

# Great Falls CONNECTION

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Staff members from Cameron's Chocolates greet visitors, their products enticing every passerby at Sunday's 9th annual McLean Chocolate Festival.



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# Closing All the Loopholes

Democrats poised to impose new regulations on high-interest lenders.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE CONNECTION

The days of unregulated high-interest lending may be coming to a close in Virginia. Now that Democrats have seized control of the General Assembly, members of the Legislative Black Caucus say cracking down on predatory lending is one of their top priorities for the 2020 session. Del. Lamont Bagby (D-74) and Sen. Mamie Locke (D-2) have introduced a legislative effort they're calling the Fair Lending Act. The bill would cap all loans at 36 percent and institute a maximum monthly fee of \$25.

"All of these lenders make the same loans in Colorado and Ohio and charge one third as much as they charge Virginians," said Jay Speer, executive director at the Virginia Poverty Law Center. "So it's pretty clear they charge the maximum they're allowed to charge and it has nothing at all to do with market forces."

The current state of Virginia law is a hodgepodge of different approaches for different loans. Some are regulated and capped at 264 percent. Others are totally unregulated, so nobody knows how many of them are being made or what the interest rates are. The Fair Lending Act would require all lenders get a Virginia license and register with the State Corporation Commission, which would track how many loans are made and many other details about the transactions. Advocates for reforming the system say the current system takes advantage of people who are already in a vulnerable financial situation.

"It's designed to bankrupt them," said Mark Levine (D-45), who introduced a bill to regulate open-end lines of credit. "It's designed to take every single asset they own."

**HIGH-INTEREST LENDERS** have been under increasing scrutiny in recent years, and campaign-finance disclosures show



MICHAEL LEE POPE/THE CONNECTION

**Campaign-finance records show that in the last election cycle, LoanMax gave \$150,000 to Republicans and \$100,000 to Democrats.**

these companies are spreading their money around to Democrats and Republicans in an effort to influence the General Assembly. During the last election cycle, the industry gave \$1 million in campaign contributions. Car-title lender LoanMax was the top contributor, giving \$250,000; online lender Enova gave \$176,000; open-end-line-of-credit lender Check Into Cash gave \$88,000.

"There's no question that when it comes to car-title lenders, that has been controversial," said Bob Denton, professor at Virginia Tech. "Republicans have protected that industry by and large."

Republicans are no longer in charge, and that has created a momentum for reforming an industry that many lawmakers believe preys on vulnerable people who are

desperate for money and don't fully understand the consequences of getting caught in a debt trap. One of the key Republicans who helped thwart efforts was former Del. Tim Hugo (R-40), who was chairman of a subcommittee that often served as graveyard for reform efforts. He was one of the four Republican incumbents unseated last year, giving Democrats a majority in the House and shifting the balance of power.

"Far too often I'm riding into work or into session, and I hear the commercials on the radio knowing that there's somebody listening to that who desperately needs a loan to pay for their electrical bill, to pay a child care payment, pay a college loan," said Bagby, who is leading the reform effort in the House. "They are going to be calling

that number that's on the radio or online to receive that loan not knowing what the rates are, and not understand what the fees are associated with that."

**ONE OF THE** key provisions in the Fair Lending Act is that it creates a cap on how much these companies can charge in interest and fees — no more than 50 percent. This is designed to prevent these companies from bilking consumers into forking over significantly more money than they borrowed in the first place, a key feature of the industry that helped earn the title "predatory."

"We want to make sure that the borrowers have terms that make sense and are reasonable because they can't negotiate those terms," said Jennifer Carroll Foy (D-2). "All they know is that they need the money, and they need it now."

Current rules allow for a wide variety of lending. Some are regulated and some are not. For example, payday loans and car-title loans are monitored by the State Corporation Commission. But open-end lines of credit and installment loans made online are not, leading to confusion about the scale of the industry and what kind of interest rates they charge. That's why the Fair Lending Act requires all businesses making loans in Virginia get a license, which will allow state regulators to track their activity. Critics say this creates a new loophole.

"We have no statute to cover somebody offshore," said Terry Kilgore (R-1). "It's going to drive a lot of people to the internet and offshore lending."

Supporters of the bill say the legislation has a solution to that problem: the attorney general.

"All you do is complain to the attorney general, and you don't have to pay a single dime," said Levine. "Sorry Russian company. Sorry German company. You're getting none of it back because under Virginia law, the loan is void."

## Troop 673 Celebrates Court of Honor

The Eagle Scout Court of Honor celebrated by Troop 673 in early January was the last one for those Great Falls boys who graduated from high school in 2019. This particular cohort was remarkable for having such a high number becoming Eagle Scouts. Not only did sixteen Scouts from this class make Eagle rank, but all were active in their troops well into high school, all but one participated in at least one High Adventure, seven attended either a National or World Jamboree, and eight were also members of the Order of the Arrow, the BSA honor society. For high school, three attended boarding school, one graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJ), and twelve graduated from Langley High School. All are now in

college, attending sixteen universities in eleven different states. Glenn Prickett was the Scoutmaster for the majority of the time for most of the boys; David Dankworth, Jon Porter, and Gary Pan (Troop 55) were also Scoutmasters and mentors for these young men.

The other remarkable fact about this cohort is that thirteen of the sixteen crossed over to Boy Scouts from the same Cub Scout den of Pack 673, based at Great Falls Elementary School. The parent leader from the den's inception in 2007 when the boys were in 1st grade was Eric Raudenbush. Sixteen Webelos from Eric's den joined Boy Scouts after they crossed over in March 2012 when they were in 5th grade, and 80 percent of those eventually became Eagle Scouts.

—CINDY GERSONY



PHOTO COURTESY OF GREG ROSZYK, SR.

**The "class of 2019" Eagle Scouts; all from Troop 673 of Great Falls, unless otherwise noted. From left, front and middle rows: Nat Raudenbush (Troop 55), Greg Roszyk, Jr., Cameron Williams, Neal Kelly, Sawyer Blazar, Matt Stephens, Mitch Williams, Jackson Sayers, and Benji Prickett. Back row: Zane Givans, Alex Marjanovich, and Greg Gersony.**

# County Studies State Budget

**Board of Supervisors Legislative Committee: Tracking items of interest to FX CO against Governor's proposed budget and specific legislation.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors held their first 2020 Legislative Committee Meeting on Fri., Jan. 17 with James Walkinshaw, (D-Braddock), chairman of the committee, and Jeffrey McKay, (D) vice-chairman. During the nearly three-hour meeting, staff reported to the Legislative Committee items deemed important and specific to Fairfax County.

