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Fairfax CONNECTION



Running on Runway

NEWS, PAGE 10

'Nothing to Lose and Everything to Gain'

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Espinosa Cruz Pleads Guilty to Murder

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From left, Mahshid Alizadeh (#3384) from Oakton, Jessica Paul (#3740) from Vienna, and Beverly Marsters (#3839) from Fairfax run the Dulles 10k together on Sept. 14.

PHOTO BY TOM MANNING/THE CONNECTION OPINION, PAGE 6 ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 12 CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 14

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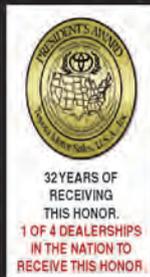
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‘Nothing to Lose and Everything to Gain’

Fairfax City is part of new, regional economic-development alliance.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

There’s strength in numbers and in united efforts – and cities and counties in Northern Virginia found that out when they recently joined together to woo Amazon’s HQ2 to this area. By providing one bid containing four, individual sites, they enabled Amazon to better understand the larger picture of what Northern Virginia has to offer in terms of housing, workforce, amenities and transportation network.

Afterward, seeing how well their collaboration worked, 10 Northern Virginia jurisdictions got together and created the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance (NOVA EDA). On Monday, Sept. 16, it became official – and Fairfax City is one of the founding members.

“It’s a very good day,” said City Economic Development Director Chris Bruno. “The reality is that we have absolutely nothing to lose and everything to gain by participating in this partnership. We have incredible assets in and around this City – and, alone, we don’t have the resources to market them. But as a group, we do, so we benefit a lot.”

Besides the City of Fairfax, the Alliance comprises the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, Arlington County, Fairfax County Economic Development Authority, City of Falls Church, Fauquier County, Loudoun County, City of Manassas, City of Manassas Park, and the Prince William County Department of Economic Development.

IN THE PAST, Northern Virginia localities only banded together occasionally on projects or marketing missions when a particular opportunity arose. Their efforts were unstructured but showed them the importance of collaboration. Then in 2017, when Amazon solicited proposals for its HQ2, it strongly encouraged a regional response. This action spurred four Northern Virginia jurisdictions – Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun counties, plus the city of Alexandria – to join forces and bid on the project as one entity.

Through the proposal process, these four jurisdictions, along with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), created the first, Northern Virginia regional brand. Called “Innovation Lives Here,” it included collateral, a website and an abundance of information highlighting the strength of the region as a whole.

Taking this tack ultimately paid off, resulting in Northern Virginia winning the biggest economic-development project in modern history. In addition, said Bruno, “After Amazon, we all realized we could do better working together, as opposed to against each other. So we talked for a couple months and decided it was time to form this regional, economic-development effort. That way, we could start working with the



Chris Bruno, Fairfax City’s Economic Development Director, is a member of the new NOVA EDA.

Innovation lives here.

state, nationally and internationally on site-selection assistance, business-attraction assistance and coordinated marketing.”

Each jurisdiction’s main economic-development personnel will make up NOVA EDA’s

members. And together, they’ll develop and market a robust, recognizable, regional brand for this area that will, hopefully, lead to more jobs and businesses coming here.

“Businesses don’t care where city and

county boundaries start and end,” explained Bruno. “They just know they want to be in Northern Virginia. So this partnership unlocks a lot of opportunities for future, potential businesses.”

For example, he said, “If you want to locate your startup, tech business near George Mason University in Fairfax City, your employees can live both in and outside of the City, and that’s beneficial. Or your business may have a second office in the county – and that’s great, too.”

Furthermore, added Bruno, “This alliance really allows us to punch above our weight as a city. A lot of larger cities like Washington, D.C., or New York can send people to the West Coast or abroad to try to attract

“This alliance really allows us to punch above our weight as a city.”

— Chris Bruno, Fairfax City Economic Development Director

businesses. And now we’ll have representation when this new organization makes these marketing trips.”

IN RECENT YEARS, Northern Virginia jurisdictions have collaborated on issues such as affordable and workforce housing, transportation and education. So the new alliance is a natural progression that takes their regional cooperation to a higher level and makes Northern Virginia one of the most competitive places in the U.S. for business attraction and growth.

The NOVA EDA is now one of 17 such regional groups in the commonwealth. But now, its Northern Virginia members will have access to the same business-development opportunities as their peers – and Bruno couldn’t be happier.

“I’m really excited about this,” he said. “It’s good to have Fairfax City represented strongly on the regional, economic-development level.”

We’ll all promote the region beyond our own boundaries. But this also allows us to take advantage of marketing opportunities that we, as a small city, currently don’t have, but deserve.”

Braddock District Candidate Forum Oct. 5

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area will hold a Braddock District Candidate Forum on Saturday, Oct. 5, at 3:30 p.m. The event will be held at the Kings Park Library Community Room, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Candidates certified for the Nov. 5 general election have been invited and are listed here as they appear on the Virginia Department of Elec-

tions’ website: Virginia House of Delegates 41st district candidates John M. Wolfe (Independent), Rachel D. Mace (Libertarian), and Eileen Filler-Corn (D); Board of Supervisors Member candidates James R. Walkinshaw (D), Carey Chet Campbell (Independent) and S. Jason Remer (R); School Board Member candidates Zia A. Tompkins (Independent) and Megan O. McLaughlin (Independent). This event is free and open

to the public, and questions for the candidates will come from the audience. Questions can be submitted in advance by accessing: www.surveymonkey.com/r/LWVFA2019. Following the formal session, an informal meet-and-greet session will allow direct audience interaction with the candidates. Any questions can be sent to Katharina Gollner-Sweet at PR@lwv-fairfax.org.

Espinosa Cruz Pleads Guilty to Murder

Teen killed local student in February 2018.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

In February 2018, Fairfax City's Uriel Josaphat Espinosa Cruz shot and killed Centreville High student Matthew Ortega at point-blank range. Last Monday, Sept. 9, in Fairfax County Circuit Court, Espinosa Cruz pleaded guilty to murder.

"Are you entering this guilty plea freely and voluntarily – and because you are, in fact, guilty of this offense?" asked Judge Thomas Mann. "Yes," replied the defendant. Mann then warned him that, because he's not a U.S. citizen, he could be deported because of this conviction.

Mann also told Espinosa Cruz, 19, that he could sentence him to as much as 40 years in prison and that, since there's no parole in Virginia, he'd have to serve at least 85 percent of his sentence. In exchange for his plea, the prosecution agreed to reduce his first-degree murder charge to second-degree and drop his related charges of attempted robbery and using a firearm in the commission of a felony.

Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Kathleen Bilton then explained what her case against Espinosa Cruz would have been, had it gone to trial. She said a Washington Post deliveryman discovered Ortega's body in the road, Feb. 14, 2018, just after 5 a.m., in front of 13506 Jeb Stuart Square

in Centreville.

