

Burke CONNECTION

Senior Living

PAGE, 6

Sign language interpreter Kathy Mac-Millan teaches the audience a sign for the letter "A" in one of the summer events at the Burke Centre Library.

Learning Differently At Burke Centre Library

NEWS, PAGE 3

Future Is Now at Electric Car Show

NEWS, PAGE 3

'Sensible Gun Legislation' Rejected

NEWS, PAGE 2



PHOTO COURTESY KAREN HIGA

Grassroots activists hold a going out of business banner on the sidewalk across the road from the National Rifle Association in Fairfax during the July 14 protest against gun violence.



PHOTO BY MARTI MOORE/THE CONNECTION

At the end of the July 14 protest at the National Rifle Association in Fairfax, gun violence prevention activists Kris Gregory of Falls Church and Nancy Despeaux of Reston discuss ideas for getting Northern Virginia residents who have moved to update their voter registration status in time for the Nov. 5 General Election.

‘Sensible Gun Legislation’ Rejected Again

Local activists reaffirm their commitment to gun violence prevention movement.

BY MARTI MOORE
THE CONNECTION

On July 14, more than 75 concerned people who oppose gun violence in Fairfax turned out to protest at the National Rifle Association. More motivation came from the July 9 failed special session of the Virginia General Assembly, when Republican lawmakers adjourned in record time without considering any proposed legislation.

Passing motorists heading to and from Oakton on a Sunday afternoon beep their car horns and give thumbs-up gestures in support of the protesters, who line the sidewalk at 11250 Waples Mill Road on a hot summer day July 14 — which marks their 79th consecutive vigil for the 20 school children and six adults fatally shot Dec. 14, 2012 at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn.

The anti-gun violence activists are used to having their firearm safety bills shot down in committee soon after the Virginia General Assembly regular session starts each January.

“We’re always hopeful,” says Del. Kenneth “Ken” R. Plum (D-36t) of Reston at the monthly NRA protest, “but realistic.”

THE JULY 9 special gun session called by Gov. Ralph S. Northam was no different, as state lawmakers adjourned early with no floor votes on the governor’s package of eight proposed gun safety measures. Plum said the General Assembly adjourned just 90 minutes after the session started at noon.

A week later, Kris Gregory of Falls Church said the most important fact to concerned

citizens like herself was every delegate and state senator in the Virginia General Assembly had to vote to adjourn. It was a party-line vote to end the special session July 9 and the Democrats were outnumbered by the Republicans.

“It’s such a cowardly way to do it,” points out Plum, who is the longest serving member of the Virginia House of Delegates.

Most gun violence prevention activists believe the NRA controls the Republican majority. Gregory attended the July 9 “Votes and Laws” rally held that morning by Moms Demand Action For Gun Sense in America before the legislative session started. She said buses chartered by Brady United Against Gun Violence left Richmond at 1 p.m. before a scheduled 2 p.m. gun rights rally held at the Old Bell Tower. She explained the Virginia Capitol Police requested both sides hold their rallies separately.

Gregory noted at the NRA protest she and more than 500 activists of the gun violence prevention movement statewide were in Richmond July 9 to get a message out to elected officials, “not to provoke the Second Amendment advocates.”

She and other protesters learned about the outcome of the special session on the bus ride home through text message from Brady staffers, who stayed in Richmond.

THE GOVERNOR said July 9: “I expected lawmakers to take this seriously. I expected them to do what their constituents elected them to do — discuss issues and take votes.”

“An average of three Virginians die each day due to gun violence,” Northam said. “That means hundreds of Virginians may die between today and Nov. 18, the next day the legislature plans to work.”

According to the state government website, lawmakers agreed to meet again after the Nov. 5 General Election. Gregory makes it clear she and other activists are working to elect “gun violence prevention

champions here in Virginia” on Nov. 5. They are united in heeding a call Gov. Northam has made to Commonwealth voters for more than a year: “If you can’t change their hearts, change their seats.”

Richmond or Bust

Early on a Tuesday morning at a commuter parking lot in Woodbridge, Springfield resident Earle Mitchell waits his turn to board one of three motor coaches chartered by Brady United Against Gun Violence — on the way to Richmond July 9 for a “Votes and Laws” rally before noon at the state Capitol. They urged Commonwealth lawmakers to pass “sensible” firearm safety laws designed to prevent future deaths from gun violence before the start of a Virginia General Assembly special session that ended as quickly as it started.

Mitchell started volunteering for gun violence prevention causes more than six years ago, when 20 school children and six adults were fatally shot Dec. 14, 2012 at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. Mitchell said he served 28 years for the U.S. Navy and worked as a defense contractor. The 82-year-old activist says he supports universal background checks and believes “Virginians want more gun control.” Before boarding the Brady bus, Mitchell affirmed — no matter the outcome in Richmond — he would continue writing letters to lawmakers and newspaper edi-



PHOTO BY MARTI MOORE

Springfield resident Earle Mitchell.

tors, plus hand-written postcards urging folks to vote a straight ticket for the Democratic Party in November.



Sign language interpreter Kathy MacMillan teaches the audience a sign for the letter "A."



Stuffed animals sit in the children's corner in the Burke Centre library.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Learning Differently at Burke Centre Library

Branch uses toys and performances to promote literacy.

BY ABBY SACKS
THE CONNECTION

As part of the Fairfax County Public Library summer events, the Burke Centre Library hosted "Once Upon a Sign," a storytime program for preschool and early elementary aged children led by certified American Sign Language interpreter Kathy MacMillan.

Before beginning the fairy tale, MacMillan taught the kids what American Sign Language is and how different countries have different sign languages, just as with spoken ones. She also spoke about deaf people

and deaf culture, explaining that deaf people can speak with their hands and listen with their eyes.

Throughout her performance, MacMillan incorporated and taught the signs of some of the important aspects of the story, including the signs for princess, prince, queen, king, magic and dragon. She encouraged the children to sign along with her when she used a word she had already taught them. "It doesn't matter if you're deaf or hearing," she said. "Anyone can learn American Sign Language."

After finishing the story, MacMillan switched her focus to deaf culture. She talked about how deaf people can adjust everyday objects and occurrences that typically need sound to meet their needs. She mentioned using video calls instead of phone calls to keep in contact with people and connecting doorbells to lights to alert a homeowner when someone is at the door.

