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PHOTO BY SARAH RAMIA/THE CONNECTION



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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.

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PEOPLE



PHOTO COURTESY OF G.C. 'GARY' BLACK, III

Eagle Scout Devin Albrecht with his mother,
Page Van Sickle.

Becoming an Eagle Scout

Devin James Albrecht became the 209th Boy Scout of Troop 1131 in Burke to pass his Eagle Scout Board of Review. Devin is a senior at Lake Braddock Secondary School; plays double bass in the orchestra; attends Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Annandale. Devin's dad is Eric Albrecht and his mom is Page Van Sickle, a veterinarian at Village Veterinary Clinic in Burke.

Devin is a second degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do at In-Courage, Kings Park Shopping Center.

An Eagle Scout Court of Honor will take place at St. Stephen's United Methodist Church on Saturday, March 10, 2018, at 1:30 p.m. Robert Stephen Wallace (205) will also receive his Eagle Scout at the same Court of Honor.



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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 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 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 heartbreak."

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



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



Erica Wogaman of Springfield leaves a message on a banner to the students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla.



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.

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 commu-

nities 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 Giannittorio, 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.

Money on the Table Required

Board intends to keep options open for a full conversation by advertising tax increase.

By KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Sharon Bulova indicated that the Board of Supervisors will advertise the tax rate March 6 with the full 2.5-cent increase proposed in County Executive Bryan Hill's budget.

"That's not to say that's what we will end up with," she said during a joint budget meeting with the Board of Supervisors and School Board on Feb. 27. School Superintendent Scott Brabrand also attended.

Hill's proposed budget would fully fund the school's budget request, fully fund compensation increases for county employees, and many county priorities.

Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay heads the supervisors' budget committee. "I think we need to make sure we are able to have a full conversation with our community about the budget that's on the table and knowing that the budget funds our highest priorities, but the only way to do that is to implement a tax increase," he said.

Bulova said she understands the impact the tax rate would have. "We are concerned about that," she said.

"When we advertise the tax rate, that will become the ceiling for what the tax rate can be. It can be lower, it can be the same, but it cannot be higher than what we adver-



Sharon Bulova



Jeff McKay



Kathy Smith



Bryan Hill



Scott Brabrand

FILE PHOTOS

tise," said Bulova.

The board will officially adopt the FY2019 budget on May 1 after a series of community meetings and public hearings on the \$4.29-billion budget.

If the Board of Supervisors were to adopt the full 2.5 cent tax rate increase, it would amount to an additional \$268 on the average homeowner's annual tax bill.

Sully Supervisor Kathy Smith said she fears talking about an average increase when all homeowners will have different property bills and property assessments.

"When talking about averages, I also think it's useful to talk about medians," she said.

Hill came on board as county executive on Jan. 2, 2018.

"We cannot sustain what we are doing. In my view, this is a one year deal that al-

lows us to have a five year strategic look forward," he said.

"It is key that we become a prioritized county so we can effectuate the change that we need to go forward."

The budget would transfer \$2.26 billion to the school system, 52 percent of the total. Funding the school's proposed budget

would bring teacher salaries closer to market rates, said Brabrand.

"Every year we wait is a year teachers can make a choice to go elsewhere," said Brabrand.

See www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget for more.

FAIRFAX COUNTY TOWN HALL BUDGET MEETINGS

- ❖ **Wednesday, March 7, 7 p.m.**, Sully District Town Hall, Rocky Run Middle School Little Theater, 4400 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly
 - ❖ **Thursday, March 8, 7 p.m.**, Hunter Mill Community Summit, South Lakes High School Lecture Hall, 11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston
 - ❖ **Monday, March 12, 7:30 p.m.**, Great Falls Budget Meeting, Great Falls Library Meeting Room, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls
 - ❖ **Wednesday, March 14, 7 p.m.**, Providence Community Budget Meeting, Providence Community Center, First Floor Multipurpose Room, 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax
 - ❖ **Wednesday, March 14, 7:30pm**, Braddock District Council Annual Budget Meeting, Location To Be Determined
 - ❖ **Thursday, March 15, 7 p.m.**, Mason District Budget Town Meeting, Mason District
- Governmental Center, Main Community Room, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale
- ❖ **Monday, March 19, 7 p.m.**, Mount Vernon District Budget Town Hall, Location to be determined
- ❖ **Wednesday, March 21, 7 p.m.**, Lee District Budget Town Hall Meeting, Franconia Governmental Center Community Room, 6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria
- ❖ **Thursday, March 22, 7 p.m.**, Springfield District Budget Town Hall Meeting, Springfield Governmental Center, Community Room, 6140 Rolling Road, Springfield
- ❖ **April 10-12**, Board of Supervisors Public Hearings on FY 2019 Budget and FY 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan. See www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/speakers-form to sign up.

