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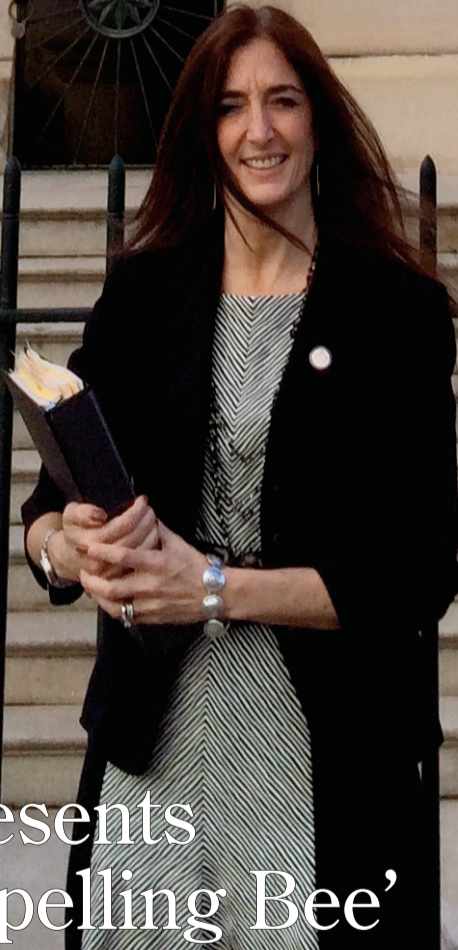
Senior Living

PAGE 6

Promises of a Blue VA: 'A House for all Virginians'

NEWS, PAGE 3

Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41) pictured outside of the Virginia State Capitol. Del. Filler-Corn is the first woman and first Jewish Speaker-designee in Virginia House of Delegates' 400-year history.



Marshall High Presents 'Putnam County Spelling Bee'

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At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2019, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

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 \$1,300 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 \$14.40¹.
6. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$3.07 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 105% to 104% and the Overhead Charge for Materials from 16% to 13%.
11. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$38 to \$39.

¹Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" 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 \$26.3 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2019	2020
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 56,839	\$ 60,020
Power and Utilities	10,890	11,060
Chemicals	7,241	7,878
Purchased Water	7,510	7,812
Supplies and Materials	5,418	5,713
Insurance	991	1,165
Fuel	685	730
Postage	612	622
Contractual Services	12,635	13,103
Professional Services	829	1,290
Other	2,353	2,562
Sub-Total	106,003	111,955
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(10,380)	(10,313)
Total	\$ 95,623	\$ 101,642

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$43,000,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$36,099,000

¹ 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 703-289-6029. 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 22031

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.



PHOTOS BY ANNIE LIM

From left: Soven Bhagat as Vice Principal Paunch, Sylvie VanStory as Rona, Haley Long as Logan, Adriano Moran as William, Catie Cryan as Marcy, Becker Spear as Chip, Torianne Hommer as Olive, Josh Gurdak as Leaf, and Alex Viera as Mitch.

Marshall High Presents 'Putnam County Spelling Bee'

Winner of the Tony and the Drama Desk Awards for Best Book, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee[®] has charmed audiences across the country with its effortless wit and humor. Featuring a fast-paced, wildly funny and touching book by Rachel Sheinkin and a truly fresh and vibrant score by William Finn, this bee is one unforgettable experience.

An eclectic group of six mid-pubescent students vie for the spelling championship of a lifetime. While candidly disclosing hilarious and touching stories from their home lives, the tweens spell their way through a series of (potentially made-up) words, hoping never to hear the soul-crushing, pout-inducing, life un-affirming "ding" of the bell

that signals a spelling mistake. Six spellers enter; one speller leaves! At least the losers get a juice box. With audience participation and charming songs galore.

Opening Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. and running nightly through Dec. 7. Statesmen Theatre Black Box shows historically sell out due to the intimate setting with fewer seats available - don't delay in purchasing tickets. George C. Marshall High School's main auditorium is at 7731 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Tickets are \$10 for students and \$15 for adults and can be purchased online at www.statesmentheatre.org and in limited quantities at the door.

❖ Parent advisory: some material is not appropriate for younger audiences.



From left: Torianne Hommer as Olive, Josh Gurdak as Leaf, Catie Cryan as Marcy, Sylvie VanStory as Rona, Becker Spear as Chip, Haley Long as Logan, Adriano Moran as William.

Promises of a Blue VA: 'A House for all Virginians'

Democrats continue to focus on education, transportation and economic equality issues.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

On the evening of Nov. 5, 2019, voters in Virginia paved the way for a historic legislative shift from red to blue in January 2020 when the Virginia General Assembly convenes. Democrats had turned the tables resulting in Democratic State House and Democratic State Senate whirlwinds as members selected their leaders, sensitive to culture, gender and geographic diversity in Virginia. Democrats have pre-filed priority bills and a resolution for the January Session, to create an early voting system, universal background checks/gun safety, housing nondiscrimination for LGBTQ+ and ratification for the Equal Rights Amendment. They pledged to work on current critical needs in education, transportation and economic equality issues.

"We will be walking our own new path moving forward, of (a) Virginia that represents & listens to all people no matter what they look like, the color of their skin, the language they speak at home, the religion they practice or not, or who they love," tweeted House Speaker-designee Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41).