"He was lying on his stomach with blood coming from his head," she said. The Post employee called 911; but since Ortega, 17, had no ID on him, police didn't know who he was. "Det. Aaron Spooner got a list

of absentee students and determined it was Matthew, and his mother confirmed it," said Bilton. "The medical examiner said cause of death was a single gunshot wound to the top of the head with a .40-caliber bullet."

She said nearby residents heard a scream, the night before, around 10:15 p.m., and detectives found a pill bottle containing just under 2 grams of marijuana in Ortega's pants pocket. Then, said Bilton, "A friend said he knew Matthew and that Uriel had confessed to killing him and said he'd buried the gun somewhere far away."

ORTEGA was actually shot inside a car and his body dumped on the ground afterward. He was in the back seat, with Espinosa Cruz next to him and two other people in the front. The details came out July 27, 2018, during the defendant's preliminary hearing in Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court.

The star witness was Enrique Rivera, 18, who was in the front seat that night and who testified against Espinosa Cruz in exchange for immunity from prosecution. Rivera used to live in Centreville and at-



Uriel Espinosa Cruz



The victim, Matthew Ortega

tend school there with Ortega. And, he said, "I knew Uriel since I was a kid in Fairfax."

On the night of the murder, Rivera said he was driving around in his mother's car, smoking marijuana with Espinosa Cruz and a friend nick-

named Peanut before meeting with Ortega. "It was Uriel's idea," said Rivera. "He said he wanted to rob somebody who had weed; he said it would be easy. [Peanut] contacted Matthew through Snapchat. Matthew sent the address where he was, in Centreville, and I drove there and parked."

Rivera said Peanut was in the front passenger seat, with Espinosa Cruz in the back seat, behind him. Ortega came inside, sitting behind Rivera. "There were people around, so I drove across the street because I knew Uriel was going to rob Matthew," said Rivera. He said he kept the motor running and that, less than a minute later, Ortega was dead.

"Uriel pulled out a gun from his waistband and pointed it near Matthew's chest," said Rivera. "I saw it in the rearview mirror. Matthew put up his hands, palms out, in front of him and said, 'Stop, chill, chill.' That's when Uriel shot Matthew in the head. I never expected Uriel to shoot him."

Afterward, continued Rivera, "Uriel said, 'He's bleeding, he's bleeding.' Uriel grabbed [Ortega's] feet and I grabbed him, too, and

we pulled him out of the car and put him on the ground."

Then, he said, they left Ortega lying on the pavement and headed to Safeway to buy cleaning supplies – "Baby Wipes and stuff" – to erase the evidence of the crime inside the car. Said Rivera: "We all cleaned the blood off the back seat and the floor."

IN COURT MONDAY, Bilton said Espinosa Cruz claims an argument arose between him and Ortega and punches were thrown before he pulled his gun. "He says the victim pushed it away and it went off," she said. "He said he did not mean to pull the trigger."

However, added Bilton, neither Rivera nor Peanut told police anything about an argument, but that "Uriel simply pulled out a gun and shot [Ortega]. Both got immunity and then said the defendant told them he planned to rob Matthew. Both said the shot seemed to surprise Uriel. They said he wanted to take the marijuana from the victim's pocket afterward, but they told him not to."

Judge Mann then formally accepted Espinosa Cruz's plea and set his sentencing for Nov. 15. He'll continue to be held in jail without bond until then. Meanwhile, defense attorney Michael Chick requested permission to have a psychological evaluation performed on his client, and Mann agreed.

Afterward, outside the courtroom, Chick said the charge of second-degree murder also includes accidental homicide. He also said, "Uriel is extremely remorseful for what he did, and he's sorry for the pain he caused Matthew's family."

Public Input Sought on Fairfax Connector Service Changes

Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) will hold a community input meeting on proposed service changes to Fairfax Connector bus service that aims to enhance customer experience. Changes to five existing Fairfax Connector routes (306, 395, 640, 650, and 950) include minor schedule adjustments to improve on-time performance and provide customers with more dependable service. A new express service to the Pentagon (Route 396) from Springfield is also being proposed for implementation. The community meeting will be held on Thursday, Sept. 19, 2019, at 7 p.m., at Eagle View Elementary School cafeteria, 4500 Dixie Hill Road, Fairfax. The meeting location is accessible by Fairfax Connector Routes 605, 621/623 and Metrobus 1C.

In addition to the community meeting, Fairfax Connector staff will be meeting with current passengers, in person, on routes that

would be affected by the proposed service changes throughout September.

Public comments will be accepted until Tuesday, Oct. 1, 2019, at 5 p.m. There are four ways to provide comments:

1. Complete an online survey.
2. E-mail fairfaxconnector@fairfaxcounty.gov.
3. Reach out on Twitter or Facebook.
4. Call 703-339-7200, TTY 703-339-1608 (Mon-Fri, 5 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sat-Sun, 7 a.m.-9 p.m.)

After receiving and reviewing public feedback, FCDOT staff will present the final proposed changes to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in the fall of 2019. If approved, the changes will go into effect in January 2020.

Proposal Highlights
 ❖ Proposed ****NEW SERVICE****
 – Route 396 – Backlick North Park-and-Ride to the Pentagon – This new service would provide express bus service in the I-95/395

corridor previously provided by Route 395. The service will provide a shorter trip by removing the stop at the Gambrill Park and Ride. Route 396 service will have 12 inbound morning and 13 outbound afternoon trips. Route 396 implementation is subject to funding through the NVTC Commuter Choice Grant Program.

❖ Route 306 – GMU - Pentagon – Minor schedule adjustments to improve on-time performance to ensure more accurate arrival times.

❖ Route 395 – Gambrill – Pentagon Express – Discontinue service to the Backlick North Park and

Ride which would be served by the new Route 396.

❖ Route 640 – Stone Road – Westfields Boulevard – Modify the 4:30 p.m. weekday trip leaving the Vienna Metrorail station and the corresponding return trip from Stone Road Park and Ride. Bus service at these locations is also provided on Routes 632 and 642. This adjustment will improve on-time performance and dependability.

❖ Route 650 – Chantilly – Service to Sullyfield Circle will be realigned while Route 651 and will continue to provide service to Sullyfield Circle during morning and afternoon rush hour. Passen-

gers traveling outside of rush hour can access service at Walney Road. This adjustment will improve on-time performance.

❖ Route 950 – Herndon – Reston – Minor schedule adjustments to improve on-time performance on Saturdays between 3-7 p.m. due to traffic on Elden Street.

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Electrify Your Ride VA to Host Educational Event

On Sept. 22 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Old Town Square Park there will be a fun and educational event featuring electric cars. To celebrate National Drive Electric Week, local community members will be bringing their own electric cars to share about the benefits of driving electric. In partnership with the City of Fairfax and the Electrify Your Ride VA campaign, this event will

showcase currently available models of electric vehicles, provide access to information about charging stations, and give residents an opportunity to check out the cars for themselves.

