

Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

HomeLifeStyle

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From left: Joanne Ormesher, Arts Herndon, Supervisor John W. Foust, Jenny Phipps of Foust's office, and Assistant Principals at Hutchison Elementary School, Steven Wilson and Katie Aldridge join with students in showing off community contributions donated to the Supervisor's Annual Shoe Drive to benefit children in need at the Title 1 school.



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All Hands on Deck

Local community helps global neighbors through Rotary Club of Reston's service project.

By MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Rotary Club of Reston participated in a global-reaching volunteer event coordinated by Rise Against Hunger to serve vulnerable families and individuals across the globe who have basic, immediate food needs. Held at Aldrin Elementary School, Reston on Sat., Jan. 11, approximately 50 Rotarians and their family members, South Lakes High School students and the local community packed 10,152 meal packets assembly-line fashion.

Mark Griffin, President of the Rotary Club of Reston, said, "This is our signature event." To fund it and other projects, the club solicited donations through Anython, a social fundraising website. The meal-packing event required funds to pay the cost of shipping and customs clearance for the containers of packed meals.

Alzina Fasadeja is a Community Engagement Coordinator with Rise Against Hunger. She ensured the ordering and delivery of the raw materials, equipment and supplies to the site and would facilitate the large group of volunteers to package the meals from filling, weighing and sealing to final boxing of the packs. The well-orchestrated event began shortly after 10 a.m. when the truck arrived. Volunteers unloaded the contents, including the 50-pound bags of rice, crumbled soy protein and dried vegetable flakes.

Reston Club Rotarian, Peter Murray of Oak Hill, brought his daughter Caroline, 6. "I'm trying to set a good example of helping fellow neighbors around the world," said Murray. Caroline applied shipping labels to the boxes. "I'm trying to be helpful," Caroline said. "The food will go in my boxes. My mom said the people could turn it into soup, people who do not have enough money to buy food." At the label station, Haley MacLean, 8, of Chantilly and her sister Marissa, 6, applied perishable date stickers to the packs. "We are doing this for people who don't have money for rice and vegetables," said Marissa. Nearby, Shruti Singh, 16, and brother Ishaan, 11, of Chantilly, demonstrated how to measure the dry ingredients. Fasadeja said one pack could serve up to six children when hydrated with water. Beginning with one bag, then the next



Caroline Murray, 6, daughter of Peter Murray of Oak Hill, a member of the Rotary Club of Reston, shows Alzina Fasadeja, Community Engagement Coordinator with Rise Against Hunger, that she can correctly apply a shipping label to a box that will be filled with meal packets.



Many hands make quick work of filling, weighing, sealing and packing 10,152 counted meal bags during the Rotary Club of Reston's service project partnering with Rise Against Hunger.

and the next, teams worked non-stop until the last packet was filled. Afterward, Griffin said, "Believe it or not, we packed more than 10,000 meals in one hour, fifteen minutes. It was all hands on deck, and the Reston community came out and helped us with this fantastic project."

Rise Against Hunger is an international hunger relief organiza-

tion that is driven by the vision of a world without Hunger. Since 1998, the organization has coordinated the distribution of food and life-saving aid to the world's most vulnerable in countries all over the world.

The organization's mission is to build awareness and drive a global commitment to ending Hunger by 2030.



By MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

From left: Joanne Ormesher, Arts Herndon, Dranesville Supervisor John W. Foust (D), Jenny Phipps of Foust's office, and Assistant Principals at Hutchison Elementary School, Steven Wilson and Katie Aldridge join with students in showing off community contributions donated to the Supervisor's Annual Shoe Drive to benefit children in need at the Title 1 school.

Simple Gift Making a Difference

Annual Drive by Dranesville District Supervisor John W. Foust and Arts Herndon fills school's shoe locker.

By MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Children in need at Hutchison Elementary School in Herndon will have warm and cozy feet for the New Year enabling them to comfortably learn, play and thrive with dignity and joy. Dranesville District Supervisor John W. Foust (D) and Arts Herndon worked in the days leading up to and over the winter holidays to support the school's shoe locker. The annual program is now in its 11th year.

According to Katie Aldridge Assistant Principal, Hutchison is a Title I federal program funded school, identified based on the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals. "We have approximately 1,100 students preschool through sixth grade in which more than 80 percent receive free or reduced-price meals," she said. With footwear being one of the most expensive items families have to purchase for their children, when parents have to decide whether precious income goes toward food, housing or shoes, children may come to school without appropriate footwear. On Jan. 4, Foust and Joanne Ormesher, CEO and President of Arts Herndon, visited the school to present the donation. Foust said he finds this day one of the most reward-

ing days of his job. "The children are so appreciative of the kindness from neighbors across Herndon, McLean and Great Falls. It warms my heart to see their smiles and know they will have new shoes or clothing this winter," he said.

