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PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax Station **CONNECTION** Clifton & Lorton

Gary Morris, new principal of South County High School, with the school mascot.

Meet South County's New Principal

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Gary Morris, new principal of South County High School, chats during the school's Open House last week.
PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Gary Morris Is New South County Principal

Will oversee school with 2,260 students and a staff of 167.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

With 24 years in education, Gary Morris, 50 of Dale City, was named the new principal of South County High School, on Aug. 15, 2018, succeeding former principal Matt Ragone. He will lead 2,260 students and a staff of 167 in the South County Pyramid, Region 4.

"It's a very inclusive population. Students have learned to embrace the diversity in the building. We don't have the extreme diversity of Falls Church; there are enough differences in demographics to allow students to feel comfortable in their settings. We don't have a lot of cliques, which is great. You'll see different ethnic groups sitting together, which is awesome," he said. The ethnic breakdown of South County students is white, 43 percent; Hispanic, 12 percent; Black, 18 percent; Asian, 19 percent; and other, 5 percent. There are 90 percent of students in General Education and 14 percent in Special Education. 19 percent of students are on the Free or Reduced Meals, based on 2016-17 statistics.

In describing some of the programs at South County, he mentioned the Robotics program, outstanding Drum Line and high-performing athletic programs. "But the arts departments, choral, and the fine performing arts have always been outstanding as well," he said.

KNOWN FOR RECITING the catch-phrase, "We will find a way or we will make one," he added: "I think we have a strong STEM program. That falls under the Robotics program. That program has really grown. I'm kind of biased because I am a former tech-ed teacher. It allows students to do a lot of learning that is applicable to real-world settings," he said.

As far as new challenges as principal, he said: "Changing the culture is probably the biggest challenge for me; having been here before (as assistant principal) and changing the perception people had of me. I'm now the principal. It's my goal to develop great relationships with all the teachers. The buck stops in this office is totally different from serving as an assistant principal. The principal is responsible for everything that goes on in the building," he said.

He said some of his goals as principal are to in-



Gary Morris, new principal of South County High School, in his office.

crease the academic rigor for the majority of the students in the building. "I want to ensure people are part of South County High School and not just part of the South County community. Bringing people in with real-world experiences to help our students realize opportunities that are out there for them where trends are developing out in industry and in the business world and being prepared for what will be next after graduation," he said.

What he loves most about the job is the opportunity to build relationships.

"Allowing kids to have that 'aha' moment is the most rewarding thing — to see kids turn the corner and realize they can do anything they set their minds to," he said. According to Deborah Hicks-Johnson, South County Social Studies Teacher: "What makes Gary a great principal is his genuine sense of caring, his solid leadership presence, and his focus as a visionary," she said. "With a welcoming personality and natural knack for developing relationships, Mr. Morris creates a comfortable atmosphere of education for SCHS. His willingness to share his background and experiences leads to active positive relationships building. As a result, he encourages teaching and learning leading to high student achievement." Added Derek Smith, Assistant Principal at Mountain View: "Gary's been a huge influence in my life. He was the first servant-leader I encountered in FCPS. As an administrator, he taught me to listen and understand perspective before speaking. His warm disposition positively affects everyone. He makes you want to get better just by being around him. He serves as both father and brother for his school community. He is a life-long learner who shares and seeks feedback for growth."

Added Dr. Angela G. Atwater, Assistant Superintendent, Region 4: "Mr. Morris is a founding member of South County High School as an assistant principal when it opened in 2005. As the former principal of Mountain View High School, he led with the belief that every student should be represented within the school community. His familiarity of South County High School made him a natural fit as the new school leader. Mr. Morris exhibits high expectations for staff and students but also will show his humorous side to life. Mr. Morris has experience as an athlete and a musician and he values both extra-curricular activities. As one teacher who was on the interview panel stated, 'As a teacher who never worked with him, he made me feel excited to get

SEE PRINCIPAL, PAGE 9

What's New, Exciting In Area Schools Principal's Back-to-School Report

In the first week of the new school year, The Connection has asked the area school principals to respond to three questions:

1 - What are the most exciting developments in your

school in the new school year?
2 - What would be your, one-sentence, message to parents, community?

3 - Any upcoming events, activities?

Here are their responses.



From left — Addison Smith, assistant principal, Janice Dalton, principal, and Vicki Duling assistant principal, Laurel Hill Elementary.

Janice Dalton, Principal, Laurel Hill Elementary, Lorton:

1. Exciting developments at Laurel Hill: STEAM Lab, Makers Space and a Totally Tech

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3. Back to School Night and Screen on the Green! Check our website for dates.



Union Mill Staff at Centreville Pyramid Kickoff.

Kathleen Case, Principal, Union Mill Elementary:

1 - Union Mill is looking forward to a great year. Besides our intense work on academics, we continue to focus on Portrait of a Graduate skills. We will also continue to incorporate the Responsive Classroom approach into our classrooms and school to create safe, joyful, and engaging classrooms and communities. Our work with The Positivity Project will also continue this year and we are excited that many of our pyramid schools will be joining Centreville Elementary and us on this journey. We had a pyramid kick-off for all staff members in the Centreville pyramid with keynote speakers Mike Erwin, co-founder of The Positivity Project, and Dr. Scott Brabrand, Superintendent of FCPS schools, and we are looking forward to more collaboration with our pyramid schools this year.

2 - At Union Mill, we will continue to teach Executive Functioning skills to all students and this work connects well with Responsive Classroom and The Positivity Project philosophies.

3 - Our Back to School picnic is Friday, Sept. 7, from 5 - 7 p.m. This is always a well-attended event and is a great way for families to meet new staff members and see new and old friends.

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NEWS



Bob Williams proudly displays his 2019 ZR1 Corvette. Only 1,500 will be made, and he's had this car for a week.

Cool Cars on a Hot Day

The Fairfax City/Clifton Lions Club Labor Day Car Show was Monday, Sept. 3.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Dignitaries attending included (from left) former City Councilman Jeff Greenfield, Councilman Michael DeMarco, State Sen. George Barker (D-39), U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) and event organizer Jim Chesley and wife Jennifer.



Jay Knakmuhs peruses a 1951 Willys Jeep.



Opera singer Angela Knight sings the National Anthem at the event.

