



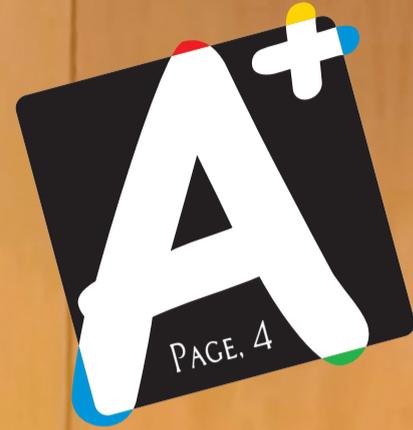
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Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION



Nepalese American Heritage Celebrated

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Veg Fest Promotes 'Time for Change'

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Supporting Immigrant Families, Community

OPINION, PAGE 8

Parshuram Bhandari, center, and Arjun Sigdel hold the Town of Herndon Proclamation of Nepalese American Heritage Day April 20, 2019, surrounded by well-wishers at the presentation ceremony held during Herndon Town Council Public Session April 9, 2019.

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An estimated 5,000 people attended the inaugural Veg Fest in Herndon. Organizers are planning for the second annual Veg Fest next year.

Veg Fest Promotes ‘Time for a Change’

Event draws 5000 attendees.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

“It’s a journey for everyone. Sometimes it takes years if not decades,” said Gwyn Whittaker, CEO GreenFare Organic Café and co-sponsor with Mike Young of the inaugural Fairfax Veg Fest held Sunday, April 13 in Herndon. According to Young, who is also President and Founder of aPlantBasedDiet.org, the purpose of the Veg Fest was to educate the public on the advantages of a plant-based and vegan lifestyle for the benefit of human health, the environment and compassion for animals.

Visitors to the fest had the opportunity to visit 60 healthy living and eco-friendly vendors with exhibitors, restaurant booths and cooking demonstrations by Mimi Clark, Danni McGhee, Pericles Silva and Sharon McRae. Only vegan foods, beverages and products were sold on-site.

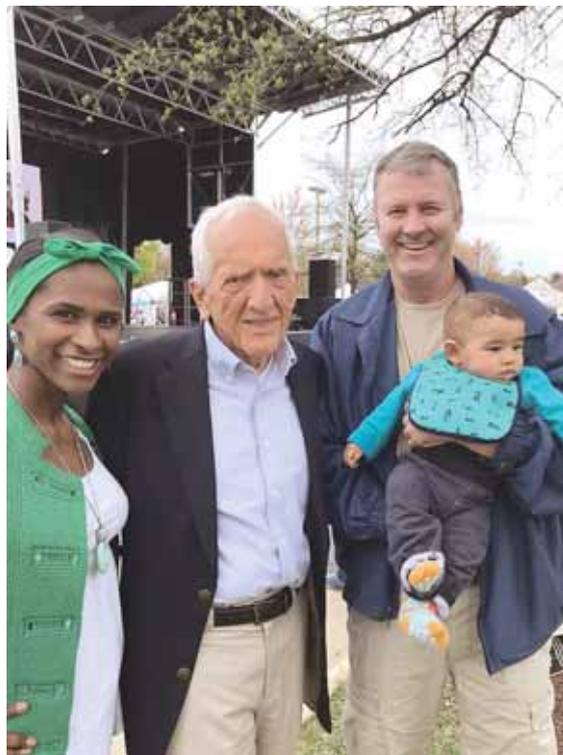
Tom Stripling of Reston came to see what kind of veggie food was offered. With a selection of donuts that won the Best Gluten Free Sweet category at the DC Gluten Free Expo in 2018 by Sweet Crimes to plant-based hot dogs made from sunflower seeds, beets, potatoes, carrots, sweet potatoes, gluten-free flours, herbs and spices by Yeah Dawg!!!, there was something for everyone.

Caryn Ginsburg said she wanted to learn more about products such as CBD.

“There’s a lot of buzz about CBD, and this is a great chance to be with a lot of providers and talk with them,” she said. Ginsburg spoke with Jessica Hinton, event manager, District Hemp Botanicals. “District Hemp Botanicals offers CBD infused products,” Hinton said.

The store’s online site stated, “(it) boasted a comprehensive selection of varying hemp products with naturally occurring cannabinoids ranging from oils to hemp-infused dog treats.”

