Learning the True Meaning of the Holidays

Ground Broken On New Fire Station

Holiday Events In the City of Fairfax

Cast members of City of Fairfax Theatre Co.’s upcoming play include Lilith Nees (the angel) and (front row, from left) Thomas Kennedy, Mindy Thomas, Gregory Kennedy and Mary Kennedy.
The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2020, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from $4,260 to $4,3201.
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from $15,285 to $18,030.
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from $1,350 to $1,3701.
4. An increase in the Account Charge from $39 to $40.
5. An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from $12.20 to $14.481.
6. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from $3.87 to $3.20 per 1,000 gallons of water.
7. An increase in the Peak Use Charge from $3.80 to $3.85.
8. An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from $48 to $49.
9. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and the Peak Use Charge.
10. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Labor from 10% to 10% and the Overhead Charge for Materials from 20% to 23%.
11. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from $38 to $39.

Charge reflect fees associated with a standard ½” residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is also proposing a $192.5 million budget for calendar year 20201. Water sales are expected to provide $166.2 million and the remaining $28.3 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

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The Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes can be viewed on our website at www.fairfaxwater.org/rates. Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Karen Barnette at 703-289-5929. Interested parties may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22032

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 11, 2019 to be included in the record of the public hearing.

News

VDOT's Plan at Popes Head Road Comes Together

By Mike Salmon
The Connection

Anyone who has traveled on the Fairfax County Parkway during peak travel times has experienced the back up at the Popes Head Road signal. From either direction, the traffic backs up on the parkway so far it's difficult to even see the traffic light that's causing the whole thing.

It's on the Virginia Department of Transportation's radar screen though, and another meeting is planned to look at the solutions their engineers have come up with for this $290 million project. The first public information meeting was held in December 2017, and there was a series of meetings up until early November 2019, and now it's moved into the “design public hearing” stage, which is a more official point in the road building process.

According to VDOT, this section of the Fairfax County Parkway from a point just north of Lee Highway to Ox Road gets about 85,000 vehicles a day and Popes Head Road averages about 4,000 vehicles a day.

The plans are to widen about five miles of Fairfax County Parkway from four lanes to six through this corridor, and redo the Popes Head Road interchange using triple roundabouts that will allow traffic to flow freely via two new bridges over the parkway. At that interchange, there will be access to the future Shirley Gate Road extension and Patriot Park as well.

The project will also include improving the Route 123 interchange, the Fairfax County Parkway/Burke Centre Parkway intersection, and a section of a shared-use path. This is a missing segment on the shared-use path between Burke Centre Parkway to Route 123.

Public Hearing Dec. 12

The design public hearing will be held Thursday, Dec. 12 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at James W. Robinson, Jr. Secondary School, 5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. A presentation will begin at 7 p.m. If cancelled due to inclement weather, the meeting will be held Monday, Dec. 16.

At Popes Head Road, eliminating the traffic signal will improve the traffic flow through here.
'It Brings Pride to Our Hearts'

By Bonnie Hobbs
The Connection

With fanfare, flags and firefighters, the City of Fairfax broke ground for the brand-new Fire Station 33 on the site of the now-demolished former station at 10101 Fairfax Blvd. During the 16 months or so of construction, the fire and-rescue personnel who worked there will operate out of Station 3 and the fire department’s training facility.

The ceremony was Saturday, Nov. 16 and, besides several firefighters/paramedics, attendees included Fire Chief John O’Neal, former Fire Chief Dave Rohr, Fairfax Mayor David Meyer, City Manager Rob Stalzer, Treasurer Tom Scibilia and City Council members Jon Stehle, Jennifer Passey, Sang Yi and Janice Miller.

After the presentation of the colors by the Fairfax City Fire Department Honor Guard, Meyer thanked City Council for “its support and foresight with this critical need in the City. This is the first, municipal project the City has done in 14 years. Firefighting is an evolving science, and our firefighters stay on top of all the trends – and this building will position us to take care of the City’s needs for the next 40 years.”

Originally constructed for a single-engine company, the old building’s design no longer met the needs of a modern fire station. It lacked the space to adequately store equipment, and its ready-reserve apparatus had to be housed off-site. Besides rectifying these things, the new facility will increase the Fire Department’s operational readiness and improve safety, health conditions and quality of life for the staff.

LeMay, Erickson, Wilcox Architects designed the new station, which is in the same location as the old one, but it will have a slightly larger building footprint. The front will be a bit closer to Fairfax Boulevard, with aprons in both the front and rear of the building.

The NEW FACILITY will have a secure vestibule and three engine bays, instead of two, like the former station. It will also have a much larger support area, a spacious control room and 25 parking spaces. The second floor will have administrative spaces on the right – three offices and a conference room – and a training area to the left. The third floor will house the dining and kitchen areas, plus bunks for 14 people.

Total project cost is $9.6 million, and the new station is expected to be operational in early 2021. Meyer said it will incorporate gender equity and will also enable the firefighters to keep their dirty gear out of the living spaces, so they won’t be exposed to toxic substances.

Some amenities are also included. “It’s not easy to come back to the fire station after stressful calls, and our firefighters need space to decompress and relax,” explained Meyer. “Overall, this building will help in our retention of and competition for firefighters.”