The contribution from the communities totaled more than \$1,200 in gift cards and monetary donations, as well as a selection of new shoes and boots. "Hutchison Elementary is incredibly grateful to Supervisor Foust, Arts Herndon and the community for their continued support through generous donations of gift cards and shoes. These donations go a long way to support our students and families who are in need," said vice principals Wilson and Aldridge in a statement.

Since 2009 and every winter holiday year after, Arts Herndon, formerly called the Council for the Arts of Herndon, has joined with Foust to gather contributions for children at Hutchison. According to Ormesher, "Hutchison Elementary School is a wonderful partner with Arts Herndon. "We enjoy a great relationship -I'm looking forward, once again, to some amazing art for the Pyramid show in April, helping by providing instruments and equipment and collaborating with Supervisor Foust's Shoe Drive. I look forward to more collaborative projects."

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

CONTRIBUTED BY ROTARY CLUB OF RESTON

Town of Herndon Approves Short-Term Lodging

Protects neighborhood character through quantitative and operational restrictions.

By MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Town of Herndon joined other local jurisdictions such as the City of Alexandria and the counties of Fairfax and Arlington, in approving Short-Term lodging regulations. During the final Herndon Town Council Public Session of 2019 held Dec. 10, in a vote of 6-0 Council took action and approved Zoning Text Amendment, ZOTA #18-03 to permit and establish limitations on Short-Term Rentals as an accessory use to the principal occupancy of a dwelling in the town.

During council level discussion before the vote, members asked for clarification on some of the proposed required provisions. Comment ranged from Operator requirement to add their unit to a Short-Term Registry in addition to obtaining the town's \$200 Zoning Permit, the impact of Short-Term lodging as a possible affordable housing option, Short-Term Rentals providing a revenue stream for Operators, and the unexpected consequence of town staff being able to note and enforce housing occupancy policies through the Operator's submission of a site plan indicating the number and location of required parking spaces for the residence.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR David Stromberg presented the report. "The purpose behind this amendment came about partially because of the rapid growth of sharing economy ... through platforms such as Airbnb and Vrbo (Vacation Rentals by Owner), as well as changes made by the General Assembly in 2017," said Stromberg. His PowerPoint presentation defined Short-Term Rental as: "A room or space that is or intended for occupancy for dwelling, sleeping, or lodging purposes, for a period of fewer than 30 consecutive days, in exchange for a charge for the occupancy. Short-Term Rental does not include accessory dwelling unit, bed and breakfast, boarding house, or motel."

However, according to Stromberg, if the application property was located within an area subject to additional restrictions pursuant to covenants, bylaws, condominiums acts, and such, the town Permit would not revoke or nullify limitations applicable to the property.

Stromberg discussed highlights of the proposed amendment. He focused on Short-Term Rental Regulations incorporating performance-type standards for the operation of the properties and registration/licensing requirements. He said that the Short-Term



Town of Herndon Councilmember Jennifer Baker.

Rental Operator must be a permanent resident of the property hosting the Short-Term Rental, and if the Operator was not the Owner, written consent from the Owner of the property must be obtained. According to the town's Department of Community Development Short-Term Rental Application as viewed online, "Any violation related to Short-Term Lodging is deemed to be a violation by both the Operator and the Owner."

As for occupancy, for a Short-Term Rental of the entire dwelling, meaning the whole house and the occupant Operator not present, such could be no more than 90 nights per calendar year. However, the 90-

"We have been talking about affordable housing. If you have a single room you want to rent out, this might help to defray that cost."

—Councilmember Bill McKenna

day limit did not apply when the Operator was present and renting out a portion of the dwelling; that number of nights remained unlimited.

According to Stromberg, the maximum number of lodgers per night could not exceed six adults including the residence's permanent occupants. Also, the maximum number of rental contracts per night was one, meaning all lodgers would be named on the same rental contract. In addition, Short-Term Rentals had to have a minimum of two designated parking spaces available for lodgers in single family-residences and one designated parking space for every condo/townhouse. Events and activities, other than those with the authorized lodgers, were prohibited during any Short-Term Rental period.



Town of Herndon Vice Mayor Sheila Olem.

Also, all advertisements had to include the Short-Term Rental Permit Number and identify the location of the required parking space(s).

Transient Occupancy Tax had to be collected for each rental contract and a monthly return filed even if no taxes were due. The Zoning Administrator's issuance of the Permit would not invalidate any other provision of federal, state, or local law, any restrictive covenant, or any property owners' association bylaw. As for safety, a working fire extinguisher and smoke/carbon monoxide detectors were required, as was the zoning Permit with the \$200 fee for the two years. There would be an initial inspection and reinspection.

