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Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

WELLBEING
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Morgan Franklin of Herndon puts the spotlight on his special girl, daughter Aubree, 6, spinning her round and round across the floor during the town of Herndon's Father Daughter Dance held at the Community Center Feb. 2, 2019.

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION
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OPINION

Week of Absurdities

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

The 2019 session of the General Assembly has reached its mid-point, or crossover, when the two houses start to consider bills that have survived the other house. It also represents the final action on many bills giving an indication of what the ultimate legislation for the session is likely to be. In the back of most legislators' minds is the fact that when the legislature adjourns *sine die* (until another day) the election season will begin. The thought of going home to meet their voters motivates many votes. After all, that is the way it should be in a representative democracy. The results, however, create some absurdities.

Republicans appear to be planning to focus once again on abortion. Although *Roe v Wade* decided in 1973 was supposed to set the rules for abortions, the debate still goes on. This week in a massive media campaign linked to fundraising, the opponents accused Governor Ralph Northam who is a pediatrician and first



term Delegate Kathy Tran, a mother of four the youngest of whom she was nursing during session last year, of favoring infanticide! I witnessed the verbal ambush by some of the most skilled lawyers in the House who with some editing of the tape of their cross-examination of her created a false impression of her bill and what it did. Calling the episode absurd is a mild description; I

think Governor Northam came closer to an accurate description when he called it disgusting. (Read more at https://wapo.st/2GduVpd?tid=ss_mail&utm_term=.814210c15403)

Thirty-seven states have ratified the Equal Rights Amendment. It is looking doubtful that Virginia will join that group this year. In floor speeches on the amendment one of the women opposing the amendment said that she did not need "words on a piece of paper" to get what she wanted.

Bills that would have created an independent redistricting commission including my perennial bill have been defeated in the House. A bill introduced by the Speaker of the House that would create a commission to redistrict

the legislature is far from independent in that it still has legislators picking their voters in order to protect incumbents and hold onto the majority. If the bill makes it through the legislature it will be amended or vetoed by the governor. It remains difficult for the majority to play fair especially when it holds control by such a slim sliver of power. A two-vote shift in both houses would put Democrats in charge of the legislature.

Major divisions continue to exist between the parties on finalizing the budget. Republicans favor a plan that continues the federal approach of giving tax breaks to those with the highest income. My bill to establish a partially refundable Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) was defeated. About half the states have used an EITC to help raise the income of working families. There is a slight possibility that Governor Northam could get the EITC in a compromise budget as he is a strong proponent of it.

Several weeks remain for the legislature to work its will. Some good bills are passing that will be favorable to the people of the Commonwealth, and I will discuss these in future columns. With an election looming in the fall, we may still see more absurdities!



Peter Goggin of Herndon presents white roses and a stuffed doll to his special date for the night, daughter Emma, 4, during the town of Herndon's much anticipated Father Daughter Dance held at the Community Center Feb. 2, 2019.



Morgan Franklin of Herndon puts the spotlight on his special girl, daughter Aubree, 6, spinning her round and round across the floor during the town of Herndon's Father Daughter Dance held at the Community Center Feb. 2, 2019.



David Kipper of Herndon with daughter Sierra, 5, and Steve Mitchell with granddaughter Leena Connors, 2.5, enjoy a little group dancing during the Father Daughter Dance produced by Herndon Parks and Recreation. "It's an honor to have been asked to bring my granddaughter," said Mitchell.

An Evening to Treasure

Father Daughter Dance offers a keepsake moment in time.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Dressed to impress, young girls in satin dresses and sparkly shoes rocked the night away with their special guys during the town of Herndon's much anticipated Father Daughter Dance held at the Community Center Feb. 2, 2019.

Aubree Franklin, 6, of Herndon and her dad Morgan twirled round and round across the dance floor. Sierra Kipper, 5, of Herndon rocked with her dad David as the music of DJ Aaron pulsed the room. "I've been asked every day

for the last two weeks, when the Father Daughter Dance was," Kipper said. "I love it," said Sierra tapping her shoes. Coming over to the Kippers, Steve Mitchell of Herndon lifted his granddaughter Leena Connors, 2.5, up and into his arms for a little cheek-to-cheek dancing. "It's an honor to have been asked to bring my granddaughter to her first dance," said Mitchell who recalled dancing with his daughters.

"This is an event that has grown over time and become a special tradition," said Cindy S. Roeder, Director at Herndon Parks and Recreation Department. "This year is no exception. We found that demand again exceeded our ex-

pectations. The staff put a lot of thought into the event, and this year's Alice in Wonderland theme was very creative, plus the charm bracelet each girl received will surely be a treasure."