Besides all that, he added, “A first-class fire station in close proximity to residents allows us to obtain the lowest tax rates possible. We’re all excited to be here, and we thank [everyone attending] and the citizens for all your support for this project.”

O’Neal thanked Meyer, Stalzer, the past and current City Council, former City Manager Bob Sisson and Finance Director David Hodgkins for their “support and guidance” through the whole process which began several years ago. He also recognized the Fire Department’s internal, design-team staff that participated in the building’s needs assessment with the architects.

The team included Asst. Fire Chiefs Andy Vita and now-retired Andrew Wilson, Battalion Chiefs Andrea Clark and Pete Rhoads, Capt. Allen Nicholson, Master Technician Steve Yannucci and Lt. John Jeniec and his father – who shared lessons learned from building a new, volunteer station in their home community. O’Neal also acknowledged the project manager, Rick Thoesen, plus the contractor, Whitener and Jackson.

“We’re very proud and pleased with the design,” said O’Neal. “The new station will be three stories and almost 21,000 square feet, replacing the old, 7,800-square-foot building. Our new facility has incorporated the latest in hot-zone design principles and modern, vehicle-exhaust systems to help limit exposure to carcinogens. “It will have a state-of-the-art decontamination area, equipment-storage areas, and modern offices and living quarters, including individual bunk rooms to help prevent

See Ground, Page 14
Fairfax Teacher Charged

Fairfax County police have charged a 29-year-old teacher at Fairfax High with indecent liberties by a custodian (meaning a person in a position of trust). He is Daniel Kim of Oakton, and police say he had an “inappropriate sexual relationship” with a student at the school. A math teacher, he was in his third year of teaching at Fairfax. Detectives from the Major Crimes Bureau Child Abuse Squad arrested him last Wednesday evening, Nov. 20, at his home. According to police, the detectives began their investigation into his alleged, illicit actions after a student reportedly disclosed information about unlawful sexual conduct with Kim within the past two months. Victim specialists from the Police Department’s Major Crimes Bureau’s Victim Services Division were then assigned to ensure that the alleged victim is receiving appropriate resources and assistance. Following his arrest, Kim was suspended from his teaching position and held in the Adult Detention Center without bond. He’s currently scheduled for a preliminary hearing, Feb. 27, 2020, in the county’s 84741.

Tips may also be sent to Crime Solvers by going to http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org/. Or download the mobile tip411 App, “Fairfax Co Crime Solvers.” Anonymous tipsters are eligible for cash rewards of $100 to $1,000 if their information leads to an arrest.

—Bonnie Hobbs
Fairfax Connection ❖ November 28 - December 4, 2019 ❖ 5

NEWS

Fairfax CROP Hunger Walk Hits the Streets in November

Event is celebrating 50th year.

BY MIKE SALMON
The Connection

On Sunday, Nov. 17, the CROP Hunger Walk took off from the Fairfax Presbyterian Church for the 50th annual fundraising walk, and netted $16,316.58 in online and offline gifts.

For Janet Smith, who was on her 25th walk, the walk will mean that many of the less fortunate will have food. “We who have been blessed with much need to share with others less fortunate to help eliminate world poverty and hunger,” Smith said.

The walkers headed out of the parking lot, many with signs of support for the effort, and wound on a 2.8-mile route through Fairfax, and back to the church where they gathered and listened to the Delaney Hall Band. This band had played at last year’s event too.

CROP stands for “Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty,” and there are nearly 1,000 CROP walks across the country. The fundraising walks occur in the fall and spring each year.

This year is the 50th anniversary of CROP Hunger Walks, the oldest nationally-based walk for hunger in the U.S. and now commonly referred to as the “Granddaddy of charity walks,” according to Smith. It started in 1969 by George Sturgeon who was on his way to a youth retreat in Bismarck, N. D.

“Our Walk is part of this nationwide movement of more than 800 walks nationally that raise about $10 million each year,” Smith said.

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Jump into the Children’s (and Teens’) Connection

Please send all submissions no later than Friday, Dec. 13, 2019. Earlier is better!

D uring the last weeks of each year, this newspaper devotes its pages to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families. Even readers without children of that age spend time admiring and chuckling over the issue. The annual Children’s Con- nection (including Children’s Gazette, Children’s Almanac and Children’s Centre View) is a tradition of well over a decade.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, art classes, individuals and homeschoolers. We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts. Drawings or paintings or photographs of your family, friends, pets or some favorite activity. These should be photographed or scanned and submitted in jpeg format. Photos of sculpture or larger art projects are also welcome.

Short answers to some of the following questions: If you could give your parents, family or friends any gift that didn’t cost money what would that gift be? What are you most looking forward to in the upcoming year? What is one thing that you would change about school? What do you want to be when you grow up? What is your favorite animal? What makes a good parent? What makes a good friend? Describe one of the best or worst things that ever happened to you? What is the best gift you’ve ever been given? Ever received?

Your opinion (around 100 words) about traffic, sports, restaurants, video games, toys, trends, politics, etc.

Poetry or other creative writing.

News stories from school newspapers.

Photos and text about activities or events.

Were you involved in November’s election? What did you think?

To be published, we must have the full first and last name of the student/artist/writer.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student’s full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Home schoolers’ contributions are welcomed.