VDOT Virginia Department of Transportation

Fairfax County Parkway Widening Fairfax County

Public Information Meetings

Attend one of three public information meetings near you.
All meeting times are 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Presentation starts at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, September 25, 2018

Willow Springs Elementary School
5400 Willow Springs School Road, Fairfax, VA 22030

Thursday, September 27, 2018

Fairview Elementary School
5815 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, VA 22039

Wednesday, October 3, 2018

Oak View Elementary School
5004 Sideburn Road, Fairfax, VA 22032

Find out about plans to widen Fairfax County Parkway (Route 286) from four to six lanes between Route 29 (Lee Highway) and Route 123 (Ox Road). The proposed project design also includes an interchange at Popes Head Road and the future Shirley Gate Road extension, improvements to the existing trail in the Fairfax County Parkway right of way and construction of a new shared-use path to make the trail continuous within the project limits.

Stop by between 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. to view displays and learn more about the project and its preliminary design, including Popes Head Road interchange options under consideration. VDOT will hold a presentation beginning at 7 p.m. Project staff will be available to answer your questions.

Review project information at the VDOT project website (www.virginiadot.org/projects), at the information meeting, or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office at 4975 Alliance Drive in Fairfax. Please call ahead at 703-691-6710 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions.

Give your written comments at the meeting, or submit them by **October 15, 2018** to Mr. Sitaram Kodali, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030, or email meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "Fairfax County Parkway Widening" in the subject line.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact Mr. Sitaram Kodali at 703-691-6710 or TTY/TDD 711.

State Project: 0286-029-259, P101, UPC: 107937, Federal: STP-5A01 (775)



Christine Allocca checks out a 1973 Volkswagen Thing owned by Clifton's Mark Knauff.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/ THE CONNECTION



From left, Ian Fromknecht, 9, dad Chris and friend Tom, 9, look at a 1978 Pontiac Firebird Trans Am.

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OPINION

Do Something

BY WENDY GRADISON
CEO PRS



The news of Anthony Bourdain and Kate Spade as well as a number of our own community members whose lives were stopped short due to suicide underscores the challenges that exist in preventing suicide. These stories created considerable grief, and in fact, we saw a significant increase in calls and texts to our PRS CrisisLink hotline.

When losses like these occur, we have an opportunity to change the conversation about suicide from one of loss to one of empowerment and hope. To keep people talking, we are launching the #CallTextLive Campaign during September, Suicide Prevention Month.

Suicide is a serious issue locally and nationally, claiming the lives of nearly 45,000 people annually and is the 10th leading cause of death nationwide and the second leading cause of death for young people aged 15-24. But for every death, 278 people manage to move past thoughts of suicide and survive.

At PRS, a nonprofit running PRS CrisisLink, Northern Virginia's crisis hotline and textline, we know there is more we can do to bring awareness and tools to prevent future suicides. We are inviting the community to get involved in our 4th annual #CallTextLive Campaign.



Join #CallTextLive Campaign.

Using the hashtag #CallTextLive, the campaign works to educate members of the community about resources available and actions they can take to bring awareness to suicide prevention and intervention. Campaign highlights include: an easy to use web-based interactive event calendar; great tips and resources to share via social media; a Facebook Live Q&A with experts; community training and tour of the PRS CrisisLink call center; a Selfie Day; a crowdsourcing fundraiser; t-shirts for purchase; and walk events. We will also explore special suicide prevention topics related to gun safety, veterans, older adults, LGBTQ, youth, and survivors.

It's time to challenge the stigma around is-

sues contributing to suicide and provide each other the tools to get help. #CallTextLive uses social media, activities and events to drive community conversation. We want people to visit our website—www.prsinc.org—to find simple ways to spark change through the #CallTextLive Campaign. Do one or do them all...but we definitely want everyone to do something.

If we are successful, even more people will find their way to community resources, including the PRS CrisisLink program, which handled nearly 80,000 crisis calls and text messages from the Northern Virginia region last year. In fact, a simple call or text to the crisis hotline or textline — (800) 273-TALK [8255] and text "CONNECT" to 85511 — provides the empathetic, trained voice that someone in crisis needs to reduce their pain and provide connections to care. Most of these voices are volunteers from our community — neighbors and friends — who share the gift of listening to those who hope to be heard.

Help us make it okay for more people to seek help. Join the #CallTextLive Campaign to broaden the conversation. Small or big ... do something ... we are listening and others will too.

Wendy Gradison is CEO of PRS, a mental health nonprofit in Northern Virginia.

De-Gerrymandering Continued

BY KENNETH R.
"KEN" PLUM
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)



COMMENTARY

rective. The legislature went home without success after one day of effort.

Why is the Republican majority failing to do as the court directed? The reason is quite simple. If it took

an unconstitutional drawing of district lines to maintain their majority in the House of Delegates, an undoing of those lines would likely take away their majority. Is the court favoring Democrats in what they are doing? No, the court is protecting the constitutional rights of individuals. The court does not take into account partisan outcomes. You simply cannot deny equal representation in the legislature of a class of people without running afoul of their constitutional protections.

When the court found Virginia's Congressional districts to be unconstitutional several years ago, the remedy of that situation was new districts that resulted in the election of an additional African

American congressman from the state that up to that point had only one. Both happen also to be Democrats.

The court has denied an appeal from the Republicans of their directive to resolve the unconstitutional districts. If the General Assembly fails to carry out the court's mandate, the court will redraw the districts themselves. Presumably there would be special elections held right away in the new districts.

In the meantime, House Democrats have proposed a redrawing of the legislative lines to make the districts constitutional which unsurprisingly could result in the election of as many as five new Democrats. The authors of the new maps insist that they did what needed to be done to follow the court's directive and not what would give them more seats. The day of the special session was spent with the Republicans picking apart the proposed map in an attempt to show that it was too partisan.

Republicans called the map hypocritical, and one of my Democratic colleagues, Del. Steve

Heretick, called it a "self-serving political power grab."

I draw two conclusions from the last several months: The court needs to take immediate remedial action to correct the constitutional problems with the current districts, and the General Assembly at its next legislative session must pass a constitutional amendment establishing a truly independent commission to do redistricting. The amendment would need to pass a second session of the General Assembly and a referendum of the people. Legislative bodies simply cannot rise above their own self-interests to do the job fairly.