Extracurriculars: Secret Sauce of Success

Superintendent's budget would eliminate barrier of \$50 activity fee.

School Superintendent Scott Brabrand's budget would eliminate a \$50 extracurricular activity fee that went into effect this year. Eliminating the fee will cost the schools \$1 million, but Brabrand said it was important.

"I believe that extracurricular activities in Fairfax County are the secret sauce of success for our kids," Brabrand said, during a joint budget committee meeting held with members of the Board of Supervisors and School Board on Feb. 27.

Brabrand said he conducted grade point average research every year when he was a principal. "We looked at every kid, and regardless of background, regardless of race," he said, when students were in-

volved in extracurricular activities they had higher grade point averages.

"Frankly, our kids that do get involved in sports and extracurricular activities already pay a mountain of fees as part of travel, as part of going places and being a part of booster clubs," said Brabrand. "So I don't think an additional fee does anything but set up a barrier for our kids to participate."

Brabrand said two other fees were implemented by the school system for FY2018. Fees will still be mandated for families whose children transfer out of boundary to another school and for students who take

more than six Advanced Placement or I.B. tests.

"The school system pays for the first six," he said.

— KEN
MOORE

Extracurricular activities... are the secret sauce of success for our kids."

— Scott Brabrand, School Superintendent



PHOTO BY WILL PALENSCAR/THE CONNECTION

The Oakton Cougars defeated the Westfield Bulldogs 59-54 to win the Concorde District Championship on Feb. 16. This year, students who participated in extracurricular activities like sports paid a \$50 fee, but the superintendent of schools proposes eliminating the fee.

NEWS

County to Host Teen Job Fairs, Resume Building Workshops

Supervisor Pat Herry (R-Springfield) has announced 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 2,000 Fairfax County teenagers and 120 employers. These job fairs provided hundreds of teenagers the opportunity 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 PM.

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 PM.

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 PM.

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 PM.

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 PM.

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

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 12 NOON-2 PM.

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



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OPINION

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

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 15

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LETTERS

Promoting Renewable Energy

To the Editor:

I recently read the article about Lorton's Reformatory being turned into a new housing development ("Lorton Prison Transformed Into Liberty," Connection, February 22-28), and while I find the concept incredibly interesting, I couldn't help but feel as though the article missed a few opportunities to talk about sustainability and how important it is in development and construction cases like this.

The article did a great job of talking about all the interesting aspects that the new apartments and townhouses would have, as well as the many amenities that would be at the residents' disposal, however it failed to mention how a large scale construction like this one may not only negatively affect the surrounding area through chemical runoff, dangerous emissions, etc., but could also negatively impact the sustainability of the planet. I feel it would've been

informative to mention how damaging the extraction and production of building materials are to the planet, as most of them are produced in unsustainable ways, while also introducing sustainable methods that could help the environment. In the article, the development firm is described as "trying to create a vibrant, new urban village," and an integral part of today's urbanization is the use of renewable energy, so it would've been great if the article could have mentioned the idea of implementing sources of renewable energy (such as solar panels) into the development. Even if it may be too late to add solar panels to this project, simply bringing up the idea of renewable energy could get readers thinking about the environment and what they can do to help.

Camille Paulston
McLean

Not Paying Attention in Logic Class

To the Editor:

I was very surprised at the honesty of the headline on your Feb. 21-27 editorial, but then someone pointed out to me that "Another Assault on Common Sense" probably wasn't referring to the content of your editorial. My mistake.