To send flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail the flash drive to: Children’s Connection (including Children’s Gazette, Children’s Almanac and Children’s Centre View), 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please send all submissions by Friday, Dec. 13, 2019.

You can see last year’s editions by visiting www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/ and scroll down to Children’s Edition.

Email submissions for the Children’s Edition to kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

Q&A

Q: What changes do the 2019 election results bring to the General Assembly?
A: Nov. 5, 2019 results will bring unified Democratic control to the House of Delegates, Senate of Virginia and Governor’s Mansion for the first time since 1991. This will end partisan roadblocks that have prevented progress on common sense firearm violence prevention, women’s rights, worker’s rights, and other measures that will bring Virginia up to speed with the rest of the United States.

Q: What are your personal legislative priorities in the next session, and what are their prospects to pass in General Assembly?
A: My top legislative priority is funding transit improvements in the U.S. 1 and I-95 Corridor. We need to finalize funding for the U.S. 1 bus rapid transit, Yellow Line extension to Hybla Valley, start planning to extend the Blue Line to Potomac Mills Mall, and fund the construction of a new Long Bridge over the Potomac River to expand both VRE and higher speed rail service from D.C. to Richmond, Norfolk and Charlotte. I hope to finally pass hands free legislation, driver’s permits for all Virginians, create a Prince William County Public Defender’s Office, lead on criminal justice reform, and lay the groundwork for clean energy in Virginia.

Q: What do you see as the top five legislative priorities in the next session: What do you think can be achieved, and what is the timeline?
A: Increasing funding for free preschool, K-12, and higher education are top priorities. Virginia’s teachers’ salaries have dropped exponentially from the top third in the country to the bottom third in the last three decades. This is detrimental to teacher recruitment and retention, which ultimately impacts the quality of education for our youth. We will work for progress in implementing universal preschool along with lowering tuition rates at Virginia’s state-supported colleges.

I hope to expand access to voting including no excuse early voting for 45 days before any election.

We will become the 38th and final state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment in the first two weeks.

I also hope we can codify Roe v Wade to protect against a backwards looking U.S. Supreme Court along with repealing the need for ultrasounds before women can exercise their constitutional reproductive rights.

This will be a big session for predatory lending reform. Online lenders who charge 400 percent interest rates and hide behind out-of-state Native American tribes will face regulation. Car title lenders who currently charge 267 percent interest rates authorized by Virginia law will likely face lower rates.

State legislators are currently preparing for the 2020 General Assembly session which will begin Jan. 8 and end in March. Public support is critical and feedback from constituents is important to make sure the Virginias’ voices are heard throughout the legislative process. I look forward to receiving comments and encouragement from constituents to reach out to my office.

Q: Any additional thoughts you would like to share?
A: As always, my staff is available for your constituent service, to help you navigate state agencies, and access services. Please make an appointment to visit us in Richmond. If you are coming, we can schedule a tour of your historic State Capitol. Please reach out to us at 571-249-4484 or district36@senate.virginia.gov. Please also keep an eye out for information about the Puller Institute. As I have in the past, I will bring high school students to Richmond to learn about state government. In the coming weeks, I will also announce our town hall schedule for the 2019 legislative session. Please plan to come share your opinions on legislative issues and make your voice heard!

Letters to the Editor

Season to Go Back to Basics

To the Editor:

In just a couple of days, me and my family will join together to share a meal and eat some pumpkin pie. I’ll get a couple of days off school to sleep in and relax. But Thanksgiving is not just about food, but gratitude. These days, it seems like we don’t appreciate each other enough. But I hope this holiday season, we go back to basics.

Aumaena Choudhury
12th Grade, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology
Millennium-Old Hebrew Bible on Display

Area residents help bring 1,000-year-old Washington Pentateuch to Museum.

By Denise Lew
The Connection

The Washington Pentateuch, an ancient Hebrew Bible, was revealed for the first time in a thousand years to the public in “A Fence around the Torah” special exhibit at the Museum of the Bible on Thursday, Nov. 7. An Arlington resident, Jeff Kloha, who is chief curatorial officer at the Museum of the Bible, headed the team.

The Washington Pentateuch, dating back to the 10th or 11th century, contains the first five books of the Jewish Torah. The leather-bound artifact is the only intact Hebrew Bible manuscript on public display in the U.S. and features the Masoretic Text, which is “the authoritative text of the Hebrew Bible in Jewish and Western Christian tradition,” said Herschel Hepler, a curator at the museum.

“This artifact is a window into an era, a millennium ago, that serves as a basis for how we understand and still talk about the Bible today. Everyone who has the opportunity to come and see this exhibit will witness a significant thread in the Bible’s history; one that has endured for more than a thousand years,” said Kloha.

The Arlington resident has been instrumental in leading the exhibition teams and curators in analysis, planning the exhibit, and development programs at the museum. “We have a talented and amazing team at the Museum of the Bible, many of whom live in northern Virginia,” said Kloha. Another team member, Allison Mullins, is a Springfield native who works as an education program developer at the museum.

Future plans for the museum include continued sponsorship with the Washington Theological Consortium, which the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria takes part in. Kloha and his team are already planning events for the spring. “We hope that this important artifact will provide another reason for people to come to visit the DMV and see the amazing history and culture that is unique to the area,” said Kloha.