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: Letters to the Editor The Connection 1606 King St., Alexandria VA 22314 Call: 703-917-6444. By e-mail: south@connectionnewspapers.com

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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.

VOYERREGISTRATIONANDIDEVENTS

The Fairfax County Office of Elections (12000 Government Center Parkway Suite 323, Fairfax) is open daily during normal business hours to provide county residents the opportunity to register to vote or obtain a free voter photo ID if needed. Applicants will need to complete a photo voter ID application, have a photo taken and sign a digital signature pad. Call 703-222-0776.

The following special events will also provide opportunity to register to vote and/or get a photo Virginia Voter card.

- ❖ Tuesday/Sept. 11, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., The Woodlands Retirement Community, 4320 Forest Hill Ct, Fairfax.
- ❖ Monday/Sept. 17, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Heatherwood Retirement Community, 9642 Burke Lake Road, Burke.
- ❖ Wednesday/Sept. 19, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Greenspring Retirement Community, 7410 Spring Village Drive, Springfield.
- ❖ Tuesday/Sept. 25, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Burke Health and Rehab Center, 9640 Burke Lake Road, Burke.
- ❖ Thursday/Oct. 4, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Leewood Healthcare Center, 7120 Braddock Road, Annandale.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is looking to expand its team of volunteers for the upcoming tax season. Tax-Aide, now in its 51st year, offers free in-person preparation and assistance to anyone, especially those 50 and older, who can't afford a tax preparation service. Volunteers make a difference in their communities by assisting many older, lower-income taxpayers, and their families, who might otherwise miss out on the tax credits and deductions they've earned. To learn about volunteer opportunities, visit aarpfoundation.org/taxaide or call 1-888-OUR-AARP (1-888-687-2277).

Docents Needed. Sundays 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Greet museum visitors and tell them about the exhibits, the museum and the its railroad and Civil War history. Ideal for those interested in railroads, the Civil War and Northern Virginia history. Training and orientation provided. Other volunteer opportunities are gardening, publicity and exhibit planning. Call 703-945-7483.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board's Merrifield Center offers a new stand-up information kiosk. Part of a pilot project, the new feature aims to improve the customer service experience and decrease wait times for individuals who are seeking mental (behavioral) health services. To check in, individuals respond to five simple questions, then the CSB's Patient Track software alerts staff. Based on clinicians' schedules and availability, as well as the needs of the client, individuals are triaged and seen by the next available staff member. For more information on available services, call the CSB at 703-383-8500 (Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.). In an emergency 24/7, call CSB Emergency Services at 703-573-5679 or the Fairfax Detox Center at 703-502-7000 (TTY 703-322-9080).

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 13

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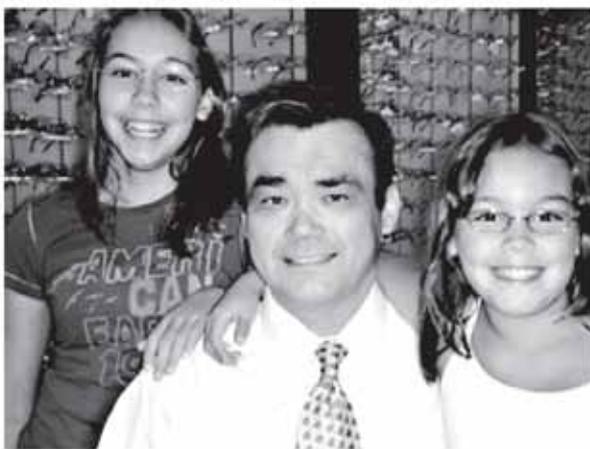
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WELLBEING

Aiming for Long-Term Fitness

Study shows physical declines can be detected as early as age 50.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

“I’ve been doing it since before I retired,” said Rich White, a former accountant who lives in Alexandria. “It’s easier to get up and get it out of the way so I don’t miss it. Both of my parents died prematurely of heart attacks. That’s when I decided to start running to get in shape. Eventually that turned into a habit of daily strength and aerobic exercise.”

White’s assumptions about preserving his physical health are underscored by a report from the Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development at Duke University School of Medicine which found that physical decline begins when people are in their 50s, much earlier than people might notice or expect.

The study looked at 775 adults ranging in age from 30 to 90 to assess changes in fitness abilities like endurance, balance, speed and strength. Researchers found that exercise efforts must begin before the age of 50 in order to help halt the decline and maintain mobility and independence longer in life.

“Our research reinforces a life-span approach to maintaining physical ability — don’t wait until you are 80 years old and cannot get out of a chair,” said lead author Katherine S. Hall, Ph.D. in releasing the study.

By having participants stand on one leg for 60 seconds to measure balance and sit and rise from a chair for 30 seconds to measure lower body strength, researchers were able to detect a decline beginning in

Emma Warner, 72, meets her trainer at a Montgomery County Recreation Center gym twice a week. Together they perform a combination of exercises aimed at improving her strength, balance, endurance and flexibility.

“We stretch and do yoga poses, sometimes we speed walk outside and I also do exercises with two or three pound dumbbells,” she said. “But my mother is 98 and is in pretty good health, so I figure I have good genes. I just need to work on fitness to maintain.”

As people age, change and decline is inevitable, but the rate and severity can vary based on genetics and the level of activity in one’s lifestyle. Regular exercise can have a profound effect on the way in which one ages.

“People have their actual age, which they can’t do anything about, and their biological age,” said Martin.

“Someone could be 40 years old, live a very inactive lifestyle and not eat very well, which may cause them to be closer to 60 in terms of their biological age. And vice versa, someone who is 60 could be very active and eat a healthy diet and feel like they are much younger, perhaps a biological age closer to mid-40s.”

Fitness instructor Amy Traum has clients who run the age gamut from college students to retirees, but her overarching advice to getting in shape is similar. “Everyone needs a well-rounded exercise program that includes stretching, balance exercises,

strength and cardio,” she said. “I always begin and end classes with stretching and I try to add strength and balance elements like a weighted deadlift.”

Those new or newly returning to exercise should start slowly and gradually, says Traum. “It sounds like common sense, but I can’t tell you the number of people who come to my classes with no experience and try to work way above their fitness level

“Our research reinforces a life-span approach to maintaining physical ability — don’t wait until you are 80 years old and cannot get out of a chair.”

— Katherine S. Hall, Ph.D.