Staff began their presentation with items on Gov. Northam's proposed 2020-22 Biennial Budget and amendments to the 2018-20 budget," followed by House and Senate bills introduced to the Virginia General Assembly by the Fairfax County Delegation.

The meeting kicked off with Claudia Arko, Legislative Director reading the Committee's approved "Five Priority Principles For Reviewing Legislation: Adequately fund K-12 education; Restore funding to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority; Build upon the successful enactment of significant transportation revenues by the 2013 General Assembly; Restore the funding partnership between the state and localities; and Preserve local government authority, particularly in taxation and land use; and allow greater flexibility in the administration of government."

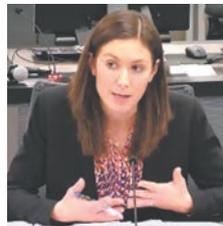
Albena Assenova, Revenue Coordinator of Department of Management and Budget, had tracked items of interest to Fairfax County that were included in the budget as well as the impact of these relative to county and school budgets and shared updates with the Committee. "The governor's budget did not include across the board salary adjustments for constitutional officers and state-supported local employees...the governor included funding to fully reimburse the general registrar and electoral board salaries in the localities, and we think that this would result in an increase of \$41,000," she said.

Assenova said, "The governor proposal included an increase in state cigarette tax rate from 30 cents per pack to 60 cents...allowing the Board of Supervisors to increase the cigarette tax and that would result in an increase of 5.4 million to Fairfax County...deposited in the general fund."

According to Assenova, in the judicial department, the County expected they might see an increase in four positions, given the governor's budget included funding for 59 additional positions for public defenders across the state. Still, it was unclear how many additional district court clerk positions. "We need more than 21 additional positions in the district court and more than 9 positions in the juvenile court," Assenova



**Albena Assenova,**  
Revenue and  
Economic Coordi-  
nator



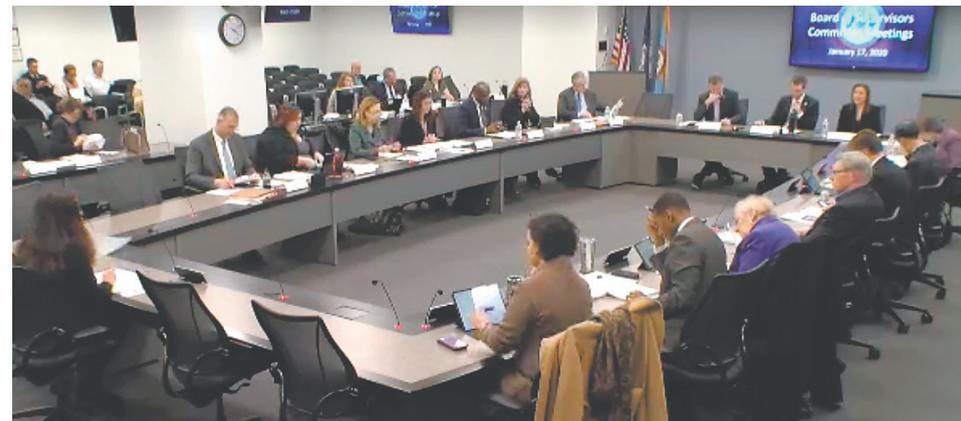
**Ellen Volo,**  
Deputy Legisla-  
tive Director,  
Office of the  
County Executive



**Noelle Dominguez,**  
Legislative Liai-  
son, Department  
of Transportation



**Chris Sigler,**  
Assistant  
County Attorney



SCREENSHOTS VIA FAIRFAX COUNTY VIDEO  
**Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Legislative Committee Meeting, Jan. 17, 2020**

said. The budget did include one new general district court judgeship and one clerk support staff for Fairfax County, funding for local stormwater assistance, Virginia Housing Trust Fund and for the 2020 Presidential Primary, reimbursement to localities for their expenditures.

As for the school budget, Governor Northam's Proposed Budget targeted more than one-third of new spending on education. According to Assenova, the governor's budget includes a total of \$69.2 million increase for fiscal year '21 compared to the current year budget...There were no teacher salary increase proposed for the first year of the biennium. Assenova reminded the supervisors that the County did receive state funding towards salary increases of teachers for fiscal year 2020, and the governor included another increase for fiscal year 2022. The proposed budget includes funding for additional counselors related to school safety at \$2 million.

In the Human Services section of staff presentations, Ellen Volo, Deputy Legislative Director, Office of the County Executive said the governor's proposal would provide a 3 percent increase for state-supported local employees of social service departments, "We do think that we would get about receive \$2.2 million for a 3 percent increase... if this component of the budget is passed, the County will receive \$2.2 million in FY

2021," she said. There would be an approximate \$400,000 match required.

Noelle Dominguez, Legislative Liaison, Department of Transportation, said the proposed budget did provide about \$50 million more than the last projections for Northern Virginia Transportation funding due to legislation passed in the previous year related to sales of items to the internet as well as revenue from the I-81 bill last year that provided some funds back to Northern Virginia Transportation Authority.

The second item Dominguez presented had to do with regional transportation entity appointments. "Two years ago the General Assembly put language in the budget that allowed the Speaker of the House to appoint non-legislative members to the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission. Some members are currently not general assembly members," said Dominguez. The budget would remove the language for the next appointments; appointees would have to be from the General Assembly.

**ONE ITEM** concerned the Department of Motor Vehicles and the proposal for 100 more employees given the need for a REAL ID compliant driver's license. "About 1 million or at least more than a million people might get those licenses in Virginia... Pro-

portionately nine of the ten busiest DMVs are in Northern Virginia, two I think are right in our area," Dominguez said.

Moving on, the Committee received details on three County Initiatives of Special Legislation that they had asked the Fairfax County Delegation to move through the General Assembly, among them SB-23 by Senator Adam Ebbin (D-30) that prohibits discrimination in employment and public accommodations based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Next, the Committee received reports for continuous support of historical positions for legislation such as Courthouse Security Fees SB 149 (Howell); Equal Rights Amendment HJ 1 (Carroll Foy) (Passed House; SPE)/SJ 1 (McClellan) (Passed Senate; HPE) ratifies the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution of the United States that was proposed by Congress in 1972; Solar Freedom HB 572 (Keam) and others.

Referring to the four bills in front of the Legislative Committee that spoke to Solar Freedom, Vice Chair McKay said, "I suggest that we do an individual letter on these, what this means to Fairfax County; to come forward from the chairman at our next board meeting, so we can be on record specifically on this issue, and specifically putting it down in terms of what this means for Fairfax County and how far along we are in this. And this would put a halt if these are not approved."