Programs like this with performers and traditional sit-down shows are readily available at Burke Centre. But, the branch also offers less structured activities for preschoolers and young children. There are interactive and tactile programs like "Read! Build! Play!" and "Play-Doh Fun" led by retired teachers that allow the kids to be more active while they learn. Nancy Klein, the youth services manager at Burke Centre, likes these events because "kids learn with play," she said. She believed her branch is taking "a different approach to early literacy."

In addition to scheduled events, the branch has permanent play areas stationed around the building. There are boxes of toys aimed at one- and two-year-olds and maker spaces by the front desk with different crafts and activities each day. Klein says that the library is now a "place where [children] can play as well as read."

The library also has events for middle and high schoolers. Burke Centre has an active Teen Advisory Board, which is made up of local students who organize and sponsor programs and clubs for their peers. Contests are the most popular library events among teens, including the upcoming Lego building contest. Nandhana Nair, sitting member of the Teen Advisory Board, thinks contests are successful events because "a little competition always incentives people," she said. "I think that the opportunity to make something that is entirely of their own inspiration and creation really attracts teens to participate." Klein enjoys seeing community members of all ages gather at the library for a common interest. At the events, "people have a lot of fun," she said. Besides entertainment and education, she thinks these programs also offer people opportunities to be "talking to their neighbors" and "meeting new people."

Future Is Now at Electric Car Show

Environment Virginia Car Show provides insight into the future of electric vehicles.

Electric vehicle (EV) owners, climate activists and concerned citizens gathered Saturday morning at the Environment Virginia Car Show to discuss the future of transportation and how Fairfax County can lead the state in the transition to electric vehicles.

The event offered Virginians the opportunity to experience EVs first hand with a variety of electric vehicles available to check out in front of Daniels Run Peace Church. Electric vehicle charging stations, which are located on the church's premises and are powered by rooftop solar panels, were also on display.

In addition, representatives from the community as well as EV, climate and health experts discussed how EVs dramatically reduce carbon emissions, enhance air quality and save consumers money on fuel and maintenance. Speakers explained how EVs are essential in reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, which is necessary to mitigate the worst effects of climate change.

"When I was in medical school, did I think that my career in medicine would



Andrea McGimsey charges her plug-in hybrid electric vehicle at Daniels Run Peace Church.

involve me talking about the climate crisis? No," said Dr. Neelu Tummala, a Fairfax County-based physician and George Washington University professor who spoke at the event. "But when I started seeing patients who were affected by air pollution or suffering from extreme heat, it is hard to ignore." Other speakers, who included Joe Rupp, climate advocate for Environment Virginia, Army veteran and Climate Reality leader Paula Clements and church

congregant Johnny Wen, also called on Virginia and Fairfax County leaders to start prioritizing electrifying transportation in order to stave off the worst impacts of global warming. "We must speed the electrification of our transportation system, and we need officials in Fairfax County to lead the way," said Joe Rupp, climate advocate with Environment Virginia. "As home to 1 in 8 Virginians and with an annual operating budget of nearly \$4.3 billion, Fairfax can

spur this transition more effectively than any other jurisdiction in the state. For the sake of our climate, our air and our health, the transition from internal combustion engines to electric vehicles cannot happen fast enough." The transportation sector is the biggest contributor of carbon emissions in Virginia, accounting for 45.5 percent of all carbon emissions in 2016. As Northern Virginia continues to grow year after year, Fairfax County has an opportunity to lead the state in EV investment and adoption.

Some Fairfax County locals already recognize this importance and have begun addressing this issue.

"About two years ago the Daniels Run Peace Church council embarked on a mission to reduce the church's carbon footprint," said Wen, a congregant of the church who organized the effort to install EV charging stations. "The church invested in installing EV chargers to not only provide an amenity to greater Fairfax, but also as a means for the community to take advantage of the electrons produced right on our rooftop."

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

National Night Out

BY JOHN C. COOK
BRADDOCK DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

Every Year neighborhoods, police departments, fire departments, and community groups across the country come together for a night of games, food, and community building on National Night Out. Neighborhoods, pools, and community centers host bar-b-ques, block parties, and festivals where police officers pay a visit and mingle with civilians. Children have the chance to meet McGruff the Crime Dog, see emergency vehicles, and give a police officer a high-five. Meanwhile adults and parents can share a burger with an officer and talk about safety con-

cerns or even just the latest Nationals game. This night is about strengthening the bonds that make our community safe and happy.

National Night Out, which takes place on Aug. 6, is far more than just a celebration. It is a beneficial learning experience for all parties involved. Children learn that police officers are not just there to arrest people, but to protect and serve their neighborhood. Adults and parents get to personally know the officers in charge of protecting their families. Community groups, such as Neighborhood Watch, can educate their neighbors on their mission and even recruit some to join. Lastly, officers get to meet and better understand the people they serve, thereby improving their service to the community. When this type of communication takes place, we all

benefit and actively make our neighborhoods safer in the process.

I will participate in National Night Out once again this year with the police from West Springfield District Station. I always enjoy visiting the many neighborhoods of the Braddock District in a police car with one of our fine Fairfax County Police Department Officers.

In fact, National Night Out is the perfect time for neighborhood leaders to print and hand out copies of the Fairfax County Community Emergency Response Guide (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cerg). From there, they can start a conversation with police officers about preparing for emergencies with a special focus on safety. Events like National Night Out bridge the communication gap

that prevents civilians from learning all they can to prepare for emergencies.

Community groups, such as Neighborhood Watch and the Community Emergency Response Team, will also be present to speak to about getting involved. As a community leader I am always happy to see people coming together. There's something special about National Night Out.

In a time where trust in societal institutions is at a dangerous low, National Night Out offers a solution in a positive and enjoyable reprieve from the negative news cycle. Events like this are vital to encourage strong and trusting relationships between first responders and the communities they serve.

The free ice cream is a very big perk as well.

Honoring Molly's Gift

BY LORI BRIGHAM
WASHINGTON REGIONAL
TRANSPLANT COMMUNITY

It was a Friday morning, and as the sun rose over the Lincoln Memorial more than 100 members of the United States Coast Guard gathered on the sixth floor of George Washington University Hospital. They came to say goodbye to their shipmate Molly Waters, who lost her life after a motorcycle crash. Molly, a Coast Guard Commander, spent 16 years rising through the ranks and lived to serve. Now even in death, Molly served others since she had made the selfless decision to register as an organ donor. As Molly was brought from the intensive care unit to the operating room to donate her organs, her shipmates, family, friends and hospital staff lined the hallway, a growing tradition known as an "Honor Walk." We stood silently in the weight of the moment, collectively mourning such a tragic death and expressing our gratitude for the generosity of this ultimate act.