According to the town's website, to be compliant the effective date is Feb. 1, 2020, or risk a \$500 penalty.

DURING QUESTIONS from Council, Jennifer Baker referenced a letter sent to Council from local real estate agents. Her understanding she said was the agents wrote that registering with the state was enough, and questioned why a town registry too. "Was that your understanding," Councilmember Baker said to Stromberg.

"When the state passed the legislation, it allowed locality to have Short-Term Registry, and as a locality, you can exercise that as the only thing you adopt, but you can also have zoning regulations for any accessory use just like we do for a home-based business," said Stromberg in reply.

Councilmember Pradip Dhakal asked for clarification on occupancy limitations, the maximum numbers of lodgers. "That maximum number of six (adults) actually combines with the number of residents already living in the house. For example, if two people live in the house, (and) they want to go for short-term rental, then they can



Town of Herndon Councilmember Cesar del Aguila.

only allow four more and those four more should come with one rental agreement," said Councilmember Dhakal.

"That's exactly correct," said Stromberg. The online application states, "The maximum number of lodgers per night may not exceed 6 adults, including permanent residents, except where the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code requires fewer occupants."

Councilmember Bill McKenna said, "In regards to how this could shape the town... We have been talking about affordable housing.

If you have a single room you want to rent out, this might help to defray that cost... The unintended consequences are since we have these parking ordinances... that we are putting in place, we will be able to identify places that are not in compliance. They are breaking the rules. We can determine what that is based upon the fact that they have people living there that maybe shouldn't be... based upon parking patterns," said Councilmember Bill McKenna.

"This (amendment) captions the essence, the spirit of what the town meant by this ordinance," said Councilmember del Aguila.

According to the online Summary of Town Council Actions, Mayor Lisa C. Merkel recused and disqualified herself from presiding and voting on the transaction. Mayor Merkel stated for the record that she owned a rental home in California with her husband and, although the matter might not have application solely to property or business in which she had a personal interest, she relinquished the gavel to Vice Mayor Sheila Olem and left the Council Chambers during proceedings.

For more information on Short-Term Rentals and to access the application, visit <https://www.herndon-va.gov/departments/community-development/residential-resources/residential-zoning-information>.

OPINION

VIEWPOINTS

Legislators Reflect on the First Days of the 2020 Session

—MERCIA HOBSON

PHOTOS VIA VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D-33): My top priority is recovering the local funding for our regional transportation.

Today (*Monday - Jan. 13), I cast my first votes on the Senate Judiciary Committee and was able to vote for four life-saving bills to prevent gun violence: universal background checks, giving municipalities local control about allowing firearms in government buildings, a red flag law and restricting gun purchases to one gun a month. Last week I cast my first vote on the Senate Privilege and Elections Committee to make Virginia the 38th state to Ratify the ERA.



Del. Ibraheem Samirah (D-86)- introduced *HB 152 Middle housing allowed on lots zoned for single-family use.* “Middle housing is defined as two-family residential units, including duplexes, townhouses, cottages, and any similar structure. Such structures shall not require a special use permit or be subjected to any other local requirements beyond those imposed upon other authorized residential uses.” Samirah said, “Across the country, there is a shortage of affordable units that is putting a squeeze on working families and contributing to rises in rents for existing units...I will certainly get pushback for this”



Del. Mark Keam (D-35) *HB 572 Distributed renewable energy; promotes the establishment thereof.* Del. Keam said, “This bill would free up the solar market, not only for local governments... but also for residents, businesses, schools, institutions and non-profits that want to install solar for their own use... (It would) remove the rule that limits customers to installing only as big an array as would have served their needs in the past year ... Today, residential customers are penalized with so-called “standby charges” if they install more than 10 kilowatts of solar (enough for a larger home, or a modest home with electric vehicles) ... Many Virginians do not have access to solar at all, especially if they live in rental apartments or condominiums, because the building owners are not allowed to install solar panels and sell the output to tenants. My bill would make this legal.”



Del. David Bulova (D-37) introduced HB 1012 Early childhood care and education; establishment of system, licensure. “A child’s earliest experiences - and particularly those in the critical years between birth and age five - have lifelong impacts on their likelihood of success. However, according to statistics from the Virginia Department of Education, 40 percent of students entering kindergarten lack the key literacy, math and social emotional skills that predict success. Further, only 25 percent of Virginia’s early childhood programs that receive public funding participate in the state’s voluntary quality measurement system. I am pleased to be carrying House Bill 1012 on behalf of the Governor, which directs the Board of Education to consolidate and simplify Virginia’s early childhood education programs and create a uniform quality rating system for programs that accept public funding. This will improve quality, foster continuous improvement, and help parents better understand their options. As the parent of three children, this is very important to me. I have personally witnessed the difference that a quality pre-school program has made on my children.”