Peter Goggin of Herndon headed toward his daughter Emma, 4, who stood under the disco lights with friends.

In his hands, Goggin held white roses and a stuffed doll. Getting down low, Goggin presented them to Emma, clearly his special girl for the night. "It's a wonderful chance to spend quality time with my daughter at the dance," said Goggin. "I'm touched to take her on her first date."

Oak Hill & Herndon
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Candidates Share Their History, Viewpoints

Special Election for member of the House of Delegates 86th District to be held on Tuesday, Feb. 19.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

On Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2019, a special election will be held to fill the unexpired term of the 86th District seat of the Virginia House of Delegates. The unexpired term ends Jan. 8, 2020. The 86th House of Delegate District includes 13 precincts in Fairfax County and two in Loudoun County. Only qualified voters of the 86th District are eligible to vote in this election.

The seat was left open when it was vacated by former Virginia State Delegate Jennifer Boysko (D) who succeeded Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton (D) in a special election on Jan. 8 for the Virginia Senate's 33rd District seat.

We invited the three candidates, Ibraheem S. Samirah, chosen as the Democratic nominee in the Jan. 12 firehouse primary, Gregg Garrett Nelson chosen as the Republican nominee on Jan. 19 at a mass meeting held in Dulles and Connie Haines Hutchinson, an Independent candidate who joined the race on Jan. 25 to take part in a survey to help inform district voters of the candidates' history, positions, and views. Candidates responded within a 500-word count limit.



Ibraheem Samirah (D). What would likely be your first proposed piece of legislation? **"I would be introducing bills that would aim to increase the participation of Virginians in the Affordable Care Act insurance marketplaces."**



Gregg Garrett Nelson (R). What would likely be your first proposed piece of legislation? **"I would like to work with other members to put forth legislation to uplift our education system with more vocational training within our school systems."**

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



Connie Haines Hutchinson (I) What would likely be your first proposed piece of legislation? **"Income tax relief for senior citizens, similar to the current real estate tax relief for seniors that is in effect so living on a fixed income is more affordable and we don't lose our seniors to states with a lower tax burden."**

healthy meal, and that our post-secondary education institutions are accessible. I will pursue making our commutes better by decreasing travel times, lowering toll costs, expanding our public transportation systems, and encouraging public-private partnerships to make sure that all Northern Virginians benefit.

4. What do you see as the major challenges to these solutions in the General Assembly?

Unlimited ability of money to influence Virginian politics. We just find a way to put a cap on the contributions that can be made by any Virginian entity.

5. Key ways you differ from your opponents?

Given my age and background, I represent the hard-working future of Virginia. I see a Northern Virginia that has the two wealthiest counties in the US, Fairfax and Loudoun counties, representing not just the best of what Virginia has to offer, but the best of what the US has to offer.

6. How would you work across party lines?

I would appeal to the desire of all legislators to make healthcare better and more affordable, make commutes cheaper and less timely, make access to the best education for our children more possible and our environment to have the best treatment, for the benefit of all, not just Democrats.

7. What would likely be your first proposed piece of legislation?

I would be introducing bills that would aim to increase the participation of Virginians in the Affordable Care Act insurance marketplaces.

Candidate Surveys

Responses printed as submitted.

Ibraheem Samirah (D)

Website- samirah4delegate.com
Phone Number- (202) 492-0034

Name: Dr. Ibraheem Samirah
Age: 27

Education: American University School of Public Affairs '13 and Boston University Goldman School of Dental Medicine '17

Family: My mother Sima is a Fairfax County Special Education teacher and my brother Omar goes to NVCC-Annandale.

Native of: Born in Chicago, Ill. and separated from my father at the age of 11, relocating to reunite with him in the country of Jordan until I had to separate from family at the age of 17, again, to become a native of the Northern Virginia area.

Moved to Herndon in what year? April 2018

1. Prior and current professional, political and civic experiences, community involvement

I have been active in advocating for the rights of all through many different organizations at the university level and throughout the DC metro areas. I worked for Envi-

Special Election Deadlines

Only 86th District voters are eligible to vote in this election
Feb. 12: Voter Registration Deadline (In-Person/By Mail) 5 p.m.; Online: 11:59 p.m.
Feb. 12: Deadline to apply to receive an Absentee Ballot by mail, fax and Online: 5 p.m.
Feb. 16: Deadline for In-Person Absentee Voting, 5 p.m.
Feb. 19: Absentee Ballot return deadline, 7 p.m.
In-Person Absentee voting locations are Fairfax County Government Center and Herndon Fortnightly Library. They are closed on Sundays.

ronment Virginia to protect the Chesapeake Bay. Through an organization called Save The Children, I taught Iraqi refugees fleeing war for two years, catching them up on education they lost. I founded two affiliates of National Jewish organizations at American University that cooperation does exist across all supposed divides.