All 40 seats in the Virginia State Senate and all 100 seats in the Virginia House of Delegates had been up for grabs in the 161st Virginia General Assembly and Virginia Democrats picked up four House District seats, 40 (in Fairfax County), 76, 83 and 94 defeating the four Republican incumbents. Democrats won two other House seats, 28 and 91 in open races. They also picked up two State Senate seats, 10 and 13.

The Democrats would have full control of the state legislature when the Virginia General Assembly session convened on Jan. 8, 2020. All three arms of the state's government would be theirs. With the newfound power of a blue-controlled lower chamber of the Virginia Assembly alongside the Virginia State Senate coupled with a blue Governor's mansion, Democrats could pass their agenda Republicans blocked for years including gun safety, higher minimum



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Lisa Sales, Equal Rights Amendment activist, State Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D-33), Kathy Stewart Shupe, Virginia Equal Right Coalition and activist Sonia Ballinger focus on Virginia ratification of the ERA.

wage and ratification of the Equal Right Amendment.

This also allows Democrats to wrest back control of the redistricting process after the 2020 Census, the shifting and drawing of the new maps for congressional and state legislative districts.

Democratic Agenda

The day after the election with new Democratic power base on the horizon in the state legislature, Governor Northam (D) told CNN's John Berman on "New Day" he planned to reintroduce a slate of "common-sense pieces of legislation" for gun control. "Getting rid of bump stocks, high volume magazines, red flag laws (extreme risk protective orders). I will reintroduce those in January, and I'm convinced with the majority now in the House and the Senate, they will become law. And because of that, Virginia will be safer... Another issue that is very important is women's reproductive health care and stopping the discrimination against the LGBTQ community," Governor Northam said.

Later that day, Governor Northam met with his cabinet and reporters. "Virginia is blue, and I want everyone to know that," he said. Northam stated he wanted to bring back eight bills in January, including decriminalizing marijuana, increasing support for early childhood education, more training for high schoolers to enter the

workforce, and reducing the recidivism rate. In addition, Northam said he hoped the Equal Rights Amendment would be brought to a floor vote and thought progress could be made with raising the minimum wage.

Caucus Leadership Elected

On Saturday, Nov. 9, the new House Democratic Majority Leadership announced the election of Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41) as Speaker-designee. The full House of Delegates would officially vote the first day of the 2020 legislative session. The House also announced Del. Charniele Herring (D-46) as Majority Leader. She became the first woman and the first African American to serve as Majority Leader. And they elected Del. Rip Sullivan (D-48) as Caucus Chair.

"Not only did Virginia just elect the most diverse House of Delegates in its 400-year history, but House Democrats have made history again by nominating a diverse leadership slate to truly represent Virginia," said House Democratic Caucus Executive Director Trevor Southerland. "Finally, we will be able to move forward with a House for All Virginians."

"We are a unified caucus with the shared priority to move our Commonwealth forward, address our most critical challenges, and ensure transparency for all Virgin-

VIEWPOINTS

Legislators on Expectations, Priorities

The Connection asked local Virginia State Senators and Delegates:

- ❖ *What changes do the 2019 election results bring to the General Assembly?*
- ❖ *What do you see as the top five legislative priorities in the next session?*
- ❖ *What are your personal legislative priorities in the next session, and what are their prospects to pass in General Assembly?*

Delegate Ibraheem Samirah (D-86)

"It's hard to understate how unprecedented the 2019 results are for the General Assembly and the Commonwealth. This could be the first time in modern history, really, when we will have a law-making majority that holds basic progressive values like fairness, inclusion, equity and the pursuit of justice for all. We will also have the most diverse General Assembly in Virginia's history.

For the new majority as a whole, I think ratifying the ERA, strengthening voting rights, raising the minimum wage, preventing gun violence, and fair redistricting are at the top of the list. I hope to also move the conversation around affordable and available housing, workers' rights and the legalization of marijuana, including expungement of records.

As a medical professional, reining in the cost of healthcare and improving public health more broadly are my top priorities. I've already introduced legislation this month that is aimed at improving maternal health and mental health. I have more legislation on the way that will work to make affordable, quality health insurance a possibility for uninsured and underinsured Virginians. I'm also planning to help address the outrageous price of prescription drugs. If these ideas get a fair hearing, and the overwhelming evidence around why the healthcare system is so expensive is heard, I think these bills will be able to move through the General Assembly."



Senator Barbara Favola (D-31)-Incoming Chair of Rehabilitation & Social Services:

"The Democratic majorities will honor Virginia's history as a forebearer to the Bill of Rights and a state that included an equality amendment in its own constitution by ratifying the ERA. This will be a momentous occasion. Gun safety measures such as universal background checks and red-flag bills will pass, a women's constitutional right to privacy as defined in Roe v Wade will be protected, and important criminal justice reform measures will pass.

I will be submitting legislation to require paid sick days. Too many families are struggling because they cannot care for themselves or their sick children. I will also be submitting legislation to protect a patient from high medical care bills if he/she received emergency care from out-of-network providers. In collaboration with the Zero Carbon Virginia group, I will be implementing important actions to address climate change. Voters spoke very strongly in 2019 about the need for a new direction in the criminal justice system. One piece of legislation that I have continually sponsored is the expungement of non-violent felony convictions from the records of juveniles. I am confident that this legislation will now pass.