“Someone could be 40 years old, live a very inactive lifestyle and not eat very well, which may cause them to be closer to 60 in terms of their biological age. And vice versa, someone who is 60 could be very active and eat a healthy diet and feel like they are much younger, perhaps a biological age closer to mid-40s.”

— Joel Martin, Ph.D., assistant professor of Kinesiology, George Mason University

one’s 50s. The findings show the need to understand and preserve muscle strength.

“Most tissues in the body respond to stress placed on them by becoming stronger or adapting to handle the stimulus you place on them,” said Joel Martin, Ph.D., assistant professor of Kinesiology at George Mason University. “If you lift weights, your muscles get bigger and stronger. If you don’t do any sort of physical activity to stimulate your muscles then they get smaller and become weaker. Use it or lose it.”

and either get injured or discouraged,” she said. “There’s nothing wrong with starting out slow, sticking with it and making gradual progress. Also make it fun, like walk or jog with a friends or take a dance or Zumba classes.”

“Eating a healthy and nutritious diet is also important,” added Martin. “The antioxidants in foods, especially fruits and vegetables, can help to preserve and protect tissues from damage that occurs as part of the natural aging process.”

NEWS

Meet South County's New Principal

FROM PAGE 3

back to work and that there may be new opportunities for teachers.”

MORRIS attended Baltimore City College High School in Maryland and graduated from Norfolk State University with an electronics technology degree. He earned a master's in teaching technology education from Norfolk State and an Education Specialist degree from Virginia Tech.

His first teaching job was at South Lakes High School where he was a technology education teacher.

He did the same job at Falls Church High School and served as the Department Chair of the electives program. He then went to Mountain View High School as the technology coordinator. Afterwards, he moved to South County as an Assistant Principal; and back to Mountain View as Assistant Principal, then Principal for Fairfax County Adult High School before moving back to Mountain View as Principal.

Morris is married to wife Gale; the couple has a blended family with eight children: Marcellus, 21; Nicolas, 20; Camryn, 17; Max, 17; Aristotle, 15; Haitia, 6; Nheema, 4; and Zara, 2.

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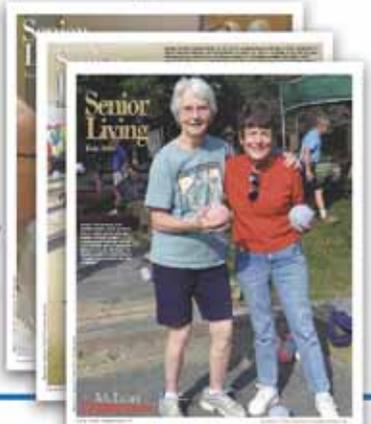
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NEWS



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Some of the GirlsTooCode Program attendees with program leader Riya Dabbi. From left, back row: Kyndall Johnson, Gianna Park, Vera Mensah, Isabella Nazari, Mia Martin-Escandarani, Izzy Meyers; Front row: Ana Mensah, Sol Martin-Escandarani, Savannah Phipps

'GirlsTooCode' Program Held at Richard Byrd Library

The meeting room in Richard Byrd Library was abuzz with girls waving their hands to answer Riya's question, "What are the 4 lobes in the human brain?" Riya Dabbi, program leader for the GirlsTooCode Program, was testing the girls to check their progress.

Girls from grades 4 to 12 had enrolled in the early part of summer when it was announced on the library calendar. The program was a huge success even before it started with enrollment spilling way beyond the planned program size of 15 girls. Many girls had to be put on a waitlist for the next session of GirlsTooCode.

Earlier in the spring, National Council for Women in Technology honored Riya Dabbi, class of 2019, from Thomas Jefferson HS with National Runner up Award and a Virginia State Winner Award in the Aspirations in Computing program. Riya was then encouraged by NCWIT, to apply for a grant under their AspireIT K-12 Outreach program.

Riya approached Richard Byrd Library in Springfield with a plan for the GirlsTooCode Program. The then-branch manager Lorraine Culhane liked the idea and ap-

proved it to be run from mid-July to mid-August for five Saturdays. Isha Bhangui and Ankitia Vadiala, rising seniors, from the Academy of Science in Loudoun joined Riya and helped plan and execute the program.

Girls learned Scratch programming with fun and interactive stories, games, and animation. They learned about the nervous system, how computers can be made to simulate the brain, Artificial Intelligence, and neural networks.

They were introduced to a variety of careers open to women with coding skills. In the last session, girls showcased their community challenge projects culminating with an award ceremony. Branch Manager Sandy Freund distributed the awards and participation certificates and congratulated the girls for successful completion.

Riya Dabbi said, "I love seeing the wonder in girls' faces after learning something new and interesting."

Girls came from diverse backgrounds and formed new friendships. Izzy Myers, a fifth grader, asked Riya, while leaving, "Are you going to do the program again next summer? I want to come again!"



Community Project Award Winners with Library Branch Manager. From left: Sandy Freund, Ana Mensah, Mia Martin-Escandarani, Riya Dabbi, Izzy Meyers.

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Bulldogs Rein in Stallions

South County falls to (1-1) and hosts Centreville (2-0).

The Westfield Bulldogs and the South County Stallions have battled it out on the gridiron for the past three years. Westfield has won three of the five games they have played against the Stallions, including play-off wins in 2015 and 2016.

Over the same time frame, the two teams are two of the area's best team's year in and out. South County has a combined record of 26-11, while Westfield has won 43 and lost 3, and won three consecutive state 6A State titles.

On Friday night, Aug. 31, the Stallions struck first as they were able to get into the end zone with 7:37 to play in the opening quarter. The Bulldogs special teams got a little revenge when senior Saadiq Hinton blocked the extra point.

In the 2nd quarter Westfield would get on the board when senior Riley Nugent kicked a 22-yard field goal to bring Westfield within 3, 6-3.

In the 3rd quarter Bizzett Woodley put the Bulldogs into the end zone with 9:11, his third TD reception of the short year, and giving Westfield their first lead of the game, 10-6. The game was then postponed due to lightning with 6:25 to play in the 3rd. When the game resumed on Saturday, Westfield went back to what was working, getting the ball to the 6'4" Woodley for his second score of the game. Later in the 3rd quarter, Woodley would add his third TD reception,



Matthew Dzerski #8 is surrounded by Westfield defense Taylor Morin #2, Saadiq Hinton #3, Tahj Summey #36 and Jordayle Dyson #92.

with 4:40 making it 24-6.