ALL DAY, bands and singer/songwriters such as Buntopia, the Stewart Sisters and Crys Matthews added to the festival atmosphere. The speakers though were the rock stars of the Veg Fest. Eric O’Grey who lives in Washington, D.C. and works as Director of Philanthropy for Physicians Committee for Respon-



The Fielding family of Herndon, Eric, his wife Maria and 4-month old son, Thomas pictured with Dr. T. Colin Campbell, co-author of “The China Study.”

sible Medicine spoke on how at 340 pounds and 25 years of failed diets he met a doctor who did not prescribe another medicine but instead a middle-aged and a rather heavy rescue dog. Together, they adopted a plant-based diet, exercised and regained their health.

Dietitian Lee Crosby spoke about the Keto diet, and as Whittaker phrased, “Hint: it’s not good,” instead promoted using plant-based nutrition to help patients lose weight and prevent and reverse diabetes and heart disease.

The star speaker by attendance levels though was T. Colin Campbell, Ph.D., co-author with his son of the best seller, “The China Study,” selling more than 2 million copies. In it, the authors described the dangers of a diet high in animal protein and the benefits of a plant-based diet.

Eric Fielding of Herndon and his wife Maria looked forward to hearing Campbell speak. Fielding held

SEE VEG FEST, PAGE 5



BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Parshuram Bhandari presents Herndon’s Mayor Lisa C. Merkel a thank you gift in recognition of the town’s Proclamation of Nepalese American Heritage Day April 20, 2019.

Nepalese American Heritage Celebrated

Town of Herndon first in USA to proclaim Nepalese-American Heritage Day.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Town of Herndon Mayor Lisa C. Merkel and the Town Council made national history during the Town Council Public Session held April 9, 2019. “Herndon is the first government entity including local, state and federal to proclaim Nepalese-American Heritage Day in the United States,” said Merkel. Merkel called on Councilmember Pradip Dhakal, one of only four Nepalese Americans in elected office in the United States to read the Proclamation signed by her and all councilmembers proclaiming April 20, 2019, as Nepalese American Heritage Day and recognizing the contributions made by Americans of Nepalese origin.

Councilmember Dhakal read, “the Mayor and the Town Council of the Town of Herndon, Virginia ... recognize the contributions of Americans of Nepalese origin, who through their hard work and engagement, dedication to family and strong sense of community, have helped to unite and sustain our nation, and break down barriers of discrimination, indifference, intolerance, working toward the inclusion of people from all backgrounds ... and applaud their commitment to leadership, dedication to knowledge and determination to succeed.”

After reading the Proclama-

tion in its entirety, Dhakal said that he found data indicating there are 315,980 people of Nepalese origin in the United States. Also, there are 80,000 plus people who come from Bhutan. “Their heritage is Nepal; they speak Nepalese and share the same culture,” he said. According to Dhakal, in Fairfax County alone, there are more than 20,000 people of Nepalese origin.

Dhakal is a first-generation immigrant and the initial thing first-generation immigrants look for, he believes, is identity. “Everybody has their identity, and they’re proud,” he said. Dhakal explained that when one’s identity is recognized, it ultimately drives people to contribute.

“With recognition comes empowerment and with empowerment comes contribution,” he said in a statement. “Nepalese American community has already started to contribute to this great nation, through many different ways of life, their professions,” said Dhakal. He later added that he knew the Nepalese people would contribute a lot “to this great land of opportunity.”

Dhakal thanked the Town Council for the proclamation and the great honor.

Councilmember Cesar del Aguila said, “This town is about inclusion, and it wasn’t always that way ... but its spirit, the inclusion, those are values that we really hold dear.”

Arjun Sigdel and Parshuram Bhandari presented thank you gifts to the Herndon Town Council on behalf of Nepalese Americans for the proclamation, recognition and honor. Aarati Sigdel said that the first Nepalese American Heritage Day celebration would be April 20, from 5-9 p.m. at Herndon Middle School.

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Opportunities for community service and/or religious education are some of the reasons that parents might consider switching a child from public to private school.

Making the Leap from Public to Private School

Signs that a public school isn't meeting your child's needs.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Elizabeth and Kent Hillegass noticed that their 6th grade son's grades began to drop while the number of times they received notices from the school regarding his misbehavior had increased. He was also having challenges socially.

"He was really unhappy, the other kids made fun of him, he didn't have any friends and to top it off his grades were awful," said Elizabeth. "I would lie awake at night crying because I felt helpless."

