Chief Carl Pardiny addresses the media.

students did everything right by notifying their SRO, school administrators and parents. They acted smartly, sensibly and responsibly." He further noted that Harrison's mother was also arrested Monday on outstanding larceny warrants from Manassas City police.

ROESSLER, too, thanked the "highly engaged community. This is an example where students, parents, schools and two police departments worked together to take

that threat off the streets and bring someone to justice." Agreeing, Pardiny said his personal cellphone was getting "bombarded with calls," adding, "That's what happens when you're the police chief of a small town."

Roessler said the county has had 52 threats since school began in August. "We're just blessed that we've not had a tragedy here, like they've had nationwide, since 1982," he said. "It's the engagement of students and trust that solved this case."

"The message is that we're here to protect you," said Pardiny. "And if you hear something, say something right away. We don't want any possibility of a threat to go unnoticed."

After the press conference, Fairfax Mayor David Meyer said, "The police have done a superior job. This has been a challenging 12 days, but the Police Department stayed focused on this investigation from the beginning. And through it all, the safety of students at our schools was paramount. I'm very pleased that [Harrison] turned himself in and this was resolved peacefully."

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Discussing School Shootings with Children

Open dialogue is key to quelling fear, say mental health professionals.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Helping parents who are grappling with their children's feelings of anger and fear following the recent Florida school shooting and subsequent fallout was a recent topic that Lisa Jackson-Cherry, Ph.D., department chair and program coordinator, Pastoral Clinical Mental Health Counseling & Pastoral and Spiritual Care programs at Marymount University, had with her graduate students. The class discussed how high profile acts of violence can frighten children who might feel as though they or someone they love could become a victim or find themselves in danger. From mass shootings to natural disasters, an open dialogue with children is key to dealing with thoughts and feelings.

"In most instances, talking about the incident helps to gain some control over what is not controlled," said Jackson-Cherry. "Normalizing feelings and thoughts like fear, sadness, anger, and confusion can help children know they are not abnormal in how they are feeling or thinking."

"First ask what they heard rather than starting by telling them about it," added Joanne Bagshaw, Ph.D., professor of psy-

chology at Montgomery College. "I wouldn't get too stuck on the details. Just get a sense of what they know and make sure it's accurate."

In fact, exploration is key. "Encourage children to express their feelings and validate them," said Bagshaw. "You can start by saying, 'I can understand why you're feeling that.'"

Monitor both the amount and source of information that children receive about high profile incidents, advises Bagshaw. "I would really limit their social media and news intake about the violence," she said. "Videos about the shooting are too traumatic, and watching them can be too traumatizing and too dramatic."

Reviewing the family's safety plan can help children feel secure, advises Bagshaw. It's something she did in her own family. "At my daughter's middle school, you can't just walk into a building like they did in Florida," she said. "I reminded my daughter of this and explained the safety differences between her school and the school in Florida. One thing that you don't want to say is that 'That will never happen here.' You want to focus on what's real and what's realistic."

Maintaining a sense of normalcy follow-

ing a public display of violence can help quell fear that children might be feeling, advises Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at George Mason University and a licensed clinical psychologist. "Parents play a key role by staying calm, maintaining household routines, explaining that many events we worry about seldom happen, and stating that we will cope with whatever happens," he said. "Parents should place the highest priority on helping children stay safe."

"I would caution against using leading questions like, 'Are you scared?' because this question already implies they should be scared of something and that may not be accurate," continued Jackson-Cherry. "Depending on their answers, parents can assist in having the child integrate aspects of power and control in a situation where they may not be in control."

While putting national events into perspective in a way that children can understand, Short also advises parents to explore emotions. "Ask children what they are feeling and empathize and validate what they say. Ask children how they feel about school," he said. "Is there anything at school that worries them? Be reassuring that you will help protect them."

Reviewing safety guidelines can help children feel secure, says Short. "Parents [can say that] local police are working to keep the community safe. We need to look out for each other," he said. "Say that high-profile violence is unlikely to happen at local schools because of safety procedures. For example, there are more than 130,000 elementary and secondary schools, and we focus on relatively few schools where shootings have occurred."