For more information on “The Fence around the Torah” special exhibit on display through Nov. 25, 2020, please visit www.museumofthebible.org.
Vestibule Expanded at St. Lawrence Catholic Church

By Mike Salmon
The Connection

At St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Franconia, the interior of the church is spacious, with high ceilings and a centrally located altar, but the lobby was small so when the priest was meeting the congregation after the mass, or a noisy toddler was not being church-like, there wasn’t much room. Construction is now underway at St. Lawrence Catholic Church on a project to expand this area, known as the vestibule.

“It’s a gathering area,” said Deacon Mike Waters, who says mass at St. Lawrence Catholic Church. “It’s really going to change it, the masons have done a great job,” he said.

When completed, the church will have a 15-foot room outside the main doors to the worship area, a covered walkway, wheelchair amenities and new restrooms.

At St. Lawrence Catholic Church, there is daily services, and regular services on Saturday and Sunday. The weekend services are still held in the main church, but the daily service is held in the administrative building until the project is completed sometime next March.

St. Lawrence Catholic Church is locally famous for a rose garden named the “Father McAfee Garden,” they had out front by a statue. In prime growing season, the rose garden is an attraction for many. Before the project started, the rose garden was temporarily relocated to another area on the church property, and will be replanted in March, just in time for the next growing season.

The church was built in 1970 and the interior was upgraded in the 1990s. While it was under construction, the original parish met at Edison High School to celebrate mass until the church facility was completed.

Lots of work underway at St. Lawrence Catholic Church.

A statue gives the site a blessing.

Through the years, a collection of statues and stained-glass windows became part of the church, and they’ll be incorporated into the new part somehow, Waters said. “All the statues and stained-glass windows that were decorated are going to be used,” he said.
Ready to Trot

Seniors among those joining turkey trots on Thanksgiving.

As part of a world-wind trip, Mimi and Rob Mortimer flew from Ethiopia to Paris last week before heading back to Arlington. They wanted to spend Thanksgiving at home with family. Their holiday tradition however, involves more than turkey and dressing. At the crack of dawn, long before the feast, Mimi, 81, and Rob, 82, will lace up their running shoes and join thousands of other runners at the 14th annual Arlington Turkey Trot.

“We first began running in our early 30s,” said Mimi. “We started doing 10k races years ago but now do only the Arlington Turkey Trot with our family, children and grandchildren.”

The Mortimers are proving that age doesn’t limit their ability to pound the pavement on Thanksgiving morning to raise money for charity. In fact, the number of older runners has increased over recent years, says Arlington Turkey Trot race director, Mark Riley, as have donations with runners raising more than $120,000 for Arlington nonprofits that provide food and clothing for those in need.

“We see people who range in age from babies in strollers who are less than a year old up to 90 people who are in the 90s.”

— Mark Riley, Race Director, Arlington Turkey Trot

Marsha Edgell who hopes to run in a turkey hikes and cycles to stay in shape.

“20-30 years ago I’d run the occasional 5k charity race for fun,” continued Edgell. “I got in shape because I want to be capable and able to [run in a turkey trot] if I feel like it.”

Riley says that older runners are motivated by different factors. “For some it’s become a family holiday tradition,” he said. “Running each year preserves that tradition.”

“We’re motivated by the love of the sport,” said Mimi. “Will continue as long as we can.”

“We see people who range in age from babies in strollers who are less than a year old up to 90 people who are in the 90s.”

— Mark Riley, Race Director, Arlington Turkey Trot

Marsha Edgell, who is 72, ran in the Bethesda Turkey Chase last year, but will be in Florida this year for the Seniors First Turkey Trot. “I love doing turkey trots and this one will be fun because people will be dressed in costumes or hats with a Thanksgiving theme,” she said. “There’s even an award for the oldest runner.”

Marsha Edgell is also hoping to do a turkey trot. Two years ago she was out of shape and overweight. Her fitness program entails cycling, hiking and yoga.

“I did a hike in Scotland,” she said. “I never could have done that two years ago.”

“20-30 years ago I’d run the occasional 5k charity race for fun,” continued Edgell. “I got in shape because I want to be capable and able to [run in a turkey trot] if I feel like it.”

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— Mark Riley, Race Director, Arlington Turkey Trot
The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department will be participating in the Annual National Capital Region Fire and EMS Departments’ 2019 TOYS FOR TOTS Campaign. The intent of the campaign is to “bring holiday joy and deliver a message of hope to children.” The campaign will only accept new unwrapped toys and will accept donations beginning Nov. 20.

Last year, the Fire and Rescue Department collected more than 15,000 toys. Children who are served by this campaign include toddlers and youths through age 17. The campaign will accept donations through Friday, Dec. 13.
Putting on a church Christmas pageant should be a fun and joyful experience—after all, ‘tis the season. But when some rowdy, rambunctious siblings get involved, both chaos and hilarity ensue. That’s the premise of City of Fairfax Theatre Co.’s (CFTC) upcoming play, “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever,” to be held at Truro Anglican Church, 10520 Main St. in Fairfax.