After a series of neuropsychological tests, the Hillegasses learned that their son had ADHD. The testing psychologist advised them to see an education consultant who helped them determine that a quiet school environment with small class sizes would best suit their son's needs. The Hillegasses ultimately decided to send their son to a private school with a student-teacher ratio of 10 to 1.

"We've always been supporters of public education, but the class sizes and noisy environment were too overwhelming for him," said Kent. "It was like he was lost and unable to focus when he was at school. He couldn't sit still and pay attention in classes and was always getting into trouble, which made him feel ostracized, like he was the bad kid in school."

A parent's decision to move a child from public to private school can be based on factors that run the gamut from smaller class sizes to tuition that can cost as much as \$50,000 annually. Although it's a choice that should not be taken lightly, there are signs that it might be time to make the change if it's possible, say education consultants.

"I suggest to parents that they focus on the needs of their child, not on the prestige that they think a private school holds or the sticker on the back of your car that lets everyone know that your child attends a certain school," said Kim Hardy who was the education consultant to the Hillegass family. "There's a range of factors that parents should take into consideration."

The first, advises Hardy, is whether their child is

happy and well adjusted. "If a child is bored or frustrated at school, not just because their grades aren't good and they've given up, but there are also cases where students are making straight As without much effort and are bored because they aren't being challenged."

When the accommodations that a school can offer don't meet the needs of one's child, that's another clue that a change is necessary, suggests Arlington-based education consultant Rita Fetters.

"Some children need to be in a classroom with a low student teacher ratio so that teachers have time to redirect students who have trouble staying focused," she said. "Other students need a lot of exercise and outdoor activity to release energy so that they can focus better in class. Public schools may not be able to offer that."

The Heights in Potomac, Md. builds activity and exercise into each school day including outdoor recess and a challenging physical education program that not only releases energy, but teaches important life skills.

Fetters says some parents make the change because they want specialized opportunities that a public school might not offer.

"If religious education is important to a family, that is certainly one reason to leave a public school," she said. "If a family wants their child to be involved in public service beyond what is required to graduate, they might choose a private school that has community service built in to the curriculum."

One such school is St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School (SSSAS) in Alexandria, Va. "Our school offers religion classes and weekly chapels," said Mandi Sapp of SSSAS. "We also have a ton of service-learning opportunities that students ... do throughout the year, including global service trips offered in Middle and Upper School. We have done a lot of work with ALIVE (ALexandrians InVolved Ecumenically) in Alexandria."

If a child is unhappy and asks repeatedly to change schools, Fetters believes that is a reason to give serious consideration to academic switch.

"At the end of the day, parents have to take a long, hard look at their child and their family," Fetters said. "They have to find the best school for their family, not the one that's most prestigious or most popular. Does what the school offers as a whole align with your family's values and your child's needs. Whether it's public or private, that's what a parent must determine."

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First Veg Fest Held in Herndon

FROM PAGE 3

his 4-month old son, Thomas. “I have been a huge fan of Dr. Campbell for many years, and have followed him in documentaries as well as reading his books. After Maria and I got married, we have both continued to follow a healthy plant-based diet,” he said.

THE DAY AFTER the Veg Fest, Whittaker reported an estimated 5,000 people attended the seven-hour event supported by a team of 70 volunteers, staffing by NWFCU. “People came to learn from some of the rock stars in nutrition, enjoy music and great food and socialize with others on a journey to health for themselves and the environment, in a compassionate way,” Whittaker said.

“I think people came for the great speakers who attended,” Whittaker said mentioning Dr. T. Colin Campbell of one of the most watched documentaries on Netflix, “Forks Over Knives” and Dr. Neal Barnard, President of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine.

Not only did Young and she co-sponsor the event, Whittaker said, “but a tireless committee assisted-Pat Barton of Party D.C., Terri Siggins of Fairfax Food Council, Pericles Silva, GreenFare Organic Cafe, John Foster, Evan Bass and Leah Rocheleau. NWFCU was a gracious host and provided



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Caryn Ginsburg learns more about CBD products from Jessica Hinton, event manager, District Hemp Botanicals.

staffing to support the event on their location. We plan to do it again next year with improvements to a few small details. We were thrilled at the turnout and the success.”