2. Why are you running? (Why are you doing this to yourself?)

Growing up, I enjoyed a typical American childhood. That all changed in middle school when my father traveled to Jordan to care for his ailing mother and was denied re-entry to the U.S. My family uprooted and relocated to stay together and fight for my father's reinstatement. It took eleven years, but we won. The road to here has been hard, but also it awakened in me a strong sense of justice and of the power of the government to both help and hurt people. I want to be part of a system that helps people. And I want to help fix the system so it can help people because what we

have now is broken.

3. What do you see as the top issues (up to three) in the 86th district and what solutions do you propose?

In my campaign, I target healthcare, education, transportation and the environment, all interwoven for the betterment of all. I will fight to expand the Virginia Department of Health programs, make Virginia's health insurance market more stable, preserve the recently passed Medicaid expansion, lower prescription drug prices and curb the growing opioid epidemic. I support Virginia's Green New Deal: we cannot separate social, economic and environmental justice issues. Virginia has the opportunity to make major strides in eliminating poverty and ensuring prosperity in the Commonwealth by creating tens of thousands of good paying jobs in clean energy. I will also work to ensure that our public education system is fully funded, that Pre-K education is a right, that children always have access to a

Gregg Garrett Nelson (R)

Website- Nelson4VA.com
Phone Number- 571-306-2216

Name: Gregg Garrett Nelson
Age: 63

Education: Some college, before joining the Air Force in 1974.

Family: Married to my wife, Lisa, to whom we have 6 children & 7 grandchildren.

Native of: Richland Center, WI
Moved to Herndon in what year? 2000.

1. Prior and current professional, political and civic experiences, community involvement:

I had the honor of starting my career serving our country for 22 years in the Air Force. Upon retirement from the military, I transitioned over to worked with the US Department of Agriculture. Years later, I moved over to the private sector, working

SEE CANDIDATES, PAGE 4

Candidate Surveys

Responses printed as submitted.
FROM PAGE 3

in senior management for a computer manufacturing company. After which I fulfilled a lifelong dream of opening up a BBQ restaurant in Ashburn. Throughout my life, I have been active with my local Home Owners Association as a committee member and board member. When I had my restaurant, we were very active in supporting community activities i.e. little league, community fundraisers. Currently, I am self-employed with our family-operated company, ZN Ventures, Inc.

2. Why are you running? (Why are you doing this to yourself?)

My wife and I have lived in this community for over twenty years, our kids went to school here, and we've operated businesses here. Ultimately, after some thought and prayer my wife and I felt it was a perfect time in our lives to continue to give back to our community and government. Thus, I announced my candidacy for the Virginia House of Delegates.

3. What do you see as the top issues (up to three) in the 86th district and what solutions do you propose?

Education is essential in the development of our youth. We must continue to ensure that upon graduation our students have a marketable skill set that will help them flourish in our community. We need to expand the STEM program and add additional vocational training not just here in NOVA but across our Commonwealth.

Transportation is an issue we all can relate with. Wither it be being stuck in traffic, paying outrageous tolls or dodging pot holes. If elected to Richmond, I will work in a bipartisan way to make sure that our tax and toll monies get back into our community & road systems.

Lastly, our tax system needs addressing. Governor Northam's plan to increase the state's spending by \$2.1 Billion is unsustainable. Thankfully, Republican legislators have put forth HB 2529 & HB 2355.

Which in a combined effort would save an estimated \$575 Million in tax relief starting next fiscal year. If elected I would strongly support both of those bills.

4. What do you see as the major challenges to these solutions in the General Assembly?

Special interest groups and partisan politics have a tendency of hindering the growth of our Commonwealth. If elected, I would work with all members of the House so we can collectively pass legislation that will help our communities grow.

5. Key ways you differ from your opponents?

Personally, I would like to thank everyone who decided run for this seat. While we may have different opinions on issue or values, I believe every one of us deeply cares about our community.

6. How would you work across party lines?

I will work in good faith with fellow members so we can provide working resolutions for our needs throughout our Commonwealth.

7. What would likely be your first proposed piece of legislation?

I would like to work with other members to put forth legislation to uplift our education system with more vocational training within our school systems.

8. Other comments within the word count.

To the voters in the 86th District, it would be an honor to serve you and our community in Richmond. I hope I can earn your support on February 19th.

Connie Haines Hutchinson (I)

Website- www.conniehutchinson.com
Phone Number-703-501-6282

Name: Connie Haines Hutchinson
Age: 64
Education Herndon High School 1972,

Virginia Computer College 1973.