Show times are Thursday-Friday, Dec. 5-6, at 7:30 p.m.; and Saturday, Dec. 7, at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets are $15, adults, and $10, children 13 and under, at https://fairfaxcitytheatre.ticketleap.com/best-christmas-pageant/. Prices are $5 more at the door. For group rates, contact fairfaxcitytheatre@gmail.com.

The 16 children and eight adults in the cast, plus the crew of 15, have been rehearsing since September. The story follows the Bradley and Herdman families, and scenes take place in a church and inside the Bradleys’ home.

“It was originally a children’s book published in 1971, so our general look and setting is 1970s Ohio,” said Director Isabelle Baucum. “People will enjoy watching a comedy about the stress of Christmas. These children are animated and interesting to watch; we have a great group of talented performers.”

Gregory Kennedy is the real-life father of twins; and as Bob Bradley, he also portrays their dad in the show. “My character is the comic relief,” said Kennedy. “He doesn’t even want to see the pageant, but he wants to support his lovely wife, Grace, who’s gotten dragged into this production.”

The church’s women’s club plans all the church’s events, and one particular woman controls the pageant every year, so it never changes. And that’s part of why the children don’t want to be in it. But when she breaks her leg, Grace takes over as director. Meanwhile, said Kennedy, “The ragamuffin Herdmans come to the church for the desserts on the day they’re choosing parts for the pageant. No one will cross them because they’re so tough, so they get the main roles. And who would have thought that the hardened, rough-and-tumble Herdmans would learn humility and find the true meaning of Christmas? That’s the emotional center of the production.”

BY THE PLAY’S END, he said, “The church ladies realize this has been their best pageant ever, the dad is glad he was in it, and everyone comes away learning.”

City of Fairfax Theatre presents “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever.”

Playing the Herdman siblings are (back row) Tristan Farmar; (middle, from left) Sabrina Revand, Daniel Plummer and Amelia Marsh; and (front, from left) Leo Kaddoura and Nate Hampel.

See City of Fairfax Theatre. Page 14
Celebrating Holidays with Music

Old favorites return and new performers debut at the Center for the Arts.

By David Siegel

The Center

or nearly three decades the Center for the Arts has offered the best in the performing arts to Northern Virginia audiences. This year is no exception. The "Great Performances Series at Mason" will continue its long-standing tradition of exceptional holiday-themed events.

For the upcoming holiday season, audiences favor a return including "A Chantecler Christmas," the American Festival Pops Orchestra and the Vienna Boys Choir. There will also be a visit from the family friendly "The Very Hungry Caterpillar Christmas." However, the Center is not standing pat with its seasonal scheduling. A singing group will be making their Center debut. It is the renowned, Grammy-nominated and Washington, D.C. based African American cappella ensemble Sweet Honey in the Rock. The group will perform Holiday songs from around the world and with the project titled "Celebrating the Holidays."

"We’re thrilled to be presenting Sweet Honey in the Rock in their Center for the Arts debut. This internationally-renowned cappella ensemble will be sharing a really special program that celebrates holiday traditions from across the globe," said Adrienne Byrant Godwin, programming manager, Center for the Arts. Sweet Honey currently consists of members Carol Maillard, Louise Robinson, Nitanju Bolade Casel, Aisha Khalil, and featured musician Romee Mendez on upright acoustic bass and electric guitar. For "Celebrating the Holidays," Sweet Honey will present its luminous harmonies with sign language interpretation. The group’s finely-honed a cappella sound will range from African to blues to gospel and jazz. "Celebrating the Holidays" will be an unusual fusion of traditional American holiday spiritual songs and hymns, as well as songs from other cultures and religions ranging from Africa to Israel.

In a conversation with Sweet Honey member Aisha Khalil, she spoke of "the great variety of music" that the group will perform. One original song was written in response to the climate crisis. It is "The Living Waters," Khalil indicated that "The Living Waters" speaks to the pollution of the world’s waterways with this lyric: "We used to drink from waters that were pure/And dance in sparkling waters that were pure."

Godwin also announced an addition to the afternoon performance of Sweet Honey. "As a very special treat, audiences should plan to arrive early to hear Anointed Vessels of Unity, Mason’s student gospel choir." The student group will give a free performance in the Concert Hall Lobby before Sweet Honey in the Rock performs.

Where and When

Sweet Honey in the Rock is performance at the Center for the Arts, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performance: Saturday, Dec 7, 2019 at 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. Tickets: $30, $43, or nearly three decades the Center for the Arts has offered the best in the performing arts to Northern Virginia audiences. This year is no exception. The "Great Performances Series at Mason" will continue its long-standing tradition of exceptional holiday-themed events.

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WEDNESDAY/DEC. 4

Blue Christmas Eucharist and Healing Service. 7 p.m. at Pohick Episcopal Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. This special Blue Christmas service recognizes the difficulties of the season for those experiencing grief, loneliness, or loss. This service of meditation, music, candle lighting, and prayers of consolation and healing calls to mind the comfort, hope, and encouragement of the season. Visit the website: pohick.org

DEC. 6-7

Norwegian Christmas Festival.

Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Christ Lutheran Church, 3810 Meredith Drive, Fairfax. Free Admission. Live music, dancing, food booths on Saturday. Visit the website: www.christlutheranfoundation.org

SUNDAY/DEC. 1

Messiah Sing Along. 3 p.m. At Fairfax Presbyterian Church, 10723 Main Street, Fairfax. All are welcome. Bring a score, or borrow one here, and join in the Messiah Sing Along...or simply come and enjoy the music. Visit the website: fairfaxprebyterian.org

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

Christmas at Gunston Hall. 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. At George Mason’s Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Celebrate a holiday tradition at Gunston Hall! Daytime activities include children’s crafts, a visit from Santa, games, and even an indoor snowball fight. The evening hours provide a romantic holiday experience by candlelight as guests are invited to sample period food in the kitchen, explore the grounds, enjoy 18th century music, and chat with characters from the past. Cost: $15 adults (ages 6 – 18), and members receive a 50% discount. Visit the website: https://gunstonhall.org/event/christmas-at-gunston-hall/

CHRISTMAS PARTY. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Twins Ace Hardware, 10311 B Main Street, Fairfax. Free-filled activities include: Live grill demo from celebrity Are grilling chef Jason K Morse of 5280 Culinary; BBQ Provisions & Team Traeger Grills; free goodie bags to the first 150 people at 11 a.m.; delicious apps and desserts; special appearance from children’s author Lindsay Barry; photos with Santa, letters to Santa activity, decorating ideas, giveaways, dessert, more. Visit the website: www.twinsacehardware.com

DEC. 8-9

"The Nutcracker," 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. At Richard J. Ernst Community Cultural Center, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Metropolitan School of the Arts’ Nutcracker brings to life the gift of imagination with Clara and her Nutcracker in a magical journey from her Victorian home through the Land of Snow and into the Land of Sweets, with dazzling dancing, a larger-than-life Christmas tree, more than 100 dancers, and Tchaikovsky’s glorious score. Tickets $20 pairs / $25. Visit the website: metropolitanschools.org to purchase tickets. Winter Wonderland. 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. At Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. At Winter Wonderland, you can hop a train ride on the Holiday Express, take unlimited spins on the Carousels Carousel, play Gingerbread Man Golf or cook s’mores by the fire. Visit with Santa and enjoy hot chocolate or cider and candy canes. Five-hour passes are $15 in advance and $20 on the event day. The park will also See Entertainment, Page 13
**Holiday Events in the City of Fairfax**

**By Bonnie Hobbs**

**The Nutcracker**

Nov. 30-Dec. 1, 2019

**The Nutcracker.** Nov. 30, 4 p.m., and Dec. 1, 2:30 p.m. At W.T. Woodson High School, Fairfax. Fairfax Ballet Company members, along with students from the Russell School of Ballet and professional guest artists, take the audience on a magical journey through a festive party, an epic battle scene, a winter wonderland of sparkling snowflakes, and a Land of Sweets that includes a delicate Sugar Plum Fairy, a dashing Cavalier, graceful Mirlitons, and waltzing flowers. Fairfax Ballet Senior company member Nicole Shortle, a sophomore at Oakton High School, dances the role of Clara; Carlos Martinez, a sophomore in George Mason University’s dance program, portrays the Nutcracker Prince. Professional guest artists, Cody Beaton and Mate Szentes from the Richmond Ballet, dance the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy and the Mouse King, respectively. Tickets are available for purchase at http://fairfaxnutcracker2019.fmgmt.com. Tickets will be available at the door beginning one hour before each show. Group discounts are available for qualifying organizations with 10 or more guests. Email events@fairisunballet.com or call 703-665-9427.

**Entertainment**

**Festival of Lights and Carolers**

This annual event is set for Saturday, Dec. 7, from noon-6 p.m., in Old Town Square, 10415 North St. There'll be live, holiday music plus s'mores and hot cider. The festivities will also include caroling and the lighting of the Christmas tree there at 5:30 p.m.

**Twins Ace Hardware Holiday Party**

Also on Dec. 7, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Twins Ace Hardware at 10310B Main St. will hold a family-friendly celebration filled with holiday-themed activities. They include gifting and home-decorating demonstrations and a photo opportunity with Santa Claus benefiting Children’s National Medical Center. Free goodie bags will be given out while supplies last. Children may write letters to Santa and there will be a coloring book give-away.

**Lunch with Santa**

Children will enjoy crafts, lunch and holiday characters in costume, Saturday, Dec. 14, at Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive. There'll be three seatings – at 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m. Purchase tickets at City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St.; Green Acres, 4401 Sideburn Road and the Sherwood Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy., or via Fairfaxva.gov.

**Holiday Market**

The third annual City of Fairfax Holiday Market will be held in Old Town Square, all three weekends, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, from Dec. 6 through Dec. 22. A wide variety of craft vendors will sell their wares, with different vendors scheduled each weekend. Covered in holiday lights. The fun will include music, hot drinks and gourmet treats.

**Weekend One**

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**Weekend Two**

AMC Woodcrafts

Area718 by Karen Mullarkey

Army Like Whos

Bags2Cute

Bandwagon LLC

Berry Jane's Sweet Delights, Inc.