## Highlights of New Bills 2020 General Assembly

**HB 1391 (Leftwich) (HCT)/SB 253 (Chafin) (SJUD) - Recommend oppose.**

Chris Sigler, Assistant County Attorney: I think the issue with the bill is that our affordable housing, ADU program relies on things like affordable housing restrictions and covenants that don't appear in the Deed of Trust, but when there is a foreclosure we want those restrictions and covenants to be protected by the Trustee and honored...I think this bill may say they might not have to do that, and that gives us great concern for the ADU Program.

**HB 1534 (Samirah) (HCCT)/SB 649 (Boysko) (Senate Floor)-Recommend support.**

Chris Sigler, Assistant County Attorney: It allows Fairfax County, to enter into agreements with towns either wholly or partially within its boundaries for the collection and enforcement of property taxes. So we would be able to collect those by agreement with Herndon.

SEE LEGISLATIVE, PAGE 10

## The People's Business

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

**T**he General Assembly has shifted into high gear to get through its agenda of thousands of bills in sixty days. The old saying that you cannot be in two places at one time is disproven every day as the 140 members of the House and Senate scurry among subcommittees and standing committees on which they serve and the subcommittees and committees before which they have to present their bills. By strategically placing an assistant or intern in one meeting while the member moves quickly among several meetings, it may even appear that a member is in more than even two places at one time. The legislature is not a place for lengthy contemplation but rather is a place for action. After all, we ran on a platform of what

we promised we were going to do, and the legislative session is the time of action to deliver on our promises.

With such a "meat grinder" approach can we trust the outcome of a legislative session? Consider that in order for a bill to become a law it must meet the approval of a subcommittee and full committee, passage twice in the full house on two different days, the same process in the other house of the legislature, and the signature of the governor.

All that time there are hundreds of advocates, constituents, lobbyists and others looking over your shoulder and providing comments on what you are doing. Bills get intense scrutiny before they are passed. It is easier to describe how a bill does not make it than it is to tell how a bill becomes a law. Fewer than half the bills intro-



duced become law.

Election outcomes do matter for to change the outcome of debate on important issues it may be easier to change the people in the legislature through the ballot box than it is to change the minds of incumbent legislators. A case in point is ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment that was debated for decades but approved within a week in a General Assembly made up of new members supporting the rights of women. Those same new members, joining the progressives who were already there, have even now approved sweeping new common-sense gun safety laws such as my universal background check bill that had been defeated for two decades by previous members of a subcommittee of the House. Laws that put barriers in the way of women in making choices con-

cerning their own reproductive health are being repealed. Laws that disproportionately affected people of color are being repealed. The criminal justice system is undergoing a major shift to make it work more fairly for all people. Challenges to the environment are being met with meaningful legislation.

It is impossible to list in a short column the thousands of bills before the legislature. You can however review the full list with descriptions and status at [lis.virginia.gov](http://lis.virginia.gov) and for the first time this year you can see livestreaming of most full and subcommittee meetings at [virginiageneralassembly.gov/house/chamber/chamberstream](http://virginiageneralassembly.gov/house/chamber/chamberstream) and [virginia-senate.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_id=3](http://virginia-senate.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=3). And you can visit the Capitol in Richmond; all meetings are open to the public. Some say the process is like making sausage. The important thing is it is doing the people's business.

## After Virginia Ratification Of Equal Rights Amendment Beyer: 'Next Steps Depend On Congress'

**R**ep. Don Beyer (D-8), a longtime supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), and cosponsor of legislation to extend the deadline for ratification, issued the following statement after the Virginia General Assembly voted to ratify the ERA: "Today, Virginia became the 38<sup>th</sup> state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, and I could not be more proud. Ratification of the ERA is long overdue, but it is wonderful that Virginia took the historic step today which brought the Amendment across the three-fourths threshold necessary for ratification.



**Rep. Don Beyer (D-8)**

"I congratulate and applaud everyone in the Virginia General Assembly, including Senator McClellan, Senator Locke, and Delegate Carroll Foy for making

this long-overdue legislation a top priority, and seeing it through successfully.

"The recent legal opinion issued by the Trump Administration via the Justice Department makes it clear that the next steps depend on Congress. I am determined to do everything I can in Congress to help pave the way for the final ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Equality, justice, and history demand nothing less."

Beyer is a cosponsor of House legislation to extend the deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, sponsored by Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA). The issue of

the deadline was raised most recently by a Trump Administration legal opinion arguing that the ERA could not be ratified because of the expiration of the original deadline. Beyer is also a cosponsor of new Equal Rights Amendment legislation introduced by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY).

Beyer's most recent Annual Women's Conference and Forum focused specifically on the need to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, with a panel discussion that featured speakers from VA Ratify ERA (Virginia's campaign to ratify the ERA) and the ERA Coalition.

## Wexton: 'A Historic Moment'

**I**n response to the final passage of the Equal Rights Amendment in the Virginia General Assembly, Rep. Jennifer Wexton (D-10) issued the following statement: "Today, Virginia sent a powerful message to the rest of the country — that 'Equal Justice Under Law' is a constitutional right for women.



**Rep. Jennifer Wexton (D-10)**

"I was a sponsor of the Equal Rights Amendment during my time in Richmond, and I am proud of my former colleagues in Richmond who made this issue a priority in this year's session.

"This is a historic moment nearly one hundred years in the making. Thanks to the tireless work of so

many trailblazers and activists over the years, women — finally — are one step closer to being included in our nation's founding document."

### 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 libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

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# BULLETIN

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

## QUICK GUIDE AVAILABLE

For 26 years the Northern Virginia Regional Commission has published a Quick Guide which is a pocket index to the most frequently sought human services in our region. The Guide is designed to meet the needs of all those in the region seeking to deal with difficult situations. You can search services for the Guide by visiting the following link: <https://novaquickguide.org/>. You can also save the link to your Smart Phone. Just enter the url <https://novaquickguide.org> into the browser of your phone and save it to your home screen. You will have the full functionality of the website.

## RUN FOR SEAT ON GOVERNING BOARD

Are you a resident of Small District 1-A Dranesville? Are you looking for ways to make a difference in the community? Consider running for a seat on the McLean Community Center's (MCC) 2020-2021 Governing Board. MCC is seeking district residents to run for seats on its 11-member volunteer board, which provides oversight and guidance for MCC programs and facilities, including the Robert Ames Alden Theatre ("The Alden") and The Old Firehouse Center (OFC). An agency of Fairfax County Government, MCC is located at 1234 Ingleside Ave. To run for a seat on the volunteer board, a candidate must reside in the Center's tax district (Small District 1A-Dranesville). Three adult positions and two youth positions are open this year. To have their names placed on election ballots, candidates are required to obtain the signatures of 10 McLean tax district residents in their respective categories. Candidate petition packets will be available at MCC starting at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 21.