This free, family-friendly event is open to the public. Lots of good stuff in store, including:

❖ FREE refreshments

SEE ELECTRIC CARS, PAGE 7

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME

Advocate Jane Materna greets citizens in Clifton in the IScream4 Equality ice cream truck.

IScream for Gender Equality

By SUSAN LAUME

After the Virginia General Assembly, Privileges and Elections Committee, voted against it in January, Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) proponents are taking a cold message to citizens throughout the Commonwealth — ice cream.

A 38th State vote is necessary to achieve ratification of the ERA to the federal constitution. Advocates want Virginia to have that historic position.

Concentrating on educational outreach, the iScream tour targets students and communities near schools and universities, and some communities where the issue might not come up in normal conversation. Their aim is to assure that voters, and young people in particular, know about the ERA issue and are registered to vote.

Reminiscent of last Fall's ERA bus tour, the campaign, VAratifyERA, is sponsoring the #iScream4Equality ice cream truck tour with multiple stops throughout the Commonwealth.

The tour launched on Aug. 26, Women's Equality Day, and continues with multiple stops on dates through Nov. 5. The truck recently stopped in Clifton.

Kati Homung, Campaign Director, said, "You'd be surprised that most people don't realize there's a gender equality issue and that [equality] is not part of the U.S. constitution already."

The campaign has recognized that the key to passage is to elect candidates who will ratify ERA. They are targeting the 20 closest House of Delegate races, talking to voters about candidates who support ERA.

The Virginia Senate has consistently passed ERA legislation for several years, including a 26-14 vote in favor in 2019. But opposition has blocked passage in the House of Delegates.



Advocates Jane Materna and Johanna Guzman offer voter Calvin Hentges ice cream and ERA information.

Local State Sen. George Barker was an early sponsor of ERA legislation. His wife, Jane Barker, is an active supporter and a leader in the effort to erect a monument recognizing suffragists in Occoquan Regional Park to be dedicated in November.

VAratifyERA also will host a law convention at the University of Richmond on Oct. 26, bringing together law students, legislators, legal scholars and policy makers. Planned for discussion: the ERA, the impact of its ratification on Virginia, and strategies to overcome objections to constitutional change.

For more information on the ERA campaign, tour schedule, or law convention, see the VAratifyERA Facebook page. For information about the Occoquan memorial, go to www.suffaristmemorial.org.

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Police Reform in Fairfax—Four Years Later

BY JOHN LOVAAS
RESTON IMPACT PRODUCER/HOST



It's hard to believe it's been four years since the Ad Hoc Commission to Review Police Practices submitted its final report to Fairfax County's Board of Supervisors. The 202 unanimously agreed recommendations contained therein, if fully implemented as intended by the 40-member Commission, would be transformative of our Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD). While transformation would be an exaggeration of what has been accomplished so far, the progress to date is remarkable, thanks in no small measure to the leadership of Police Chief Edwin Roessler.

The Commission created by the Board of Supervisors in early 2015, fifteen months after an officer's fatal shooting of unarmed John Geer, divided its report into five areas: Communications, Recruitment & Diversity, Mental Health, Use of Force, and Independent Oversight & Investigations. In the 75 years since the Police Department was created, the men in blue controlled all that went on behind the steel blue curtain. Transparency and civilian review were foreign concepts. So, there was tension on a Commission made up of one-third police, including heavy hitters. Our unanimous decisions reflect their presence.

What has been accomplished? Nearly all recommendations to improve Communications, i.e., public information on police operations, have been implemented, including installing a civilian chief of communications. At

INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE

times getting out information on police shootings still is delayed, but it gets out. Transparency does not come easily in a Department with five would-be police unions, but forward movement to date is impressive.

Diversity, however, is the one area where there has been almost zero progress. The Police Department is not representative of the County it serves — especially in hiring and promoting Latinos and African Americans. The county is nearly 10 percent black and 16 percent Latino, but the Force is just over 7 percent black and 4 percent Latino, and worse higher up. It's hard to believe minorities don't apply for and cannot qualify for entry level positions paying \$55,000. The Chief says bad press for cops these days is a main obstacle. That may be, but institutional resistance also certainly plays a role.

Mental Health - a success! Persons with mental illness frequently conflict with police officers, usually involving minor offenses (e.g., disorderly conduct), sometimes with tragic consequences. Half of all fatal shootings by law enforcement involve people with mental illness. Officers are ill prepared to identify persons in crisis much less manage encounters with them.

Their only option for resolution is arrest and incarceration in the county jail, a lockup filled with people in crisis.

Crisis Intervention Training for all officers and a Diversion First program providing facilities to assess and treat (vs. jail) the mentally ill were adopted and are underway.

Use Of Force. Appropriately, 87 of 202 Commission recommendations involve use of force. They include adopting a new philosophy—the Sanctity of Life as the guiding principle for new police policy and practices.

Policies and practices were reviewed and have been overhauled to include de-escalation in confrontations, prompt reporting stressing transparency, emphasis of less lethal techniques, and employing new technologies (e.g., late model tasers and body cameras for all officers). Implementation is nearly complete.

New tasers are now on the way, and long-delayed body cameras are expected to be approved for funding by County Supervisors this month. FCPD could be a topnotch, more humane force if these Use of Force reforms fully sink in. Perhaps John Geer did not die in vain!

A final area, Independent Oversight and Investigation, has met strong resistance from police. Three activities were proposed. A recommendation to build independent investigative capacity with the Commonwealth Attorney was killed by the Supervisors.

However, the Independent Police Auditor (IPA) is in place and reviewing all officer involved shootings, deaths and serious injury investigations conducted by the Internal Affairs Bureau.

Last, the proposed Civilian Review Panel is in place to accept public complaints about police abuse of authority, hear them and review police investigations of them. CRP's power was diluted in the approval process. Still, the creation of the CRP and the IPA mark truly historical turning points in drawing back the steel blue curtain.

More at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecivilianreviewpanel/complaint-process>

Legislating by Skulduggery

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



Last week while Democrats in the North Carolina House of Representatives were attending a 9/11 remembrance service, Republicans called a surprise vote to overturn the Democratic governor's veto of the state budget. While Democrats and media were told that there would be no voting during the morning session, Democrats' attendance at the vigil allowed Republicans to get the three-fifths vote needed to override the veto.

Reaction to the maneuver has been harsh. The Charlotte Observer in an editorial said that "the verdict is now plain. North Carolina's Republican legislative leaders

COMMENTARY

— not actually leaders, but connivers — are beyond shame." The paper described what happened as a "stunning display of contempt for democracy ... but this isn't a case simply of hardball politics and sly legislative maneuvering. This is a case of breaking faith with the people..." The Senate must concur on the override before it becomes effective.