South County would make things interesting after they reached the end zone with 11:53 to play in the 4th quarter, bringing the score to 24-12, but failed on a two-point conversion. Bulldog penalties and a South County successful onside kick recovery made the home team and their fans a little anxious. However, Westfield would not be

denied their 26th consecutive win.

Westfield was led by QB Noah Kim who passed for 212 yards and 3TD's on 19-30 passing. Bizzett Woodley had 9 catches for 139 yards and 3 TD's. Gavin Kiley caught four passes, Taylor Morin brought in two more and Isaiah Daniel brought in another. Stats were not available for South County. South County falls to (1-1) and hosts



Tyler Johnson #25 carries the ball for South County.

Centreville (2-0). Westfield (2-0) has a bye week, and in two weeks will travel to play Stonewall Jackson. Riley Nugent and some of his teammates plan to use their bye week to watch some of the other teams in action. Nugent thinks "Centreville will be the team's greatest challenge of the regular season. Their team has been playing really well."

— WILL PALENSCAR

PHOTOS BY WILL PALENSCAR

'The Crossings' at Spring Hill Setting an Example for Continuum-of-Care

BY AUSTIN HOUCK

For years, Spring Hill has been a thriving 55+ active adult community, with pristinely-cut lawns, quaint houses and condominiums. Recent additions of Lindsay Hill senior apartments and The Crossings assisted living and memory care facility provide senior living options from single-family homes to assisted living apartments. In addition to the Spring Hill living community, Lorton will also be home to a future Artis memory care facility.

On April 5, the Spring Hill community welcomed its newest addition, an assisted living and memory care facility aptly named The Crossings. This new building finally completes Spring Hill's transitional senior care system, with residents having independent living, assisted living, and memory care all in one spot, so that should the need to move to the next phase of life arise, residents don't need to go very far. I had the opportunity to tour the facility, and was blown away at both the variety of services they provided, as well as the size and brand-new appearance of the building. I met several residents, each occupied with different activities, some in the physical therapy room, some in the barber shop, and some lounging outside in the court-



Homes at Spring Hill

yard.

The apartments themselves offer 24 different models in a total of 108 apartments, 74 in assisted living and 34 in memory care. Residents can choose between two and one bedroom units, with many variations for people's specific preferences. Dining is also very well put-together, with a dining room for assisted living and another for memory care, each with their own wait staff, giving

off the atmosphere of an actual restaurant. Waiters bring out visual examples for those with cognitive impairments, and the facility offers many different common meals on their permanent menu, as well as specials that rotate every day.

The staff throughout the building were very friendly, many of them busy helping residents get to where they needed to go or working in the dining rooms and other ser-

vices.

The Crossings is just the latest in a growing number of quality senior care facilities in Fairfax County, making Spring Hill one of the communities that offers a continuum-of-care for senior living. This kind of senior care is vital to our larger healthcare system, and it's great to see that we have it right here in Lorton. When I informed Supervisor Storck about my experience on the tour, he mentioned that "it's important for senior care facilities to not feel like senior care facilities, but like a resort, like a home." I know from personal experiences in my family how stressful it is for people living in senior care and rehabilitation care to stay for extended periods of time in a place that doesn't feel right, where they're constantly reminded of their condition, age, or illness. At this new facility, a lot of work has been put into circumventing this feeling of being "treated", making it feel more like they're just permanent guests at a nice hotel, and it's paid off.

Spring Hill is a community, helping seniors feel more at home in the later stages of their lives, while being fully prepared to assist in the transitions between these stages.

Austin Houck is an intern at Mt. Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck's office.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

Pop-Up Art show. Through Dec. 16 at Gallery 57, 11899 Grand Commons Ave., Fairfax. Emerging Artists Initiative and the Peterson Companies are partnering to bring an artistic and creative facet to the Fairfax community. A new pop-up art gallery at Fairfax Corner Center will be exhibiting paintings and sculptors by four resident artists in the vacant retail space. Free. Email director@eaiinc.org or visit eaiinc.org.

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/.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 6

History of Belvoir Manor. 7-8:30 p.m. at Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Learn about the fascinating history of Belvoir Manor with Patrick O'Neil from the Burke Historical Society. Discover the mansion's past from its Fairfax family ties to its role in the War of 1812 and creation of Fort Belvoir. Adults and teens. Free. Call 703-978-5600 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/4454036.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 7

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Call 703-273-3638 or visit www.fairfaxvfd.com.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 8

Marketing for Writers. 8 a.m.-3 p.m. at Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. Join Capital Christian Writers for a one-day writers marketing conference. Aspiring writers have their own track to learn the nuts and bolts of getting published. \$75-\$115. Email ccwriters@gmail.com or visit capitalchristianwriters.org/index.php/2018-conference-marketing-for-writers/.

Annual Crab Feast Dinner. 3:30-6 p.m. at Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton, in the Common Room. The 26th Annual Crab Feast, sponsored by the Brotherhood of St Andrew, will include crabs, fried fish, steamed shrimp, potato salad, pork and chicken barbecue sandwiches, and hot dogs for children. \$30 per adult (ages 18 and older), \$15 for children ages 12-17, and children under the age of 12 are free. Contact Rodger Jones, rodgerjns125@gmail.com, or Fred Crawford, fcrawford205@comcast.net, or call the church office at 703-339-6572.

SEPT. 8-16

Workhouse 10th Anniversary. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The Workhouse Arts Center invites the residents of Fairfax County and guests from throughout the region to visit for a week of free



"Mason and his Legacy," performed inside the mansion as part of a naturalization ceremony.

Citizen Naturalization Ceremony

George Mason's Gunston Hall will partner with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Washington Office, in naturalizing candidates. Before the ceremony, guests may enjoy activities and crafts and explore Gunston Hall's grounds. The ceremony is followed by a reception, an opportunity to register to vote, and Gunston Hall's exclusive theater performance, "Mason and his Legacy," performed inside the mansion. Saturday, Sept. 15, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Admission is free until 1 p.m. to all visitors. Call 703-550-9220 ext. 240 or visit gunstonhall.org.

and low-cost events and activities in celebration of its 10th anniversary. Experiences include classes and presentations, films and music, special tours, and more. Visit www.workhousearts.org/events/category/10th-anniversary/.