ASSEMBLY - WEEK ONE

Highlights of Some of the Bills Proposed

—MERCIA HOBSON

PHOTOS VIA VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Del. Karrie Delaney (D-67) introduced *HB 547 Virginia Energy and Economy Transition Council; established, report.* The bill establishes the Virginia Energy and Economy Transition Council, consisting of 28 members, to develop plans to assist the Commonwealth in transitioning from the use of fossil fuel energy to renewable energy by 2050



Sen. Janet Howell (D-32), Chair Senate Finance and Appropriations, introduced *SB 581 Minors; allowing access to firearms, Class 6 felony* which provides that any person who recklessly leaves a loaded, unsecured firearm in such a manner as to endanger the life or limb of any person under the age of 18 is guilty of a Class 6 felony.



Sen. J. Chapman Peterson (D-34) introduced *SB 26 Plastic bags; tax in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed* which imposes a five-cent per bag tax on plastic bags provided to customers by certain retailers in localities located wholly within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and directs revenues to be used to support the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan.



Del. Paul Krizek (D-44) introduced *HB 15 Public school buses seat belts.* The bill requires the Board of Education to make regulations to require each new public school bus purchased for the transportation of students to be equipped with a seat belt consisting of a lap belt and shoulder strap or harness in every seat. He also introduced *HB 16 Safety belt system; all occupants of motor vehicles to utilize.*



Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, civility, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

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Alexandria VA 22314

By email: editors@connectionnewspapers.com
On Line: www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter

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HOME LIFE STYLE

A Classic Blue sofa is complemented by other shades of blue in this living room designed by Keira St. Claire



PHOTO BY JOHN COLE

Beautiful, Bold, Soothing: Classic Blue

Dependable, stable and calming are the characteristic of the Color of the Year for 2020.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Dependable, stable and calming are the characteristic of the Color of the Year for 2020. For the past 21 years, Pantone Color Institute has announced a “Color of the Year,” which the self-proclaimed authority on color says will be on trend during the year ahead. Local designers share how the color can be used in a home’s interior.

“Classic Blue is a beautiful and bold, yet soothing color reminiscent of the evening sky and the deep blue ocean,” said Keira St. Claire of Anthony Wilder Design/Build in Bethesda, Maryland. “Soft, rich and versatile, this color has the potential to inject creative confidence into your interiors.”

From an accent wall in a child’s bedroom, throw pillows or a kitchen backsplash to a home’s front door, mailbox or shutters, Allie Mann, designer and senior interiors specialist at Case Design/Remodeling suggests a variety of ways to use classic blue. “Perhaps as a ceiling color to draw your eye up or add interest,” she said. “As a powder room wall color or vanity, this bold color will work well in the tiniest of spaces including the back of a bookcase or built-in, a reading nook, a laundry room or mudroom or as cubbies.”

Whether bold or subtle, St. Claire said the design options are plentiful. “Opt to incorporate this color in your home with decorative accents like throw blankets, pillows, rugs, and artwork and even kitchenware to add a pop of color without feeling over-saturated,” she said. “Repurpose old pieces [or furniture]. A fresh blue lacquered coat of paint would magically transform an old chair or dresser into a unique statement piece.”

For the courageous homeowner, St. Claire suggests a bolder approach. “Paint your walls or refinish your kitchen or bathroom cabinets in blue or upholster a large piece of furniture like a sofa or armchair in



PHOTO BY STACY ZARIN GOLDBERG

For this Arlington, Virginia breakfast room, designer Allie Mann incorporated Pantone’s color of the year by using Classic Blue fabric on the chairs, window seat cushion and pillows.

blue,” she said. “Introduce other complementary colors like olive greens, golds or magenta to really offset the color and make a statement. Classic blue doesn’t have to be the only pop of color.”

Adding the color gradually is what Amanda Mertins of Patina Polished Living in Alexandria, Virginia suggests. “Infuse it into your home and fashion design in bits and pieces,” added “Maybe you paint an accent wall classic blue and let that be the focus. The color blue is kind to many colors and therefore easy to use in a room as an accent color. You can also mix varying shades of blue.”

“Classic blue is just that, it’s classic and timeless and can be weaved into many design schemes,” said Mann. “Do not be afraid of color.”

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DINING

A Must Destination for Latino Fare
Restaurant Review: Pupusas Express in Herndon.

BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY
THE CONNECTION

Celebrate the New Year — 2020 AD — with yummy foods and all at very reasonable prices. You don't even have to travel out to the wide, open plains to get a real kick to your palate and a thumbs-up to your wallet: Pupusas Express in Herndon is a must destination, particularly if you love Latino fare.

(Note: It's located on a side street in a modest store front. Parking is somewhat limited ... but worth the escapade.)

Although inspired by Salvadoran recipes, many of the offerings will have a familiar ring. Take, for example, among the appetizers: yuca con chicharron, or deep-fried cubes of pork served with fried strips of yuca, makes a universal appearance in many Mexican, Tex-Mex, and South American restaurants that feature Honduran and Guatemalan dishes. The serving is ample for two, and though it is classified as an appetizer, it can well become a main course at lunch or dinner. Other appetizers include ceviche, fried plantains, chicken nachos and chicken quesadillas, and chips and guacamole.

For main fare, sample some of the pupusas, a traditional Salvadoran dish using two corn tortillas that sandwich a filling of your choice: shredded pork and beans with cheese; just cheese; just beans and cheese; and loroco flower (an edible flower from a Central

American plant) and cheese, among others. Typically, the thick tortillas are corn, but the kitchen also offers a choice of flour tortillas.

Soups, as starters or main course offerings, include beef tripe stew; beef and beef bones cooked with yucca and other veggies; a seafood combo; and a country chicken soup. You might want to add on a salad as well, which is simply romaine lettuce and veggies topped with your choice of chicken or steak.

Traditional main dishes include several types of tacos; fajitas; beef stew; Salvadorian rib steak with sausages; chicken and shrimp; and a grilled chicken or steak burrito, among several other offerings.

But if you are a pupusa fan, order several with the fillings of your choice; these will provide an ample meal. Sides include rice, refried beans, tamales, fried tortillas with such add-ons as refried beans, grilled steak or chicken, and avocado.

Desserts: flan; tres leches cake; arroz con leche; and Salvadorian empanadas, or fried sweet plantains filled with corn flour and milk. But no meal here would be complete without its stunning hot drink, the *atol de elote*, or sweet corn drink—this is much like sipping on a creamy corn custard with bits of corn kernels inside. Order several for take-home enjoyment.

Pupusas Express, 720 Grant St., Herndon, 703-383-0025. Hours: Mon.-Sat., 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., closed Sundays. Order online or ask for delivery with a 4-mile radius. www.pupusasexpress.com.

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Delight in our **HomeLifeStyle** sections, the second week of every month. Peek at the top real estate sales, glimpse over-the-top remodeling projects, get practical suggestions for your home.

Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our **A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun** pages, the third week of every month.

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THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

BULLETIN

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

TUESDAY/JAN. 21

DMV2GO at the Library. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. The wireless office on wheels offers all DMV services: driver's license and ID card applications and renewals, driving records, vehicle titles, license plates, decals, order disabled plates, and more. Information on all services available at dmv.virginia.gov/general/#dmv_2go.

Commemorative Brick Program.

The Reston Historic Trust & Museum will be celebrating its commemorative brick program. Members of the community are encouraged to support not only the Reston Historic Trust & Museum on Giving Tuesday – but to do so by ordering a commemorative brick which is a great way to leave your mark on Reston or give as a gift to friends, family, teachers, neighbors, organizations, or even a pet. Commemorative bricks can be ordered at <https://www.restonmuseum.org/bricks>. The bricks are ordered only once a year. Bricks to be installed in 2020 must be ordered by Jan. 8, 2020. Bricks are then reviewed by the Lake Anne Condominium Association and Reston Historic Trust & Museum. They are displayed and dedicated on Founder's Day, which will be April 18, 2020 and installed shortly thereafter dependent on weather.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthyminds/fairfax or www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

ONGOING

STEM Professionals Needed. Volunteers are needed to assist K-12 STEM teachers in northern Virginia as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2019-20 school year. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488 or donaldrea@aol.com.

Assistance League of Northern Virginia, a volunteer nonprofit, invites community members to join the organization to participate in its Reading Express program. Volunteers provide one-on-one tutoring to first grade students during the school year. To learn more contact VP Membership Mary Gronlund at gronbiz@aol.com or Program Coordinator Lynn Barron at lynnieb517@verizon.net.

Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed. Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil at Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov or 703-324-4547.