Since I was wrong about that, maybe I don't understand the cartoon either. As I understand it, a deranged individual murdered 17 people in a school in Florida; many of that person's peers "knew" that he was dangerous, but apparently did not mention that to school authorities until after the shooting; school authorities considered him dangerous, but did not go to police; police made dozens of visits to his house, but two investigators concluded that he was not a danger to himself or others; the adults with whom he was living did not notice the aberrant behavior that so many others saw; the

FBI was "unable to identify" him as the author of a post indicating he wanted to be a school shooter, and when the FBI received two separate tips actually naming him as dangerous and threatening to become a school shooter, the Bureau ignored one, and failed to send the second to the local Field Office for action, and when he became the school shooter he said that he wanted to be, the Broward County deputy on duty at the school failed to do his duty and remained outside the building where the shooting was taking place, where he was joined by other Broward deputies who also did not enter the building – and so the NRA was responsible for the atrocity.

I must not have been paying attention in Logic Class.

H. M. Padon
Great Falls

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

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WELLBEING

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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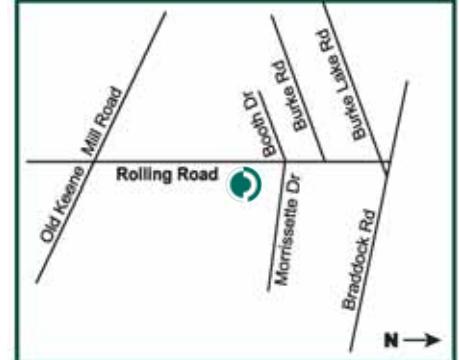
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NEWS

Budget Brinkmanship

State lawmakers poised to leave Richmond without passing budget.

By MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

Budget showdowns are rare in Virginia, but not unprecedented. Back in 2004, Gov. Mark Warner clashed with Republicans over a sales tax increase. Then in 2014, Gov. Terry McAuliffe engaged in brinkmanship over expanding Medicaid. Now lawmakers are poised to end the session once again without passing a budget. The final deadline for reaching an agreement is the end of June, when the new fiscal year begins.

"Looking at past budget standoffs, this one surpasses anything I've seen," said Del. Ken Plum (D-36), the longest serving member of the House. "The issues are so big in terms of the number difference, but also in terms of philosophical differences in how we might put programs together."

After experiencing an earthquake election last year, House Republicans changed course on expanding Medicaid. Their budget has \$371 million in new revenue from the federal government under the Affordable Care Act. Senate Republicans remain steadfastly opposed to expanding Medicaid. So far, only one Senate Republican has sided with Democrats, Sen. Emmett Hanger (R-24), although he's opposed to the hospital bed tax that would fund the part of Medicaid expansion not funded by the federal government. That means conferees from the House and Senate will spend the next few weeks hashing it out.

"The House conferees all voted for the House budget, and they all support Medicaid expansion. The Senate conferees are mixed," said Barbara Favola (D-31). "Right now I don't see a clear pathway for them unless they are identifying some particular incentives that they want Governor Northam to consider."

IF PAST IS PROLOGUE, the next few weeks will see some dramatic new development that will shift the discussion. Back in 2004, lawmakers left town at loggerheads over a sales tax increase. The Senate supported the idea, but the House resisted it. After weeks of negotiation, several key Republicans flipped and eventually supported the idea, giving Warner and the Democrats a major victory.

"This has been the most trying time that's ever been in my political career," said House Appropriations Chairman Vince Callahan (R-34) during the 2004 negotiations. "Hopefully we'll go to the middle of June, and we'll have it all wrapped up and I can enjoy my life again."

The budget standoff of 2014 didn't play out quite so swimmingly for Democrats. McAuliffe was ending his first General Assembly session as governor, and he was pushing hard for Medicaid expansion. House and Senate leaders were deep in negotiations when Sen. Phil Puckett (D-38) unexpectedly announced his resignation, giving Republicans control of the chamber. Democrats cried foul, charging that Republicans had offered Puckett a seat on the Tobacco Commission and proposed his daughter get a judicial appointment. Nevertheless, Republicans successfully blocked Medicaid expansion.

"The momentum is different now," said Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34). "When McAuliffe was governor, Obama was still president and there was still a lot of



MICHAEL LEE POPE/THE CONNECTION

House and Senate leaders are deadlocked over the budget, a debate that expected to unfold over the next few weeks as budget conferees hash out the details.

"Right now I don't see a clear pathway for them unless they are identifying some particular incentives that they want Governor Northam to consider."

— Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31)

fear that the ACA was not a long-term program and once Obama was gone it would go away. I think even the most ardent conservatives would have to concede at this point that the ACA is here to stay."

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE between the House budget and the Senate budget won't be easy. Aside from the ideological differences on the Affordable Care Act, the two budgets have a long list of differences. The Senate budget includes \$5 million for home health care; the House budget has \$1 million to train personal care attendants. The House spends \$46 million for financial aid to in-state undergraduate students; the Senate slashes that in half to \$23 million. The House invests \$88 million in a 2 percent raise for teachers; the Senate budget has no money for teacher raises.

"When we don't pass a budget, all 130 local governments around the state start screaming at us," said Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36). "They can't plan their budgets — especially their school budgets — until they know how much money allocation they're going to get from us for their direct aid."

For now, local governments across Virginia will have to live with uncertainty. Most House members and senators believe lawmakers will leave town without passing a budget, leaving it to the conferees to hash out the details. A resolution could emerge as early as April or as late as June, although the possibility still exists that a last-minute fix could emerge. Del. Tim Hugo (R-40), who voted against the budget, predicts a solution will happen before lawmakers leave town on Saturday.

"I'm always the optimist," said Hugo when asked for a prediction. "But if I'm wrong, I'm sure you'll tell me."

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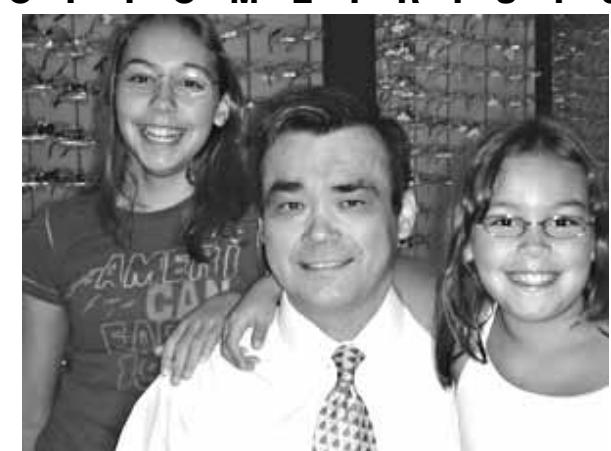
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CALENDAR

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.fairfxcityrestaurantweek.com.

Second Saturdays. 6-9 p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Road, Lorton. The Second Saturday Art Walk is the perfect time to meet nearly 85 Resident and Associate Artists, creating art in the studios or exhibiting in our galleries. Experience performances of dance, cabaret, comedy, big band, jazz, and theater. Indulge in classes in the art of mixology or cuisines from around the globe. Enjoy art exhibitions in nine galleries of the region's finest sculpture, painting, glass, ceramics, and fiber art works. Visit www.workhousearts.org/.

Fairfax Pets on Wheels New Volunteer Orientation.

An orientation for new volunteers interested in visiting residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities with their approved pets through the Fairfax Pets On Wheels program is held the first Wednesday of every month starting at 7:30 p.m. Visit www.fpow.org for each month's location. Prior to attending, please complete the online application found at www.fpow.org/volunteer. www.fpow.org, 703-324-5424 or dfspetsongwheels@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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 through 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.

Hands On Day

The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum will hold a Hands On Day with crafts. Admission: museum members and age 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2; ages 16 and older, \$4. Craft supplies included with admission. Sunday, March 11, 1-4 p.m. at The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.



Consequences." A professional lecture series sponsored by the School of Art, invites nationally recognized visiting artists and designers to 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 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 Lesina Old Town Hall Performance Series presents Linn Barnes & Allison Hampton: "Celtic Spring, Music from the Celtic Countries." Free and open to the public. Call 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov/culturalarts.

SATURDAY/MARCH 10

Children's Consignment Sale. 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Christ Church, 7600 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Come and shop for quality, gently used children's clothing, toys, infant items, shoes, books, games, DVD's, videos, furniture and much more. Cash, checks and credit cards. Free

admission. Call 703 425-3580 or visit www.christchurchsale.com.

NoVa TEEN Book Festival. Opens at 9:30 am at Washington-Lee High School, 1301 N. Stafford St., Arlington. Forty authors will take part in the NoVa TEEN Book Festival. Author panels and breakout sessions will be held throughout the day-long event packed with books, authors, and activities. Book lovers of all ages are welcome. Free admission. Find a full event schedule and registration information at novateenbookfestival.com.