It is noteworthy that the composition of the General Assembly more closely reflects the diversity of our great state, and women are taking their place in the power structure.



ians," said Speaker-designee Filler-Corn. "We are stepping up to lead and understand the value of making our schools better, our communities stronger, our economy fairer, and our Commonwealth the envy of all the states. The firsts are not lost on me - the first woman and the first Jewish person elected Speaker designee in our 400-year

legislative history. ..We have the most diverse House Caucus in our history, which includes cultural, gender and geographic diversity. It also means diversity of experience and perspectives on issues that affect Virginians in all regions.

SEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.
PAGE 10

OPINION

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

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

During 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 Connection (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.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on flash drive. Writing should be submitted in text format. Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

Some suggestions, but don't be limited by these:

- ❖ 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 is your favorite toy? 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 elections? 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

Happy Thanksgiving 2019

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



The 38 British settlers who landed on Dec. 4, 1619 at the site of what is now Berkeley Plantation, about halfway between Williamsburg and Richmond, fell to their knees and thanked the Good Lord. Little wonder that they were thankful

after having survived a 75-day journey that should have taken half that time in the cramped quarters of a small wooden ship with munitions running out.

The guidance provided them by the investors supporting their voyage was that they should observe a period of thankfulness for having completed the journey. Do not envision the event as a bountiful feast for it was not.

The guidance document along with our own imagination of how thankful the voyagers must have been constitute sufficient evidence for Virginia to lay claim to having the first English Thanksgiving in the New World. Along with that claim in most documents celebrating the happening is a note pointing out that it happened two years before the festivities at Plymouth, Massachusetts, that are more commonly referred to as the first Thanksgiving.

The Virginia Thanksgiving is qualified as being the first English Thanksgiving for in Florida there is evidence that the actual first Thanksgiving took place around 50 years before Berkeley and Plymouth near the Matanzas River in St. Augustine, Florida. Rather than a scene like that typically thought of as Thanksgiving, the Florida First Thanksgiving would have had Spanish Conquistadors wearing armor gathering around eating salt pork and

COMMENTARY

drinking red wine with local Native Americans.

From its earliest beginnings the diversity of America with the Spanish, British and Indigenous Americans was providing ample reason for a thanksgiving celebration. None of those early celebrations continued.

The celebration that we know of as Thanksgiving today traces its continuous history to 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation during the Civil War to "render the homage due to the Divine Majesty for the wonderful things he had done in the nation's behalf and...to subdue the anger which has produced and for so long sustained a needless and cruel rebellion...and finally to lead the whole nation through the paths of

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.

Aumena Choudhry

12th Grade, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology.

McLean
CONNECTION

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Gifts with a Touch of History

Holiday shopping is handled at Colvin Run Mill General Store.

BY OLIVIA ANELLO
THE CONNECTION

As we compile holiday shopping lists this season, keep in mind the local gems that lie within our own communities, including Colvin Run Mill General Store in Great Falls. Some of the trickiest people to buy for are the ones who already have everything, but gifts at the General Store are completely one-of-a-kind.

The Colvin Run Mill in Great Falls is a historic site that once milled corn and wheat for the Fairfax County community in the late 1800s. The site hosts regular demonstrations and tours of the mill from April to November.

A stop for all ages, the Colvin Run Mill General Store offers many children's toys, books, and games, such as wooden tops and dominoes, marbles, and card games that children of the late 19th century would have played with. Along the many shelves of toys and games, sit gifts for a parent, a hostess, or someone visiting Fairfax County for the first time. An assortment of stationery, postcards, puzzles, trivets, recipe books, and rare tea leaves line the shelves. Mike Henry, manager of the Colvin Run Mill Historic Site,



The original general store counter, topped with toys and mill-building tools.

shared that many of the store's goods sit on the original countertop that greeted customers in the general store during the late 1800s. Henry also explained how the general store got to be where it is today. As home building in Great Falls increased, the general store was forced to move, and in 1972, the store was lifted, placed on the back of a flatbed truck, and inched slowly across the street to where it now stands.

"To this day, [the store] has still got as much atmosphere as when

it first ran," Henry said. He continued, "We make a strong effort to stock the shelves with really unique things from the time period." For example, all the penny candy is by brands that would have been sold in the late 18th and



PHOTOS BY OLIVIA ANELLO/THE CONNECTION

Old-fashioned penny candy in every flavor.

19th centuries. Henry said: "whether you're shopping for the holidays or not, there's something about giving a gift that is significant to that area or time period, something that was ground on site the way it used to be."

Be sure to knock out your holiday shopping and visit the Colvin Run Mill General Store on Dec. 1 for National Museum Store Day. Shoppers will receive a 15 percent discount off their purchase.



Some of the many children's activities available to purchase at the general store.

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Diplomat of American Board of Obstetrics & Gynecology

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SENIOR LIVING



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARLINGTON TURKEY TROT

Mimi and Rob Mortimer will be among thousands of runners at the 14th annual Arlington Turkey Trot.

Ready to Trot Seniors among those joining turkey trots on Thanksgiving.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

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 to 90 people who are in the 90s," he said. "This is a well-regarded festival and there are people who've been doing it for years."

Alexandra Danza, 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."