Before Virginians get too smug about what happened in North Carolina we must remember what happened in the Virginia General Assembly about a month ago.

With the continuing string of mass murders in the country — beginning about the time of the massacre at Virginia Tech that for a while was the largest ever and continuing through a mass shooting at a Virginia Beach municipal building — Gov. Ralph Northam called a special session of the General Assembly to consider several bills intended to reduce gun violence.

The special session convened on July 9 to take up bills related to gun violence but without notice to Democrats or media the Republican majority adjourned 90 minutes later without taking up any of the bills and with a return date scheduled after the elections.

There were no bills among those introduced to respond to gun violence that would have confiscated guns or altered the Second Amendment.

They were common-sense bills that according to all public opinion polls I have seen are supported by more than 80 percent and some by more than 90 percent of the public.

The experience in Virginia can be described by the same terms of that in North Carolina: contempt for democracy, a travesty of the process, legislative deceit. You may have seen news reports that the Republican floor leader in the Virginia House received a \$200,000 campaign contribution from the NRA several weeks later.

Partisan control of the Virginia House and Senate are on the line this Nov. 5 as all 140 seats are on the ballot.

There are numerous critically important issues on the ballot that it would take several columns to enumerate.

I do want to add one that gets too little discussion and that is legislative reform. Such reform includes independent drawing of legislative district lines, or getting rid of gerrymandering, that allows the abuses of legislative power in North Carolina and Virginia that are discussed here. As the Charlotte Observer said of the situation in North Carolina, "It was an illegitimate majority acting in an unethical way."

What happened in both states demonstrates once again that the speakership be defined not as the head of the majority party but as an impartial and fair leader. In both instances the speakers of their respective houses should have stopped these episodes of legislating by skulduggery.



NEWS

Electric cars

FROM PAGE 4

- ❖ Food vendors
 - ❖ Activities for kids
 - ❖ Opportunities for community engagement
- Register for free here. www.eventbrite.com/e/electrify-your-ride-va-fairfax-tickets-69801170179?aff=ebapi

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.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 20

Naming and Dedication: The Gerry W. Hyland Building. 1 p.m. at the South County Center, 8350 Richmond Highway. Reception to follow. RSVP for planning purposes. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/naming-and-dedication-gerry-w-hyland-building.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

Women's Ministry 2019 Fall Conference. 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Greater Little Zion Baptist Church, 10185 Zion Drive, Fairfax. Members of the Women's Ministry of Greater Little Zion Baptist Church, Fairfax, Virginia present their 2019 Fall Conference, exploring the theme: Women of God: Stretching for the Imagined Life in Christ. (Ephesians 3:20 MSG). \$45 per individual or \$80 for two SisterFriends. Register at glzbc.org and click on Women's Ministry 2019 Fall Conference or call the church's Administration Office at 703-239-9111.

Watershed Clean-Up Days. 8-11 a.m. at Royal Lake Park, Fairfax. Grab a bag and go on a trash scavenger hunt as the Park Authority hosts

Need more info? Get in touch with laura@generation180.org for any additional questions.

Electrify Your Ride VA is a campaign to raise awareness about the benefits of driving electric and a collaboration of nonprofits Generation180, Green Energy Consumers Alliance, and Virginia Clean Cities.

"Watershed Clean-Up Days" again this fall. lend a hand by helping to remove tires, bottles, cans and other debris from local waterways. Helping to clear the earth's vital arteries is a great community volunteer project for service groups and students. All ages are welcome. For a complete listing and to sign up as an individual volunteer, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/volunteer. Groups should call the site of choice.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 22

50+ Expo. Noon-4 p.m. at Springfield Town Center in Springfield. This annual event feature speakers and exercise demonstrations, health screenings, flu shots, informative resources and entertainment for older adults and their families. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Matthew Mintz, a board-certified internist and Washingtonian Top Doctor, who will address the issue that has everyone abuzz: "Medical cannabis and CBD oil: What you need to know." Free. Visit www.theBeaconNewspapers.com/50-expos or call 301-949-9766.

MONDAY/SEPT. 23

Community Conversations. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Gum Springs Community Center in Alexandria. Fairfax County is planning for the next 10-20 SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

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Normal Adolescent Moods Swings or Depression?

Making a distinction between the two can be difficult.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Stephanie Pironne says her daughter Lila was always a child who was well behaved. From preschool through elementary school, she was described by her teachers as having a kind and cheerful nature. When her daughter, now 13 years old and in eighth grade, began middle school, something changed.

"She now goes from goes from happy to grumpy to sad all within 15 minutes and with nothing around her having changed," said Pironne. "I'm always on edge when she comes down for breakfast in the morning because I never know what I'm going to get. She might be yelling at me for something I didn't know I'd done, giving me the silent treatment or happy and chatty or combination of all three.

Such emotional roller coasters are often a part of puberty. Hormonal changes that happen when puberty begins can cause not only bodily physical changes but mood swings that can feel out of control, say mental health professionals. It's often difficult for parents and those close to teens learn to distinguish normal changes in mood from a more serious mental health issue.

"It's really, really hard to do, because they can present in very much the same way, and aren't always two distinct categories," said psychologist Stacie Isenberg, Psy.D. "Also, sometimes [puberty-driven mood swings], do get treated with medication. I've had patients who were prescribed birth control and some who were prescribed antidepressants."

The severity of the symptoms, says Carol Barnaby, MSW, LCSW-C can help make the distinction," said therapist Carol Barnaby, MSW, LCSW-C. "Crying spells or deep sadness for no apparent reason is a sign. Displaying a loss of energy or isolating themselves from others and persistent low self-esteem are also signals."

"If your child's mood seems off with regularity or they are withdrawing or increasingly irritable, I would advise parents to get a professional assessment," added Isenberg. "You can start with you pediatrician, and based on their recommendation, you may want to have your child see a psychologist or psychiatrist."

The amount of time the symptoms last could also be a clue that professional help is needed. "Teen depression is normally indicated by a persistent change in mood that lasts two weeks or more," said Barnaby. "The change in mood seems to cause significant distress and problems that show up at home, school, during extra-curricular activities, and in social areas of life."

A desire to hurt oneself is an indicator of a mental health issue that is more serious than normal teen mood swings, said Barnaby.

"If your child ever talks about self-harm like cutting themselves, refusing to attend school or other activities they previously enjoyed those are sign that you should seek help immediately.

If your child talks ...or has thoughts about suicide or not wanting to be around, seek professional help immediately," added Isenberg.

Changing Lives. Saving Lives.

"PRC is a non profit providing mental health, crisis intervention and suicide prevention services in Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C. We seek to change and save lives in our community by empowering hope, safety, recovery, wellness, independence and community integration."

"She goes from goes from happy to grumpy to sad all within 15 minutes and with nothing around her having changed. I'm always on edge when she comes down for breakfast in the morning because I never know what I'm going to get."