Druel at 703-569-0214 or email jdruel@gmail.com.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 14

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Call 703-273-3638 or visit www.fairfaxvfd.com.

Movies Under the Moon: Matilda.

8 p.m. at Van Dyck Park, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Enjoy a night under the stars in Van Dyck Park with family and friends with a movie for all ages to enjoy. Free admission, bring chairs and blankets.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 15

Pet Adoption Event. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Pet Supplies Plus, 11054 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Find a new forever animal friend with the help of the City of Fairfax Animal Control and Animal Shelter. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/government/police/programs/animal-control/adopt-a-pet.

14th Annual Merrifield Fall Festival.

11 a.m.-6 p.m. at Mosaic District. Presented by the Greater Merrifield Business Association (GMBA), in conjunction with URBNmarket and Mosaic, and held will be in the heart of the Mosaic District with food vendors, a beer garden, music and entertainment, as well as a pre-holiday handmade and vintage market. Children's activities including: Vienna Singing Princesses, pumpkin painting, face painting, hair braiding, sack races, karate, peace mural painting, carnival games and more. Visit greatermerrifield.org/merrifield-fall-festival.

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10 a.m.-1 p.m. at George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. George Mason's Gunston Hall will partner with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Washington Office, in naturalizing candidates. Before the

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Community FunFest. 1-4:30 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Fun for the whole family with food, games, music, children's activities, and an auction is open to everyone. Free, open to all. Call 703-281-1767 or visit www.unityoffairfax.org/funfest.

Harry Ponder. 2-3:30 p.m. at Hidden Pond Nature Center, 8511 Greeley Blvd., Springfield. While the wizards head to Hogwarts, the muggles can celebrate the start of a new school year at Hidden Pond. Learn about our magical beasts, make your own wand, have your fortune told by Professor Treefroggie, and defend against the dark arts of pollution. \$7. Email casey.riley@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-451-9588.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 16

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. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, or call 703-425-9225.

TUESDAY/SEPT. 18

Farm to Fairfax Market. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Old Town Square, 10415 North St., Fairfax. The market, will be producers-only - meaning that all vendors at the market may only sell what they raise on their farms or make from scratch using local

ingredients as much as possible. May-September, weather permitting. Call 703-385-7893.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 20

Hometown Thursdays: Sudden M-Pac. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Old Town Square, 10415 North St., Fairfax. Third Thursdays in May-September. The new series will host local bands from the Fairfax area. Meet up with friends, grab dinner at one of the many restaurants in downtown, and listen to great music. A free, family-friendly event for all ages. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/special-events/hometown-thursdays.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 21

B-I-N-G-O. 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Call 703-273-3638 or visit www.fairfaxvfd.com.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 22

Mosby Civil War Bus Tour. 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Stuart - Mosby Historical Society; tour leader will be Don Hakenson, Eric Buckland with special guest Tom Evans. The bus will leave Truro Parish (10520 Main St., Fairfax City). Will be visiting Mosby's Grave, Clover Hill (supposedly a safe house for Nick Carter), Wolf's Craig (the home of General Turner Ashby), The Mountain Home in Front Royal. Cost for Stuart-Mosby Historical Society members is \$65; non members is \$75. Reserve a seat by sending contact info to Don Hakenson at dhakenson@verizon.net.

Treasures Revealed. 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-2:30 p.m. at Army Navy Country Club, 3315 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. The Salvation Army Ladies Auxiliary of Fairfax County hosts "Treasures Revealed," an art and antiques valuation event. Everyone has something they own that they are curious about, whether it is something inherited, received as a gift, built in a collection over decades, or acquired yesterday in a garage sale. Register and reserve a valuation time slot at Give.virginiasalvationarmy.org/Fairfax-Treasuresrevealed.

Pig Roast. 5:30-7:30 p.m. at American Legion Post 176, 6520 Amherst Ave., Springfield. The Springfield American Legion is hosting the 2nd Annual Pig Roast in support of the 8th Annual Virginia, State-Wide Motorcycle Rally for the Legion Riders. Tickets are \$20 until Aug. 22 and \$25 afterwards. Tickets are available at www.facebook.com/Squadron176 ("Events" tab), at the Post lounge, or at the time of the event. All are welcome and there is ample parking. Call 703-440-0336 or visit www.facebook.com/Squadron176.

Twilight Rock-n-Run 5K, Glow Walk, Kids' Fun Run.

5:30 p.m. Runners and walkers from across Fairfax County will converge in Lorton for the South County High School Band's 4th Annual Twilight Rock -n- Run 5K. This yearly family-oriented event also features a 1-mile Glow Walk and a Kids' Fun Run. The evening event benefits the South County High School Band program. Visit www.schsbands.org.

SATURDAY-TUESDAY/SEPT. 22-25

Lord Fairfax Motorcycle Ride Fundraiser. Multiple options to join Lord Fairfax and trace the boundaries of the original Lord Fairfax Land Grant with one-, two- and four-day options. Participants will cover their own expenses. Details and registration at lordfairfaxride.org.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

THURSDAY/SEPT. 6

Capital Region Business Forum. 7:30-9:30 a.m. at Hilton McLean Tysons Corner, 7920 Jones Branch Drive, McLean. Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan and D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser will discuss their plans to work cooperatively to bolster the regional economy. Visit www.bot.org/upcomingevents/dmbizforum for more.

Gentle Yoga. 12:30-2 p.m. at Sentara Surgery Specialists Comprehensive Breast Center, 8988 Lorton Station Blvd., Suite 103, Lorton. This yoga protocol is facilitated by Pat Fitzsimmons RN, C-IAYT, E-RYT 500, an instructor specifically trained to work with cancer patients who will adapt traditional yoga practices to meet the physiological and psychological needs of cancer patients. No registration required. It is recommended that participants dress comfortably and bring a yoga mat, towel(s), and water. Visit www.sentara.com for more.

ESL Class Registration. 7 p.m. at Lord of Life Lutheran Church's two campuses: Fairfax Campus, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax; or Clifton Campus, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Clifton. Registration fee \$15; Text book \$25. Class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7-9 p.m.; start date is on Sept. 11 and ends Nov. 15, 2018. Call 703-323-9500 or visit www.lordoflifeva.org.