Children's Book Sale. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Fairfax City Regional Library, 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. Adults: \$15; families: \$25, other discounts: \$5. 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. This fitness workshop gives you the skills to enhance your regular workout program and make it more fun to do! Wear exercise clothes, bring a mat and water. \$20 for two people in advance; \$25 for two at the door. Think of it as "date night" for fitness. Childcare available. For information email ffxjazzercise@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.fairfaxesymphony.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. Admission: museum members and age 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2; ages 16 and older, \$4. Craft supplies included with admission. 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 Rachael Carson, conservationist. Stevenson will conclude the performance by highlighting contemporary women role models in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). Youth and adults welcome. Free. Call 703-385-8414.

Russian String Orchestra. 2 p.m. at GMU's Center for the Arts' Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Tickets: \$50, \$43, \$30. Calling 888-945-2468 or visit cfa.gmu.edu.

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.

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.

SUNDAY/MARCH 18

NTRAK Scale Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold a N gauge model train show. Admission, Museum members and age 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2 and 16 and older, \$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR or call 703-425-9225.

Moscow Festival Ballet: Cinderella. 2 p.m. at GMU's Center for the Arts' Concert Hall. Fifty dancers from this world-renowned ensemble perform a ballet for the whole family. Cinderella is based on the well-known fairy tale about the kind but mistreated step-daughter and step-sister who is forbidden to attend the royal ball. Tickets: \$56, \$48, \$34. Calling 888-945-2468 or visit cfa.gmu.edu.

NEWS

Arts Enrich Military, Veterans Communities

Since co-founding the General Assembly Arts Caucus, Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41) has made it her commitment to celebrate the arts and make arts education more accessible throughout the Commonwealth. For more than seven years now, Del. Filler-Corn has hosted two caucus meetings per year; one as an independent caucus, and another as a joint caucus. This past year, the independent caucus meeting focused on the arts in secondary and higher education.

"The arts enrich the lives of Virginians in countless ways. Beyond just providing entertainment, the arts create jobs, attract a stronger, more skilled and creative workforce, generate needed tax revenues, and adds so much to the overall cultural and economic vitality of our region," said Filler-Corn. "More often than not, people lose sight of the contributions of the arts to the Commonwealth, and this caucus seeks to celebrate the arts and the potential they bring to Virginia."

Del. Filler-Corn also co-hosted her annual joint meeting of the Arts Caucus and the Military and Veterans Caucus this session. This annual tradition provides the opportunity to discuss organizations that use the arts as a way to positively impact the military and veteran communities in Virginia.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Del. Eileen Filler-Corn co-hosted her annual joint meeting of the Arts Caucus and the Military and Veterans Caucus this session.

This year, Rick Davis, Niyati Dhokai, and Eileen Kennedy spoke on behalf of the Veterans and the Arts Initiative at George Mason University, which serves as an arts and community hub for local veterans, service members, their families, and community members. Davis, Dhokai, and Kennedy described how the Initiative brings the community together at the Hylton Performing Arts Center in Prince William County to engage veterans and military families

through performances, workshops, lessons, exhibitions, and special events that feature music, visual art, dance, and poetry.

"I appreciated representatives from GMU coming down to Richmond to share how they help the brave men and women who serve our country," said Filler-Corn. "I look forward to continuing to work with them and the many other great arts organizations both during my time in Richmond as well as back in Northern Virginia."

Becoming an Eagle Scout

Devin James Albrecht became the 209th Boy Scout of Troop 1131 in Burke to pass his Eagle Scout Board of Review. Devin is a senior at Lake Braddock Secondary School; plays double bass in the orchestra; attends Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Annandale. Devin's dad is Eric Albrecht and his mom is Page Van Sickle, a veterinarian at Village Veterinary Clinic in Burke.

Devin is a second degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do at In-Courage, Kings Park Shopping Center.

An Eagle Scout Court of Honor will take place at St. Stephen's United Methodist Church on Saturday, March 10, 2018, at 1:30 p.m. Robert Stephen Wallace (205) will also receive his Eagle Scout at the same Court of Honor.



PHOTO COURTESY OF G.C. 'GARY' BLACK, III
Eagle Scout Devin Albrecht with his mother, Page Van Sickle.