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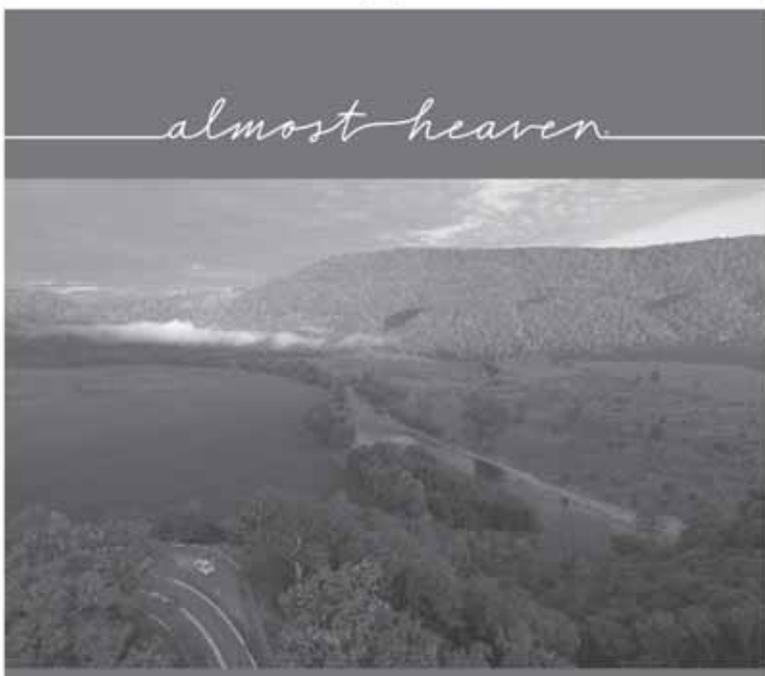


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Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

Art Exhibit: Herndon Pyramid Schools. Through April 20, at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. The exhibit is open to the community and will feature artwork by students from Aldrin Elementary, Armstrong Elementary, Clearview Elementary, Dranesville Elementary, Herndon Elementary, Hutchison Elementary, Herndon Middle, and Herndon High School. Some art available for purchase. Call 703-956-6590 or visit www.artspaceherndon.org.

Art Exhibition: IRL. Through April 23, Tuesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at The Signature at Reston Town Center, 11850 Freedom Drive, Reston. IRL is a solo exhibition featuring work by painter and video artist Monica Stroik. Through a combination of video and paintings selected from her ongoing Cyber series, IRL (online shorthand for "in real life") investigates concepts of simultaneously being present and disconnected and how the natural world becomes entangled in digital lives. Free and open to the public. Visit restonarts.org for more.

Founder's Day Show at Lake Anne. Through April 29, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. at the JoAnne Rose Gallery, Reston Community Center at Lake Anne, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. The League of Reston Artists presents their annual Founder's Day exhibit in honor of the group's founder, Patricia MacIntyre. MacIntyre will judge the painted and mixed media entries that illustrate the theme of "Fine Lines." Visit www.leagueofrestonartists.org

THURSDAY/APRIL 18

Messy Minis. 10-10:45 a.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Messy Minis Class with Megan Hunter Scarmazzi is a four-week series for toddlers who love getting into everything and making a mess, or a budding artist who loves to paint and draw all over everything they're not supposed to. For ages is 1-3 years, but flexible. Parents who have a toddler and a baby (under 1) are welcome to bring the baby along for free. \$100 per child. Register with Megan Hunter Scarmazzi, messybeestudio@gmail.com.

Book Signing with Barbara Glakas. 6-8 p.m. at Jimmy's Old Town Tavern, 697 Spring St., Herndon. Read the fascinating and lesser known stories of Herndon's history in Barbara Glakas's book, "Hidden History of Herndon." A portion of the proceeds of books will benefit the Herndon Historical Society. Visit www.jottnew.com or call 703-435-JIMS (5467).



COURTESY OF THE HERNDON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Fun with the Easter Bunny at the Herndon Easter Egg Hunt.

Herndon Easter Egg Hunt

The Town of Herndon Parks and Recreation Department will host our annual traditional Easter Egg Hunt, featuring: an egg hunt, craft projects, story time in the library, instrument petting zoo, a petting zoo, coloring mural, potting station, and photos with the Easter Bunny. Bring a basket or bag to collect eggs. For children, ages walking up to 7. Saturday, April 20, 9:30-11:15 a.m. (hunt times by age) at Herndon Municipal Center Town Green, 777 Lynn St., Herndon. Advance registration is \$9 per child; onsite registration is \$10 per child (bring cash or check). Visit herndon-va.gov/recreation or call 703-787-7300.