Even those children who don't express emotions or appear unaffected by news reports of violence might still be anxious about the event. "Many children may not display outward anger or fear but that does not mean they are not fearful, angry, or sad about what they have heard or experienced," said Jackson-Cherry. "I think in most circumstances, parents asking about a child's knowledge of the event would be a good way to start."

Limit a child's exposure to media coverage of acts of violence and discuss it in an age appropriate manner, advises Jackson-Cherry. "If the parent is watching or listening to the news together with their child, try asking, 'What are you thinking or feeling about what just happened or was reported?'" she said. "I asked my 15 year old, 'Has the school discussed the shooting in Florida? Have you had drill in case it were to happen?'"

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PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) greets well-wishers after the meeting of Moms Demand Action at Frost Middle School.

Moms Demand Action

FROM PAGE 3

mismatch, between what the American public wants to happen and what Congress is willing to do,” he said. “It’s been building for such a long time. The tectonic tension eventually becomes so significant that the plates realign. We may be at that moment because of you, because of these youngsters [in Parkland, Fla.], and because of a deep sense of heart-sickness.”

ORGANIZER Sarah Ramia of the Burke/Fairfax local group of Moms Demand Action, which started in 2016, said: “We want to harness the raw emotion and the disgust that the community has had with gun violence in the United States. We wanted to bring everybody here; we wanted to educate them, and we wanted to give our Senator an opportunity to speak as to his views and what Congress can do, what the Senate can do, and what we need to do as voters to act and to affect change.”

The national group Moms Demand Action was founded by Shannon Watts in 2012 in response to the Sandy Hook shooting. It has since been a force for gun violence prevention, with chapters in 50 states.

“We are not anti-gun.

We support for the Second Amendment but advocate for common-sense gun legislation and want to reduce 33,000 deaths a year by guns,” said Kim Perks of the Burke/Fairfax local group.

Perks gave some stats that 96 people a day die from guns; twice as many are injured; and that seven children die every day from guns. She added there are 13,000 homicides a year, with 50 women in a month killed by domestic partner, and that black men are 13 times more likely to be killed by guns than whites.

Perks said the group is working to close deadly loopholes in our background checks system that allow dangerous people, such as felons, domestic abusers, and terrorists easy access to guns. They are also promoting gun safety, so our children and communities will no longer be at an unacceptable level of risk; and supporting reasonable limits on when, where, and how loaded guns

are carried and discharged in public places. They also support creating enforceable laws that address gun trafficking and fraudulent purchases to keep illegal guns off our streets.

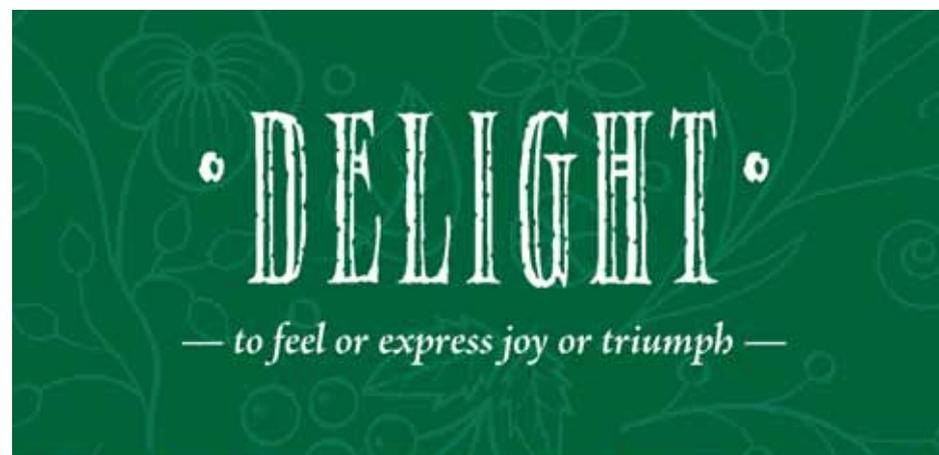
THE MEETING outlined what moms can do on the local level – like writing letters to the editor or contacting their congressmen – to enact change in their communities.