Key Election Dates:

- ❖ Friday, March 13: Completed Petition Packets are due at MCC by 5 p.m.
- ❖ Saturday, March 14: Candidates' Orientation.

- ❖ Wednesday, March 18: Absentee Voting begins at the MCC and The Old Firehouse Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd., McLean, Va. 22101.
- ❖ Wednesday, May 13: Absentee Voting ends at 5 p.m.
- ❖ Saturday, May 16: Elections at McLean Day (Lewinsville Park) from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call the Center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, or logon to the Governing Board Candidates' webpage: <https://bit.ly/2QwOURj>.

## FRIDAY/FEB. 7

**Preschool Transition to Kindergarten for Students with Disabilities.** 10 a.m. to noon. At Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Dunn Loring. The transition to kindergarten is a big one for kids and can be even more so for children with disabilities. Learn how parents can collaborate with FCPS to ensure their students have a smooth transition to Kindergarten.

## TUESDAY/FEB. 11

**Valentine's Day Luncheon.** 12 noon to 2 p.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. Cost is \$18/person. Hosted by SCOV and The Vienna Community Center. Registration required by Feb. 3. Call 703-281-0538. You must be registered to attend. No walk-ins please.

**NARFE Chapter Meeting.** 2 p.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association) Chapter Meeting. Guest speaker - Marge Van Lierde - "The Road Ahead" - Transitioning into a retirement community. Refreshments will be served. Free. Members and guests. Call 703-205-9041.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

# State Farm Insurance

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## SENIOR LIVING

# Tax Season, Tax Scams

The most common tricks and have to avoid them.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**T**ax season and tax scams often go hand-in-hand. Scammers will try to steal tax documents, money and even a person's identity and seniors are often their prime target.

"Con artists will target anyone, but older adults are targeted at higher rates because criminals go where the money is, and older adults have the majority of wealth because of their years of hard work and savings," said Amy Nofziger, Director of Fraud Victim Support at the AARP. "Plus, older adults have not grown up with the technology of today, which has grown so fast."

"Older Adults are often targets because they are going through life transitions and scammers can be very convincing," added Rachel Coates, Director of the Arlington County Agency on Aging. "Awareness is critical."

While numerous scams abound, there are some that are currently more prevalent than others. "The complaints we hear...is the IRS phone scam," said Stacy Northrop of the Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs. "This is where the caller will state that a warrant of arrest has been issued for the victim."

"The crook will claim that the recipient in trouble for not paying enough in taxes or not filing properly," added Eric Friedman, Director of the Montgomery County Office of Consumer Protection. "Crooks instill a sense of fear and urgency, then they'll trick the consumer into wiring money or paying over the phone with a prepaid gift card. Consumers make quick decisions that they wouldn't make if there wasn't a sense of urgency."

Some of the features commonly thought to be safeguards may not be so, says Friedman. "You cannot trust Caller ID to tell you who's really on the other end of the phone," he said. "Caller ID is of no value because crooks can say anything over the phone. They can have IRS as the name that appears to make it look official."

Telephone calls and emails are two warning signs of a scam.

"This is not how the government actually operates," said Nofziger of AARP. "You would always first receive a letter from the IRS, and they would never threaten you with arrest or use foul language. If you receive this type of call, hang up the phone."

Fraudulent emails and websites can be created to look as though they are from a government agency.

**"If anyone calls, mails, emails or texts you asking for money, that is a red flag. If they ask you for personal information such as your Medicare number, Social Security number or financial information, it's a huge red flag."**

— Amy Nofziger, Director of Fraud Victim Support at the AARP

**"Crooks instill a sense of fear and urgency. Consumers make quick decisions that they wouldn't make if there wasn't a sense of urgency."**

— Eric Friedman, Montgomery County Office of Consumer Protection

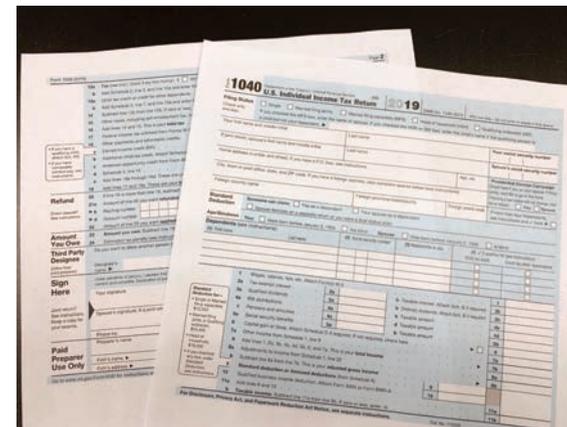


PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

**Know the warning signs to avoid scams this tax season.**

## For Help and More Information

- ❖ AARP Fraud Watch Network at [www.aarp.org/FraudWatchNetwork](http://www.aarp.org/FraudWatchNetwork). AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline and our trained fraud specialists can help walk you through it: 877-908-3360.
- ❖ Free Help at Montgomery County Libraries: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter/Resources/Files/taxaideflyer.pdf>
- ❖ Tax ID Theft Awareness Week: <https://www.idtheftcenter.org/tax-identity-theft-awareness-week-2020/>
- ❖ Arlington Adult Protective Services 703-228-1700
- ❖ Fairfax County Silver Shield Anti-Scam Campaign <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/older-adults/fairfax-county-silver-shield-anti-scam-campaign>

"Many older adults are unaware that criminals are lurking on what we consider innocent websites or apps, like 'Words with Friends,' Instagram or other social media platforms," said Nofziger. "This is why education and warning people about the red flags is crucial."

Identify theft is also prevalent during tax season, says Friedman of Montgomery County. "Crooks will steal someone's social security number and file [taxes] really early, like in January or February, before the consumer files their return," he said. "When the consumer really does file, the IRS rejects it. When the problem is reported, the IRS will

have to investigate which takes months to resolve, which is not good if you're getting a refund."

Scammers seek to obtain money from a victim often in the form of wire transfers or cash, says Nofziger. "It's important to know the red flags of

scams," she said. "Even though the scam tactics might vary, the criminals' demands never change. They want money or personal information. So if anyone calls, mails, emails or texts you asking for money, that is a red flag. If they ask you for personal information such as your Medicare number, Social Security number or financial information, it's a huge red flag."

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lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known



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This festive children's Valentine basket was one of the many raffle items available at the Chocolate Festival.



PHOTOS BY OLIVIA ANELLO/THE CONNECTION

Chocolate-covered Oreos in every color and flavor from the Capital Candy Jar quickly disappeared from these boxes.

# Sweetest Weekend in Mclean

## McLean Chocolate Festival:

BY OLIVIA ANELLO  
THE CONNECTION

It's safe to say that more than a few sweet tooth's were satisfied this past weekend.