Last year in the United States more people than ever gave the gift of life by donating their organs upon their death. This isn't the type of record that makes headlines. But it should be. Organ donation and lifesaving transplants can only occur when individuals like Molly and their families realize that even in death they can make a difference and become



Honor Walk for Molly Waters took place at George Washington University Hospital in D.C.

part of a much larger story.

That story is one of generosity and inspiration that has led to steady increases in organ donations and transplants. Organ transplants in the U.S. saw their sixth consecutive record-breaking year in 2018, with an 18 percent increase in deceased organ donors between 2015 and 2018. The 10,721 deceased donors last year meant 29,680 transplants for people waiting for an organ. Here in the D.C. metro area, we are part of this story, too. Last year, our organization surpassed our own record recovering and allocating 474 organs from 137 generous donors, which saved the lives of 401 people.

At Washington Regional Transplant Community (WRTC) located in Falls Church, we work every day to help save more lives through organ donation. Our job is to educate medical professionals and the public about organ donation; facilitate the recovery of organs, match them to waiting patients and deliver them to transplant

We are working toward the day that no one dies waiting for an organ.

hospitals; and support donor families before, during and after the donation process and help honor the legacies of their loved ones. We work in close partnership with six transplant centers and 44 hospitals to decrease the number of patients waiting for a lifesaving organ. WRTC is one of 58 organ procurement organizations (OPOs) across the U.S. Our singular mission is to save lives through organ donation and transplantation and, as a community, we are working toward the day that no one dies waiting for an organ. The unfortunate fact today is that with more than 113,000 people on the national transplant waiting list, the need for a donated organ far outpaces availability. And while increased public awareness and willingness to be a donor is essential, that alone isn't enough. Only three in every 1,000 people die in a way that allows for the possibility of organ donation.

OPOs are working to improve these odds. We are pursuing positive changes to federal policies

that govern organ donation and transplantation, including promoting the use of organs from more complex donors, improving clinical support, providing OPOs access to donor hospital health records and addressing transplant center reimbursement and evaluation policies that might be a disincentive to otherwise successful organ matches.

Additionally, at WRTC, we realize the power of scientific and medical research and its ability to save lives and heal patients. Therefore, deceased donors can donate organs and tissues, unsuitable for transplants, to far-reaching medical research and therapy initiatives. In 2018, WRTC allocated 92 organs for research, which ranked seventh in the nation.

The system for organ donation in the U.S. is complex and highly regulated, providing a strong infrastructure and successful track record from which to build. At WRTC, we are privileged to play a role in this system and are committed to working with our local and national partners to make it even stronger and more successful. We honor those who have embraced organ donation as an act of human kindness to inspire others to register as donors too. We encourage you to make the legal and informed decision to be an organ donor.

Lori Brigham is President and Chief Executive Officer of the Washington Regional Transplant Community in Falls Church.

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CONNECTION

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
south@connectionnewspapers.com

Kemal Kurspahic
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

Andrea Worker
Contributing Writer
aworker@connectionnewspapers.com

Jean Card
Production Editor
jcard@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
e-mail:
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Steve Hogan
Display Advertising, 703-778-9418
shogan@connectionnewspapers.com

Debbie Funk
National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin
Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment Advertising
703-778-9431

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Executive Vice President
Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor in Chief
Steven Mauren
Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic
Art/Design:
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
Ali Khaligh
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION
Circulation Manager:
Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



NEWS

After the Storm

Tree came down from the storms in Hayfield, all the neighbors came out to cut it up and open the road.



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

Register for Senior Olympics

The Northern Virginia Senior Olympics features more than 60 events.

Registration for the 2019 Northern Virginia Senior Olympics is heading into the final stretch at www.nvso.us. The games run Saturday, Sept. 14 thru Sept. 28. All registrations must be completed by Aug. 31. Paper registrations, available at most local recreation and senior centers, must be postmarked by Aug. 24. There will be no onsite registration.

The NVSO includes more than 60 events that exercise the mind as well as the body. To qualify competitors must be at least 50-years-old by Dec. 31, 2019, and be a resident of Northern Virginia. The games will be hosted at more than 25 venues, located in and around Fairfax and Arlington counties and the City of Alexandria. A list of events, rules and locations can be found at www.nvso.us. The NVSO is a nonprofit and is a joint project of the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, and Prince William.

In addition to offering traditional Olympic-style events such as running, walking, discus and swimming, the NVSO also has



PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

Medalists at the Northern Virginia Senior Olympics diving events Saturday, Sept. 15, 2018. Duane Clayton-Cox from Burke (first row, left) won a blue ribbon in the 65-69 men's category.

games that exercise the mind, including bridge, a spelling bee and one of this year's new competitions, jigsaw puzzle. The new event this year for those more active is line-dancing.

In addition to the support from local jurisdictions, the NVSO receives support from numerous local businesses and media outlets, including The Connection Newspapers, which for the third year in a row is an NVSO gold patron.

The NVSO began in 1982 with about 80 competitors. In 2018, more than 800 people took part, making it one of the largest annual senior events in the region.

New this year is a flat registration fee of \$15 that allows participants to compete in as many events as they choose with the exception of bowling, cycling, golf and orienteering which have additional charges.

NVSO volunteer partner RSVP-Northern Virginia, the region's largest volunteer group for those 55 or better, (which is a program of Volunteer Fairfax, Volunteer Arlington and Volunteer Alexandria) recruits more than 100 volunteers to support the games. Those interested in volunteering should call 703-403-5360 or register online at www.rsvpnova.org.



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Senior Living



Drinking plenty of non-alcoholic fluids like water, even if you're not thirsty can help prevent heat related illnesses.

Beating the Heat

Seniors at greater risk for heat-related illnesses.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

With the sunny days of mid-summer come sweltering heat. This week's heat indexes topping 110 degrees in some cases illustrate that July and August are the hottest months of the year, according to the National Centers for Environmental Information.

Soaring temperatures may have the greatest impact on those who are over the age of 65.

"They are more likely to have a chronic medical condition that changes the normal body's responses to heat," said Amy Vennett, BSN, RN, Program Manager and Nursing Case Management for Arlington, County. "Older adults don't adjust as well as young people to sudden changes in temperature. They're more likely to take prescription medicines that affect the body's ability to control its temperature or sweat."