Family: Four adult children, seven grandchildren

Native of: Herndon, VA

Moved to Herndon in what year? 1954

1. Prior and current professional, political and civic experiences, community involvement:

Prior Founder and Executive Director of the Herndon Dulles Visitor's Center which operated for ten years out of the Historic Herndon Depot; and current General Manager for a Marketing, PR & Branding Firm in Arlington. Elected to seven terms on the Herndon Town Council, serving as Vice Mayor for two of those terms. A past President for the Dulles Area Transportation Association, past member of the Interjurisdictional Committee comprised of Fairfax County, Loudoun County and the Town of Herndon; Chairman of the Virginia Municipal League's General Laws committee, past President of Herndon Youth Soccer, past member of Herndon's Architectural Review Board and its Heritage Preservation Review Board, past Parent Teacher's Association President for Herndon Elementary School and past PTA Vice-President for Herndon Middle School, past NVSL Representative for the Herndon Hammerheads Swim Team; current Treasurer of the Herndon Hospitality Association and co-chair of it's popular JamBrew free fall concert series. (151)

2. Why are you running? (Why are you doing this to yourself?)

To continue to give back to my hometown and the surrounding area that has shaped my life. I think there is too much divisive partisan politics in today's government process and we need more open-mindedness and cooperation in order to get things done. (43)

3. What do you see as the top issues (up to three) in the 86th district and what solutions do you propose?

The top three issues I see facing this General Assembly session are abortion regulations, transportation funding, and the minimum wage. Allowing abortion in the third

trimester equates to infanticide and is just WRONG and this issue should never be raised in the State Legislature again! Being one of the State's biggest economic engines should ensure that Northern Virginia gets its fair share of State transportation funding to lessen the congestion on our roadways; not just more toll lanes. The proposed raise in the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour could have devastating effects on small businesses all across the State and a lower increase should be discussed. (107)

4. What do you see as the major challenges to these solutions in the General Assembly?

5. Major challenges: Democrats continuing to push to remove the current regulations on abortion; Transportation improvements and maintenance funding being based on 'lane miles' rather than congestion; and a lack of cooperation on both sides to consider a more reasonable increase to \$8 per hour. (44)

6. Key ways you differ from your opponents?

I am the only one with any legislative experience and I am not committed to following along party lines with every vote. I would be an INDEPENDENT thinker, open and willing to debate both sides of an issue in order to come to the best solution possible. (47)

7. How would you work across party lines?

The same way I have worked with people on both sides of an issue during my time on the Herndon Town Council; by truly listening to the opposition's concerns, cooperating and collaborating by suggesting amendments or alternatives that address their concerns as well as my own. (46)

8. What would likely be your first proposed piece of legislation?

Income tax relief for senior citizens, similar to the current real estate tax relief for seniors that is in effect so living on a fixed income is more affordable and we don't lose our seniors to states with a lower tax burden. (42)

BULLETIN BOARD

WINTER SHELTERS

Find homeless and cold weather drop-in centers and shelters that serve Northern Virginia at www.novaregion.org/174/Homeless-Shelter-Lists.

DONATION REQUEST

Diva Central Accessories Drive. Through Feb. 28, Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Reston Community Center will be collecting gently used items at its Hunters Woods and Lake Anne locations. RCC is accepting donations of accessories, including shoes, jewelry, handbags and shawls. RCC does not need donations of dresses this year. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com for more.

Support Reston Historic Trust & Museum. The Reston Historic Trust & Museum has launched a GoFundMe campaign with the goal to raise \$15,000 to go towards the repair, cleaning, and

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

reinstallation of icons on the façade of the former Lakeside Pharmacy, an original Lake Anne Plaza store, in a new permanent exhibit. The new exhibit will be unveiled during Reston's annual Founder's Day event, April 6. Read more about their history and donate at www.gofundme.com/preserve-lakeside-pharmacy-icons to assist in their preservation. Thank you for your help!

INPUT SOUGHT

Shaping the Future Together. Fairfax County Government is beginning a strategic planning process with the community to shape the future together. The goal is to hear all voices and reach all segments of the community. This effort will span most of 2019, but in this first phase, the community is being asked to visit fairfaxcounty.gov/strategicplan and:

- ❖ Take a short five-question online survey
- ❖ Join a community conversation in person: Feb. 13 – Reston; Feb. 25 – Alexandria; Feb. 26 – Fairfax; March 6 – Falls Church.

- ❖ Share the survey and conversation invitation with neighbors, co-workers and county family and friends.