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARSHA EDGELL

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

"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

"20-30 years ago I'd run the occasional 5k charity race for fun," continued Edgell. "I got in shape be-

cause 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."

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COURTESY PHOTO

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Stations will accept donations through Friday, Dec. 13.

Fairfax County Fire And Rescue Participating In TOYS FOR TOTS Campaign

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." Stations are accepting 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 only accept new unwrapped toys and you can drop them off at any of our Fire and Rescue Stations. Toys used as weapons or considered to be weapons (i.e., toy guns or knives of any kind) will not be accepted. Checks or money orders for donations must be made payable to TOYS FOR TOTS.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Stations will accept donations through Friday, Dec. 13.

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

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

ONGOING

Great Falls Farmers Market. Year-round, Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., 778 Walker Road, Great Falls. Email kathleen@greatfallsfarmersmarket.org

Oakton Farmers Market. Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax Church, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Year-round weekly farmers market in Oakton. Visit community-foodworks.org.

Mah Jongg Cards. Order cards through Jan. 15, 2020, from Temple Rodef Shalom, 2100 Westmoreland St. 2020 Mah Jongg cards are \$8 for small cards and \$9 for large cards. Official cards and will be sent directly from the National Mah Jongg League in late March/early April 2020. Go to bit.ly/mahjonggcards2020 or email iva.gresko@gmail.com to order.

CHRISTMAS AND HOLIDAYS

NOW THRU DEC. 22

Holiday Art Market. Noon to 6 p.m. At 101 Church Street, NW, Vienna. The Vienna Arts Society presents hundreds of original artworks as well as hand-crafted gift items; to include jewelry, silk scarves, pottery, fused glass and more. Free. Market hours are Thursdays - Sundays from noon - 6 p.m. In addition, doors will open during the annual Vienna Church Street Stroll, 5- 9 p.m., Monday, Dec. 2, when the street fills with hundreds celebrating Santa's arrival in town. Visit the website: www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

NOW THRU DEC. 24

HGTV's Santa HQ. At Tysons Corner Center, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Kids can explore the wonder of Santa in the digital age with HGTV's Santa HQ at Tysons Corner Center! This holiday, check out the interactive Elf Academy at Santa HQ. You can try on the latest elf looks with Santa's Magic Mirror, create your very own Elf-ID Card and scan yourself on the Naughty or Nice O'Meter. Plus, new this year, spend less time in line and more time on holiday fun with a Fast Pass. Prices and times vary. Visit the website: www.tysonscornercenter.com/SantaHQ

THURSDAY/NOV. 28

Thanksgiving Feast. Specials from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. At Amphora Restaurant, 377 Maple Ave. West, Vienna. Amphora will be serving traditional turkey dinners in addition to their regular menu plus holiday specials, complete with slice of pumpkin pie for dessert. No reservations required. Visit the website: <http://amphoragroup.com>

Zenola Thanksgiving. 12 to 8 p.m. At Zenola, 132 Branch Road, SE, Vienna. Zenola, a new family-owned restaurant in the heart of Vienna, invites you to its first annual Thanksgiving dinner. Cost is \$45.99 for adults, 22.99 for children 12 and under. Visit the website: www.zenolavienna.com.

FRIDAY/NOV. 29

Reston Holiday Parade. 10 a.m. At Reston Town Center, Reston. The 29th annual Reston Holiday Parade - one of USA Today's 10 Best - plus

tree lighting, sing-along, horse-drawn carriage rides, and more all day. Rain or shine. Schedule: 12:30 - 4:30 p.m.: Visits and photos with Santa & Mrs. Claus;
11 a.m. - 6 p.m.: Mini-train rides on Market Street;
5 p.m.: Dance Performance at Fountain Square;
6- 6:30 p.m.: Tree Lighting & Sing Along;
6:30- 10 p.m.: Horse-drawn Carriage Rides. Visit www.restontowncenter.com/holidays.

NOV. 29 THRU DEC. 24

ACS Gift Wrapping. 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. At Tysons Corner Center, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The American Cancer Society volunteers will be offering holiday gift wrapping, located next to Santa Claus Headquarters in the mall, Fashion Court, Level 1. Donations to help fight cancer are welcome. Free. All donations for the gift wrapping go to fight cancer from all angles with the American Cancer Society. Email: shiri.rozenberg@cancer.org or visit the website: www.cancer.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 1

McLean's WinterFest Parade. Pre-parade festivities at 2:30 p.m. Parade starts at 3:30 p.m. at Langley Shopping Center; moves from Elm Street and Beverly Road to Old Chain Bridge Road in McLean. This year, WinterFest will salute Grand Marshals Sharon Bulova, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Janie Strauss, Fairfax County School Board member, both retiring after 30 years of service to Fairfax County and its



PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Girl Scout Troop 4022 marches in last year's parade.