Public Hearing. 7 p.m. in the Oaks Room at Twin Lakes Golf Course, 6201 Union Mill Road, Clifton. The Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks) will hold a joint public hearing on the proposed adoption of an amendment to Park Regulation Section 1.17, Remote-Control Devices and Powered Models or Toys. The full text of the proposed amendment is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/model-aircrafts-drones. Anyone wishing to speak on this subject may call Judy Pedersen, FCPA Public Information Officer, at 703-324-8662 or email parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov, to be placed on the Speakers' List.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 8

Walter4FCPS Campaign Kickoff. 6-8 p.m. at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Robert Walter is running to represent the Springfield District on the Fairfax County School Board. With special guest: Donte Tanner. \$25. Email walter4fcps@gmail.com or visit www.walter4fcps.com/ for more.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 9

One-hour Tours. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum volunteers will conduct one-hour tours (beginning at 1:15 and 2:45 p.m.) of the area immediately around the Museum in the historic Fairfax Station village to help visitors learn what life was like when it was an active depot. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, or call 703-425-9225.

THROUGH SEPT. 9

Pool Closure: South Run RECenter. Four Fairfax County Park Authority RECenter pools will be closing for regular, periodic cleaning and maintenance next month. Consider trying out another county pool during the temporary shutdown.

RECenter passes are valid at all nine Park Authority RECenters. Dates are subject to change. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/recenter for more.

TUESDAY/SEPT. 11

NARFE Fairfax 737 Luncheon Meeting. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. Presentation on "Refuse to be a Victim" by Lt. Brian Ruck, Fairfax County Police. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month from September through June, and opened to all active and retired Federal employees, spouses and guests. Register for luncheon (\$11) by Sept. 7, 2018 at 703-280-2356.

Engaging the (ADHD) Student in Learning. 7-8:30 p.m. at The Oakwood School, 7210 Braddock Road, Annandale. Learn six research-based, active study methods that help make studying engaging, faster and result in learning – even for those with ADHD. This event is part of the CHADD of NoVA/DC Chapter's "Understanding ADHD" Lecture Series. Free. Email NoVADC@CHADD.net or call 703-829-6129. Get tickets at www.eventbrite.com, search "Engaging the ADHD Student."

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 12

Christian Women's Luncheon. 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Road, Springfield. The Springfield Christian Women's Club Luncheon will feature Stacey Hawkins presenting "Tea Time: The History of Tea" and inspirational speaker Judy Blevins with "Cheering Even When Life Has Given You Nothing To Cheer About." \$20. Reserve at 703-922-6438 or email springwmconn@yahoo.com.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 13

Gentle Yoga. 12:30-2 p.m. at Sentara Surgery Specialists Comprehensive Breast Center, 8988 Lorton Station Blvd., Suite 103, Lorton. This yoga protocol is facilitated by Pat Fitzsimmons RN, C-IAYT, E-RYT 500, an instructor specifically trained to work with cancer patients who will adapt traditional yoga practices to meet the physiological and psychological needs of cancer patients. No registration required. It is recommended that participants dress comfortably and bring a yoga mat, towel(s), and water. Visit www.sentara.com for more.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 16

11th District Congressional Candidate Forum. 2-4 p.m. at the Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area will hold an 11th District Congressional Candidate Forum. The certified candidates have been invited and are listed here as they appear on the Virginia Department of Elections' website: Jeff A. Dove, Jr. (R), Gerald Edward Connolly (D) (incumbent), and Stevan M. Porter (L). The questions for the candidates will come from the audience. This event is free and open to the public. Email PR@lwv-fairfax.org for more.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 20

Gentle Yoga. 12:30-2 p.m. at Sentara Surgery Specialists Comprehensive Breast Center, 8988 Lorton Station Blvd., Suite 103, Lorton. This yoga protocol is facilitated by Pat Fitzsimmons RN, C-IAYT, E-RYT 500,

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NEWS

'La Boheme' for Season Opening

**Fairfax
Symphony to
kick-off new
season Sept. 22.**

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

The powerhouse professional Fairfax Symphony Orchestra opens its 2018-2019 season with a special performance of "La Bohème" in concert. This is the first time the orchestra will present an entire concert-opera endeavor. The concert will feature renowned opera stars performing Puccini's beloved masterwork about a tragic love affair that has enthralled audiences for over a century.

The concert also celebrates music director and conductor Christopher Zimmerman's 10th anniversary season with the Fairfax Symphony (FSO).

"La Bohème" tells a story of love and death within a bohemian circle of friends in 19th century Paris. The opera is cherished for its arias enfolded a love affair between a poor poet and a poor seamstress. Soprano Danielle Talamantes will perform the role of Mimi, the down-on-her heels seamstress. Tenor Rolando Sanz will perform the role of Rodolfo, the broke poet. Colleen Daly is Musetta, as a seemingly carefree singer.

The FSO performance of "La Bohème" will also feature singers from the Potomac Vocal Institute lead by the celebrated opera performer Elizabeth Bishop.

"The arts are an essential source of creativity, education, and economic impact in Fairfax County," said Jonathan Kerr, Executive Director, FSO.

"We're honored to dedicate this season to Maestro Zimmerman's 10th Anniversary. Under his leadership the Fairfax Symphony is increasingly recognized as one of the leading regional orchestras in the country."

Zimmerman has scheduled a broad repertoire for the coming FSO season with a varied and emotional musical experience for patrons. Zimmerman has a vision that the FSO "must continue to build its programs and reputation in Northern Virginia and the D.C. region, to represent Fairfax County as fully and relevantly as possible, and to provide meaningful and high-quality artistry."

Under Zimmerman's baton, the



Music director and conductor Christopher Zimmerman leading the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra.

PHOTO BY NESHAN NALICHAVAN/COURTESY FSO



Danielle Talamantes performs the role of Mimi in the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra concert of "La Boheme."

PHOTOS COURTESY FAIRFAX SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



Rolando Sanz, performs the role of Rodolfo in the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra concert of "La Boheme."

Where and When

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra presents "La Bohème" in concert at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performance Sept. 22 at 8 p.m. Tickets \$25, \$39, \$50, \$53, and \$65. Student tickets \$15. For tickets visit www.fairfaxsymphony.org or by phone at 703-993-2787. **Note:** Pre-Performance discussions at 7 p.m. with Fairfax Symphony Orchestra conductor Christopher Zimmerman and special guests for insights into the performance.