Cindy's Special Gift

Crochet Treasures

Gourd Art

Homemade Heartfelt

LikableBrats by Lisabeth

Little Hat Creek Farm, LLC

Moonshine Boutique

Native Condoms and Seasonings

Spelldy LLC

Spout Head

Whole Grain Goods

**Weekend Three**

Wood and Glass Design

Pet Wanas Chantilly Cupcakes & Beyond

c. c. ornaments

Sitt & Stoner

Savage and Sweet

InterNutritions, LLC

Crescent Clay

Yarn Chef Creations

Artisanal Leather Aprons

Grandma Mary's Buttons & Bows

Mandi's Dandies Soaps & Such

Murrail's Salisa

Silverstein/Painted Coins

The Secret Jewellery Garden

Art by Zachary Savin

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**Menorah Lighting**

The annual lighting of the menorah, to celebrate the start of Hanukkah, will be held Sunday, Dec. 22, at sundown, in Old Town Square. The festivities will include special treats to eat, plus live entertainment.

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**Fairfax Connection**

November 28 – December 4, 2019

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**SUNDAY/DEC. 8**

"Little Drummer Dude," 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Twins Ace Hardware, 10301 Main St., Annandale. Encore Theatrical Arts will host a family friendly "Little Drummer Dude" that takes place during the time Jesus was born and we see the story through the eyes of the wise men, a traveling band and a little drummer dude. Free. Visit the website: www.twinsacehardware.com.

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**SATURDAY/DEC. 14**

Annual Christmas Musical, 6 p.m. At Greater Little Zion Baptist Church, 4105 Kent Bridge Rd., Fairfax. The Ministry of Music and Performing Arts of Greater Little Zion Baptist Church presents its Annual Christmas Musical, No Ordinary Night, a special service to celebrate the birth of our Savior in narration, music, song, and dance. Featured will be the Greater Little Zion choir and praise dancers, along with a special performance by recording artist and


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**DEC. 14-15**

Winter Wonderland, Noon to 5 p.m. At Burke Lake Park, 7115 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. At Winter Wonderland, you can hop on a train ride through the Christmas spirit walking through the narrow streets of Bethlehem. Haggler with shop owners, sidestep tax collectors, avoid the Roman centurions on your way to the manger scene. Hundreds of families make the trek each year to a replica of the holy city, raised by Parkwood Baptist Church. Features re- enactors, live music, children's crafts, games. Live nativity scene. Free. Ample parking. Reserve advance tickets at www.parkwoodva.com. For details call 703-978-4160.
Ground Broken on New Fire Station

FROM PAGE 3

sleep deprivation," he continued. "Construction will take approximately 16 months as we move forward, and then we can return here for a ribbon-cutting/hose-uncoupling ceremony."

Christopher Kehde, principal with LeMay Erickson, Willcox Architects – which has designed fire station for more than 30 years – said, "We're excited to be here today celebrating this important milestone. We're proud to do our part to serve our first responders who put their lives on the line every day to keep our communities safe."

He said concepts focusing on the health and wellbeing of the firefighters will be an integral part of the new Station 33. "This has been a positive and amazing process," said Kehde. "Thanks again to everyone that's helped us get to this important day, and we look forward to seeing everyone back here at the grand opening."

Kevin Jackson, with Whitener and Jackson, told attendees, "It brings pride to our hearts that we were chosen as your contractor. Thank you – we won't let you down."

SPEAKING LAST was Joe Charley, vice president of the City of Fairfax Professional Firefighters and Paramedics IAFF Local 2702. "Making a career of firefighting is a noble profession," he said. "But firefighters have a 9-percent higher risk of being diagnosed with cancer – and a 14-percent higher risk of dying from cancer – than the general public."

So, he said, "Mayor Meyer has been an advocate for cancer-reducing elements in this building – and, for that, we are eternally grateful. This fire station will also be able to deal with new growth." Then, also thanking O’Neal and Stalzer for their efforts in bringing the project to this point, Charley added, "When management and labor work together, everyone benefits – most of all, the citizens."

City of Fairfax Theatre Presents ‘The Best Christmas Pageant Ever’

FROM PAGE II

ing about the gifts of love, understanding and forgiveness from an unexpected source. And Mindy Thomas, who plays Grace Bradley, brings a lot of personality to her role and brings the best out of the kids."

“I love playing Bob,” said Kennedy. “I brought my own kids to audition for this show and was asked to audition, too, and got the role. It’s just great to share the stage with my real-life children and see how prepared and professional they are.”

His son, Thomas Kennedy, 11, portrays Charlie Bradley. “He’s sometimes sarcastic and says funny stuff to be noticed, and he criticizes everything,” said Thomas. “Sometimes he’s a good angel; but when the Herdmans come in, he goes back into his shell.”

He likes his role because he has a lot of lines and also because “I like how he’s sarcastic,” said Thomas. "But when the Herdmans become involved in the show, Charlie changes from strong and powerful to a scaredy cat. He goes from a big, red fire to a little, blue flame.”

Thomas said the show’s funny and the audience will enjoy “how every scene teeters on the edge of explosion. They’ll also like the Herdmans because they’re humorous, but in their own way. This play teaches people about Jesus’s birth, but in a funny way and with some songs, too.”
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.