McLean's WinterFest Parade

SUNDAY/DEC. 1

McLean's WinterFest Parade. Pre-parade festivities at 2:30 p.m. Parade starts at 3:30 p.m. at Langley Shopping Center; moves from Elm Street and Beverly Road to Old Chain Bridge Road in McLean. This year, WinterFest will salute Grand Marshals Sharon Bulova, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Janie Strauss, Fairfax County School Board member, both retiring after 30 years of service to Fairfax County and its residents. Will include performances by the McLean Baptist Hand Bell Choir, Kent Gardens Elementary School chorus, Langley High School Madrigals and the McLean Youth Orchestra's brass and wind ensemble presenting a medley of holiday favorites. The Master of Ceremonies is Peggy Fox. Visit the website <http://www.mcleanwinterfest.org>.

residents. Will include performances by the McLean Baptist Hand Bell Choir, Kent Gardens Elementary School chorus, Langley High School Madrigals and the McLean Youth Orchestra's brass and wind ensemble presenting a medley of holiday favorites. The Master of Ceremonies is Peggy Fox. Visit the website <http://www.mcleanwinterfest.org>.

2019 Celebration of Lights. 3:45-6:30 p.m. At the Village Field in Great Falls (behind the Post Office). Celebrate the beginning of the season with the 29th Annual Christmas Tree Lighting. Enjoy hot cocoa and cookies next to the fire as you listen

to local children's choral groups sing seasonal music. The petting zoo and pony rides will keep your kids busy until Mr. and Mrs. Claus arrive by antique fire truck to light the tree. The timeline is as follows:
3:45 p.m. - Great Falls United Methodist Preschool
4:00 p.m. - Village Green Day School Pony Rides and Petting Zoo begin

4:15 p.m. - King's Kids Preschool
4:30 p.m. - Siena Academy
4:45 p.m. - St Francis Creche Preschool
5:00 p.m. - Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive

SEE HOLIDAY, PAGE 9



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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 8

to light the tree
 5:15 p.m. - Forestville ES Ensembles
 5:30 p.m. - Great Falls ES
 5:45 p.m. - Colvin Run ES Singalong
 6:00 p.m. - Live Nativity (pony rides and petting zoo close)
 Volunteers are needed between 4-6 p.m. Contact info@celebrategreatfalls.org if you are available. After Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in an antique fire truck to light the Great Falls Tree, they will meet all children who wish to share their holiday wishes.

THURSDAY/DEC. 5

53rd Annual McLean Holiday Homes Tour. Hours of tour: 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Tour four large, festively decorated homes in McLean's Ballantrae Farm and Langley Forest. Lunch, jewelry and holiday boutique, baked goods at Trinity United Methodist Church, McLean. Cost: \$30 before Dec. 5th and \$35 after at Mesmeralda's, in McLean; Karin's Florist, in Vienna, and Great Dogs of Great Falls; also on website, www.mcleanwomansclub.org and at church. Call 703-556-0197.

DEC. 5-23

MBC Christmas Drive-Through Light Show. 7:15-9:30 p.m. At McLean Bible Church, 8925 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. The public is invited to drive through the spectacular Drive-Through Light Show set up around the McLean Bible Church Tysons building. Experience the story of Christmas with your family from the comfort of your vehicle. Free Visit the website: mcleanbible.org/christmas

DEC. 5 AND 6

Tiny Tots Concerts. Dec. 5 at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. ("Jammy Friendly"); and Dec. 6 at 10 a.m. At James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. The James Madison High School Band Program presents an exciting concert celebration featuring a wide spectrum of seasonal music. Costumed performers include old friends and some very special surprise guests. Sing, clap and dance along with the band as you are introduced to the wonderful world of music and symphonic instruments. Advance purchase is recommended to ensure admission. Tickets are \$9 per person and may be purchased online at <https://www.jmhsband.org>. Admission is free for babies in arms (under age 1). Walk-in tickets may be purchased in the lobby by check, cash or credit card 30 minutes prior to the show for \$10 per person if the concert has not sold out. Visit the website: www.jmhsband.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

Breakfast With Santa. 8:30-10:30 a.m. At St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Make memories with a picture with Santa and avoid the malls. Free community event open to all to benefit Housing Up and Samaritan Ministry. Suggested donation is a new, unwrapped toy. Free. Email: Annabeebacon@gmail.com or call 571-235-6349.

SUNDAY/DEC. 8

Santa Visits. 12 - 2 p.m. At Freeman Store and Museum, 131 Church Street, NE, Vienna. Presented by the Historic Vienna, Inc., The jolly ol' elf will listen to children's holiday wishes in the decorated parlor next to the Christmas tree. Free admission; no reservations necessary. Questions? Call 703-938-5187, email historiciennava@gmail.com, or visit historiciennainc.org.



PHOTO BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

The lighting of the Christmas Tree at the Great Falls Celebration of Lights will take place Sunday, Dec. 1 at the Great Falls Village Centre.

SUNDAY/DEC. 1

2019 Celebration of Lights. 3:45-6:30 p.m. At the Village Field in Great Falls (behind the Post Office). Celebrate the beginning of the season with the 29th Annual Christmas Tree Lighting. Enjoy hot cocoa and cookies next to the fire as you listen to local children's choral groups sing seasonal music. The petting zoo and pony rides will keep your kids busy until Mr. and Mrs. Claus arrive by antique fire truck to light the tree. The timeline is as follows:
 3:45 p.m. - Great Falls United Methodist Preschool
 4:00 p.m. - Village Green Day School
 Pony Rides and Petting Zoo begin
 4:15 p.m. - King's Kids Preschool
 4:30 p.m. - Siena Academy
 4:45 p.m. - St Francis Creche Preschool
 5:00 p.m. - Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive to light the tree
 5:15 p.m. - Forestville ES Ensembles
 5:30 p.m. - Great Falls ES
 5:45 p.m. - Colvin Run ES Singalong
 6:00 p.m. - Live Nativity (pony rides and petting zoo close)
 Volunteers are needed between 4-6 p.m. Contact info@celebrategreatfalls.org if you are available. After Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in an antique fire truck to light the Great Falls Tree, they will meet all children who wish to share their holiday wishes.