FSO has also engaged the Northern Virginia community by performing D.C. area premieres such as Philip Glass's "Piano Concerto No. 3" written for pianist Simone Dinnerstein, who is an FSO audience favorite.

The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra also provides a wide spectrum of educational and community outreach programs. The FSO has partnered with Fairfax County Public Schools for more than 50

years. The FSO performs before about 10,000 listeners each year.

The upcoming FSO season includes programs with composers including Tchaikovsky & Beethoven; Mozart, Gershwin and Eryilmaz; Mendelssohn and Schumann, as well as Verdi. There will also be special performances of "The Nutcracker" with the Fairfax Ballet, and Holst's "The Planet" with the Fairfax County All-Stars Youth Orchestra.

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BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 13

an instructor specifically trained to work with cancer patients who will adapt traditional yoga practices to meet the physiological and psychological needs of cancer patients. No registration required. It is recommended that participants dress comfortably and bring a yoga mat, towel(s), and water. Visit www.sentara.com for more.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 27

Alzheimer's Educational Conference. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at Waterford at Fair Oaks, 12025 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax. The Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA)'s national Educating America National Tour, featuring AFA's free Concepts in Care educational conference, free memory screenings, and much more, comes to Fairfax. Program is open to families affected by Alzheimer's disease, caregivers, and anyone interested in learning more about Alzheimer's disease. Free. Visit alzfdn.org/event/afa-educating-america-tour-fair-oaks/ or call 866-232-8484.

Gentle Yoga. 12:30-2 p.m. at Sentara Surgery Specialists Comprehensive Breast Center, 8988 Lorton Station Blvd., Suite 103, Lorton. See listing above.

MONDAY/OCT. 1

Nominations. Nominations are being accepted for the Army 2019 Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame is intended to honor graduates of the Army Officer Candidate School Program who have distinguished themselves in military or civilian pursuits. Nominations may include posthumous consideration. Visit www.benning.army.mil/infantry/199th/ocs/ for eligibility criteria and required documents.

THURSDAY/OCT. 4

Gentle Yoga. 12:30-2 p.m. at Sentara Surgery Specialists Comprehensive Breast Center, 8988 Lorton Station Blvd., Suite 103, Lorton. This yoga protocol is facilitated by Pat Fitzsimmons RN, C-IAYT, E-RYT 500, an instructor specifically trained to work with cancer patients who will adapt traditional yoga practices to meet the physiological and psychological needs of cancer patients. No registration required. It is recommended that participants dress comfortably and bring a yoga mat, towel(s), and water. Visit www.sentara.com for more.

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 31

"Embark on Opportunity." 8 a.m. at Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Learn how the Embark Richmond Highway Comprehensive Plan Amendment will shape the future of the Richmond Highway Corridor. This event will take the audience through a geographic tour of the corridor, led by the planners, community leaders, and industry experts that helped shape Embark Richmond Highway. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-zoning/embark-richmond-highway for more.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax or www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

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

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

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Poise Under Pressure - Or Not



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I don't want to self-indulge too much, but given the potentially life-changing seriousness of my upcoming Sept. 26 CT scan, I'm having a little trouble getting myself started in the morning - and throughout the day also, if you must know the truth? (I realize you all have your own lives to lead so that last sentence-ending question was more rhetorical than actual.)

Nevertheless, if you're still reading, you're still interested so I'll try to string together some "insightful commentary and thoughtful humor," (an original characterization of my columns) to keep you on the page. Although, given the subject of this week's column, it might be hard to tiptoe through the tulips.

The difficulty I'm having is being unable to ignore, "totally," (my mother loved to mimic the generation that popularized that word) the reality of my situation.

Typically, I've been able to maintain a relative calm and detached disposition as I go from one cancer-related thing to another. None of the tasks I must perform or the responsibilities I've assimilated into a routine (24-hour urine collection, pre-chemotherapy lab work, chemotherapy, quarterly CT scans, annual brain MRI, quarterly appointments with my oncologist, have changed who I like to think I am compared to who I was pre-cancer diagnosis, 2/27/09; despite having the weight of a "terminal" diagnosis/original "13 month to two year" prognosis on my shoulders/literally in my lungs.

To quote Popeye the Sailor Man: "I y'am who I y'am." (And I still don't like spinach, certainly not out of a can.)

And though I've done a pretty good job of flicking these flakes of pressure and anxiety off my shoulders like unwanted dandruff, the fact is - as with dandruff shampoo or any other personal hygiene product for that matter - unless one is diligent, vigilant and cognizant of its likely recurrence, nothing will change.

Unfortunately, cancer doesn't quite react that way. It will change and it can overwhelm even your best efforts and can cause harm not only internally but externally as well (emotionally). Fending off these emotional pressures is challenging and dare I say, presents as many problems as the growth and movement of one's tumors and the side effects of one's treatment does.

What makes my present situation feel different and a bit off-putting is that what has happened has happened after nearly five years of relative peace and quiet (I was never characterized as in "remission," by the way). It seems the possibility of having to go back, so to speak, and return to the scene of the crime - against my body/life expectancy; and moreover, having to restart the process, ratchets up the stress to previously unknown heights.

And part of me is wondering (worrying actually) if I'm up to the challenge again, emotionally and of course, physically as well; whether my body can sustain the damage its likely to experience if we have to reload.

I use the word 'reload' for a reason. Without invoking too many war metaphors, being diagnosed with cancer is like being drafted into the Army, except you have little training for the battles you're about to fight. And as much as fighting against cancer is a battle, it's more a war against attrition in which the bad guys (cancer) regularly defeat the good guys (people diagnosed with cancer). In general, the cancer experience is no picnic.

It reminds me of a long-ago M*A*S*H episode in which the doctors operated through a particularly difficult surgical session after which Henry (Lt. Col. Blake) and "Hawkeye" (Capt. Pierce) went outside the operating room/tent for some relief. "Hawkeye" clearly agitated over a patient he couldn't save; Henry tried to offer him some comfort with the following words: "There are certain rules about war. And rule number one is young men die. And rule number two is, doctors can't change rule number one."

What scares me about cancer is, it follows no rules and like war, leaves devastation in its wake. I just hope I'm not about to be another casualty.

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



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