Herndon High School Library needs volunteers. Training available to help with re-shelving books, pulling books for teacher use, helping to check passes, or other special projects. To learn more, email hhs_library@fcps.edu.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

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Still Waiting for "Canswers"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As I half expected, with my oncologist out on vacation this week, he and the endocrinologist didn't speak. As a result, after sitting in the examining chair, the first question the doctor asks is "So you have thyroid cancer?" I snickered and said something like "Hopefully," before I began to elaborate. Though she had access to my medical records, I can't say she was prepped and ready for our appointment. As she listened to my story, I could she see was simultaneously trying to review my medical history on her computer. In fact, as I hemmed and hawed in response to some of her medical questions, I kept saying/pointing to her computer for her to get the proper answer.

Nevertheless, eventually we were able to move forward in the determination of exactly what kind of cancer I have: thyroid cancer or lung cancer - or both (it's possible, she said). To that end-result, the doctor performed a biopsy on my "Adam's Apple" tumor, as I call it. The biopsy I had two weeks prior was from a lymph node. The results from which caused my oncologist to call me with his "exciting news." Apparently, those results were not enough for the endocrinologist (who had never seen me before) to make a definitive judgment, so in her office, that day, this second biopsy was performed. Fine with me since a second biopsy from a different tumor is absolutely moving the ball forward, as if it is so often said these days; I just hope it leads to a touchdown instead of another possible fumble.

For the last nearly 11 years, I've been diagnosed with non small cell lung cancer, stage IV. Now after two biopsies, not so much. Right now, the assessment of my cancer status is somewhere between a definite maybe and a confirmed I don't know.

Will I now know - in another week's time (when the results of this most recent biopsy are confirmed) whether my non small cell lung cancer is actually thyroid cancer or will there be additional biopsies, additional diagnostic scans, injections of isotopes, etc., to make a once-and-for-all confirmation of what the heck is going on (or has been going on) in my body? If so, it's been a long time coming. I first went to the Emergency Room Jan. 1, 2009 so it's sort of an anniversary of sorts as I write this column. I'd just as soon we get it right this time, if in fact it was ever wrong.

I have a few questions, some of which were answered by the endocrinologist. Yes, I can have two types of cancer. Could my lung cancer have changed to become thyroid cancer? No. And the underlying curiosity/question: During this cancer life that I have lived, I have been told - and seen multiple times on discharge-type paperwork I've received that I have "metastatic cancer" meaning that the cancer has moved. Moreover, when one considers the staging aspect, my cancer was stage IV. Stage IV means, among "relevancies" (like inoperable) that the cancer has moved from its "primary" location. I remember asking my oncologist where did my lung cancer come from (I'm a lifelong non-smoker with no cancer history in my immediate family). His answer, if I recall correctly, and I may not due to "chemo brain," a confirmed side effect of chemotherapy) was that he didn't know, and if I further recall correctly, he wasn't particularly interested in finding out and accordingly no additional tests were ordered. Perhaps we misunderstand the need to know now or misunderstood the answers we were given then (Feb., 2009). But as of this past Friday, Team Lourie is sort of wondering as was the endocrinologist.

As of this moment, our focus is on hearing back from the endocrinologist. Until then, we'll try to move forward. What's done is done and we'll hear back when we hear back. I have what I have (and have had what I've had) and right now, all we can do is wait.

That being said, we are having a little difficulty restraining ourselves. We can't get past the fact that my oncologist called us in the first place, and in the last place, if he wasn't so sure, why call us and get our collective hope sky high? Why go out on such a presumptive limb? In spite of that call, somehow, we have to internalize and compartmentalize and try to synthesize fact from fiction. So far, it's proving extremely difficult.

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

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

NOW THRU FEB. 2

"The Mountaintop." At NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. "The Mountaintop" is a historical drama taking place in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s hotel room the night before his assassination. He meets a young maid who forces him to consider exactly who and what he is fighting for. Full of vivid theatricality, poetic language, and surprising twists, this drama takes us to the summit of a man's historic life and offers a stunning view of his dream for our nation. Visit the website: www.nextstoptheatre.org/shows/mountaintop

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 15

Teddy Bear Tea Party. 2-4 p.m. At Herndon Community Center, 730 Elden Street, Herndon. Bring your favorite teddy bear or stuffed friend, dress in your tea time best, and enjoy tea, treats, stories, and a special craft. Cost is \$18 per child/adult couple; \$10 per add'l person. Pre-registration required. Visit the website: <https://www.herndon-va.gov/recreation/special-events/teddy-bear-tea-party>.