The physical, cognitive and social changes that happen as one ages, make one more susceptible to illnesses related to extreme heat, says Ingrid Parkhurst, Center Nurse Coordinator and Gerontologist for the Fairfax County Health Department. "So, when it comes to the heat, we need to think about all three perspectives. Physically, older adults might overheat, sunburn and dehydrate more easily given changes to their bodies. Cognitively, older people are more likely than the general population to suffer from some mental decline, [and] they may not be able to communicate their needs in the heat as readily, leaving them open to dehydration and heat-related illnesses."

Vennett says that the signs that might signal the onset of such an illness include "Heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, sunburn, and heat rash."

Local counties offer help during times of extreme heat, says Brian Roberts of the Montgomery Health



and Human Services Department. "Anyone who needs to get out of the heat can take advantage of the cooling centers like senior centers during normal business hours."

Staying indoors during the hottest parts of the day, is the most obvious way to prevent illnesses, says Vennett. "If you do spend time outside, wear light-

weight, loose-fitting clothing. Drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids like water, even if you're not thirsty."

"Stay ahead of your thirst," continued Vennett. "On days with heat advisories, take sips from a water bottle all day. If you feel sick, see your physician. Older adults can have multiple health problems at once, and dehydration can affect any of these."

Some older adults go through social changes that could leave them isolated and unable to

seek help before reaching the point of an extreme heat-induced illness, says Parkhurst. "That is dangerous because if they do not have social connections it will be harder for them to access the care they need, especially in an emergency," she said. "Those who are isolated or lack the physical ability to drink adequate amounts of water or recognize thirst are at greater risk. And, dehydration easily leads to urinary tract infections in older adults."

News

Area Students Graduate From High Point University

High Point University awarded degrees to 919 graduates in spring 2019. Area students receiving degrees are as follows:

Alexandria: Madeleine Sanasack
Burke: Thomas Boudreaux
Centreville: Caroline Hager
Fairfax: Paige Lloyd
Fairfax Station: Anna Billings, Emily Cole

Great Falls: Daniel Bartlett, Joshua Gibbs
Lorton: Breanne Linton
McLean: Rachel Gillum
Reston: Brandonn Kamga, Ryan McLaughlin, Dorothy Querolo, Maggie Williams
Springfield: Soo Min Lee
Vienna: Matthew Bacigalupo, James Farrell II, Viena Forkas.

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.

CAMPS

Art Camp Registration. Summer Art Camp in Burke for 5-8 year olds, 8 years and up, and teens/adults. Camp is held through Burke Centre Conservancy at the Woods Community Center, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Camp weeks run July 29-Aug. 2; and Aug. 5-9. Call 703-250-6930 or visit www.czartlessons.com.

- ❖ Fine Arts & Crafts Camp (8 years & up)
 - ❖ Drawing Camp (8 years & up)
 - ❖ Drawing Plus Color & Craft Fun Camp (5-8 year olds)
 - ❖ Art Boot Camp for teens/adults
- Call instructor at 703-250-6930 or visit www.czartlessons.com.

SATURDAY/JULY 27

"Your Journey Through Grief." 2-4 p.m. at Haven of Northern Virginia, 4606 Ravensworth Road, Annandale. Haven of Northern Virginia offers this free summer workshop. Registration requested. For information and registration, call 703-941-7000 or email havenofnova@verizon.net.

SUNDAY/JULY 28

Movie Screening: Proof of Heaven. 2-4 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Best-selling author of Proof of Heaven: A Neurosurgeon's Journey into the Afterlife, Dr. Eben Alexander will describe his personal near death experience and the lessons he has learned. \$25. Register at proofofheavenunity.eventbrite.com.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 31

Last Wednesday Social. 5-7 p.m. at Houlihan's, 6550 Loisdale Road, Springfield. Part social, part networking, part Fairfax-Lee Chapter of the Association of the United States Army updates, part information exchange, and always fun. Free. Contact Leif Johnson at c2806@ausa.org. Visit AUSA.org

FRIDAY-MONDAY/AUG. 2-5

Road Closure: Route 50. Eastbound and westbound Route 50 (Arlington Boulevard) at the Route 7 (Leesburg Pike) interchange and eastbound Wilson Boulevard (Route 613) between the eastbound Route 50 service road and the westbound Route 50 service road will be closed from 10 p.m. Friday, Aug. 2 to 5 a.m. Monday, Aug. 5 to demolish the Wilson Boulevard bridge deck over Route 50 and install the new bridge deck. Drivers can expect major delays and are advised to use alternate routes. After the weekend closure,

drivers can expect single-lane closures on Route 50 and the eastbound Wilson Boulevard bridge until late fall. The project is scheduled for completion this winter. Visit www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/wilson_over_50.asp for more.

SATURDAY/AUG. 3

Peripheral Neuropathy Support Group. 2-4 p.m. at Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale. The Peripheral Neuropathy Support Group for greater Washington meets the first Saturday of the month. All are welcome. RSVP for available seating. Call 301-263-0616 or visit www.dcpnsupport.org for more.

SUNDAY/AUG. 4

Life Notes Workshop. 1:30-4 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Join singer/songwriter and presenter Daniel Nahmod for an experience of music, readings, journaling, and discussion. Through the Life Notes process developed and refined by Daniel, participants will learn to see themselves with clarity and resolve. \$25-\$45. Visit uof-nahmod-workshop.eventbrite.com or call 703-281-1767.

TUESDAY/AUG. 6

Car Seat Safety Check. 5-9 p.m. at the West Springfield district police station, 6140 Rolling Road. Fairfax County Police Department offers free safety check and install events throughout the year to ensure children travel safely. By appointment only; call 703-644-7377 and press 0 at the recording to schedule. In preparation for appointment, install the seat using the instructions that came with the car seat. Trained officers will review the car seat instructions and car owner's manual to be certain that they are being followed.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 7

New Volunteer Orientation. 7:30-9 p.m. at Providence Community Center, 3001 Vaden Drive, Fairfax. People and their pets (dog, cat or bunny) are needed to join other Fairfax Pets on Wheels, Inc. volunteers who make a difference in the community by visiting residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Visit www.fpow.org. Call 703-324-5424 or visit www.fpow.org

SATURDAY/AUG. 10

Shamanic Journeying. 5-8 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Learn about Shamanic Journeying is, and how it is different than meditation in this three-hour long intensive. In the first two hours, there will be a presentation on the P

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

Art Exhibition: Virginia

Watercolor Society. Through Aug. 2, gallery hours in the McGuireWoods Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. 40th annual juried painting exhibition with about 85 paintings on display. Free and open to the public. Visit www.workhousearts.org/ or www.virginiawatercolorssociety.org for more.