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Meetings in 2019

12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035

Dec. 3, 2019 9:30 a.m. - Full Board of Supervisors Meeting

Dec. 10 Committee Meetings
9:30 a.m. - Health, Housing and Human Services Committee
11 a.m. - Development Process Committee
3 p.m. - General Assembly Annual Reception and Work Session

TUESDAY/DEC. 3

Open House 7:30-10:30 a.m. at Main Street Child Development Center, 4401 Sideboard Road, Fairfax. Tours at 8 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. Stop by Main Street for coffee and a quick breakfast. Stop by for a tour or just come by for a quick visit. RSVP encouraged but not required. cschwarten@MainStreetCDC.org or 703-273-1192.

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.

THURSDAY/DEC. 5

Transportation Meeting 7-9 p.m. at Garfield Elementary School, 7101 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) will hold a community input meeting to encourage public input on alternatives developed to provide enhanced Fairfax Connector bus service (routes 310, 321, 322) in the Franconia and Springfield areas. The service alternatives were developed based on the first round of public input received through community engagement, stakeholder engagement and technical analysis. After this round of public engagement, FCDOT will develop a preferred service plan based on public input received and further technical analysis to provide better access to destinations, improved travel times, increased schedule reliability and more dependable service. The community will have an opportunity to review and comment on the preferred service plan in Spring 2020. Residents are encouraged to provide input on the service alternatives by filling out an online survey (Visit https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/franconia-springfield/optimization). The survey will be open from now thru Dec. 17, 2019. Mail comments to Fairfax County Department of Transportation, 4000 Legato Road, Suite 600, Fairfax, VA 22033.

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

PN Support Group 2-4 p.m. at Mason District Government Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale. PN Support Group monthly meeting. Dr. Sarah McQuide addresses lifestyle changes around chronic pain, anxiety and depression of PN. Visit the website: www.pnpsupport.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 8

Low Cost Rabies Vaccine Clinic Noon-2 p.m. at West Springfield Governmental Center, 6140 Rolling Road, Springfield. Cost is $15 per pet, cash and check only. Dogs, cats, and ferrets may be vaccinated at the clinic. Dogs must be on leashes; cats and ferrets must be in carriers. All pets will receive a 3 year rabies vaccination. To obtain a 3-year vaccine, bring pet’s rabies certificate (not tag) showing the current rabies vaccination expiration date. 2019 county dog licenses will be sold for an additional $10 per license. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/animalshelter/communityassistance/rabiesclinics for more.

By KENNETH H. LOURIE

As difficult as the last few weeks have been, with Chino’s at home hospice-type care and ultimate passing, and the “Catch-22” realities of “reverse-mongrelizing” my house “furbirded” by the “derekcat” established on my property, my upcoming quarterly CT scan hasn’t even “blipped” the radar. Though it has occurred already by the time this column prints, it’s quite possible, due to the Thanksgiving holiday, its results won’t be known for much longer, 12 days in fact, than has been customarily and so far, between my wife, Dina and I, none of this has been discussed. Yet as I sit and write on Sunday, the scan is on Wednesday, three days away. Close enough to where it’s been: back and off to the side.

But so what, really? My attitude is, and always has been, “it is what it is, and it will be what it will be.” By the time I slide forth and back under the CT scan’s arch, I imagine, the damage to my body such as it is – or isn’t, will have been done. Either the cancer has grown/spread or it hasn’t. Certain facts remain, and for nailing results from the oncologist will confirm facts at present not in evidence but there is, without being particularly negative about my circumstances, an inevitability to it. One day, my amazing nearly 11-year-ran is going to come to a walk and eventually to a lie-down. And I will deal with it when the times/results come. In the interim however, this next scan is merely another step on the less-than-Merry Go-Round.

I don’t mean to make light of an extremely heavy burden that we cancer patients have to carry: the prospect of death. As Leo I. Cobb said in “The Exorcist”: “I only mention it in passing.” Cancer causes enough internal problems (physically), one doesn’t need, if possible – and so far for me, it has been possible, to cause external (emotional) problems as well. Maybe it’s a kind of resignation or some kind of accommodation or acceptance of reality that has enabled this one to have lived so long beyond my original “11 month to two-year” prognosis (offered up on Feb. 27, 2009), an accomplishment I am proud of occasionally has led to my oncologist showing me off to his medical students; his prize cow I call myself.

I’m just sayin’ the point, really? I’m only in control of so much. Focusing on things I can’t control seems a waste of time and energy. Life is not a dwell on what’s beyond my reach. Grasping at straws, if you can even find one, is likewise counter-productive. And setting oneself up for failure or disappointment is counter-intuitive almost. Why do that? The cancer is already causing enough havoc in my body. Don’t let me affect you too. I’ll “plugging on,” as the NFL referees used to call this major infraction. Now I believe its called “Unnecessary Roughness,” for cancer patients, doing anything, physically or emotionally to hasten your demise/adversely affect your quality of life is most definitely unnecessary roughness and should be penalized.

Learning to live with what ails you seems a much wiser plan than “woosing” is or bemoaning the process. Sure we’ll all love to be on the President’s plan when you’re examined in the morning, scanned in the afternoon and operated on in the evening. But none of us are on the plan and wishing we were, to quote Jean Luc Picard from “Star Trek: Next Generation,” is not going to “Make it so.” But I can live with that. I have lived with that - for almost 11 years now, and counting. I’ll learn the results from my scan soon enough. Good or bad, life goes on. To quote my friend John’s daughter, Melanie: “Whatever.”
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