Live Music: Two By Sea. 9:30 p.m. at Jimmy's Old Town Tavern, 697 Spring St., Herndon. Renegade Folk. Visit www.jottnew.com or call 703-435-JIMS (5467).

FRIDAY/APRIL 19

Baby & Me Yoga. 10:30 a.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. A nurturing yoga workshop is designed for the two of you. No experience needed. Please bring a towel or yoga mat. Age 6 weeks - 16 months with adult. Registration begins April 5. librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-689-2700.

SATURDAY/APRIL 20

Herndon Easter Egg Hunt. 9:30-11:15 a.m. (hunt times by age) at Herndon Municipal Center Town Green, 777 Lynn St., Herndon. Egg hunt, craft projects, story time in the library, instrument petting zoo, a petting zoo, coloring mural, potting station, and photos with the Easter Bunny. Bring a basket or bag to collect eggs. For children, ages walking up to 7. Advance registration is \$9 per child; onsite registration is \$10 per child (bring cash or check). Visit herndon-va.gov/recreation or call 703-787-7300.

Fix-It-Clinic. 2 p.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Bring in small, broken household items, and volunteer fixers

will help get them back in working order. Services provided will be different at participating library branches. Adults. Visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-689-2700.

MONDAY/APRIL 22

Reston Photographic Society. 7:30-9:30 p.m. in Room 6 at the Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. The Reston Photographic Society invites photography enthusiasts of all skill levels to attend meetings. Share information and enjoy guest speakers, workshops and group critiques. Nonmembers welcome. www.leagueofrestonartists.org

FRIDAY/APRIL 26

Annual Empty Bowls Event. 5:30-8 p.m. at Floris United Methodist Church, 13600 Frying Pan Road, Herndon. For a small donation, guests receive a supper of soup, bread, beverage, and dessert, as well as a handmade pottery bowl to keep as a reminder that there are those in our community with empty bowls. Entertainment and a raffle add fun to the evening. All proceeds benefit Food for Others, the largest distributor of free food directly to the hungry in Northern Virginia. \$25 for adults; \$15 for children under 12. Visit www.givingcircleofhope.org.

Announcements

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

NEWS

Herndon Police Make Arrest in Clearwater Court Homicide

On Tuesday, April 9, 2019, Herndon Police arrested Stephanie Fyfe, 29, of Herndon, for murder. On April 5, 2019, at approximately 1 a.m., Herndon Police officers responded to the 600-block of Clearwater Court for a report of an unresponsive male victim with a stab wound to his chest. The victim, David Puryear, 45, of Clinton, Md., was transported to Reston Hospital where he was pronounced dead. The victim and the suspect were known to each other, according to police.



PHOTO BY
HERNDON POLICE
DEPARTMENT

Stephanie Fyfe

Anyone with information regarding this incident should contact Detective Miranda at 703-435-6843.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

TUESDAY/APRIL 23

Supervisor Candidates' Forum. 7-9 p.m. at Reston Community Center Lake Anne, 1609-A Washington Plaza N., Reston. Supervisor Cathy Hudgins is retiring at the end of this term. This forum will allow Hunter Mill District residents to hear their potential supervisor's positions and plans first-hand. Moderators and audience members will ask questions of the candidates. Free. Call 703-662-1687 or visit RCareston.com

SATURDAY/APRIL 27

Reston Community Yard Sale. 8:30 a.m.-noon at 1900 Campus Commons Drive, Reston. Eighty families will be selling a variety of items. No early birds as gates open at 8:30 a.m. Vendor space is sold out. For a recorded, weather related message, call 703-435-6577 the morning of the event. Email Ashleigh@reston.org

Spring Forward. 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. at Colgan Hall, George Mason University Science and Technology Campus, 10900 University Blvd., Manassas. Spring Forward Family Fun Day offers adoptive, foster and kinship families a day of fun and learning about tools and solutions. Found Families Forward is partnering with NewFound Families, the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), and VDOE's Training and Technical Assistance Center. While the kids enjoy activities, parents, caregivers and professionals will be treated to keynote Family Strong: Five Ways to Fight the Fear, Beat the Burnout, and Stay Focused for the Long Haul by presenter Wendy Besmann. \$0-\$40. Visit www.eventbrite.com/e/spring-forward-family-fun-day-and-regional-conference-tickets-54145770457 for tickets.