Registration Open: NVSO. The Northern Virginia Senior Olympics features more than 60 events that challenge the mind as well as the body. New games this year: jigsaw puzzle and line-dancing. The games run Sept. 14-28. There will be no on-site registration. Paper registrations, available at most local recreation and senior centers, must be postmarked by Aug. 24. Online registration deadline Aug. 31 www.nvso.us.

Crafters Wanted for 2nd Annual Fall Craft Show. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum will hold its 2nd Annual Fall Craft Show and LEGO (TM) Train Show on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2019, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Booth space is 10x10 and cost is \$50 per space. Email dmueller@fairfax-station.org. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

Kingstowne Farmers Market. Fridays, through Oct. 25, 4-7 p.m. in the Giant parking lot, 5870 Kingstowne Towne Center, Alexandria. Call 703-642-0128 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/kingstowne.

Wakefield Farmers Market. Wednesdays, 2-6 p.m. through Oct. 30, at Wakefield Park, 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale. Call 703-642-0128 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/wakefield.

Lorton Farmers Market. Sundays, 9 a.m.-noon, through Nov. 17, in the VRE Parking Lot, 8990 Lorton Station Blvd., Lorton. Call 703-642-0128 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/lorton.

Springfield Farmers Market. Saturdays, through Nov. 23, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Springfield Town Center, 6699 Spring Mall Drive, Springfield. Visit www.community-foodworks.org or call 202-697-7768.

Burke Farmers Market. Through Dec. 21, 8 a.m.-noon at the VRE parking lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke. Call 703-642-0128 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/burke for more.

THURSDAY/JULY 25

Evenings on the Ellipse: Daryl Davis (swing). 5:30-7 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. The Fairfax County Government Center's backyard will be alive with fun, music and good company this summer as the Evenings on the Ellipse concert series returns. Stop by and relax in style with generous tastings and sales from Fairfax County's two Wineries, Paradise Springs and Bull Run. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/evenings-on-the-ellipse for more.

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/JULY 25-27

Mamma Mia. Thursday-Saturday, 7 p.m. at Hayfield Secondary School, 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. The story follows a young bride-to-be who invites three men to her upcoming wedding, each one with the possibility of being her father. \$10-\$12. Call 703-505-9955 or visit www.hayfielddrama.com for tickets.



Kyle Harrell, better known as Humble, has been painting walls, doing illustrations and creating captivating canvases in Richmond for years. His work is all over the city, the state and the world.

Workhouse Mural Project and Festival

Visit the inaugural Workhouse Mural Project (WMP) and Festival. This one-day event is the first mural project of its kind in Fairfax County and will showcase the creativity of regional artists whose primary art form is mural painting. This outdoor festival include live painting, live music and performances, food trucks, cash bar, local vendors and sponsor booths, and more. Saturday, Aug. 3, 3-6 p.m. at Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Road, Lorton. \$15-\$20. RSVP at www.eventbrite.com/e/workhouse-mural-project-and-festival-tickets-61120026645. Visit www.workhousearts.org/ for more.

FRIDAY/JULY 26

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

SATURDAY/JULY 27

Children's Entertainment Series. 10-10:45 a.m. at Burke Lake Park Amphitheater, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Featuring The grandsons, jr. (children's songs). Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/springfield-nights.

Summer Saturdays. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Join Gunston Hall for a summer of fun. Each Saturday in June, July, and August, stop by for a historic adventure on the grounds and in the Visitor Center. Call 703-550-9220 or visit www.gunstonhall.org/visit/guide/upcoming-events.

Mountain Songs/Stories. 3-4:30 p.m. at City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Dulcimer legends Ralph Lee Smith and Madeline MacNeil present mountain songs and stories. Sing-alongs and display of old mountain dulcimers. All ages. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library or call 703-293-6227, ext. 6.

SUNDAY/JULY 28

G-Scale Trains. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Washington, Virginia & Maryland Garden Railway Society (WVMGRS) members will have a G-Scale train display running. The sheer size of these trains is a wonder to behold as is their ability to run through the garden all year around. 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.

Burke Historical Society. 3:30-5 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library,

6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. William Connery speaks on the post-Civil-War career of John S. Mosby: supporting Ulysses S. Grant's presidency, serving as U.S. consul to Hong Kong, mentoring George S. Patton.

Films in the Park: The Jungle Book (2016). 7 p.m. at Strawberry Park in Mosaic, Fairfax. Grab a blanket, friends and family and watch favorite films underneath the stars. Visit mosaicdistrict.com/events/event/films-in-the-park-2/.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 31

Springfield Nights: The English Channel (Rock&Roll). 7-8:30 p.m. at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Springfield Nights returns for a second summer season with free musical performances on Wednesday evenings at Burke Lake Park ranging from bluegrass and pop, to rock and R&B. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/springfield-nights.

Concert Band Performance. 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Mason District Park, 6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Springfield's Kings Park Band presents a band music favorites, with marches such as Americans We, Inglesina, and 76 Trombones; overtures such as Orpheus and Marriage of Figaro; selections from My Fair Lady, and other types of music such as Walking Frog and Charlie Chaplin Portrait. The program is at the amphitheater – seating is provided or bring a lawn chair. Free. Visit kingsparkband.org

THURSDAY/AUG. 1

Evenings on the Ellipse: Machaya (Klezmer). 5:30-7 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. The Fairfax County Government Center's backyard will be alive with fun, music and good company this summer as the Evenings on the Ellipse concert series returns. Stop by and relax in style with generous tastings and sales from



PHOTO COURTESY OF MAMA CHANG

Mama Chang restaurant is located at 3251 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax.

Keeping it Chang

Restaurant review: Mama Chang.

BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY
THE CONNECTION

Recently opened in Fairfax, the immense and glittery Mama Chang restaurant is part of the metro area Peter Chang restaurant empire. Immense, yes, as it apparently can seat up to 200, which will not surprise any patron coming in at mealtime. There could be a wait, and when a table clears, folks may walk through a crowded area with waitstaff dashing around carrying meals.