On Sunday afternoon, the Rotary Club of McLean hosted their 9th annual McLean Chocolate Festival. Held at the McLean Community Center, eighteen vendors from all over the DMV area came together to share their confections with the tri-state community. Eva Sereghy, Secretary of the Rotary Club of McLean was "pleased with everyone that came out, especially those from Maryland and the D.C. area." She continued, "It's a nice feeling to be supported by so many visitors, from McLean and beyond."

Of the eighteen chocolate-relevant businesses in attendance, fifteen were returning vendors, including Cameron's Chocolates from Fairfax. Madeline Porth, a staff member of the Cameron's Chocolate storefront, was eager to share the many wonderful qualities about the business, and not just because fresh made baked goods are available in the store every single day. Cameron's Chocolates is a business that employs adults with intellectual disabilities and has an appreciation for the opportunity for meaningful employment. Cameron's Chocolates takes pride in delivering extraordinary chocolates made by extraordinary people. Porth spoke passionately about their many homemade goods available on Sunday, including their milk salted caramels which were worth their cost in treat tickets and more.

A first-time vendor at the McLean Chocolate Festival was The Dough Jar. With stores in Georgetown and National Harbor, D.C., The Dough Jar makes edible cookie dough in every flavor that is completely safe to eat. Owner, Lindsay Goldin, skips the raw egg and uses a pasteurized flour, allowing her



Dave of Dave's Candy Kitchen set up shop, displaying his English toffee candies and chocolate covered pretzels for sale.



Cake pops and chocolate-dipped rice krispie treats line the table of business, Fluffy Thoughts in McLean.



customers to safely enjoy the best part of making cookies. Goldin shared how much she "loves the opportunity to connect with new people" at events like the Chocolate Festival. She went on, "the traffic [in the stores] is not always immediate, but I love when people come in weeks or months later and say 'I was at that Chocolate Festival and remember having your cookie dough.'"

Jan Auerbach, Treasurer of the Rotary Club of McLean and chair of the event's committee, expressed her gratitude for the many families and individuals who visited the Chocolate Festival. "The beauty of this event is that it really is for all ages. We've seen families with young children, teenagers with their friends, couples, seniors..." Auerbach said.

The Rotary Club of McLean is a member of Rotary International which is a service organization whose mission is to improve the lives of others throughout the world. Chocolate is certainly a great way to bring people together, but the list of services the Rotary Club has accomplished on behalf of local and international organizations is truly extensive. In 2019 alone, the Rotary Club of McLean devoted their service to 10 local organizations, including Cameron's Coffee and Chocolates, and 4 international organizations, many for health-related conflicts in Africa. The Rotary Club of McLean meets on Tuesdays at noon in the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in McLean.

Laid out on the raffle table was a real chocolate pearl jewelry set, as well as chocolate baskets for all ages. All of the proceeds from the raffle are going to the organizations supported by the Rotary Club of McLean.

# CALENDAR

Submit entertainment announcements at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## ONGOING

**The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia**, a senior women's softball league, is looking for players. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. They play on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna. For more information, visit the web site [www.goldengirls.org](http://www.goldengirls.org)

**Beginners Mah Jongg Class.** Tuesdays thru Feb. 18. 12:30-2:30 p.m. At Great Falls Library, 9830 VA-193, Great Falls. Learn to play the fun, fast-paced game of Mah Jongg. Registration is now open for an Adult Beginners Mah Jongg class. The class will run for six weeks on Tuesday afternoons from 12:30-2:30 p.m. beginning January 14 through February 18. Attendees should plan to attend all six sessions. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov).

## WEDNESDAY/JAN. 29

**Playdate Meetup.** 10:30 a.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Toys and play space for children. Birth-5 with adult. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/oakton>

**Qigong Introduction.** 2 p.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Learn to practice the Ancient Chinese exercises of Qigong to improve your health and increase your vitality. Adults and Older Adults. No registration necessary, but space is limited to first 20 people. First come, first served. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/oakton>

**Drawing the Figure Class.** 6-8:30 p.m. At The Arts of Great Falls School, 756 Walker Road, Great Falls. Six weekly classes with Marcia Klioze; cost is \$275. Interested in painting or drawing the figure? This class is designed for all levels of artists. Students will be painting the human figure from a model. In this class you will gain the knowledge of basic painting concepts and techniques such as value, color, temperature, composition, and transition, through one-on-one instruction and demonstration. Visit the website: [www.greatfallsart.org](http://www.greatfallsart.org)

## THURSDAY/JAN. 30

**Lunch & Learn on Senior Housing Options.** 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Huckaby Briscoe Conroy (HBC) Group at Keller Williams McLean has organized a Lunch & Learn on Senior Housing Options. Seniors Real Estate Specialist Karen Briscoe, HBC Principal, and HBC partner Lizzy Conroy are hosting this discussion for seniors in the Northern Virginia area. Also participating is Jeanina DiVittorio, a Senior Living Expert. Subjects to be discussed include: In-home care vs. retirement community living; Elder nourish and senior community programs; Retirement community options and their costs; How to decide when to downsize and move; and Selling your home to help pay your long-term needs. RSVP by Jan. 23 to 703-734-0192 or [Homes@HBCGroupKW.com](mailto:Homes@HBCGroupKW.com)

**Pet Therapy for Teens.** 6:30 p.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Hang out with therapy dogs. Pets have been proven to benefit mental health and they're pretty cute! Teens. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/oakton>

**Unruly Theatre Project Improv Performance.** 7 p.m. At McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Free admission. The Unruly Theatre Project is The Alden's professional teen improv company dedicated to bringing comedic productions to the community. Call the Center at 703-790-0123, or visit the website, [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org).

## JAN. 30 THRU FEB. 23

**"The Royal."** At 1st Stage in Tysons, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. "The Royale" by Marco Ramirez, Directed by Paige Hernandez. Jay "The Sport" Jackson dreams of being the undisputed heavyweight champion of the world, but in the racially segregated world of boxing in 1905, the odds are stacked against him. When a crooked boxing promoter hatches a plan for "the fight of the century," "The Sport" might land a place in the ring with the reigning white



## "We Shall Overcome"

**Musician Damien Sneed will perform at The Alden Theater in McLean on Thursday, Jan. 30.**

## THURSDAY/JAN. 30

**Musician Damien Sneed.** 7 p.m. At The Alden Theater, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. "We Shall Overcome: A Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., featuring Damien Sneed" will arrive at The Alden for one performance. This is the only DMV stop in the 40-city "We Shall Overcome" tour. Sneed is a graduate of Howard University, and he will be joined by the Howard University Choir. Tickets are \$45 for the general public, \$25 for seniors and students and \$20 for McLean Community Center tax district residents. Visit: [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org) or call 703-790-0123.