— Stephanie Pironne

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Virginia Schools Rank Third in Nation with B-minus

A leading education journal ranked Virginia's public schools as third in the nation in student achievement based on the performance of students on national assessments in reading and mathematics, graduation rates and achievement on Advanced Placement examinations.

Education Week's Quality Counts 2019 report awarded the commonwealth a letter

grade of B- for K-12 achievement. Only Massachusetts, with a B+, and New Jersey, with a B, earned higher grades. Superintendent of Public Instruction James Lane said: "I look forward to visiting as many schools as I can during the coming weeks and months and personally congratulating teachers, principals, administrators and support professionals for all they do as we strive to make the commonwealth's schools the best

in the nation."

K-12 achievement comprises one third of Education Week's three-part Quality Counts rating system. Earlier this year, the publication awarded Virginia a B on its "Chance for Success Index" and a C for school finance. Today's grade for K-12 achievement resulted in Virginia earning an overall grade of B- from Education Week for 2019.



Navajo rider, and reigning Rookie of the Year, Keyshawn Whitehorse in action.



The Fairfax Invitational will feature the Top 35 bull riders in the world.

Unleashing the Beast at EagleBank Arena

For just the second time in league history, PBR's (Professional Bull Riders) elite Unleash The Beast will take over Fairfax's EagleBank Arena for two nights on Sept. 21-22.

The Fairfax Invitational will feature the Top 35 bull riders in the world squaring off in epic 8-second confrontations all night long against some of the rankest bulls on the planet, often 10-times their size. Last season the event proved to be a crucial mile-

stone for Kaique Pacheco, winning the stop en route to capturing his first World Championship.

Among those riders anticipated to compete in 2019 are several World Champions including current world No. 1 Jess Lockwood (2017), Cooper Davis (2016), J.B. Mauney (2013, 2015) and Silvano Alves (2011, 2012 and 2014).

Also expected to compete this season is accomplished Navajo rider, and reigning

Rookie of the Year, Keyshawn Whitehorse.

Whitehorse had a record season in 2018, recording six regular-season Top-10 efforts en route to capturing the year's Rookie of the Year title. Finishing the season a career-best No. 19 in the world, Whitehorse clinched the Rookie of the Year title in Round 5 of the PBR World Finals, when he rode Wicked Dreams for a career-high 89.5 points.

Whitehorse and Colten Jesse went ride-

for-ride in the Rookie of the Year race through the second half of the season and it came down to their last outs of the five-day World Finals to crown the league's top Rookie.

The World Finals appearance was Whitehorse's first qualification to the most prestigious event in bull riding. He finished the biggest event of the year for the league that boasts itself as the "toughest sport on dirt."

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Runners pass a United 787 Dreamliner parked on the runway.

Running On Runway

The 7th annual Dulles Day 5k/10k on the Runway took place on Sept. 14. The races were held on a closed runway at Dulles Airport, giving runners a flat course which made for fast races. All proceeds raised from the races benefit Special Olympics Virginia, the Committee for Dulles Community Outreach, and the Washington Airports Task Force.

PHOTOS BY TOM MANNING
THE CONNECTION



From left, Mahshid Alizadeh #3384 from Oakton, Jessica Paul #3740 from Vienna, and Beverly Marsters #3839 from Fairfax run the Dulles 10k together on Sept. 14.



Curtis Lamb from Fairfax makes his way down the runway during the 10k.



Durbois Zim from Fairfax is about to cross the finish line of the 10k.



PHOTOS BY TOM MANNING/THE CONNECTION

Spectators look on as a team pulls a FedEx airplane.

Dulles Day Festival, Plane Pull Attract Crowds

The 27th annual Dulles Day Festival and Plane Pull was held at Washington Dulles International Airport on Sept. 14. The event, presented by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority and United Airlines, has raised more than \$2 million for the Special Olympics of Virginia since it began in 1992. This year, 59 teams competed to see how fast they could pull a FedEx Airbus A320 or a United Boeing 757 airplane 12 feet. The Chesapeake Sheriff's Office won for the twelfth consecutive year. The Chesapeake team completed their pull in 4.95 seconds, beating the team from the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office by just .01 seconds.



The Fairfax County Police Unified Team 2 pulls an 82-ton FedEx Airbus A320.



It's all smiles for the lead pullers of team Diplomatic Security Special Agents Association.

'ARTS By George!' to Feature Broadway Superstar Audra McDonald

The event benefits student scholarships at George Mason University.

BY DAVID SIEGE
THE CONNECTION

Each September, the George Mason University College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) presents the "ARTS by George!" Gala to benefit students' scholarships and local community arts programs.

Students and faculty from the CVPA join forces showcasing exceptional performances and distinctive exhibits in open studios and rehearsal halls throughout the GMU deLaski Performing Arts Building. To benefit students' ability to attend college, the event includes a silent auction of arts-related items and experiences as well as wine and restaurant stations from the top restaurants in



PHOTO BY ALISON MICHAEL ORENSETIN/COURTESY GMU CENTER FOR THE ARTS
Tony, Grammy and Emmy Award winner Audra McDonald in performance at 2019 ARTS By George! Gala concert.

the region for guests to enjoy.

Over the decades "ARTS By George!" has culminated in a gala performance by major performing artists. This year is no exception. Tony, Grammy and Emmy Award recipient Audra McDonald will grace the Center for the Arts stage. She will perform a mix of hits from Broadway and The Great American Songbook. McDonald will be joined onstage by a three piece band including piano, bass and

drums. After her performance she will be on stage for a champagne and dessert reception with Gala guests

The annual "ARTS By George!" event has raised more than \$1 million since 2006 to benefit students. The scholarships have helped many students to attend college.

This year's Gala co-chairs are Steven Golsch (McLean) and Anne Bolger. "I have been blown away

Where and When

"ARTS By George!" Gala and Concert at George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Event: Saturday, Sept. 28, 2019, beginning at 5 p.m. Detailed Gala event tickets and sponsorship information call Emily Rusch at call 703-993-3872. Gala General tickets \$300, \$125*^{Mason Alumni Tickets}. Sponsorships begin at \$1,800

"ARTS by George!" Gala

5 p.m.: Student showcases, silent auction, grand buffet
8 p.m.: Live auction and Fund-a-Student
8:30 p.m.: Headline Great performances with Audra McDonald
10 p.m.: On stage champagne reception with Audra McDonald
Tickets only for the Audra McDonald mainstage concert at 8:30 p.m. are \$50, \$75 and \$100. Visit www.cfa.gmu.edu or call 888-945-2468. Note. ADA accessible seating is available at the Center for the Arts.

by the high caliber talent of GMU visual and performing arts students. With headliner Audra McDonald, you don't want to miss this evening," said Golsch.

"More so, it is not just another night of entertainment. The funds raised help student scholarships," Golsch said. "Scholarships make the difference for some students to be able to attend college."