TUESDAYS THROUGH FEB. 19

Workshop Series: Mind in the Making. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 – Room 100, Dunn Loring. Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs by Ellen Galinsky, encompasses an evidence-based list of life skills that are essential for children to succeed socially, emotionally and intellectually in the short and long term. Participants may register for one or all of the workshops and do not need to attend the previous class. Registration is limited. Call 703-204-3941 or visit www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center for more or to register.

- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 12 – Taking on Challenges (part 6)
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 19 – Self-Directed, Engaged Learning (part 7)

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 6

Long-Term Care Planning. 7-8 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Financial experts from OneCommonwealth Advisors present a free workshop on protecting yourself from long-term care expenses without spending extra money, and leaving more money to your loved ones. Free. Call 703-689-2700 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/events for more.

THURSDAY/FEB. 7

Title IX. 7-8:30 p.m. at North County Government Center, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. Reston-Herndon Branch of the American Association of University Women will host Bryan Gibson, Acting Director of Equity and Employee Relations and Title IX Coordinator for the Fairfax County Public

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

NEWS

Jeff Bentley, President & CEO of Northwest Federal Credit Union and James Lawson, Chair of the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Northwest Federal Earns Dulles Chamber's Financial Industry Leader Award

Northwest Federal Credit Union was presented with the Stars Over Dulles Award for Financial Leader by the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce. The award recognizes businesses in the Dulles area that are industry and community leaders, delivering exceptional service and value to customers or members, and offering a unique approach to the financial industry.

"I am honored to accept this award on behalf of Northwest Federal Credit Union. The Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce has been an excellent partner in the community and I look forward to our continued partnership," said Jeff Bentley, President & CEO of Northwest Federal Credit Union.

"Jeff Bentley and his team at Northwest

Federal routinely go above and beyond expectations when serving their members and the local community," said John Boylan, President & CEO of Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce. "Northwest Federal is always at the leading edge of new technology and service. Their many locations throughout our Dulles Region and the DC Metro area are a reflection of their promise to help others. When we put out the call for help, Northwest Federal is always the first to respond. Therefore, while we recognized them for financial leadership they are also 'first responders' when helping in the community."

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Free and open to the public. Chef-prepared appetizers provided.

EVENT LOCATION

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 6

Wine Wednesday. 6-8 p.m. at The Tasting Room, 1816 Library St., Reston. Raise a glass to fine wine and good books. Join fellow book lovers at the Tasting Room on Library Street to talk about what everyone is reading and to get some new recommendations. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com or call 703-966-2111.

FRIDAY/FEB. 8

The Storytime Social Hour. 11 a.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Every Friday, moms, dads, caregivers and kids are invited to join a Storytime Social Hour. Scrawl will provide coffee and treats for the adults; stories and fun for the little people. Make new friends or meet up with neighbors. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com or call 703-966-2111.

Charity Swing Dance. 8 p.m. at Washington Dulles Hilton, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon. "Have A Heart Hop" is a swing dance featuring live music by the Fabulettes with silent auction fundraiser to benefit Lucky Dog Animal Rescue and the Honor Flight Network for Veterans. \$25 per person. Email sueandgary@gottaswing.com or visit www.haveahearthop.net.

FEB. 8-27

Audubon Photography Awards Show. Mondays, Wednesdays-Fridays 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; and Sundays 1-4 p.m. at Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Call 703-476-9689 or email naturecenter@reston.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 9

Book Worms Club. 11 a.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. One of Scrawl's favorite children's authors and the master ninja of rhymes, Sue Fliess, will read from her new book, *Ninja Camp*. Call 703-966-2111 or visit scrawlbooks.com.

Saturday Series: Nature Explorer. Noon-1:30 p.m. at Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. In the "Exploring Nature Series-Winter" program, students age 6-adult will explore Virginia's ecosystem. Sessions are spread over four Saturdays in February with a new topic to explore each week. Each session is \$8 per person. The program takes place both outdoors and indoors, so dress accordingly. Call 703-471-5414 or visit fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-fairfax.

Singles Dinner and Movie. 5 p.m. at Anatolian Bistro, 13029 Worldgate Drive, Herndon. Fixed price dinner, followed by choice of movie at AMC Worldgate 9. Cost of \$35 at door includes dinner, soda, tip and movie ticket. Advance RSVP required for reserved seats at movies: NewBCarol@verizon.net. Sponsored by New Beginnings, a support group for separated/divorced men and women (newbeginningsusa.org).