EVENTS IN ALEXANDRIA

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 6-7

The Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend. At various Old Town Alexandria locations. The Campagna Center presents the 49th Annual Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend and Parade. The parade is Dec. 7 at 11 a.m. and begins at St. Asaph and Wolfe Streets and concludes at Market Square with a massed band concert. Admission: Free for parade



The Hess family of the MiKiDo Martial Arts Center in Baileys Crossroads.

MiKiDo Martial Arts Christmas Show

SATURDAY/DEC. 14

MiKiDo Martial Arts Christmas Show. 11 a.m. At 3443 Carlin Springs Road, Baileys Crossroads. MiKiDo Martial Arts Center, a family-owned business that has been in the area for 37 years, will hold its Annual Christmas Show where the participants will showcase their skills. Special guests are the children from Second Story (a homeless shelter for youth in Northern Virginia). This will be the 8th year that the children from Second Story will be attending. This year will be special since there will be a MiKiDo Black Belt promotion/test. Brent Hess, the current leader of MiKiDo and his mother, Maria Hess will be participating in the promotion test. Contact 703-618-9343 or visit www.mikido.com.

and Heather and Greens Sales; \$180-\$290 for Taste of Scotland; \$40 for Holiday Home Tours. In 1749, the City of Alexandria was officially established by three Scottish merchants and named after its original founder, John Alexander, also of Scottish descent. Through your support of the events of The Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend, you provide vital support to Campagna Center programs that serve more than 2,000 children, teens, and adults throughout the year. Visit the website: <https://www.campagnacenter.org/scottishwalkweekend>

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

Boat Parade of Lights. Parade begins at 5:30 p.m.; Dockside festivities 2 to 8 p.m. At Waterfront Park, 1 King Street, Alexandria. Parade viewing areas: Founders Park (351 N. Union St.), Alexandria City Marina (0 Cameron St.), Waterfront Park (1 King St. and 1A Prince St.), Point Lumley Park (1 Duke St.), Shipyard/Harborside Park (1 Wilkes St.), Windmill Hill Park (501 S. Union St.) and Ford's Landing Park (99 Franklin St.). Admission: Free; \$ for food/drink and some activities. Visit AlexandriaVA.com/boatparade Schedule in Old Town (2 to 8 p.m.)
 ❖ Holiday music and giveaways from 97.1 WASH-FM
 ❖ Letters to Santa postcard station from Penny Post
 ❖ Holiday ornament activity from AR Workshop Alexandria (2 to 4 p.m.)
 ❖ Bookmark making station from Old Town Books (4:30 to 8 p.m.)
 ❖ Torpedo Factory Art Center Holiday Festival
 ❖ Santa arrives by fireboat at the Alexandria City Marina (3:30 p.m.)
 ❖ Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights begins (5:30 p.m.)

TUESDAY/DEC. 31

First Night Alexandria. 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. At venues throughout Old Town Alexandria. This 25th Anniversary Celebration is the largest New Year's Eve party in the D.C. region that is safe and fun for the entire family and culminates with fireworks finale over the Potomac River at midnight. Kids Karnivals: 6 to 9 p.m. at four warm indoor venues in Old Town, Del Ray and the West End. Live Entertainment: 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. Call 703-963-3755 or visit firstnightalexandria.org.

LOCAL CALENDAR

SUNDAY/DEC. 1

Fair Trade Fair. 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. At Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. This annual Fair Trade Sale will feature products from Ten Thousand Villages. Beautiful hand-crafted products from around the world. Call the church office during normal business hours at 703-356-7200 or visit the website: www.lewinsville.org/events/fair-trade-fair/
Service of Remembrance. 3 p.m. At Katie's Coffee House, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. All are welcome to a non-traditional service of remembrance and hope for those who are stressed, lonely or grieving.
Hot Cocoa Party. 3 to 5 p.m. At Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills Street, Great Falls. Join a park naturalist for an outdoor walk through nature's winter wonderland and then head inside to treat yourself to a cup of hot cocoa. Jazz up your cocoa with goodies, listen to some heartwarming winter stories, and make a wintry craft to take home. Cost is \$15 per person. Call 703-759-9018 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend.

MONDAY/DEC. 2

Model Railroaders Open House. 6-9 p.m. at the Vienna Depot, 231 Dominion Road NE. Northern Virginia Model Railroaders hold an open house at the Vienna Depot each month and on Vienna celebration days, including Viva! Vienna and the Vienna Holiday Stroll. Free admission. Call 703-938-5157 or visit www.nvmr.org.

DEC. 5-25

"Airness" by Chelsea Marcantel. At 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. When Nina enters her first air guitar competition, she befriends a group of charismatic nerds and discovers it's about finding yourself and performing with raw joy. Directed by Christina Coakley. deidrastarnes@1ststage.org or visit the website: www.1ststage.org.