And apparently the “mama” does not really pertain to Peter Chang’s mom, but is more or less a general, catchall name to reflect assorted female family connections.

Stopping by for dinner, patrons may be mystified by the lengthy dinner menu with so many offerings—from small bites, to “family style” to small plates, that making some final choices could be challenging, particularly because some offerings may not be at all familiar to Chinese foodies. (Note: According to the restaurant’s web page, the dishes reflect Hunan, Szechuan, and Hubei flavors and recipes.)

Take, for example, the dry chili pork intestines or the home-made fish ball in pickled chili soup. The Chang family must be on a crusade to educate the average Western consumer’s palate; though obviously their Chinese compatriots know what the offerings are.

But for those patrons looking out for more familiar dishes,

good news—crispy duck spring rolls, roast pork belly bun, pan-fried noodles with vegetables, and Chang’s roast duck all provide familiar tastes and textures.

One of the must-have offerings, and one that is relatively familiar sounding, is the scallion bubble pancake that looks as large as a blown-up balloon, and apparently is a number 1 seller here. Delicious and tender, and probably one order can feed two to three people, it comes with a dipping sauce and chopsticks so patrons can dunk their pieces into the sauce before eating it.

And as for a main course, the best bet is to scan the “family style” section of the menu, where entrées to feed a party of three or more are listed. There’s bean curd, and braised beef stew, and smoked pork belly. But one of the most robust dishes is the lamb and fish ball stew—the broth is mild, the fish balls are doughy tender, and the lamb comes in long, tender strips.

The interior is airy and bright with many windows brightening the room and pale, bamboo-colored tables and booths. That, too, is underscored by the artfully presented dishes—on bamboo platters, steaming hot pots, and pretty ceramic ware. The staff is super friendly and eager to answer questions from baffled patrons who may not understand what are some of the offerings.

Mama Chang, 3251 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. 703-268-5556. Hours: Mon.-Thurs., 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Sun. 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

PEOPLE

One Small Step Man's greatest journey continues to inspire.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE CONNECTION

It was one small step taken 50 years ago. Around the world, eyes were collectively riveted to grainy pictures on a television screen as others gazed up at the sky in wonder and awe. America had conquered the impossible: A man was on the moon.

"I remember that night vividly," said Paul Lockhart, a retired NASA astronaut and longtime Fairfax Station resident. "It was a clear night in Texas and I was outside with my friends thinking 'Wow! There is somebody up there about to step onto the moon.' It was very exciting."

Lockhart's fascination with space exploration began even earlier, when he watched the space launches of the early '60s.

"One of the few things that all the news networks covered at the time were the space launches," Lockhart said. "I was 5 or 6 and the idea of the unknown really captured my imagination. At the same time, I had an aunt who was a trailblazer in her own way – she was the first female CPA in the state of Texas and flew in open biplanes so she was a bit of a risk taker. She kept putting books on exploration, like Lewis and Clark, in front of me so along with those early space flights I knew this was something I was interested in."

A NATIVE OF AMARILLO, Texas, Lockhart received a BA in mathematics from Texas Tech and a master's in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin. He was commissioned in the U.S. Air Force in 1981 and flew as a test pilot for the F-16 aircraft when he was selected as an astronaut candidate in 1996.

"NASA is a part of our national character. It is recognized and respected around the world and represents the best of what America is."

— Space Shuttle Endeavour astronaut Paul Lockhart



Fairfax Station resident Paul Lockhart, second from left, as Pilot of the crew of the Space Shuttle Endeavour in December of 2002. With him are Commander Kenneth Cockrell and Mission Specialists Franklin Chang-Diaz and Philippe Perrin.

Lockhart's two space missions, STS-111 and STS-113, both in 2002, were missions to the International Space Station aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavour. He piloted the STS-113 mission in December of 2002, the last shuttle mission before the loss of the Space Shuttle Columbia and its crew the following February. The Commander of that mission, Rick Husband, was a childhood

friend.

"Rick was from my hometown and we knew each other in high school," Lockhart

said. "Although we all know the risks it was a hard loss and since I had just completed two shuttle missions, I felt the time was right to leave NASA and return to the Air Force."

Lockhart retired from the Air Force in 2007 and returned to NASA in an administrative position. He currently works as Director of Engineering for PEMDAS Technologies and Innovations, a woman-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned Small Business.

As the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing is celebrated on July 20, Lockhart believes we still have more to learn from space exploration.

"I think space exploration is vital to who we are as a nation," said Lockhart, noting that the last moon landing took place in 1972. "Space technology is critical and has such wide-ranging consequences. Every

time you use your phone, every time you watch a satellite feed, every time someone uses an ATM or is rushed to the hospital in an ambulance – much of that is traceable back to the sciences that NASA developed."

While many are focused on putting a man on Mars, Lockhart believes there is more to learn before that can happen.

"I believe the right thing to do is return to the moon," Lockhart said. "While the technology is there, there is still so much that we don't know about deep space flight. We need to develop the capabilities and resources that will allow us to eventually reach Mars but more importantly return safely."

AS AMERICA CELEBRATES the imagination, dedication and courage that united the nation and conquered what had once seemed impossible, Lockhart added without any hesitation, "The decision to do this program took the same resolve and willingness to assume a high level of risk that our forefathers did when they signed the declaration of independence in 1776 and again in 1944 when America and its allies executed Operation Overlord: D-Day."

Lockhart credits the Apollo program as one of America's greatest examples of risk undertaking.

"We commenced a project that was technically very difficult, fraught with uncertainty and outcome and achieved remarkable success within a very ambitious timetable set by President Kennedy," Lockhart said.

"It was truly a national effort as there were tens of thousands of Americans working on the project, either for the government or at major corporations and even small mom and pop businesses."

And for Lockhart, July 20, 1969, captured everything a young boy would be interested in.

"I wasn't sure how I would get there, but my path to NASA was about trying to do something significant," Lockhart said. "I believed then and believe now that NASA is a part of our national character. It is recognized and respected around the world and represents the best of what America is."



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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

Fairfax County's two Wineries, Paradise Springs and Bull Run. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/evenings-on-the-ellipse for more.

Hometown Thursdays: Lesson Zero. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Old Town Square, 10415 North St., Fairfax. Fairfax's Hometown Thursdays concert series takes place the first and third Thursdays through September. A free, family-friendly event for all ages. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/special-events/hometown-thursdays for more.