Eagle Scout Board of Review members: Jack Richmond, Dan Peck, Phil Sternberg, Eagle Scout Devin Albrecht (209), Gary Black, III, and Rick Priest.

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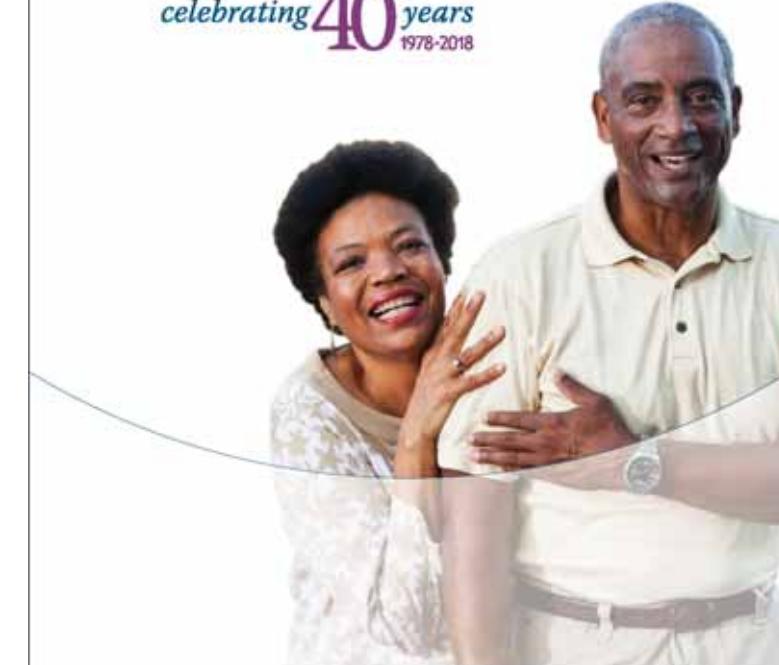
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NEWSPAPERS

NEWS



Mike Luley, Lake Braddock Director of Bands, conducts students in the Symphonic Band.



PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Lake Braddock Secondary Band members Laura String, Band President; William Kelley, first chair trumpet; Michael Baker, first chair euphonium.

Lake Braddock Band Wins National Award

Receives Sudler Flag of Honor by the John Philip Sousa Foundation, a seven-year effort.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Under the direction of Mike Luley, the Lake Braddock Secondary School Symphonic Band from Burke has been awarded the Sudler Flag of Honor by the John Philip Sousa Foundation – a national award.

"I'm very proud of the students and thankful to the support system of our administration and our instructional staff that help us train students and give us opportunities," said Luley, 38, of Springfield, who is the Director of Bands. The band program includes almost 200 students in four concert bands: Symphonic, Concert 1, 2, and 3; one jazz band and a marching band.

Luley, a graduate of West Virginia University and the University of Southern Mississippi for graduate school, added: "For

students, it demonstrates their hard work and their commitment of excellence. It took many facets to make this happen, from the marching bands, concert bands, solo and ensemble, District band and other national events that we performed at."

The application process is extensive, requiring seven years of documentation, recordings, and letters of recommendation, as well as success in adjudicated performances, state and national events and outstanding professional commitment by the conductor. Lake Braddock is one of only two band programs in the U.S. chosen to receive the concert band award this year. The other school was McLean High School.

LULEY said they submitted recordings of their symphonic bands performing as well as a list of master works they've been playing. Included in that were letters of recommendation from college professors; assessment rating sheets from concert band assessments – like the SOLs; as well as programs of significant performances. "The foundation listened (to recordings) and decided if it was of the quality they wanted. If it passed through that, there was a sec-

ond round," said Luley.

They also included how many students were participating in District and All-State Bands to show that students are performing at those levels; including soloists, small groups, and marching band. "It's demonstrating there's continuity in the program and the students have been excelling," said Luley.

This is the second time Lake Braddock received the award; the other time was in 1994 when director Roy Holder ran the program. "For us, it's significant because it's being recognized at the national level by esteemed band directors. The committee is by previous award winners, college professors, members of the John Philip Sousa Foundation and directors of the American Band Masters Association," he said.