DEC. 6-8

Starvin' Artists Sale. Friday reception 5-8 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Idylwood Presbyterian Church, 7617 Idylwood Road, Falls Church (between Route 7 and Gallows Road. www.mcleanartsociety.org.

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ABC LICENSE

WCBB LLC trading as CaliBurger Tysons, 8301 A Greensboro Dr. McLean VA 22102. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer On Premises and Mixed Beverage Restaurant license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Vic Aulakh, owner/The Veritas Law Firm. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

Employment

Senior Lead Architect, Informatica HAFS: Perform needs analysis, dsgrn., dev., testing, & deployment of new data feeds. Resp. for supp. of 70+ data feeds. Must have exp. in Informatica (incl. PowerCenter Data Integration), database arch., dsgrn./dev./testing, batch scheduling apps. incl. Autosys, data integrations & automation projects, supporting client reqs. & testing for tech. solns., & excellent verbal & written communication skills. Job in McLean, VA. Mail resume/cv. ltr. to M. Combs, Hilton Domestic Op. Comp., 7930 Jones Branch Drive, McLean, VA, 22102.

Announcements

NEWS

Change in the General Assembly

FROM PAGE 3

Our work will not be easy, but I am prepared and eager to serve the people of the Great Commonwealth of Virginia alongside Majority Leader-elect Herring, Democratic Caucus Chair-Elect Sullivan and all of our colleagues," Filler-Corn said.

Del. Mark Levine (D-45) posted, "This is the most diverse caucus that there has ever been in the General Assembly's 400-year history. No General Assembly majority has ever looked more like the people of Virginia than the current House Democratic majority."

Transition Team Announced

As the days after the election rolled forward, on Nov. 14, the blue wave surged. Speaker-designee Filler-Corn announced her transition team, 18 key advisors, to assist as she transitioned into the office of Speaker of the House of Delegates. She selected Wayne Turnage as Chair and Suzette Denslow as Transition Staff Director. She chose other members for her team, including Walter Tejada, a member of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Board of Directors and Ilryong Moon of Fairfax, the first Asian American elected to a public office in Virginia. "People across the Commonwealth told us they wanted to move our Commonwealth forward, address our most critical challenges and ensure transparency for all Virginians," posted Filler-Corn. "I am truly honored to have guidance from these leaders from across Virginia to develop leadership to make our schools better, our communities stronger and our economy more fair."

Chairs of Key Legislative Committees

House Speaker-designee Filler-Corn announced her picks for the key legislative committees in a news release Thursday, Nov. 14. Choices reflected racial, gender and geographic diversity of the Democratic caucus. She named Del. Luke Torian, (D-52), as chair of the Appropriations Committee; Del. Jeion Ward, (D-92), as chair of the Commerce and Labor Committee; and Del. Roslyn Tyler, (D-75), as chair of the Education Committee. All three are members of the black caucus. House Filler-Corn also announced Del. Vivian Watts, (D-39), as chair of the Finance Committee. "These impressive leaders will be important al-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Senate Democratic Press Conference on ERA, Senate Finance Committee, Harrisonburg, Va., Thursday, Nov. 21.

lies as we shape our policy agenda for the commonwealth in 2020 and beyond."

First Bills and Resolution Filed

Shortly after midnight on Monday, Nov. 18, Democratic lawmakers began to file bills minutes into the opening date of pre-filing for the 2020 General Assembly session. State Sen. Jennifer L. McClellan (D-9) submitted her first legislation moments after filing season opened at midnight, putting passage of the ERA at the symbolic head of the list for that chamber.

The weekend after the filing, Democratic Caucus Chair Rip Sullivan (D-48) shared his thoughts on party's intention for the first three House Bills and resolution, "We tried to send a signal of our highest priorities, in terms of the top," he said.

Democrats filed:

❖ HB1: No-excuse in-person and mail absentee voting; Patron: Del. Charniele Herring (D-46).

❖ HB2: Universal background checks; Patron: Del. Ken Plum (D-36). This bill would require universal background checks for any firearm sales or transfers.

❖ HB3: LGBTQ+ Housing Non-discrimination; Patron: Del. Delores McQuinn (D-70). The bill defined sexual orientation and gender identity.

❖ HJ1: Equal Rights Amendment; Patron: Del. Jennifer Carroll Foy (D-2) ratifies the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution of the United States proposed by Congress in 1972. "Today, I filed a resolution to have Virginia be the 38th and final state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution for the upcoming 2020 General Assembly session. It's time to be on the right side of history. It's time to finally ratify the #ERA," Foy tweeted.

VA Senate Democrats Elect leadership

On Nov. 20, VA Senate Democrats elected leadership ahead of the 2020 legislative session.