FRIDAY/AUG. 2

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

SATURDAY/AUG. 3

Children's Entertainment Series. 10-10:45 a.m. at Burke Lake Park Amphitheater, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Featuring Mr. Jon & Friends (children's songs). Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/springfield-nights.

Unprofane Riders DMV Car Show. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at American Legion Post 176, 6520 Amherst Ave., Springfield. Unprofane Riders DMV 1st Annual Car Show. Cars, Trucks, SUVs and Bikes, all models welcome. Proceeds go to Shelter House, Inc., a nonprofit organization helping victims of domestic abuse. Raffles and giveaways. Spectators free admission; registration for cars, trucks and SUVs \$20, bikes \$15. Bring a donation of school supplies donation and receive entry into the giveaway prizes. Email unprofaneridersva@gmail.com

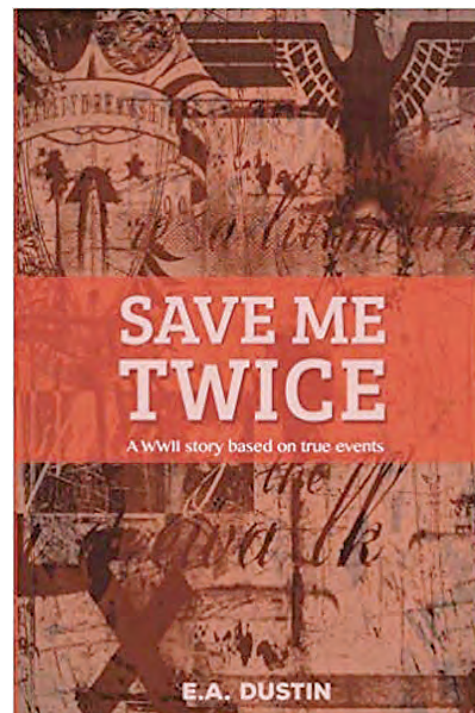
Summer Saturdays. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Join Gunston Hall for a summer of fun. Each Saturday in June, July, and August, stop by for a historic adventure on the grounds and in the Visitor Center. Included with regular admission. Call 703-550-9220 or visit www.gunstonhall.org/visit/guide/upcoming-events.

The Drew-Smith School Reunion and Picnic. Noon-5 p.m. at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, 8115 Fordson Road, Gum Springs. Celebrating the Communities of Spring Bank, Gum Springs, Hybla Valley, and Springfield. Share common history with photos, year books, and tributes to Fairfax County School leaders and community pioneers. Each family member must have a wristband. Tickets must be reserved and picked up before the event. Contact: Carolyn Quander at 703-772-9440 or cquander@outlook.com; and Sharon "Shubby" Suggs at 703-371-3388 or SuggsSharon3@gmail.com. Order a Drew-Smith Reunion Picnic T-Shirt at 703-649-1769 or popcornsb2@cox.net. In case of rainy weather, meet in the Gym at the Gum Springs Community Center.

Workhouse Mural Project and Festival. 3-6 p.m. at Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Road, Lorton. Visit the inaugural Workhouse Mural Project (WMP) and Festival. This one-day event is the first mural project of its kind in Fairfax County and will showcase the creativity of regional artists whose primary art form is mural painting. This outdoor festival include live painting, live music and

Author Event: E. A. Dustin

Join for a discussion and signing with local author E.A. Dustin who will be talking about and signing copies of her book, *Save Me Twice* – a WWII story. She will also give a preview of her upcoming book "Self-Healed," a thriller. Friday, Aug. 9, 7-8:30 p.m. at Barnes and Noble Mosaic District, 2921 District Ave., Suite 180, Fairfax. Free admission. Call 703-245-9260 or visit bn.com for more.



performances, food trucks, cash bar, local vendors and sponsor booths, and more. \$15-\$20. RSVP at www.eventbrite.com/e/workhouse-mural-project-and-festival-tickets-61120026645. Visit www.workhousearts.org/ for more.

SUNDAY/AUG. 4

Reading Circle Activities. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Join for a fun afternoon discussing a book on railroads, everything from the history of railroading to different types of railroad cars. A book on life during the Civil War might also be read and discussed that day. There may be a craft to highlight the book theme of the day. No extra charge for craft fees. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

Burke Historical Society. 3:30-5 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Shortly before D-Day, Jerry Wolf who served as a B-17 turret gunner was shot down. He will be sharing stories of his detention and liberation. Free. Visit www.burkehistoricalsociety.org

Films in the Park: Small Foot (2018). 7 p.m. at Strawberry Park in Mosaic, Fairfax. Mosaic's summer movie lineup has something for the whole family. Grab a blanket, friends and family and watch favorite films underneath the stars. Visit mosaicdistrict.com/events/event/films-in-the-park-2/.

TUESDAY/AUG. 6

Searching Fold3 Records. 7-8:30 p.m. at Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Learn to search military records through the Fold3 database, available through the Library of Virginia and covering from the Revolutionary War to the Vietnam War. Free. Email slawski_brian@yahoo.com or visit www.burkehistoricalsociety.org.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 7

Springfield Nights: The Colin Thompson Band (Blues Rock). 7-8:30 p.m. at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Springfield Nights returns for a second summer season with free musical performances on Wednesday evenings at Burke Lake Park. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/springfield-nights.

THURSDAY/AUG. 8

Evenings on the Ellipse: The David Kitchen Band (pop/rock). 5:30-7 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Evenings on the Ellipse concert series returns on Thursdays. Stop by and relax in style with generous tastings and sales from Fairfax County's two Wineries, Paradise Springs and Bull Run. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/evenings-on-the-ellipse

FRIDAY/AUG. 9

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

Author Event: E. A. Dustin. 7-8:30 p.m. at Barnes and Noble Mosaic District, 2921 District Ave., Suite 180, Fairfax. See above. Call 703-245-9260 or visit bn.com for more.

SATURDAY/AUG. 10

Geocaching. 9:30-11:30 a.m. at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Set off on a modern-day treasure hunt at Burke Lake Park with the Geocaching Workshop. Participants 8-adult will learn to use hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS) units to locate hidden treasure caches within the park. Students will test their skills by following coordinates to find a hidden object or unique geological feature. Bring a GPS. Limited number to borrow. \$22 per person. Call 703-323-6600 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burke-lake.