Member Jennifer Lowe-Davis said 150 moms attend an annual lobby day in January and February in Richmond. “We show up and meet with our legislators. If we don’t speak to them, they don’t know that we’re here. They don’t know that we care about this issue. They can care about an issue all they want, but if they don’t have words from their constituents to tell them that it is important to us, then they’re not going to act on that. So, we go down every year, and we tell them we need gun sense,” she said.

Jennifer Herrera, Virginia Chapter Leader of Moms Demand Action, added: “The interest our chapter has gotten over the past two weeks has been incredible. We’re seeing meetings not only in Virginia but all over the country. From Charlottesville to Richmond to Arlington to Reston — we’re having massive meetings because people have had enough. They’re sick of Congressional inaction, and they’re going to take it upon themselves to be the change that this country needs to end the epidemic of gun violence.”

Added Dawnee Giammittorio, survivor engagement lead for the Virginia Chapter: “I think we’re just overwhelmed with the interest and the excitement that people are showing for gun violence prevention since the latest shooting, and we want to get people on board and advocating for more sensible gun laws.”

For more info on Moms Demand Action, visit their Facebook page www.facebook.com/MomsDemandActionVA. Or visit their website: <https://momsdemandaction.org>. Or contact the local Burke/Fairfax group at burkemoms@yahoo.com. Call 571-354-6764.



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City Manager Unveils Proposed FY19 Budget

Recommends a rise in the real-estate tax rate for City of Fairfax.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City Manager Bob Sisson's proposed Fiscal Year 2019 budget recommends a 2.25-cent hike in the real-estate tax rate. But during his Feb. 27 presentation to City Council, he also stressed the "gold-standard services and outstanding amenities" residents receive in return, plus their low tax burden compared to neighboring jurisdictions.

The proposal would increase the real-estate tax rate from \$1.06 per \$100 assessed valuation to \$1.0825. If approved, it would mean the owner of a home valued at \$523,915, for example, would pay \$143 more a year in property taxes. The average residential tax bill would increase 2.6 percent.

Still, said Sisson, "The City of Fairfax is truly a good value for residents." And since the real-estate tax yields 50 percent of City of Fairfax's General Fund revenue, he said the money's needed to keep providing the quality of life citizens here enjoy.

He explained the many factors informing the preparation of this budget, including the desire to maintain the City's AAA bond rating. And he said budget savings in FY '17 and '18 were used to help balance the FY '19 budget.

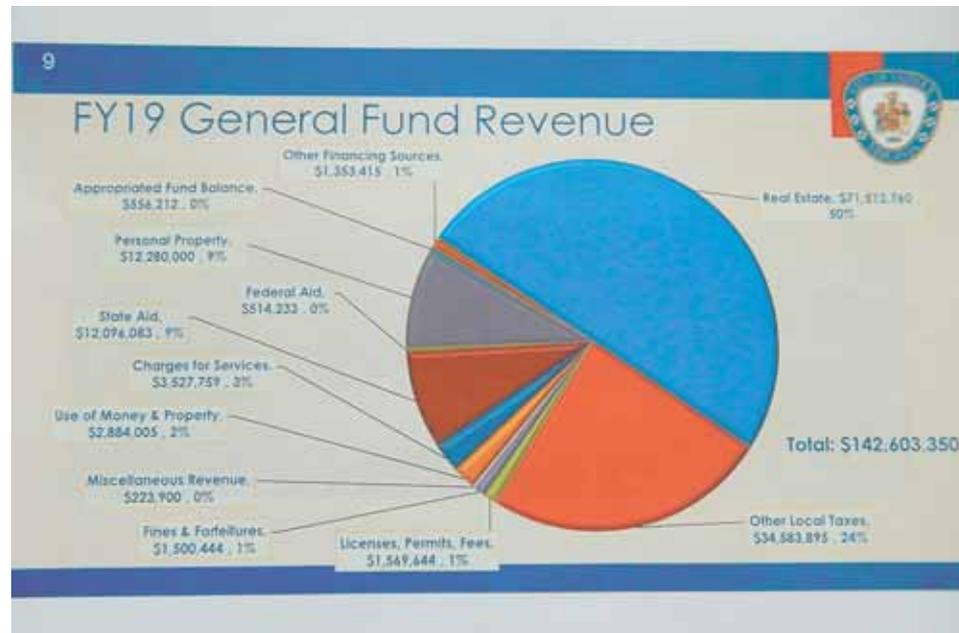
SISSON also faced a slew of challenges, especially the fact that 60 percent of the General Fund budget must go to non-discretionary expenses, over which the City has no control. These are non-negotiable items for certain services and contracts, such as the school contract with FCPS, debt obligations, pension benefits, and fixed costs including debt payments for capital improvements.