SUNDAY/FEB. 10

Live Music: Laurie Lewis & the Right Hands. 7 p.m. (doors open at 6) at Frying Pan Farm Park Visitor Center, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Make plans to "hitch up the team" and head to Frying Pan Farm Park this season for Bluegrass Barn. Food and beverages available for purchase. \$18 in advance, \$20 at the door. Purchase tickets online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park/bluegrass-barn or by phone



Connected Stories, Knitted Souls (detail) by Alyssa Imes.

at 703-222-4664 or 703-437-9101.

MONDAY/FEB. 11

Little Hands Work on the Farm at Frying Pan. 9:45 a.m. (2-3 year olds); 11 a.m. (3-5 year olds) at Frying Pan Farm Park, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Discover what happens on a farm during the winter. Children will learn about animals, farm chores and how farm life changes with the season with activities such as stories, crafts or games. \$8 per child. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 703-437-9101 or visit fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park.

TUESDAY/FEB. 12

Design & Wine: Spring Shoes. 7-9 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Design a pair of spring shoes. Mary Sears will discuss the elements & principles of Color, Line, Variety, Balance, and Unity as they apply to shoes. Ink, fabric paint and markers and variety of resource materials provided. Bring a pair of canvas shoes. \$40. Call 703-956-6590 or visit ArtSpaceHerndon.org.

THURSDAY/FEB. 14

Make Art Inspired by History. 10 a.m. or 5:30 p.m. at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. This Valentine's Day, gather friends and family together at the park to create art inspired by history. The artwork created will reflect the season or month, and the projects are designed for artists age 6-adult. \$8 per person. Call 703-631-0013 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/eclawrence.

Girl Power! Book Club. 6:30 and 7 p.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. February features two picks for the Girl Power! Book Club. "Into White," a book tackling some tough issues will be discussed from 6:30-7. Parents are encouraged to attend. At 7, review the 2019 Newbery Medal winner, "Merci Suarez Changes Gears" by Meg Medina. All middle grade readers are welcome to attend. Visit www.scrawlbooks.com or call 703-966-2111.

FRIDAY/FEB. 15

The Storytime Social Hour. 11 a.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Every Friday, moms, dads, caregivers and kids are invited to join a Storytime Social Hour. Scrawl will provide coffee and treats for the adults; stories and fun for the

Art Exhibit: Looming Connections

Looming Connections is a solo show focusing on the artwork of Maryland artist Alyssa Imes. The sculptures and drawings reference the formation of relationships and the interconnectedness of culture. The artist sees the yarn as time and life, and the knots as shared experiences we share. The looms are the places we meet people. The pieces of fabric are knitted from the sculptures themselves so the iron looms create support and help mechanically weave fabric from an individual strand of string. Sculptures will be made from cast iron and other metals with knitted fabric on them will fill the gallery. The exhibit runs March 5-April 6. An exhibit reception is planned for Saturday, March 9, 7-9 p.m. Visit ArtSpaceHerndon.org or call 703-956-6590.

little people. Meet up with neighbors. Call 703-966-2111 or visit scrawlbooks.com.

Fishing Workshop - Tackle. 6-7 p.m. at Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. Hone fishing skills with this hands-on workshop that covers topics such as rods, reels and other tackle. Ages 10-adult. \$8 per person. Call 703-471-5414 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-fairfax.

Calamity Improv. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Direct from Fauquier County, Dark Horse Theatre Company presents "Calamity Improv," the wild west of improv shows. \$15. Call 703-956-6590 or visit www.ArtSpaceHerndon.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 16

Haint So: A Staged Reading. 7 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Come sit on the wide front porch with members of the Wells family in Southwest Virginia, as their Sunday afternoon conversation turns to tales of the supernatural. Haint So explores the rich tradition of folklore, superstition and the mystical spirits of the dark mountains in Virginia. Haint So is the third production from Shoestring Theatre Company, based in Oakton. \$20. Call 703-956-6590 or visit www.artspaceherndon.org.

SUNDAY/FEB. 17

Fishing Workshop-Reading Water. 4-5 p.m. at Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. Learn how to identify bodies of water and develop techniques to increase the chances of catching fish. Ages 10-adult. \$8 per person. Call 703-471-5414 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-fairfax.

Celebrate Galentine's Day. 6:30 p.m. at Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Scrawl Books is hosting a post-Valentine's Day party for the ladies with two wonderful women's authors, Orly Konig and Erika Marks, plus food, drinks, raffles and more. Call 703-966-2111 or visit scrawlbooks.com.

MONDAY/FEB. 18

Children's Performing Arts Series: Bunny Business. 10:30-11:15 a.m. at Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Bunny Business by Bob Brown Puppets. Watch silly bunnies dance and swing on the trapeze with their forest friends. Ages 1-10. \$4 in advance, \$5 at the door per person, per show. Children under 1 are free. Call 703-787-7300 or visit herndon-va.gov.

BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 4

Schools to discuss the County's administration of Title IX requirements. Email aauwreston@aauw.net or visit restonherndon.va.aauw.net.

FRIDAY/FEB. 8

"Why Won't My Child Go to School?" 10 a.m.-noon at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 – Room 100, Dunn Loring. Dr. Lisa Batemen, of Neuroscience, Inc., presents this workshop sharing information on school refusal. Highlights include symptoms of school refusal, including behavioral symptoms, and patterns of behavior. Batemen will also share information on the differences between school refusal and truancy, causes of school refusal, strategies for parents and resources to help support students. Call 703-204-3941 or visit www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center for more or to register.

Arts Grant Proposal Deadline. 5 p.m. The Town of Herndon is accepting grant proposals up to \$4,500 through the Virginia Commission for the Arts (VCA) for projects to be implemented in FY 2020. Review the 2020 Guidelines for Funding which are available at www.arts.virginia.gov/grants_guidelines.html. Proposals may be mailed to Herndon Parks and Recreation Department, 777 Lynn St., Herndon, VA 20170, hand delivered to the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave, Herndon, or sent electronically to parksandrec@herndonva.gov.

SATURDAY/FEB. 9

Fairfax County NAACP Meeting. 10 a.m.-noon at West Springfield Government Center, 6140 Rolling Road, West Springfield. Join Fairfax County NAACP for their monthly meeting to review and discuss their 2019 Advocacy Agenda. The Youth Council will also host a food drive for the Capital Area Food Bank. Light refreshments will be served. RSVP at www.eventbrite.com/e/2019-agenda-presentation-and-meeting-tickets-55144018243. Visit www.fairfaxnaacp.org/ for more.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 13

Anti-Scam Presentation. 1:10-2:15 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St., Vienna. Fairfax County is offering a free Silver Shield Anti-Scam Presentation. Subject matter experts will discuss warning signs of fraud and present information to empower families against scams in the community. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults and click on Silver Shield Anti-Scam Campaign. Call 703-273-4113, TTY 711.

Fairfax County Park Authority Board Meeting. 7:30 p.m. in the Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 941, Fairfax. The Park Authority Board is a 12-member board appointed by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to set policy and establish strategic policy and direction for the Park Authority. Open to the public. For information regarding meeting agendas, Park Board members, opportunities for public comment, or to view meeting materials, board minutes and archival materials, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/boardagn2.htm.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 20

Fairfax Commission on Aging Meets. 1-3 p.m. at the Hunter Mill District Office, Community Room A, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. The public is welcome to attend and join in the comment period that begins each session. Find out more at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/coa.htm. Call 703-324-5403, TTY 711 for meeting access needs.

FRIDAY/FEB. 22

Selective Mutism. 10 a.m.-noon at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 – Room 100, Dunn Loring. Learn about the diagnosis of Selective Mutism and how symptoms are maintained and persist. Dr. Kristin Swanson is a clinical psychologist, specializing in work with young children (ages 2-12) and their families. Call 703-204-3941 or visit www.fcps.edu/resources/family-engagement/parent-resource-center for more or to register.

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My Own Sort of Groundhog Day



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As it happens every year around this time, the monthly calendar turns to February, and I am reminded of the goings on in my life Jan. 1 through Feb. 27, 2009.

I was not, as yet, in the throws of having been diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV, but I was in pursuit of finding the cause of the shortness of breath and stinging pain in my side that first manifested on Jan. 1, 2009.

Cancer was the last word I expected to hear in late February after a biopsy confirmed the finding. Until I received that call from my primary care physician on Thursday, Feb. 20, advising me that the tissue biopsy was indeed malignant, I had been, since that New Year's Day visit to the Emergency Room, in a diagnostic dalliance to determine what had caused an otherwise, healthy 54-and-half-year-old man, to present with such symptoms.

The Emergency Room doctor was perplexed as the chest X-Ray I had taken that day was inconclusive. In addition, I offered no pertinent medical history to account for the symptoms I was experiencing.

Eventually I was released and it was suggested that I return in a week, have another chest X-Ray then and see a pulmonary doctor. And so I did. After reviewing both X-Rays, and examining me, the pulmonologist was equally perplexed. I was healthy by all appearances and I had no family history of anything.

Out of curiosity – or bewilderment – the doctor told me to get a CT scan, which I did, approximately two weeks later, at the earliest available time. Within a day of having been CT-scanned, I was called by the pulmonologist and advised to schedule an appointment with a thoracic surgeon, a specialty with which I was totally unfamiliar.