Lake Braddock's Middle School Band, under the direction of Lou Bean, also won the Sudler Cup Award in the year 2000, which is equivalent to the same award at the middle school level. "We're very appreciative of the elementary and middle school band directors and private teachers who work with the students," said Luley.

BAND PRESIDENT Laura String, 17, of Burke, is a senior who plays flute. She said: "It's a great honor for not just us but everyone who's come before us and worked with Mr. Luley and all of the students that have worked so hard to help us achieve this goal. And we're just looking forward to continuing the work."

Michael Baker, 17, of Burke, a junior who plays the euphonium in the band, said he feels pretty good about winning the award. "It's been a lot of work along the road for everyone, not just for the group here now, but seven years back," he said. He plans to study music education in college and join a military band, possibly the U.S. Air Force Band.

William Kelley, 17, of Burke, is a junior who plays the trumpet. "It's an honor because not only is it just our band but it's all of the bands that have come before us, and just being able to continue with the legacy that they've left us with," he said. He is undecided about college but wants to continue playing trumpet.

The Sudler Flag of Honor will be awarded to Lake Braddock during a concert and ceremony on May 31, 2018.



Janelle Chanchu plays her flute during rehearsals. Students were preparing for their concert.



The Lake Braddock Symphonic Band students on clarinet: Dominique Cox, Josh Anderson, and Panhlauv Panh.



The Lake Braddock Symphonic Band students in rehearsal: Panhlauv Panh on clarinet and Rebecca Marietta-Perez and George Gilbertson on oboe.

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NEWS

Transforming Lives

Assistance League's auction to raise funds for Weekend Food for Kids and more.

Assistance League of Northern Virginia will hold its annual fundraiser on April 27 to support its community outreach programs. The public is invited to attend the event which will raise funds for the nonprofit's three major programs: Weekend Food for Kids, New Clothing for Kids, and Reading Express. Through these programs, the all-volunteer nonprofit organization helps more than 6,000 disadvantaged students each year.

Started in 2010 with a delivery of 500 bags of food to one school, Weekend Food for Kids now provides food to children living with food insecurity in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria who receive free or reduced-price meals on school days but lack adequate food resources on weekends. Today, with financial and hands-on support from the community, Assistance League delivers 1,650 bags of supplemental food to children in six Title I schools every month during the school year.

Last school year, with the help of Dominion Energy, Intelsat, Tee Off for Tots Children's Charities, Quadrant and other charitable organizations, the program provided 15,672 bags of food to children who may otherwise go hungry on weekends. The population served is multicultural, and the school counselors identify the children to receive the food.

Through the New Clothing for Kids program, clothing, shoes and personal grooming products are provided to more than 2,870 children whose families cannot afford those items.

Reading Express targets at-risk first grade students by providing one-on-one tutoring to improve the reading skills of students at Providence Elementary School in Fairfax. In 2016-17, members gave 521 hours of support in the classroom and, to encourage reading at home, also provided new books to stu-



COURTESY OF FOX 5 NEWS
Tony Perkins



PHOTO BY KAREN AMSTER/ASSISTANCE LEAGUE
A guest bidding at the silent auction table last year.

dents enrolled in the program.

Through fundraising efforts and grant awards, members lend their time and talent to raise funds to support the organization's mission.

Assistance League will again conduct its primary campaign to raise money to sustain its philanthropic programs in the 2018-19 school year. The "Transforming Lives" Spring Luncheon is scheduled for Friday, April 27 from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Country Club of Fairfax, 5110 Ox Road, in Fairfax. Ticket price is \$65 (\$30 is tax deductible).

This year's luncheon will include silent and live auctions and feature Keynote Speaker Tony Perkins, Fox 5 News Anchor and Co-Host MAJIC 102.3/92.7. Local businesses donate a variety of goods to support the cause. Current event sponsors include: Quadrant, Joyce Koons Honda Buick GMC, Manassas Spine Care Chiropractic Center and NOVEC. To attend or contribute, contact: ALNorthernVA@gmail.com. Visit www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org.

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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 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 6

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.

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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

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 Heroes": "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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Training & Coaching
Unlimited Earning Potential

**Wednesday, March 21, 6:00 PM
6045 Burke Centre Parkway, Burke, VA**

You can register for the Career Seminar at:
www.varealestateclasses.com

For more information contact: **Paul DiCicco**
703-503-1899 or PaulD@lnf.com



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