## Lilt in Concert

**Lilt is Tina Eck on wooden flute and whistle and Keith Carr on 10 string bouzouki, mandolin, tenor banjo and vocals.**

## SUNDAY/FEB. 9

**Celtic Music Featuring Lilt.** 5 p.m. and 7:15 p.m. At The Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. The Old Brogue Irish Pub and Barnaby Productions, Inc. present the 31st season of family friendly, Winter Traditional Celtic Concerts. Featuring internationally recognized Celtic musicians, the concerts are performed in a listening room by the fireside. Tickets must be purchased in advance; \$20 general admission/\$15 children under 12. Season ticket: \$108. Visit [www.oldbrogue.com](http://www.oldbrogue.com) or call the Old Brogue at 703-759-3309.

heavyweight champion. Show times are Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 and 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$42 general admission, \$39 seniors (65+), \$15 students and military. Purchase online at [www.1ststage.org](http://www.1ststage.org) or 703-854-1856.

## FRIDAY/JAN. 31

**Little Explorer's Playgroup.** 10:30 a.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Join in an adventurous STEAM centered playgroup that engages the senses. Age 2-5 with adult. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/oakton>

**TMO — Tysons McLean Orchestra Reception.** 5:30-7:30 p.m. At Bank of America, 8300 Greensboro Drive, McLean. Join the

Orchestra Board of Trustees for an evening reception sponsored by Merrill Lynch, where TMO will unveil the 50<sup>th</sup> Season Repertoire, Development Plan and Calendar for the year. RSVP to [info@tysonsmcleanorchestra.org](mailto:info@tysonsmcleanorchestra.org).

## SATURDAY/FEB. 1

**Pairing Premium Teas and Chocolate.** 1-3 p.m. At Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. This favorite seminar is back! Learn about the similarities of theobroma cacao and camillia sinensis, from their growing regions to their processing methods as you taste, compare, and pair special teas and chocolates. Taste some treats made with these two delectable ingredients. A take home sampler included. Cost is \$35. Use ID Code 4C6.790B.

Register at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes) or call 703-222-4664.

**Author Talk.** 1:30-3 p.m. At Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. Author Julianna Miner shares insights from her book on how parents can help their kids navigate childhood and adolescence while they learn to use smartphones, apps, and websites — and reduce unexpected consequences. Adults. Free. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/5815506>

## MONDAYS/FEB. 3, 10, 24

**Baby Storytime.** 10:30 a.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Have fun with baby while building early literacy foundations for reading success. Birth -18 months with adults.

## TUESDAYS/FEB. 4, 11, 18

**Toddler Tales.** 10:30 a.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Have fun with your child and build early literacy foundations for reading success. Age 18 months-3 years with adults.

## TUESDAY/FEB. 4

**Entrepreneurship 101: Starting a Business in Fairfax County.** 7:30-10:30 a.m. At Fairfax County Economic Development Authority, 8300 Boone Blvd., McLean. Held in partnership with the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD), U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), and Community Business Partnership (CBP), the sessions have attracted nearly 4,000 attendees. The sessions provide overviews of: Business start-up basics (licenses and permits); workforce services and training programs; SBA financing and resources; SDB, MBE and 8(a) certification. There is no charge, but pre-registration is required and the workshops almost always fill up. Visit the website: <https://www.fairfaxcountyped.org/event/5437/>

**GFHS Award Dinner.** 6:30-8:30 p.m. At The Old Brogue, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Join The Great Falls Historical Society in honoring Mike Henry as the 2020 recipient of the Tibbetts Award. Mr. Henry works tirelessly for the Colvin Run Mill and they are excited to celebrate him. Cost is \$50. Visit the website [GFHS.org](http://GFHS.org)

## WEDNESDAYS/FEB. 5, 12, 19

**Preschool Storytime.** 10:30 a.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Have fun with your child and build early literacy foundations for reading success. Age 3-5 with adult.

## THURSDAY/FEB. 6

**Teen Advisory Board (TAB).** 6 p.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Gain leadership experience and discuss what the library can do for you. Grades 7-12.

**Meme Fest.** 6:30 p.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Game focused on identifying and determining appropriate use of memes. Teens.

## FRIDAY/FEB. 7, 14, 21

**Karate for Kids.** 5 p.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Join the Karate to gain powerful tools for self-defense, inner-strength and a strong, healthy body. Ages 4 and up.

## FRIDAY/FEB. 7

**Waterfowl Hike.** 9-11 a.m. At Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills Street, Great Falls. Some water birds stick around all winter and others merely pass through our region. Go on a "Winter Waterfowl Hike" at Riverbend Park and see what birds you can find. Bird lovers age 14 to adult are invited to hike with a naturalist to search for winter waterfowl along the Upper Potomac River. Participants should bring binoculars and spotting scopes. Cost is \$8 per person. Call 703-759-9018 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend).

**Bilingual Storytime.** 10:30 a.m. At Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Bilingual Storytime in English and Hindi. Enjoy stories, songs and activities. Birth-5 with adult.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 9

# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

**Catholic Charities Ball.** 7 p.m. At the Ritz-Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. The event is the largest annual fundraiser for Catholic Charities, providing a significant portion of the resources needed to support 21 programs serving those in need throughout the 21 counties and seven cities of the Diocese. This year's theme is "With Love and Charity." Tickets for both events can be purchased at [www.ccca.net](http://www.ccca.net).

## SATURDAY/FEB. 8

**Star Trek to Astronomy Festival.** 5:30-7:30 p.m. At Turner Farm, 925 Springvale Road, Great Falls. There will be guided stargazing and opportunities to get a close-up look at the stars through a telescope at the roll-top observatory. Join in games and warm yourself by the campfire as you listen to ancient stories about the constellations. Hot chocolate and snacks will be available for purchase. This event is designed for stargazers age 3 to adult. Cost is \$10 per person. The festival will be canceled if it is raining or snowing. Call 703-324-8618 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/turner-farm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/turner-farm).

**Flamenco Vivo/Carlota Santana.** 7 p.m. At The Alden Theater, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. "Reflejos Flamencos" ("Flamenco Reflections"), the newest production by Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana, celebrates the fundamental emotions that connect us while honoring the individual human spirit inherent in flamenco. Tickets are \$40/\$35 senior/\$30 MCC tax district residents.