SUNDAY/APRIL 28

Community Interfaith Forum on Hate & Bigotry. 4-6 p.m. at Temple Rodef Shalom, 2100 Westmoreland St., Falls Church. Panelists include: Imam Abd Ar-rafa, All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS); Andrea Miller, Virginia Tri-Chair, Poor People's Campaign; Rev. Michelle Thomas, Holy and Whole Life Changing Ministries, and President, Loudoun County NAACP; Rabbi Jeffrey Saxe, Temple Rodef Shalom; Rev. Angela Martin, Itinerant Elder, A.M.E. Church, and Maryland Tri-Chair, Poor People's Campaign; Dr. Randall Robinson, Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Falls Church; Rev. Stuart Scott, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints; and Ronald Halber, Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington. Free. Visit www.eventbrite.com/o/naacp-fairfax-county-12397167937.

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As It Is Happening



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Thankfully I woke up today (duh!) – without the crushing, incapacitating fatigue that I woke up with two weeks ago, post-my-last-immunotherapy infusion.

As I have written previously, I did not alert my oncologist to my bedridden status then or since as I have been trying not to worry that I had crossed some Rubicon-type line concerning my treatment and its side/straight-on effects. Apparently, and I will continue to believe (cling to this belief) that my inability to get out of bed two Saturdays ago was indeed an aberration rather than an actualization, of life in this new Kenny lane.

So here I sit at my desk writing away, fully dressed, teeth-brushed and clean-shaven, all by 8:15 am, pill-popping as I go.

As I recall two weeks ago, when I finally summoned the strength to extricate myself from under the covers to get dressed and attempt to walk downstairs and restart my day (I had gotten up earlier to feed our cats breakfast and give Chino his insulin shot), “The clock on the wall” (clock radio, actually), to quote George Thorogood, said 3:53 p.m. (And other than bathroom breaks, that was all I could muster in the nine hours since I woke up at 7 a.m.)

No pain, just zero energy. It was almost as if I was paralyzed.

Writing back to the present, anticipating this morning, I’ve been a bit apprehensive the last few days – fearful that when I awoke today, I would once again be fighting that terrible fatigue and considering a new reality in my cancer existence.

When my eyes popped open at 6:30 this morning, I was grateful (as my father used to say: “Any day that I wake up is a good day”) and relieved that when I raised my right arm to roll back the covers, I did so with relative normalcy; and even more relieved when I was able to swing my legs out from underneath the covers and onto the bedroom floor where I had no difficulty getting my bearings. Before too long (maybe 30 seconds or so), and after a few deep breaths, I stood up and officially began my day without any further adieu. Although I hadn’t taken any Roloids: “Oh, what a relief it is!”

Dare I say then it will be a normal day, up and at ‘em with nary a hint of fatigue in the forecast.

Rain, however, is in the forecast and given the date on the calendar: April 13, 2019, I have to face an even greater challenge than the fatigue I experienced two weeks ago: clothes shopping.

More specifically, I have to buy a suit, as well as some upgraded good-looking casual attire which my wife, Dina will approve and that Kenny’s budget will tolerate, as I’ll be attending a family wedding and rehearsal dinner beginning May 3, 2019.

One more concern: my weight. It’s not good. It’s the talking-scale-joke-will-one-of-you-please-get-off, bad. But I have no choice. Today’s the day (for availability reasons) or it will be “Good night, Irene.” Is there a tent sale going on anywhere?

You know, now that I think about it – and feel it, I may be feeling a little fatigue.

Maybe it’s not the best day to be trying on ill-fitting clothes ALL DAY. What if I don’t have the manual dexterity to be in and out of dressing rooms, up and down while in them and back and forth to the clothing racks with shoes, slacks, shirts and suits?

What if today is another day in my life – which seemingly began at birth, where I spent hours in the “Husky”/“Portly” departments at Jordan Marsh, Filene’s Basement and Kennedy’s in downtown Boston, trying to find Kenny some “school clothes” that fit, that is excruciating AGAIN? Granted, it wasn’t cancer then as it is now, but for an overweight young boy, it was torture personified and the experience imprinted me for life as a serial-clothes-shopping-hater.

Got to go. Wish me luck. I’ll need it.

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

OPINION

Supporting Immigrant Families, Community

Comprehensive change — not one-time funding — needed to support Fairfax County immigrant families and community members.