THURSDAY/JAN. 16

Toddler Storytime — I Want My Hat Back! 10:30 a.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Join in this enchanting tale by Jon Klassen. If you have a special hat, wear it for our storytime. Age 2 with adult. No registration required. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

Magic Tree House Book Club. 4:30 p.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Read to discuss: Winter of the Ice Wizard by M.P. Osborne. Copies available at the Children's Desk. Grade 3-4. No registration required. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

FRIDAY/JAN. 17

Gymboree Music. 10:30 a.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Discover melody pitch and rhythm while building a repertoire of joyful songs. Cosponsored by FRRL. Age 6-18 months with adult. Please register. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

Gymboree Music II. 11:15 a.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Dance and sing to a new musical style each month, including Latin, Rock 'n' Roll and Classical. Cosponsored by FRRL. Age 18-24 months with adult. Please register. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

Author David Goodrich. 2-4:30 p.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. As part of the Reston Library's Great Decisions Program, author David Goodrich will lead a discussion on climate change and global order. Once the Director of the UN Global Climate Observing System in Geneva, Goodrich rode his bike 4,200 miles across the United States to better understand why climate is a complicated issue for Americans and even more about the country we all share.

JAN. 17-26

Joshua's Hands Quilting Event. At 38997 E. Colonial Hwy., Hamilton VA. Joshua's Hands is a non-profit in Loudoun County that hosts free quilting events to support wounded servicepeople. Joshua's Hands will host 10 days of quilting fun to make handmade quilts for servicemen and women wounded while serving our country. All are welcome. No sewing experience or registration needed. All materials are provided but donations are appreciated. Come for an hour or the day. Monday-Saturdays 9 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sundays 1-9 p.m. Purcellville. Check website for exact location. Info@JoshuasHands.org, or call 540-454-7827, or visit www.JoshuasHands.org.

JAN. 17 TO FEB. 1

Ken Ludwig's "The Game's Afoot." 8 p.m. At

MLK Birthday Celebration

The Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration will take place Jan. 18 to 20 at venues in Reston.

JAN. 18 TO 20

MLK Birthday Celebration. At different venues in Reston. Reston Community Center will have a full slate of community events January 18 to 20 as it presents the 35th Annual Reston Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration. Bakari Sellers, a former member of the South Carolina state legislature who is considered a rising and leading voice for a new generation of African Americans, will deliver this year's Keynote Address at 11 a.m. on Jan. 20 at RCC Hunters Woods. Attendees will enjoy a family-style community lunch at RCC Hunters Woods following Sellers' speech. Tickets are \$5 for Reston residents and employees, and \$10 for all others. Tickets to the Community Lunch and Keynote Address are required. Tickets are available at the CenterStage Box Office or by calling 703-476-4500.

This year's Reston celebration will also include events at Southgate Community Center, North County Government Center and Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation. Contact RCC Community Events Director Kevin Danaher at 703-390-6166 or at kevin.danaher@fairfaxcounty.gov. To register for programs, visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com or call 703-476-4500.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

- ❖ Saturday, Jan. 18 at 9 a.m. — Community Service Projects at Southgate Community Center, 12125 Pinecrest Road, Reston;
- ❖ Saturday, Jan. 18 at 1 p.m. — Community Service Projects at North County Government Center, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston;
- ❖ Saturday, Jan. 18 at 4 p.m. — Reston Community Orchestra Tribute at RCC Hunters Woods, Reston;
- ❖ Sunday, Jan. 19 at 2 p.m. — Liner Notes: Music of the Movement at RCC Hunters Woods, The CenterStage, Reston; Tickets \$15/\$20.
- ❖ Sunday, Jan. 19 at 4 p.m. — Voices of Inspiration at Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation, 1441 Wiehle Ave., Reston.
- ❖ Monday, Jan. 20 at 11 a.m. — Keynote Address by Bakari Sellers followed by Community Lunch at RCC Hunters Woods, Reston. Tickets \$5/\$10.
- ❖ Monday, Jan. 20 at 10:30 a.m. — Especially for Youth at RCC Hunters Woods, Reston.

Reston Community's CenterStage, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. The Reston Community Players presents this murder-mystery comedy featuring real-life 1930s Broadway star William Gillette, admired the world over for playing Sherlock Holmes. Mystery

and hilarity in equal parts ensue in this murderously funny whodunit production that will keep you guessing until the final curtain. Tickets: \$28/adult, \$24/seniors and students. Performance Dates: Jan. 17, 18, 24, 25, 26, 30, Feb. 1. Tickets at www.restonplayers.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 18

Book Launch Celebration. 11 a.m. At Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Laura Renauld introduces her new picture book, Fred's Big Feelings: The Life and Legacy of Mr. Rogers during a special event at the store. Readers of all ages are invited to enjoy storytime with the author who also brought us Porcupine's Pie.