One of those Mason students assisted with a scholarship is Hasan Crawford from Burke. Crawford graduated from Robinson Secondary School. He is a sophomore at the George Mason College of Visual and Performing

Arts.

"I felt so comfortable applying to Mason. Applying included an audition," said Crawford. "The faculty and students were and have been so helpful. I just fell in love with the school."

"At my audition I learned so much. The faculty members were kind; they gave notes after my audition so I could improve my work," added Crawford. "They helped me find new ways to be the characters I performed." Crawford also mentioned that "while I work, the "ARTS By George!" scholarship reduced my financial anxiety."

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

Shir HaLev, the Community Jewish Chorale of Northern Virginia. Rehearsals are held select Tuesdays, 7:30-9 p.m. at Congregation Olam Tikvah, 3800 Glenbrook Road, Fairfax. The Chorale is a friendly, welcoming, adult volunteer choir. Membership in the group is open to all, members of Congregation Olam Tikvah and other Northern Virginians. Visit carolboydleon.com/shir_halev for more.

Senior Olympics. 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 public is invited, free of charge, to all NVSO events. The games run through Sept. 28. Visit www.nvso.us.

(Im)Permanence Continued. Through Oct. 6 in the McGuireWoods Gallery, 2nd Floor, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. A solo exhibition featuring work by Cynthia Myron. Visit www.WorkhouseArts.org

Juried Exhibition: Clay International. Through Oct. 6 in the Vulcan Gallery, 1st Floor, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Ceramic Artist and Educator Peter Beasecker juried over 300 images to select 52 pieces of art which incorporate a contemporary spirit as well as a technical mastery of the material for 2019 Workhouse Clay International. Clay International represents the depth and breadth of contemporary functional and sculptural ceramic artworks being created throughout the country. Visit www.WorkhouseArts.org for more.

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/SEPT. 19

Sand Art-Rangoli. 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Rangoli patterns are made with colored sand during Diwali in India. Rangoli patterns are created on the floor in living rooms or courtyards using materials such as colored rice, dry flour, colored sand or flower petals. Learn how to use colored sand to make a Rangoli pattern. All materials will be provided by Pohick Regional Library, just come on time. Participants will take their work home. For teens and adults. Free. Email sonal.gosai@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-644-7333, ext. 4, or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/5618898.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 20

Lakeside Campfire Friday. 6:30-8 p.m. at Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. Campfire programs are family-friendly and designed for participants age 3-adult. New topics and different areas of the parks are explored during each program. \$8 per person. Call 703-569-3464 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-accotink.

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.



Unleash the Beast

For just the second time in league history, PBR's (Professional Bull Riders) elite Unleash The Beast will take over Fairfax's EagleBank Arena for two nights. The Fairfax Invitational, the 22nd stop on the premier series, will feature the Top 35 bull riders in the world squaring off in epic 8-second confrontations all night long. Saturday-Sunday, Sept. 21-22 at Fairfax's EagleBank Arena, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Visit www.ticketmaster.com/pbr-unleash-the-beast-tickets/artist/2550701 for tickets.



Community Country Fair

The Annual Pohick Church Country Fair offers a day of outdoor fun and learning with historic colonial church tours, Living History reenactors, organ concerts, children's games, barbecue, hamburgers and hot dogs, homemade apple butter, live country music, and more. Call 703-339-6572 or visit www.pohick.org.

Lakeside Campfire Friday. 7:30-9 p.m. at Hidden Pond Nature Center, 8511 Greeley Blvd., Springfield. Campfire programs are family-friendly and designed for participants age 3-adult. New topics and different areas of the parks are explored during each program. \$10 per person. Call 703-451-9588 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hidden-pond.

Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Resource Fair. 5:45-7:45 p.m. at the Hylton Education Center on the campus of Sentara Northern Virginia Medical Center, 2300 Opitz Blvd., Woodbridge. Mental health experts from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Prince William County Community Services, National Alliance on Mental Illness and more. Free, open to the public. More at pwcmentalhealth.eventbrite.com.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/SEPT. 20-22

Capital Home Show. Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. Brett Tutor, the carpenter on TLC's Trading Spaces, will headline with more than

250 companies exhibiting and showcasing the latest in home remodeling, renovation, décor and redesign. Visit www.capitalhomeshow.com for tickets.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

Archaeology Day. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Gunston Hall will celebrate their annual Archaeology Day, a day dedicated to digging up and discovering the mysteries of the past. Join friends and family for a fun-filled day of activities for all ages including sifting for artifacts, mending archaeology objects, and dressing like an archaeologist. Free with admission. Visit gunstonhall.org/event/archaeology-day/ or call 703-550-9220.

Mini Pop Up Psychic Fair. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at The Old Fire Station # 3 Bar & Grill, 3988 University Drive, Fairfax. Three psychic mediums come together for an event in downtown Fairfax City. Their vendor tables are located in an upstairs room that some say is haunted. Downstairs is the Old Fire Station Bar & Grill where visitors can enjoy food and/or

drink. All three vendors accept credit cards but prefer cash. Entrance is \$1 at the door (cash only) or buy advance tickets at power-of-three.eventbrite.com.

Family Fun Bingo. 1-3 p.m. (doors open 12:30 p.m.) at the Parish Center Gym, St. Leo the Great Catholic Church, 3700 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. All proceeds benefit The Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke and its work for area seniors. \$10. Tickets include two bingo cards that can be played for the entire event, beverages and snacks. Additional cards available at \$1 per card per game. To purchase tickets, call Lisa Carroll at 703-426-2824.

Crabs and Corn Hole. 1-4 p.m. at Fairwinds Brewing Company, 7000 Newington Road, Lorton. The Key Center PTA is sponsoring an All You Can Eat Crabs and Sides. Tickets are limited. All profits will go to support Key Center School programs. \$55. Visit keycenter.fcps.edu/ or call 703-313-4000.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/SEPT. 21-22

Children's Book Sale. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, 1-3 p.m. at City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Thousands of gently read books and non-book media organized by categories including picture books, early readers, nonfiction, chapter books, young adult, etc. \$0.50-\$4. Check or cash only. Free admission. Email FOLfairfaxcity@gmail.com or call 703-293-2132.

Unleash the Beast. At Fairfax's EagleBank Arena, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. PBR's (Professional Bull Riders) elite Unleash The Beast will take over Fairfax's EagleBank Arena for two nights. www.ticketmaster.com/pbr-unleash-the-beast-tickets/artist/2550701 for tickets.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 22

Electric Car Expo. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Old Town Square, North Street, Fairfax. Come see and feel electric vehicles, learn about the benefits of electric, and enjoy local refreshments. Free. Email laura@generation180.org for more.