BY MARY SUPLEY
FAIRFAX FOR ALL

Fairfax County residents in deportation proceedings are not guaranteed access to free legal counsel. According to Department of Justice data, such legal representation dramatically increases the likelihood that an individual will have a hearing, be released from detention, and be granted relief from deportation.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is considering limited, temporary, one-time funding for legal representation for county residents in deportation proceedings. Without also enacting a policy that ends the county's voluntary collaboration with ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement), this proposal is merely a band-aid that would offer assistance to fewer than 1 percent of the people who need it. A band-aid on a wound that the Board of Supervisors and Sheriff Stacey Kincaid deepen every day as they put more people into the

arrest-to-deportation pipeline.

Currently, more than 11,500 county residents are in deportation proceedings. This is because Fairfax County voluntarily collaborates with ICE in the detention and deportation of its residents and visitors. This collaboration harms migrants residing in Fairfax County and weakens our community. Every day that county leadership fails to act, more people live in fear and more residents are detained. Data from Syracuse University's TRAC program show that Fairfax County ranks 13th in the country for its compliance with voluntary detainer requests issued by ICE (view data directly at bit.ly/detainer-compliance-rates).

While funding for legal representation would be commendable, it's not enough. By itself, this proposal alone offers more comfort to the politicians who want to appear to stand with our immigrant neighbors than it does to people vulnerable to those politicians' policies. Real and lasting change will only come by ending the county's voluntary collaboration with ICE.

In late 2017, attorneys working in concert with the Fairfax for All coalition drafted the Ordinance to Protect Equal Justice for All. This countywide policy, which would end this racist collaboration and create some equity for our immigrant neighbors, will:

1. Prohibit the county from being involved in civil immigration enforcement;
2. Limit the collecting and sharing of information with ICE;
3. Expand the list of documents that are acceptable as proof of identity; and
4. Establish permanent funding for legal representation for county residents in deportation proceedings.

The complete ordinance can be read at fairfaxforall.org/pledge.

It is long past time for Board Chairman Sharon Bulova, the Board of Supervisors, Sheriff Stacey Kincaid, and other officials to end the county's voluntary collaboration with ICE. A collaboration that furthers the criminalization, incarceration, and deportation of valued Fairfax County families and community members.

Fairfax for All is a coalition of grassroots, civil rights, immigrant rights, and faith-based organizations dedicated to building sanctuary in Fairfax County. Visit fairfaxforall.org.

Fully Fund the MRA to Support Our Community

BY TARRENCE TAYLOR
FAIRFAX COUNTY RESIDENT AND
EMPLOYEE

Frontline Fairfax County employees work hard every day to make our community a better place for all people.

We are nurses, educators, librarians, first responders, parks staff, sanitation workers, engineers and more. We are your friends, family and neighbors. And we want what everyone wants: the ability to make a difference, financial security, and a better life for our kids.

Unfortunately, the proposed Fairfax budget breaks the county's promise to workers like me by not funding the agreed-upon Market Rate Adjustment.

The Market Rate Adjustment is similar to a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), and it is intended to help employees keep up with the high cost of living in this area, as well as to keep up with our neighboring counties. That's why the Board of Supervisors voted to adopt a pay plan which includes a yearly Market Rate Adjustment.

The agreed-upon formula says the MRA should be 2.51 percent this year, but the proposed budget only offers 1 percent. That is simply not enough.

The Market Rate Adjustment is not just a number to me. I'm the father of seven wonderful children, and I've made a promise that nothing will get in the way of them achieving a college education. That's why I've worked hard my entire life.

However, if the county does not keep its promise and fully fund the Market Rate Adjustment, then I may not be able to keep my promise to my kids.

Not fully funding the Market Rate Adjustment also hurts the local families who use our services to get ahead, because it keeps us from recruiting and retaining the quality workforce we need.

We are losing good employees every day. Employees gain experience and training here in Fairfax, and then leave for the surrounding counties that pay more. That costs us money and time, as we are forced to constantly train new employees.

Fully funding the Market Rate Adjustment will help keep the experienced employees that we work hard to train, right here in Fairfax County, helping Fairfax County families.

The Board of Supervisors has an opportunity to do something about this. It is their job to make changes



to the budget to ensure it meets the needs of our community.

Please join us in calling on Chairman Sharon Bulova and the Fairfax Board of Supervisors to fully fund the Market Rate Adjustment so that our community can

continue to be a wonderful place to live, work and play.

Tarrence Taylor is a Fairfax County employee, resident and taxpayer, and a proud union member of SEIU Virginia 512.

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