From the Senate Democratic Caucus:

Sen. Dick Saslaw (D-Fairfax)-Majority Leader

Sen. Mamie Locke (D-Hampton)-Caucus Chair

Sen. Scott Surovell (D-Mount Vernon) Caucus Vice Chair

Sen. Jeremy McPike (Prince William)- Caucus Vice Chair

Sen. Barbara Favola (D-Arlington) Caucus Co-Whip

Sen. Lionell Spruill (D-Chesapeake) Caucus Co-Whip

Sen. Jennifer McClellan (D-Richmond)- Caucus Secretary

Sen-elect Ghazala Hashni (D-Chesterfield)- Caucus Treasurer

Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D-Fairfax)- Caucus Sergeant at Arms

Sen. Louise Lucas (D-Portsmouth)-President Pro Tempore-designee (first African American and the first woman to serve as President Pro Tempore)

Senate Democrats announced Committee Chairs for the 2020 legislative session:

Agriculture, Conservation & Natural Resources: Senator Chap Petersen (D-Fairfax City)

Commerce & Labor Committee: Senator Dick Saslaw (D-Fairfax)

Courts of Justice: Senator John Edwards (D-Roanoke)

Education & Health: Senator L. Louise Lucas (D-Portsmouth)

Finance: Senator Janet Howell (D-Fairfax)

Rules: Senator Mamie E. Locke (D-Hampton)

Rehabilitation & Social Services: Senator Barbara Favola (D-Arlington)

General Laws: Senator George Barker (D-Fairfax)

Local Government: Senator Lynwood Lewis (D-Accomack)

Transportation: Senator Dave Marsden (D-Fairfax)

Privileges & Elections: Senator Creigh Deeds (D-Bath)

With the appointment of State Senator Janet Howell (D-Fairfax) as incoming Chairwoman of the Senate Finance Committee and Del. Luke Torian (D-Prince William) as chair of the House Appropriations Committee, the state's purse strings and its power rested in Northern Virginia.

On Nov. 21, incoming House Speaker Filler-Corn announced decisions for Chairs of two additional committees Del. Mark Sickles (D-43)- Health, Welfare & Institutions Committee and Del. Delores McQuinn (D-70) Transportation Committee.

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BULLETIN

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
❖ 1:30 p.m. - Transportation Committee
❖ 3 p.m. - **General Assembly Annual Reception and Work Session**

Two Join Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna Board

The Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna welcomes two new members to its Board of Directors — Leigh Banducci and Kimberly Greer. Both bring extensive experience in their fields to the nonprofit. Leigh Banducci, the newest member of the Finance Committee, is a former CPA for KPMG. She joined the Board in 2019 to continue promoting the important contributions SCOV makes to the local community. Kimberly Greer, Marketing Committee Chair, brings 20-years of communications, branding, and marketing expertise to help broaden SCOV's community outreach efforts. She currently directs marketing and business development for Odin, Feldman & Pittleman, law firm based in Reston.

NOW THRU DEC. 18

Active Aging Wellness Exercise Class. 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. At Oakton Church of the Brethren, 10025 Courthouse Road, Vienna. An eight week exercise class to improve strength, balance and mobility for older adults sponsored by Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna. Cost is \$40 for 8 week session — payable to Sun Fitness LLC. To register, contact Casey Tarr, eileentarr1@verizon.net or 703-821-6838.

TUESDAY/DEC. 3

Holiday Party. 4-7 p.m. At JR's Stockyards Inn, 8130 Watson Street, McLean. Hosted by the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia. Business Attire. Hors d'oeuvres and wine will be provided. Reserve your space by Tuesday, Nov. 26 at www.cfnova.org/holiday or by contacting Tara Nadel at 703-879-7637 or tara.nadel@cfnova.org.

TUESDAY/DEC. 10

Potluck Holiday Party. 12 noon. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. Presented by NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association) Chapter 1116. Includes an installation of officers by Dr. Constance Bails, President, Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) — Members and guests welcome. RSVP to 703-281-5123.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 11

COMMUNITY HELP NEEDED

Recycling Project. At Church of the Good Shepherd, 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. The church has a new project lined up for its January 2020 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Morning of Service and is asking community residents to begin now to collect plastic caps and lids. The special recycling effort already has engaged the church's membership in starting to bring plastic caps and lids to fill "Chomper," a fun, child-friendly recycling container in the main entrance to the church. A second special recycling bin for easy drop-off is located just inside the church's office entrance. For details of what plastic caps/lids are suitable, see www.GoodShepherdVA.com.

Fairfax County Park Authority Board Meeting. 7:30 p.m. in the Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 941, Fairfax. The Park Authority Board's 12 appointed members establish strategic policy and direction for the Park Authority. Open to the public. For agenda and more information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/boardagn2.htm or call 703-324-8662.

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Lost in the Shuffle



By KENNETH B. 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 A" realities of "reverse-mortgaging" my house "perplexed" by the "derelict" stable/shed on my property, my upcoming quarterly CT scan hasn't even "blipped" the radar. Though it will have 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 customary. And so far, between my wife, Dina and I, none of this has even been discussed. Yet, as I sit and write on Sunday, the scan is on Wednesday, three days away. Close enough to where it should have been front and center instead of where it's been: back and off to the side.

But so what, really? My attitude is, and has always been, to quote John, a close friend: "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, or earlier 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. Certainly hearing and/or reading 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 run is going to come to a walk and eventually to a lie-down. And I will deal with it when the time/results come. In the interim however, this next scan is merely another stop 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 Lee J. 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 "13 month to two-year" prognosis (offered up on Feb. 27, 2009), an accomplishment I am proud to say occasionally has led to my oncologist showing me off to his medical students; his prize cow I call myself.

Honestly, what's 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 precious. Why dwell on things 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 your body. Don't let it affect your mind too. "Piling 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 more prudent plan than "woeing" is me or bemoaning the process. Sure we'd all love to be on the President's plan where 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."

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



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