## SUNDAY/FEB. 9 AND 23, MARCH 1

**Maple Syrup Boil-Down.** Noon to 2 p.m. At Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. How does maple syrup get from the tree to your breakfast table? See the old-fashioned process from beginning to end at the "Maple Syrup Boil-Down at Colvin Run Mill." When the sap starts to rise, the maple trees are tapped at Colvin Run and the drip, drip, drip begins. Now, it's sugaring time! Bundle up, watch and learn as sap is boiled down into sweet syrup over an outdoor, open fire. Sample the delicious maple syrup served over cornbread that's made from Colvin Run Mill's own cornmeal. Cost is \$8 per person. No reservations are required. Call 703-759-2771 or visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/colvin-run-mill>.

## MONDAY/FEB. 10

**English on the Go.** Registration 6:30-8 p.m. At James Lee Community Center, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. Do you need to learn English but can't find the time? The Literacy Council of Northern Virginia has the right course for you. Cell-Ed English on the Go combines a limited number of classes with an easy-to-follow home learning program. Learn on your phone by texting, no Wi-Fi is required. The class is offered at \$85 per semester. Go to [lcnv.org/learn](http://lcnv.org/learn) or call 703-237-0866.

## TUESDAY/FEB. 11

**Valentine Senior Social Event.** 12-2 p.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. The Shepherd's Center serving Oakton-Vienna-Reston-Herndon and Vienna Parks and Recreation will present its Valentine Senior Social event. Held throughout the year, The Shepherd's Center Senior Socials afford guests the opportunity to socialize and stay connected in the community. These Senior Social events help to address the Vision Statement of The Shepherd's Center: A World Without



## NDWC Fundraiser

The NDWC Fundraiser will be held Sunday, Feb. 9 at Chain Bridge Cellars in McLean.

## SUNDAY/FEB. 9

**New Dominion Women's Club Fundraiser.** 3-5 p.m. At Chain Bridge Cellars, 1351 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. This is a great opportunity to stock up on wines and bubbly prior to Valentine's Day and the start of spring. Host Doug House will donate 15 percent of purchases from that day to the NDWC. Can't make it to the event? Stop in anytime that day, mention "NDWC" and Doug will apply the donation. Tickets \$20. Visit the website: [ndwc.org/wine-and-cheese-party.html](http://ndwc.org/wine-and-cheese-party.html)

Loneliness. Entertainment will be provided by Jody Marshall on hammered dulcimer and Jim Queen on fiddle. Tickets are \$18 per person. To register, call 703-281-0601 by Feb. 3, 2020. Registration is required. No refunds. No walk-ins.

## THURSDAY/FEB. 20

**Brain and Breathing.** 10-11 a.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, Vienna. In this course, you will learn breathing exercises designed to help support brain function. Instructor: Dr. Charles Masarsky of Vienna Chiropractic. Free. Call 701-255-7801.

**Acoustic Autumn Live Music.** 6:30-9 p.m. At Blend 111, 111 Church Street, NW, Vienna. Laissez Fouré is an acoustic swing quartet playing classics from the '30s and '40s. The group consists of acoustic bass, swing rhythm guitar, saxophone/clarinet, and trumpet. In the tradition of New Orleans jazz, the quartet emphasizes an acoustic sound when feasible and plays charts by Armstrong, Ellington, Count Basie and others from the era.

**The ABCs of CBD and Medical Marijuana.** 7:30-9 p.m. At Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave., E, Vienna. The discussion will provide medical information about CBD/THC, the differences between CBD and medical marijuana, and how people can legally obtain medical marijuana in Virginia. Free. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/5843108>

## FRIDAY/FEB. 21

**Nora Jane Struthers Concert.** 8 p.m. At Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave., E, Vienna. Nashville-based singer/songwriter Nora Jane Struthers is a rootsy artist with a bent toward mixing traditional country and contemporary rock stylings into her passionate Americana sound. Also on stage, Sarah Borges and the Broken Singles. Tickets \$15-\$25. Visit [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com)

## SUNDAY/FEB. 23

**Capitol Steps Performance.** 7 p.m. At Langley High School Auditorium, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The Capitol Steps will perform with new material for the 2020 election. Tickets cost \$37. This is a one-time event and the main fundraiser for the Langley High School Class of 2020 All-Night Grad Party (ANGP). Buy online at <https://form.jotform.com/>

LangleyPTSA/angp2020.

## SATURDAY/MARCH 10, 2020

**Free Black History Concert.** 3 p.m. At Historic Pleasant Grove Church, 8700 Lewinsville Road, McLean. Featuring the Washington Revels Jubilee Voices in a free concert celebrating African American musical traditions. This event will take place in a quaint 1895 church setting, now an historic site. For information, see [www.HistoricPleasantGrove.org](http://www.HistoricPleasantGrove.org).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 18

**32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup.** 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Hosted by the Alice Ferguson Foundation, 2001 Bryan Point Rd, Accokeek. The Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup has become a catalyst for progress that ignites people's interest and passion for the environment and community action. The largest regional event of its kind, the Cleanup provides a transforming experience that engages residents and community leaders and generates momentum for change. The Potomac River Watershed Cleanup has grown from a small shoreline cleanup at Piscataway National Park to a watershed wide network. What started as a few cleanup events along the Potomac River is now a regional event spanning Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. If you can't make this date or location check out [PotomacCleanup.org](http://PotomacCleanup.org) to find another cleanup near you.

## ONGOING

**Drop-in Mah Jongg.** Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.-noon at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Players should have a basic understanding of the rules and should bring their current American MJ League card. For McLean District residents. Email [emvarner@verizon.net](mailto:emvarner@verizon.net) for more.

**Camp Grow Registration Open.** Camp Grow at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, in Vienna, invites children to explore nature through hands-on activities, gardening, discovery walks, crafts, music, storytelling, and animal programs. Camp Grow is designed to engage, challenge, educate and encourage a sense of community. Camp Grow values and encourages inclusion of all campers in every activity. Visit [www.novaparks.com/things-to-do/camps/](http://www.novaparks.com/things-to-do/camps/) for more.

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**NEWS**

**Legislative Committee Tracks Priority Bills**

FROM PAGE 3

**SB 631 (Surovell) (SLG)-Recommend support.**

The County supports expanded local authority but has concerns about its ability to implement this authority.

Chris Sigler, Assistant County Attorney: "(May allow by ordinance) the County to fine people who have essentially stolen or removed the shopping cart from the shop that it belongs to and can fine them up to \$500... There's concern that there are shopping carts that end up in our creeks."

Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk (D- Lee): "I'm not sure if the punishment fits the crime...I have some issues that the \$500 penalty will probably be assessed to someone who is homeless."

Supervisor Dalia Palchik (D-Providence): "This is penalizing poverty. This is how my family shopped when we first moved here."