"We're at about \$133 million worth of debt right now," he said. "It won't be until 2024 'til we get a significant stepdown on our debt repayment."

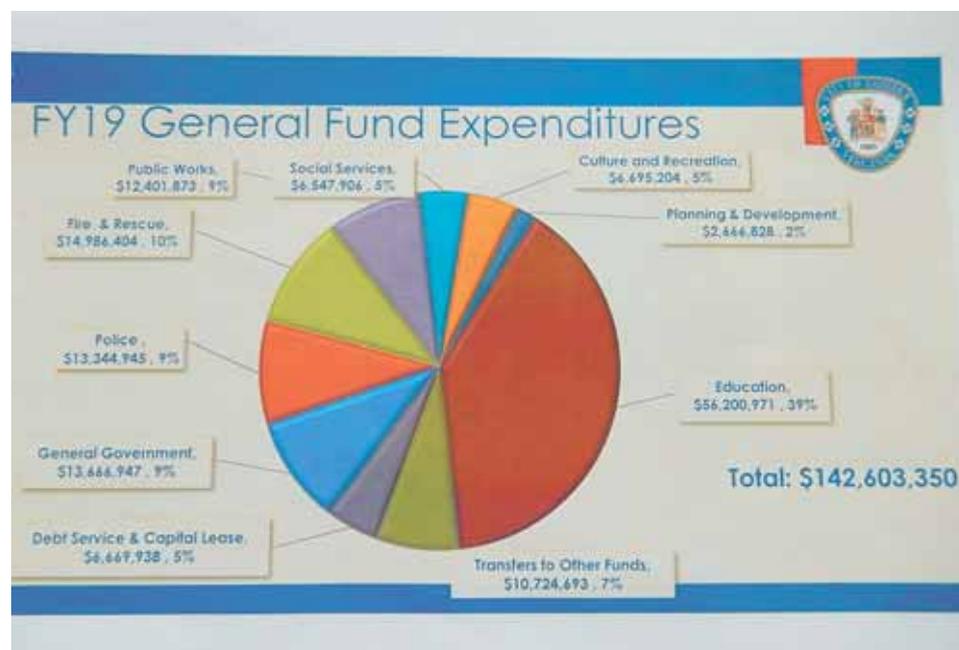
However, on the positive side, Sisson noted that, in calendar years 2018 and '19, "We should have a healthy amount of new construction. We've forecast over \$100 million of new construction in the community this year."

The proposed General Fund budget is \$142,603,350 – an increase of 1.8 percent, or \$2,556,679, over FY '18. The total budget amount for all the City's funds is \$171,446,670 – a .9-percent decrease from the current fiscal year, mainly due to a reduction in capital spending.

The largest General Fund expenditure – \$56.2 million, or 39 percent – is for education, although it's less than last year. "It's



FY '19 General Fund revenue.



FY '19 General Fund expenditures.

our fourth year of having less students than the year before," said Sisson.