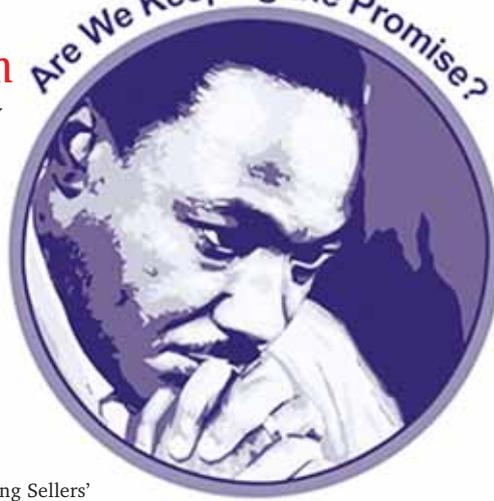
Reston Festival: Lunar New Year. 1 p.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Celebrate Lunar New Year with the library and the Northern Virginia Experimental Chinese School. Festivities for all ages will include crafts, games, and performances. All Ages. No registration required. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

MLK Tribute. 4-5:30 p.m. At Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through Negro Spirituals performed by Jasmine Marshall Lizama, Bryan Jackson, and Beverly Cosham. Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech performed by students from Al Fatih Academy. Free admission. Visit the website: <http://www.restoncommunityorchestra.org>

Curator's Talk and Opening Reception. 4-6 p.m. At Greater Reston Arts Center. For the exhibit Moira Dryer: Yours for the Taking, which runs Jan. 18-April 18. GRACE will present a selection of works by artist Moira Dryer (b. 1957, Toronto, Ontario; d. 1992, New York, NY) in conjunction with the major exhibition of Dryer's early work at the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., entitled Moira Dryer: Back in Business. Both exhibitions are curated by GRACE Executive Director and Curator Lily Siegel. Dryer is primarily known for her large abstract paintings on wood panel.

Country-Western Dance. At Galilee United Methodist Church, 45425 Winding Road, Sterling. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a dance. Lessons, 6-7 p.m. Open dancing, 7-9:30 p.m. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Admission for NVCWDA members \$10; non-

Are We Keeping the Promise?



Address with Bakari Sellers. Bakari Sellers, formerly the youngest member of the South Carolina state legislature and the youngest African American elected official in the nation, is widely considered a rising and leading voice for his generation. The Keynote Address is followed by a community luncheon. Cost is \$5 Reston/\$10 Non-Reston.

TUESDAY/JAN. 21

Baby Steps Storytime. 10:30 a.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. An interactive storytime for you and your child. Age 12-23 months with adult. No registration required. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

Baby Play and Explore. 11 a.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Join in an hour of unstructured play and social time for babies. Cosponsored by Friends of the Reston Regional Library. Age birth-18 months with adult. No registration required. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

Aaron Reynolds Visits Scrawl. 7 p.m. At Scrawl Books, 11911 Freedom Drive, Reston. Humorist, professional speaker, and author Aaron Reynolds promises an evening full of laughs as he discusses his not-quite-scientific "guidebook" on birds and the popular Twitter account that spawned it. (Not PG rated!).

THURSDAY/JAN. 23

Toddler Storytime — Big Frog Can't Fit In! 10:30 a.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Come hear this vibrant and engaging pop-out story by Mo Willems. Age 2 with Adult. No registration required. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

Teen Advisory Board (TAB). 7 p.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Join TAB to gain leadership and volunteer experience and share your ideas about how to make the library a wonderful place for teens. Volunteer hours granted. Age 13-18. No registration required. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

FRIDAY/JAN. 24

Family Yoga. 10:30 a.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Enjoy playful yoga, stories and songs with a children's yoga instructor. Bring a mat or blanket. Cosponsored by FRRL. Are 2-4 with adult. Please register. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

SATURDAY/JAN. 25

STEM Club. 10:30 a.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Navigate and explore a series of challenging Sphero Ball Robot Mazes using iPads. Age 6-13. No registration required. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

SUNDAY/JAN. 26

Sunday Funday. 1-4 p.m. At Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Drop by the Children's desk on any Sunday for a fun independent activity. Perhaps you will create a flannel board, or play Book Bingo, or explore the library with a scavenger hunt. We will have a new activity each month. Age 5-11. No registration required. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional>

MONDAY/JAN. 27

Cook Up a Pot of Stone Soup. 10:30 a.m. to noon. At Floris Schoolhouse, Frying Pan Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Learn how easy and satisfying it is to prepare home-cooked soups in winter and create your very own version of "Stone Soup." Hear the children's tale about "Stone Soup" and work with the group to cook up a pot of soup large enough for everyone to take home a serving. Participants will also learn the history and origins of several different ethnic soup styles and sample each style featured. Cost is \$10 per person. Call 703-437-9101 or visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/frying-pan-park>.