Music in the Parks - "Feast for Young Ears." 10 a.m. at Burke Lake Park Amphitheater, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra is partnering with Fairfax County Parks to provide free Music in the Parks children's concerts. The performances are engaging and interactive experiences; perfect for young, first-time concertgoers. Each concert offers an introduction to the musicians, their instruments, their roles in creating the music, and features a wide variety of musical selections. Visit www.fairfaxsymphony.org/concerts-in-the-parks.

BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 7

history of shamanic journeying, the different types, and an in-depth explanation describing many different paths that use shamanic journeying as a tool. The third hour will be an application of the skills learned. Donations accepted. Call 703-281-1767 or RSVP at journeyingaugust10.eventbrite.com/

TUESDAY/AUG. 13

Car Seat Safety Check. 5-9 p.m. at the West Springfield district police station, 6140 Rolling Road. Fairfax County Police Department offers free safety check and install events throughout the year to ensure children travel safely. By appointment only; call 703-644-7377 and press 0 at the recording to schedule. In preparation for appointment, install the seat using the instructions that came with the car seat. Trained officers will review the car seat instructions and car owner's manual to be certain that they are being followed as they should.

Family Caregiver Telephone Support Group. 7-8 p.m. Fairfax County's Family Caregiver Telephone Support Group meets by phone on Tuesday, February 13, 7-8 p.m. This month's focus is an open discussion on caregiver stress. Share experiences, gain support and get information without having to travel. Call 703-324-5484, TTY 711 to register.

TUESDAY/AUG. 20

Volunteer Seminar: RSVP. 10:30 a.m. at Junior Achievement Finance Park, 4099 Pickett Road, Fairfax. RSVP-Northern Virginia (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) will hold a seminar on volunteering in retirement. The one-hour event is free and open to the public. To sign up for the Aug. 14 info session, email bmorris@volunteerfairfax.org, call RSV703-403-5360 or visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Car Seat Safety Check. 5-9 p.m. at the West Springfield district police station, 6140 Rolling Road. Fairfax County Police Department offers free safety check and install events throughout the year to ensure children travel safely. By appointment only; call 703-644-7377 and press 0 at the recording to schedule. In preparation for appointment, install the seat using the instructions that came with the car seat.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 21

4th Annual Clergy Breakfast. 8:30-10:30 a.m. at Vienna Baptist Church, 541 Marshall Road, SW, Vienna. This once-a-year connection continues to build fellowship and goodwill throughout the year as attendees collectively address common issues. The Clergy Breakfast also showcases Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna's new vision statement, their mission statement and the current programs and services they have been providing seniors, their caregivers and families for over twenty-one years. All faiths are welcome. RSVP by Aug. 16 at 703-281-0538 or office@scov.org.

Public Comment Sought. The Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, under the leadership of the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), are developing a plan to study Virginia's 179 miles of the Interstate 95 corridor between the Woodrow Wilson Bridge in Alexandria, Virginia and the North Carolina border. The first comment period will end Aug. 21, 2019. Additional comment opportunities will be available throughout the study period. For more information about the study, or to view meeting materials and access the online engagement tool, visit VA95Corridor.org.

SATURDAY/AUG. 24

Messy Church. 5-6:30 p.m. at St. Peter's in the Woods, 5911 Fairview Woods Drive, Fairfax Station. Join St. Peter's in the Woods for their monthly Messy Church. It's a worshipping community especially geared towards families and young children, but welcoming to all. Bible-themed crafts and activities, casual worship and a free, family-style dinner. Call 703-503-9210. Registration is appreciated, visit www.stpetersinthewoods.org/events.

Pet Connection

Send photos by Monday, July 29, to be included. Online at www.connectionnewspapers.com/pets

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"Come On Down!"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Except I was not sitting in the audience for "The Price Is Right" when I heard my name called.

Nor was I needing to guess the cost of my infusion with my treatment that day contingent on my guess not exceeding the "actual retail price." And neither were there any of "Barker's Beauties" to wave their hands and showcase what items I would be attempting to price right.

No. There were only multiple oncology nurses standing in front of the Infusion Center's entry door calling out the names of the next patients lucky enough to begin their treatment.

It wasn't exactly "Plinko," but once inside the Center, the fun, such as it is, really begins.

At least that's the way the activity appeared to me. The preceding day was July 4, and the Center was closed forcing those Thursday patients to be rescheduled to either Wednesday or Friday. As a result, the waiting area was particularly full with patients, along with their family and friends - all of whom are encouraged to attend.

In the midst of this crowd, I sat and waited. We hadn't exactly been assigned numbers, but we were assigned oncology nurses and therefore could only enter the Infusion Center with their assistance.

Then, with all of us "waiters" looking at the entry door, waiting for an oncology nurse to walk through and call our name, the door lock clicked open and out walked two oncology nurses. As soon as they cleared the door and entered the waiting area, they called out their respective patient's names (unfortunately not mine).

Upon hearing their names, the two patients and nearly half a dozen of their supporters got up and moved eagerly toward the entry door. It reminded me of the beginning of "The Price Is Right" when four audience members' names are called in quick succession and implored to "Come On Down!" by George Gray (Johnny Olson, the original announcer, retired years ago) and officially become one of that day's contestants.

However, once inside the Infusion Center, it's dead serious.

Your life is at stake, maybe even at risk, depending upon your cancer/treatment, and at this point, you're not playing any more games (although occasionally, you may be guessing the price of things and wondering how it all gets calculated). So, you slide into your Barcalounger, hold out your arm to have your bar-coded wristband scanned and prepare for your hopefully, life-saving infusion - don't smoke 'em, even if you got 'em.

It's rare that you'll see your oncologist in the Center.

Typically, they'll be seeing patients in examining rooms, performing surgery or rounding in local hospitals. But they're always a phone call away should the nurses need any additional instructions or clarification.

Generally speaking, once inside the Center, all goes as anticipated for us patients: you're in, you're treated, you're out. And when you're out, new patients names are called and on and on it goes, just like "The Price Is Right," except the program doesn't end in an hour.

And just like "The Price Is Right," where there are no shortage of audience members wanting to participate, at the Infusion Center, likewise, there seems not to be a shortage of patients wanting to be treated either. (Granted it's not exactly the same thing, but you get my drift, I'm sure.)

Cancer is not fun, nor funny, and an Infusion Center is not filled with anticipation of cash awards and magnificent trips. There is however, lots of empathy and understanding - from your support system and from staff as well.

But it's the last place you want to be, unlike "The Price Is Right."

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

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