The budget contains a 3.5-percent merit pay raise for eligible City employees. But, said Sisson, "There's no COLA [cost of living adjustment] in this budget. We felt that we didn't have sufficient revenue to recommend that. Employee financial compensation will continue to be a challenge, and

"This budget is conservative in its spending proposals and requests for additional resources."

—Fairfax City Manager Bob Sisson

it's always a high priority in this community."

Regarding the recruitment and retention of public safety personnel, he said it's a problem in many jurisdictions, including Fairfax, and "It's a significant concern." So

this budget does recommend applying a 2.6-percent market adjustment to employee pay scales to retain parity within the region.

A 1-cent increase in the Commercial and Industrial (C&I) real-estate tax is requested. This would take it from 10.5 cents to 11.5 cents per \$100 assessed valuation.

Also recommended is a wastewater utility rate hike of 10 percent to support the City's share of capital project costs required for the Noman Cole Wastewater Treatment Plant.

In addition, the budget dedicates 50 cents more from the real-estate tax rate for the Stormwater Fund.

The money will be used to improve the City's aging infrastructure, as well as meet federal and state regulations regarding stormwater management.

Sisson also recommends a transportation tax fund rate increase from 10.5 cents to 11.5 cents for commercial and industrial properties.

City of Fairfax Budget Review Schedule

The Budget Review Schedule is as follows:
 March 6: Staff presentations to City Council and community outreach;
 March 13: Public hearing; consideration of real-estate tax rate to be advertised;
 March 27: Public hearing; work session;
 April 3: Work session;
 April 10: Introduction of rates for commercial and industrial property tax and wastewater tax;
 April 24: Real-estate tax rate public hearing; work session;
 May 2: public hearing; budget adoption.

This rate would then be \$1.1975 per \$100 assessed valuation. All residential properties are excluded from this tax.

The money is used solely for transportation and transit purposes and enables the City to qualify for matching funds for various transportation projects. And, said Sisson, "It's been so refreshing to see transportation funds coming into the City as a result of this, plus the grants and state and federal money we've been able to obtain."

Overall, he said, "This budget is conservative in its spending proposals and requests for additional resources." But at the same time, it helps the City advance its goals by taking actions including:

Taking the environmental sustainability employee from half to full time; moving its multimodal transportation program forward; providing additional resources for the City's economic development program for business recruitment and retention; and establishing a reorganized, citywide communications and marketing function.

"Economic development is the top item for both our positives and challenges," explained Sisson.

"Our Economic Development Office is trying to develop an aggressive program, but several commercial properties are depreciating in value.

But as new developments are completed and our infrastructure work finishes, it'll attract more people to the City."

TOWARD THAT END, the budget also supports the redevelopment of several, large-scale, residential and mixed-use projects expected to yield enhanced commercial and retail growth, as well as a greater diversity in housing options. And it recommends making the Human Services director a full-time position, instead of half time, to strengthen the administration of the City's complex, health-and-human-services contracts and better meet the needs of the people using those services.

At the end of his presentation, Sisson thanked Finance Director David Hodgkins, Budget Manager Kerry Kidd and City Clerk Melanie Crowder for their "around-the-clock work" that went into it. Mayor David Meyer then noted that the Council will go through the budget in great detail and discuss it at upcoming work sessions and that the public will have "ample opportunities" to comment on it.

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

Fairfax City Restaurant Week. Through March 10, participating restaurants will offer a \$35 three-course dinner menu, a \$20 three-course lunch/brunch menu, dine-in specials, and additional thematic layers of entertainment. Visit www.fairfaxcityrestaurantweek.com.
Smoke Free Bingo. 7 p.m. Every Friday. Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Free coffee, entertaining callers, \$1,000 jackpot (with breaks for smoking friends). www.fairfaxvd.com. 703-273-3638.