Supervisor John Foust (D- Dranesville): "If this bill is passed, we do not have to implement any fine at all...I support it...Fining someone \$500 or any amount would be inappropriate, but putting the burden on the store owner to retrieve these and get them back is reasonable."

**HB 812 (Ward) (HPS)/SB 69 (Locke) (Passed Senate)-Recommend support.**

The bill would reinstate one handgun a month.

**SB 297 (Favola) (SRSS)-Recommend support.**

Creates the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Prevention Fund-Recommend support.

Sue Rowland, State Legislative Consultant, SR Consulting, Inc.: "This is a good bill; we recommend you support... The idea is that there would be funding for local programs such as ours to focus on prevention prior to the support that we give when people have had a bad experience."

**HB 151 (Samirah) (HCCT)—Recommend oppose.**

Provides that all localities shall allow for the development and use of one accessory dwelling unit (ADU) per single-family dwelling (SFD), notwithstanding any contrary provision of zoning ordinance.

Chris Sigler, Assistant County Attorney: "I think the issue we have with this bill is that we are eroding our land use authority number one. And number two, I think this bill is driving at the affordability crisis... to resolve some of the affordability issues...Right now, our staff is looking at our accessory dwelling unit policy and will be coming back to you...This bill is a mandate that goes a little bit too far."

Visit [http://video.fairfaxcounty.gov/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_id=9](http://video.fairfaxcounty.gov/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=9) for Meeting Material and the archived video for the Jan. 17, 2020 Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Legislative Committee Meeting.

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Questions? E-mail [sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-778-9431



FROM PAGE 5

## THURSDAY/FEB. 13

**Fostering Protective Factors in Children.** 10 a.m. to noon. At Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1, Room 100, Dunn Loring. Every adult can foster protective factors and build resiliency in children and adolescents. Presented by Ryan Dickerson, FCPS School Psychologist and Jenn Spears, FCPS Mental Wellness Specialist. Topics include: What does the Fairfax County Youth Survey data show us? Identifying Protective Factors and Assets (Three to Succeed); Strategies for building protective factors and assets; Understanding resilience and how to increase your child's ability to respond to challenges.

## 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/healthymindsfairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax) or [www.nam-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html](http://www.nam-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html).

**Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna Caregivers' Support Group** takes place first and third Thursday of each month, 10-11:30 a.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax (UUCF) - Program Building, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. For caregivers to adult family members with dementia. First and third Thursdays of every month. Hosted by Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna, [scov.org](http://scov.org). Contact facilitator Jack Tarr at 703-821-6838 or [jtarr5@verizon.net](mailto:jtarr5@verizon.net).

**Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group.** 703-941-7000, [www.havenofnova.org](http://www.havenofnova.org) or [havenofnova@verizon.net](mailto:havenofnova@verizon.net).

**Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group** Meets from 1:30-3 p.m. the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**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](http://stemvolunteers.org), during the 2019-20 school year, beginning in September. Please contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488 or [donaldrea@aol.com](mailto: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](mailto:gronbiz@aol.com) or Program Coordinator Lynn Barron at [lynnieb517@verizon.net](mailto: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](mailto:Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-324-4547.

**Volunteer Victims Needed.** Virginia Task Force 1 (VA-TF1) is holding a full scale exercise and needs volunteers to act as victims in need of rescue. The exercise will take place from the evening of Monday, April 23 through afternoon of Thursday, April 26. A minimum shift of six hours is expected - overnight volunteers are especially needed. "Victims" will need to be able to crawl in and out of rubble piles, capable of sitting or lying in place for extended periods of time, and don't mind getting dirty. Contact Christopher Yorty at [christopher.yorty@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:christopher.yorty@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Operation Paws for Homes**, a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See [www.ophrescue.org](http://www.ophrescue.org) for information and all volunteer opportunities.

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## Can You Spell Thyroidectomy? (Or Ice Cream?)



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I couldn't before, Mr. Rogers, but now I can. And I even know what it means, which 10 days ago, in my neighborhood, I wouldn't have had a clue. Now, not only do I have a clue, I have a date for surgery: Jan. 27. Moreover, in addition to a date (and I don't mean my wife, Dina), I have a time and a place, a list of pre-surgical dos and don'ts, and a few items to buy: a post-surgical healing ointment and a special scrub to help minimize the risk of infection. And of course, I've been advised to wear loose-fitting clothing, perhaps a button down cardigan will do. If all goes well, I'll be home in my jammies around supper time when my recovery begins. Details of which are still a bit sketchy. I suppose I'll have to 'recover' to find out.

Let me amend that last sentence: I'll be on a soft-food diet for five days. What might not jump at you is that I don't eat many soft foods (M&Ms melting in one's mouth instead of their hands likely doesn't count). More significantly and quite out of my ordinary, my wife, Dina will be managing and controlling my menu. So far that menu includes eggs, pudding, apple sauce; all good but her last two items: spinach and kale, not good at all. I imagine I'll survive the surgery, but given how rarely Dina and I may not survive the recovery. And though her heart and head might be in the right place, I'm afraid my knife and fork won't be. During the best of times, I'm challenging to feed. After my surgery, I'm likely going to be at my worst. Although I certainly don't look it, food has always been the bane of my existence.

But at that post-surgical point, aren't I entitled? I mean, when I was a little boy and had my tonsils removed, I remember being given ice cream to eat - in bed. That had never happened before - or since, quite frankly. Soft foods. What's softer than ice cream? Why should I be deprived? I have two types of cancer. Yet so far, I don't see ice cream on the list. Maybe Dina's waiting for confirmation from the surgeon that cold foods are just as soft as hot. If true, I think I'm going to need that in ALL CAPS to convince my wife to give in to my indulgences. After all, one's thyroid gland isn't extracted every day so shouldn't I scream (perhaps whisper would be advisable) for ice cream? Wouldn't it soothe the savage beast that I might be after surgery? Presumably there will be some pain or discomfort and/or side effects from prescription medications I'm obliged to take so why not humor me; I like to laugh.

Except there's really nothing funny about surgery, other than the old joke: it's minor surgery when it's someone else, when it's me, it's major. So even though I've been told on relatively good authority that a thyroidectomy is not exactly major surgery, it's still me that's being anesthetized and operated on for four hours. And though I'd rather it would be somebody else, I don't see how that would help remove my thyroid gland which apparently has spread cancer to my neck and a lymph node. I guess if it has to come out, it might as well come out of me. And then we can get on to the business of learning whether I have one cancer or two and perhaps get an updated assessment of my life expectancy. If I had my druthers, I'd just as soon have only one cancer. Two is too much.

That being said/vented, right now, I just want to wake up after surgery and get home. And when I get there, either that night or for breakfast the next day, there better be a pint or two of ice cream with my name on it. I think it's only fair, don't you?

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

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