Book and Memorabilia Sale. 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Arlington-Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Experience the Second Annual Civil War Book & Memorabilia Sale featuring authors, artifacts, books and memorabilia items. Admission \$5 per person. Contact Frank Stringfellow Camp Commander Bud Mayo at mayo5304@cox.net or 703-389-1505

Game Day and Scavenger Hunt. 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Play a Train or History Game as well as try your luck at a Scavenger Hunt. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

MONDAY/SEPT. 23, 30

Funday Monday. 10:30-11:30 a.m. at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Crafts, music, movement, and fun with Mr. Skip, My Gym, Paint Your Own Pottery and a new VIP series featuring community helpers and leaders. Free. www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts or call 703-385-2712.

Fairfax Lions Blood Drive. 2:30-7:30 p.m. at Providence Presbyterian Church, 9019 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. The demand for donated blood in our nation's hospitals is consistently high – about 40,000 donors every single day. Make a life saving difference, give blood. Free. Visit www.fairfaxlions.org or call 703-266-2776.

WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY/SEPT. 25-29

Library Book Sale. Wednesday (member preview), 3-6 p.m.; Thursday, 1-9 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sunday (\$5 bag sale), 1-3 p.m. at the Burke Centre Library. Join the Friends of the Burke Centre Library at their largest fall book sale with over 12,000 books, 75 percent hardcover and 100 percent donated. All proceeds benefit the Burke Centre Library and the Fairfax Library Foundation for collection enhancement and other programming.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 26

Erin Peterson Fund Golf Tournament. At the Westfields Golf Club, 13940 Balmoral Greens Ave., Clifton. Erin was a 2006 Westfield High grad who died in the April 2007 Virginia Tech tragedy. Afterward, her parents started the Erin Peterson Fund (EPF) to award scholarships in her memory to those less fortunate, plus the Leadership for Tomorrow program which provides grants to at-risk male students at Westfield. Community members make that possible each year when they play in the tournament and support the fund. To register, go to www.erinpetersonfund.org and click on Golf Registration. Raffle tickets may also be purchased online.

NEWS

Park Foundation Board Director Emeritus Receives State Volunteer Award

Fairfax County Park Foundation Board Director Stephen Thormahlen was honored with the Distinguished Volunteer Service Award at the Virginia Recreation and Park Society's 64th Annual Conference this month in Tysons Corner.

Former Board Chair and Director Emeritus Thormahlen has provided 16 years of volunteer service to the Park Foundation, which supports the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) by raising private funds, obtaining grants and creating partnerships that supplement tax dollars to meet community needs for park land, facilities and services. During his tenure at the Foundation, numerous projects were completed due to his positive vision and steadfast guidance. Generous personal contributions from he and his wife, Adriane, inspired others to give as well. These gifts supported Rec-PAC summer camps, the Combo Classic Golf Tournament, and trails construction, improvement and maintenance.

Thormahlen is a retired PNC Wealth Management Executive, and in addition to his personal giving for the Arts in the Parks performance series, the PNC Foundation has provided a decade of grants totaling \$92,500 that serve as the Signature Sponsor of the Children's Summer Entertainment Series. Going forward, the Burke Lake Park Improvement campaign will benefit from the largess of the Thormahlen Family Trust.

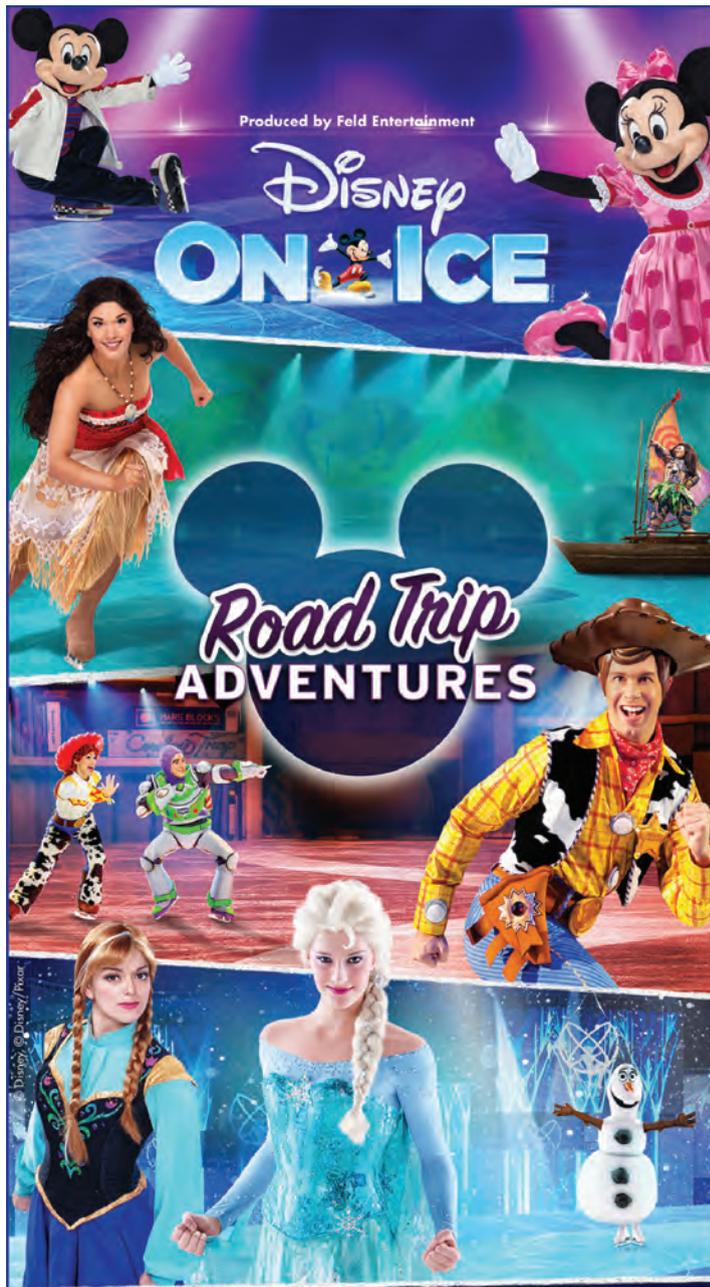
In addition to his monetary gifts, Thormahlen has been generous with his time. He volunteered for more than 500 hours at various board meetings, executive committee meetings, presentations before the Board of Supervisors and the FCPA, volunteering at special Park Authority and Park Foundation public events and at outside meetings.

The VRPS program honors individuals, departments and organizations throughout Virginia who have demonstrated excellence during the previous year in 14 different categories. Applications are judged by a jury of peers. The mission of VRPS is to unite all professionals, students, and interested lay persons engaged in the field of recreation, parks, and other leisure services in the Commonwealth of Virginia.



Fairfax County Park Foundation Board Director Stephen Thormahlen receives the Distinguished Volunteer Service Award.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



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connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

Announcements

Announcements

PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN (Never Known to Fail)

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt. Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity.

Oh Star of the sea, help me and show me herein you are my Mother.