THURSDAY/MARCH 8

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 an Art & Lunch event. Bring lunch and enjoy the company of other artists. Free and open to the public. New members welcome. Visit www.fairfaxartleague.net or call 703-587-9481.
Visual Voices Speaker Series. 7:30 p.m. at George Mason University's Harris Theatre. John Henry, "The Quest for Unintended Consequences." Nationally recognized visiting artists and designers speak about their work and the world of art and design. Free and open to the public. Visit cfa.gmu.edu.

FRIDAY/MARCH 9

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Enjoy free coffee, entertaining callers, a friendly atmosphere, \$1,000 guaranteed jackpot, treasure chest



PHOTO BY MEGAN CHRISTENSEN

COURTESY OF WORKHOUSE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Ruthie Rado (character Lucy) with "Avenue Q" rehearsal puppet designed/created by Silly Puppets.

'Avenue Q' at Workhouse

Workhouse Arts Center presents "Avenue Q" at W3 Theatre, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Performances March 3 to April 1, 2018. Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$20-\$35. Call 703-584-2900 or visit www.workhousearts.org. Note: Ticket prices may increase, based on demand. Advanced purchase recommended. Note: Intended for mature audiences due to adult humor, language and situations.

progressive raffles, and good food available for purchase. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit www.fairfaxvfd.com or call 703-273-3638 for more.

"Celtic Spring, Music from the Celtic Countries." 8 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. The Bonita Lestina Old Town

Hall Performance Series Free and open to the public. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts.

SATURDAY/MARCH 10
Children's Book Sale. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Fairfax City Regional Library, SEE CALENDAR. PAGE 10

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 9

10360 North Street, Fairfax. Thousands of gently read books and non-book media organized by categories including picture books, early readers, nonfiction, holiday, chapter books, young adult, etc. \$25-\$2. Some specials \$3 and \$4. Plenty of free parking below library; personal check or cash only. Call 703-644-4870 or email friendsoffairfaxcitylibrary@gmail.com.

Coffee House/Open Mic. 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Calvary Hill Baptist Church, 9301 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Free. Call or text Pete at 703-955-2039 to perform.

"Irish Country Dancing." 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Green Acres Center, 4401 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. The Ancient Order of the Hibernians presents the Northern Virginia Ceili "Irish Country Dancing." The second Saturday each month. Free coffee, tea, refreshments. Adults: \$15; families: \$25 (includes all children under 16, and uncles, aunts, and grandparents) Call 703-273-6090.

Tone for Two. 7-7:45 p.m. at The Mott Community Center, 12111 Braddock Road, Fairfax. Learn how to stick with your workout routine by exercising with a partner. Wear exercise clothes, bring a mat and water. \$20 for two people in advance; \$25 for two at the door. Childcare available. For information email ffjazzercise@gmail.com or call 703 909 6449.

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra. 8 p.m. at GMU Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Mozart's Requiem with Christopher Zimmerman, conductor

and Fairfax Choral Society and the Music & Arts Chorus. Tickets: \$65, \$53, \$39; student tickets: \$15. Visit www.fairfaxsymphony.org.

SUNDAY/MARCH 11

Hands On Day. 1-4 p.m. at The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum will hold a Hands On Day with crafts. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

"Women Back to the Future— Nevertheless She Persisted!" 2 p.m. at Fairfax City Hall Annex, Council Chambers, 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax. A historical performance by Kate Campbell Stevenson of Bessie Coleman, African American aviator; Louise Arner Boyd, Arctic explorer, and Rachal Carson, conservationist. Youth and adults welcome. Free. Call 703-385-8414.

MONDAY/MARCH 12

Funday Monday: Story Time and Craft. 10:30 a.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Music, movement, story telling, performances, crafts, and more. Funday Monday is open to children of all ages, however especially for those who haven't yet started school. Free and open to the public, donations appreciated. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts.

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/MARCH 15-17

Burke Centre Library Spring Sale. Thursday, 1-9 p.m.; Friday 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds

Oak Road, Burke. Friends of the Burke Centre Library Spring used book and media sale with more than 8,000 items. Call 703-249-1520.