Two weeks or so later, at the first available time, I saw the surgeon. Equally befuddled, by his own admission, after reviewing my two X-Rays and recent CT scan, he equivocated on the next step: ordering a P.E.T. scan, which he did not – until a few days later when he changed his mind and told me to make the arrangements; which of course I did, and again, it was approximately two weeks later that an appointment was available.

After receiving the results, the thoracic surgeon called me. He said, among other things: "Your scan lit up like a Christmas tree."

Not good as I later learned. And so, a surgical biopsy was scheduled, upon availability, about two weeks later, which presumably would determine the cause of my original discomfort and confirm what all this diagnostic back and forth had been about.

Within a few days of my procedure, I received a phone call at work from my internal medicine doctor. He asked if I wanted to come to his office to discuss the results. I said "No, just tell me," figuring that a request to see him in his office meant bad news.

Sure enough, it was. He told me that the sample was malignant. Stunned by the news, I remember asking: "What does that mean?" He might have mentioned cancer, I can't recall. He instead deferred and referred me to an oncologist, actually making the appointment for me for the following Thursday, only a week later.

Nearly two months had passed since the original Jan. 1 visit to the E.R. Finally on Feb. 27, I was going to find out what's been going on – from an oncologist. And sure enough, on that following Thursday, my new-best-friend-to-be, lowered the boom: "Lung cancer."

My prognosis he said: "13 months to two years." Moreover, he advised: He "could treat me," but he "couldn't cure me." In simple terms, he told me I was "terminal."

Not that I don't already think about having cancer every minute of every day but especially so at this time of the year. This is when my world, as I knew it, came crashing down. Over and over, I review the days and weeks leading up to that first appointment with my oncologist and the impact the diagnosis has had on my life.

Granted, it's nothing to laugh about, but given that I've survived so long, it's certainly something to be grateful about.

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

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WELLBEING

American Heart Month

Making healthy diet and exercise choices are two keys to preventing heart disease.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Each time the door bell rang, a guest arrived, wearing red and bringing with her a new flavorful dish with an aroma that filled the already pungent air in Cassandra Pope's Arlington home. One by one friends strolled through the living room and into the kitchen bearing dishes like balsamic-grilled chicken breast, curried cauliflower steak and freshly made hummus. They had arrived for a potluck dinner and the theme that evening was heart health.

"My father died of a heart attack when he was 62, and when he was 57 he had a stroke," said Pope. "All nine of his siblings had massive heart attacks and all of them died of a heart-related illness. So I know that I need to focus eating better and exercising and losing weight. My friends always get together for dinner about once or twice a month and usually we have a theme. For February, we decided to combine Valentine's Day and heart health. We exchanged recipes so that we all have a stash of new recipes to try."

Cardiovascular disease remains one of the leading cause of death in the United States, and after decades of a steady decline in this country, it is once again on the rise, according to a study by the American Heart Association. The research also shows that approximately 80 percent of all cardiovascular disease can be prevented by adopting a healthy lifestyle and controlling high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol. During February, American Heart Month, health care professionals are working to raise awareness of the importance of making healthy lifestyle choices and managing their health conditions.

"February is also Black History Month and these two recognitions go hand-in-hand," said Nikkia Wilkens, Fairfax County Health Department community outreach professional. "African Americans have some of the highest rates of hypertension and heart disease, [but] with the right steps, we can improve our heart health."

Some of the heart-smart lifestyle adjustments that Wilkens and other health care professionals advise include staying active and exercising regularly and monitoring one's salt intake. "Incorporate movement into your everyday activities, such as taking the stairs instead of an elevator," said Wilkens. "Maintain a healthy diet and skip the fried foods, and eat lots of



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Finding creative but tasteful ways to add vibrantly colored fruit and vegetables to one's diet can help prevent heart disease.

fruits and vegetables. Commit to eight hours [of sleep] a night and drink eight glasses of water each day."

While African-American have one of the highest rates of heart disease, the American Heart Association reports that anyone at any age can be affected by cardiovascular diseases and 80 percent of cardiac events can be prevented.

"Even making small changes like getting 30 minutes of exercise a day can improve not just your heart health, but your overall health as well," said fitness trainer Brendan Moore. "Find a type of exercise that you enjoy enough to do for 30 minutes that also gets you to break a sweat and do it everyday. The important thing is that you get your heart rate up. If you start to break a sweat, you know that you're exerting enough energy to have an impact."

Small dietary changes can be made gradually. "Watching your salt intake is really important," said dietician Caroline Knowles. "There are so many ways to prepare meals by using spices instead of salt so that you don't compromise the taste. With slow cookers and instant cookers there are so many options that you no longer have to fry food to enjoy that satisfying taste."



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