Oh, Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in this necessity.

There are none who can withstand your powers.

Oh, show me herein you are my Mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee. (Repeat three times)

Oh, Holy Mary, I place this cause in your hands. (Repeat three times)

Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I may obtain my goals.

You gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me, and that in all instances of my life, you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in eternal glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. Amen.

Say this prayer on three consecutive days. After three days the request will be granted.

This prayer must be published after the favor has been granted.

Thank you. The Germain family

Announcements

Announcements

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September 27, 28 & 29

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NEWS

First Responders Help Fight Muscular Dystrophy

Technician Teresa Swanson of Fairfax County Fire Station 15 in Chantilly works on Labor Day, in between distress calls, to help kids affected by muscular dystrophy. She and fellow first responders stood at busy traffic intersections throughout Fairfax County during the long weekend to collect this year for the Reston-based non-profit MDA Greater Washington, D.C.



PHOTO BY MARTI MOORE/THE CONNECTION

TAX NOTICE CITY OF FAIRFAX

PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS ARE DUE

Personal Property tax bills have been mailed and are due
October 7, 2019

LATE PAYMENT PENALTY

To avoid a 10% late payment penalty and interest charges, payment must be made in full in person or postmarked by close of business on

October 7, 2019

Taxes may be paid in person Monday – Friday
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Treasurer's Office, Room 234, City Hall

IMPORTANT

Even if you do not receive a bill,
You are responsible for paying personal property taxes on time.

For Additional Information, please call 703-385-7900

FROM PAGE 7

years in the community and they want to hear from everyone. Share thoughts, insights, opinions and experiences that will be used to help further shape a countywide strategic plan. Register via www.fairfaxcounty.gov/strategic-plan-community-conversations. Arrangements for child care, transportation assistance, interpretation services and reasonable ADA accommodations can be made by calling 703-324-5302, TTY 711,

School Board and Chair of the Board of Supervisors. candidate forums. The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area does not support or oppose any party or candidate and invite all certified candidates in their respective districts. After a moderated discussion, meet the candidates. Volunteers, including students, are welcome. Visit www.lvv-fairfax.org/candidateforum

TUESDAY/SEPT. 24

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.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 28

Caregiver Bootcamp. 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax. Join IMCC for a special day-long training event covering many essential caregiving topics. Insight offers the Caregiver Bootcamp to help caretakers learn more about essential caregiving topics, all in one place. Learn from experts in their fields. A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. Register at insightmcc.org, or contact Lindsey Vajpeyi at 703-204-4664 or lindsey.vajpeyi@insightmcc.org.

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 for more.

Registration is appreciated, visit www.stpetersinthewoods.org/events.

MONDAY & WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 30-OCT. 23

Community Emergency Response Team Training. 7-11 p.m. at the Fire and Rescue Academy, 4600 West Ox Road, Fairfax. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program trains county residents in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. Emphasis on hands-on skill development and Fairfax County protocols and procedures. Instructor will provide syllabus with class schedule at first session. This training does not require any special physical strength or agility. Visit volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/#/opp_details/184991 to register.

TUESDAY/OCT. 1

Fairfax Lions Club Dinner Meeting. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at American Legion Post 177, upper level. 939 Oak St., Fairfax. Visit a Lions Club dinner meeting. Enjoy a buffet dinner, speaker, and club announcements. Guests are cordially invited – meet members and learn about Lions community service. Free. Visit www.fairfaxlions.org or call 703-879-5795.

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.

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Medicare Is In The House



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

More like in my wallet. After worrying for the past 18 months about possibly losing my health insurance, I finally hit pay dirt – and it didn't hit back.

I have received my Medicare card and after I "disenroll" from my interim "Obama Care" within the next week or so, I will officially join the ranks of the millions who have insured their health – so to speak, with the Federal Government.

No more will I if-and-or-but about hospitals, doctors ("medical" actually) and prescription drugs (parts "A", "B" and "D" for those of you unfamiliar with the alphabet soup). Dental and vision coverage I'm not so sure about, but at present, I can live with the coverage that I know I have now because the worst case scenarios have been addressed.

And, as a former insurance broker, solving and/or protecting against worst case scenarios was always my main concern.

To invoke "Speedy" from those long-ago Alka Seltzer commercials: "Plop, Plop, Fizz, Fizz. Oh, what a relief it is." And even though I'm not plopping or fizzing, I am effervescent nonetheless at my arrival.

Reaching milestones (even destinations, sort of) is a way I've measured and evaluated my cancer experience. Not that I keep a chart or even a calendar with Xs marking the days but "I've looked at life from both sides now" (heck, I've looked at life from all sides now – and in between, too) and my glass is still half full. I remain positive about my negative and despite having never having seen Joni Mitchell in concert (although I did have tickets to see her at Cole Field House in the '70s – once on stage however, she realized she was too sick to perform and stage right she went) occasionally her songs have spoken to me.

Right now, The United States Government is speaking to me in the form of a red, white and blue card. They are telling me that I have made it to the promised land, a land whose existence was proposed in 1965 and which became law in 1966 fulfilling promises made to all Americans who reach age 65 that health insurance is their right and not because they were privileged.

Nevertheless, I feel privileged to be "Medichere." For 10 years, 10 months and 20 days, dating back to late December 2008 when I first experienced the pain in my rib cage which precipitated my visit to the Emergency Room, I have been under the proverbial gun.

Sometimes, it's been holstered. Other times, it's been locked and loaded. So far, no shots have been fired, even though occasionally I've been in very close range.

I can't say for sure whether I thought I'd actually get here, but let's be realistic, we all had our doubts. But now it's time to gear up.

A tremendous weight has been lifted from my shoulders. All I have to do now is live with the fact that I have stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer, an incurable disease if there ever was one. But here I am, alive and reasonably well.

No more will I have to worry about who, what and where I'm going to be treated. From now on, I'm in charge. (Like Charles.) As a result, I feel as if I've regained a little control of my life.

And for a cancer patient originally diagnosed as "terminal," this control is an extraordinarily wonderful feeling.

I wish I could bottle it like "Brighto." "Brighto, Brighto, makes old bodies new. We'll sell a million bottles, woo, woo, woo, woo, woo, woo." (The Three Stooges in "Dizzy Doctors," 1937.) And that's just the kind of silly enthusiasm I'll need living forward.

Hardly is the lung cancer I have on the run. I wouldn't even say I have it on the walk. A stagger, maybe. (Or maybe that's me who's staggering when I lose my balance because of the neuropathy in my feet.)

Cancer is an adversary unlike any other. It's going to do what it does. I doubt Medicare is going to scare it into remission.

Moreover, my not worrying about having health insurance anymore probably isn't going to have much effect on "the cancer" ("Forrest, Forrest Gump") either. The biggest effect will be on me, emotionally.

I just hope that's enough. Because I'm going to need all the ammunition I can muster.

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



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