FRIDAY/MARCH 16

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Enjoy free coffee, entertaining callers, a friendly atmosphere, \$1,000 guaranteed jackpot, Good food available for purchase. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit www.fairfaxvfd.com or call 703-273-3638 for more.

SATURDAY/MARCH 17

Songs of Ireland. 1 p.m. at Annandale United Methodist Church, 6935 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Fairfax Choral Society presents Harmonious Art: Songs of the Emerald Isle - youth choirs sing songs from Ireland. \$25. FCPS teachers and students free. Call 703-642-3277 or visit www.fairfaxchoralsociety.org.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/MARCH 17-18

SPRINGPEX Stamp Show. Saturday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. in the Cafeteria at Robert E. Lee High School, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. Competitive exhibits of philatelic material, philatelic sales bourse of 26 regional stamp dealers, free stamps and materials for young collectors, special show covers and postal cancels commemorate 100th anniversary of US involvement in WWI, and 100th anniversary of U.S. Air Mail. Free admission. Free parking in school parking lot. Email frazierg@cox.net or visit www.springfieldstampclub.org.

County to Host Teen Job Fairs, Resume Building Workshops

Supervisor Pat Herry (R-Springfield) has announced schedule of upcoming Teen Job Fairs and Resume Building Workshops.

"They give our teens the opportunity to speak with employers and businesses an opportunity to connect with teens looking for jobs. Many teens have left the fair with actual jobs and many more with scheduled interviews," said Herry. "Since holding my first teen job fair in 2014 at West Springfield High School, I have partnered with the Connection Newspapers, other Supervisors, local chambers of commerce, Fairfax County Public Schools and the county government to grow to six job fairs this year across the county. During our four job fairs last year we had combined attendance of over 2000 Fairfax County teenagers and 120 employers. These job fairs provided hundreds of teenagers the opportu-

nity to get in front of employers and for employers and volunteer organizations to find talented, driven Fairfax County students to fill their positions."

The schedule and the other individual co-sponsors are listed below:

SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 1-3 P.M.

Woodson High School, Co-sponsored by Supervisor Linda Smyth, Supervisor John Cook, Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, and Woodson High School

SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 1-3 P.M.

South County High School, Co-sponsored by Supervisor Dan Storck, South Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, South County Federation, and South County High School

SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 11 A.M.-1 P.M.

Chantilly High School, Co-sponsored by Supervisor Kathy Smith, Chantilly HS

STEM Academy, and Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce

SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 11 A.M.-1 P.M.

Mount Vernon High School, Co-sponsored by Supervisor Dan Storck, Supervisor Jeff McKay, Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce, and Mount Vernon High School

SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 11 A.M.-1 P.M.

South Lakes High School, Co-sponsored by Supervisor Cathy Hudgins and Reston Chamber of Commerce

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 12 NOON-2 P.M.

West Springfield High School, Co-sponsored by West Springfield HS Student Government Association and Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce

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BULLETIN

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. 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.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum needs volunteer docents on Sunday afternoons from 1-4 p.m. Greet museum visitors and tell them about the exhibits, the Museum and the its railroad and Civil War history. Training and orientation provided. Other volunteer opportunities are gardening, publicity and exhibit planning. The Museum is located at 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Call Michael at 703-945-7483 for more information.

MONDAY-THURSDAY/MARCH 7-8

Unclaimed Property. Virginians can visit any of the four events below and find their unclaimed property. This free public service is facilitated by The Virginia Department of Treasury. Learn more at www.VaMoneysearch.org.

- * Wednesday, March 7, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Fairfax County Jennings Judicial Center Cafeteria, 4110 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax
- * Thursday, March 8, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Hollins Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria

THURSDAY/MARCH 8

Sensory Processing Disorder. 7:30-9 p.m. at Oakwood School, 7210 Braddock Road, Annandale. Parents or educators of a child with sensory processing disorder may join for this workshop, which will focus on identifying factors of sensory processing difficulty, understanding what's going on and developing strategies to deal with life's requirements. Free and open to the public. Call 571-214-8799 or visit www.oakwoodschool.com/beyond-academics/oakwood-parent-association/opa-speaker-series.

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 4

more, Medicaid funds a huge number of births. And if you think it doesn't touch the middle class, consider the number of elderly people, who have to spend down all assets and become destitute, or close to destitute, and still need nursing home care.

The other huge reality is that someone pays for all the care given to people who are underinsured or uninsured. That someone is all of us. Hospitals don't turn away sick people because they can't pay. We all pay more to help cover those costs. People are sicker more frequently without good medical help, and we pay by higher costs.

Senator Jennifer Wexton has been working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle trying to make Medicaid expansion happen here. Keep it up, Senator Wexton. The over 80 percent of Virginians who want Medicaid expansion need to help you by making our voices be heard in Richmond.

Nancy Hopkins
Vienna

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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them. -Werner Heisenberg			
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Reflections



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

A few weeks back at my last post CT-scan appointment with my oncologist (when all continued to be amazingly stable), he finally asked me the question I've been wondering if he'd ever ask: "Mr. Lourie, I talk about you all the time, how well you're doing; is there anything I can tell people about what you're doing that might help them?"

My first reaction was to laugh and then ask if I even have cancer. I mean, typically, one diagnosed with an incurable disease doesn't just live life merrily along as if the diagnosis was a mere inconvenience, no matter what he or she may or may not be doing. My oncologist assured me that I indeed have cancer and even offered up some news about my tumors with which I was totally unfamiliar.

Five years ago when I was hospitalized (due to excessive fluid in my lungs), in the course of the procedure, the thoracic surgeon did a DNA profile of my tumors to determine if I had a specific mutation (allowing for more targeted treatment). Unfortunately, the ALK and ROS-1 mutations were not confirmed. In pursuit of more current information, more recently, I had a liquid biopsy (a blood test) which tested for the EGFR and T790 mutations. Again, no confirmation. As it stands now, I am as unclassified. For the nine-year moment then, I remain in treatment without the targeted precision so many of my fellow cancer survivors have been extraordinarily fortunate to have. Yet life goes on.

So what am I doing? Other than laughing in the face of death (my best attribute), which if anecdotal reports are to be believed, truly is the best medicine, a bit more. Remaining positive and generally upbeat is a parallel corollary to humoring yourself and those around you.

But more specifically and perhaps uniquely, I am supplementing my standard of care with some non-Western care: alkaline water, organic apple cider vinegar, and about 60 pills a day, most chosen for their qualities of strengthening my immune system and/or eliminating the toxins from my body. I can't say I'm eating really right, but neither will I admit to not eating totally wrong. Reducing stress and exercising are popular advisories in my control. One out of two will have to do.

However, as I told my oncologist, whatever I'm doing I've been told to do by my holistic health and fitness coach. She knows what, how and why. (I might as well be Sergeant Schulz from "Hogan's Heros: "I know nothing.") I don't feel qualified to speak to any of what I do.

Yes, I've survived but, I'm a sports and chocolate guy not a science and medicine man. All I can do is list what I'm doing. I can't chapter and verse any of it. I'm not NIKE, but I just do it. It's a routine and I rarely stray. I do add stuff occasionally but to think any of what I do might have a bearing on another cancer patient's survivability? Not hardly, and that's what I told my oncologist. Dina suggested the alkaline water. I suggested my "coach."

I guess I'm just not that deep of a thinker. I trust people the same way that as a salesman I want them to trust me. I'm not leading anybody astray, and I'm providing them the best available knowledge. I'm not manipulating. Nor am I maneuvering. I'm simply managing dos, don'ts, maybes, what ifs and why nots.

Moreover, I'm trying to think outside the box while respecting and appreciating that the box has its purpose as well.

Heck, for all I know, my non-Western stuff has had minimal impact on my life expectancy and the standard of care from my oncologist has provided the most.

Maybe I'm just an anomaly, pure and simple: a nine-year-plus non small cell lung cancer survivor. What am I doing? Trying not to abuse the privilege, that's what.

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



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