

Having fun with parents Dave and Anna Kurtz, Addie, 2-1/2, enjoys a cake pop at the Fairfax Chocolate Festival's Taste of Chocolate held Feb. 1-2.

Fairfax CONNECTION

Chocolate-Covered Joy on a Chilly Weekend

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF GRETCHEN BULOVA



Evie Infantides (in green jacket) is greeted at Daniels Run Elementary.

Posing for a photo during the 1,000th ride are (from left) Richard Michelback, Evie Infantides, David Bulova and Fran Migdal.

Having 'Less Cars on the Road Helps Everybody'

Fairfax City woman bikes to and from work 1,000 times.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

As a young girl in Athens, Greece, Evie Infantides loved riding her yellow bike. But at age 12, she and her family moved to Maine, life happened, and she stopped bike-riding on a consistent basis until she was in her 40s.

Living in Fairfax City since 1993, she's now an FCPS pre-K-12th grade ESOL technology specialist, working in Instructional Services with teachers and staff. And on Dec. 6, she completed her 1,000th bike ride to and from her job, logging an impressive 9,585 miles while also raising money for safe bike routes for students.

"In March 2012, I was in an FCPS leadership-development cohort, and we all had to come up with an idea to transform something in the school system," explained Infantides. "And one of my fellow cohort members, Richard Michelback, had an idea."

He figured that employees living further from FCPS than 5 miles could drive their cars somewhere, park them and then bike the rest of the way to their jobs. And if they lived 5 miles or less, they could just bike from home.

"About two weeks later, we had a Parks and Rec Advisory Board meeting, and people showed us how to bike from GMU to Vienna," said Infantides. "At the end, I asked one of the presenters, Frank Linton, how to go from my house to my work. We were then working in Fair Oaks, about 4 miles from my home, and he showed me two different ways to get to work."

Her first day, it was raining, so she couldn't do it because she needed lights for



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

(From left) are Del. David Bulova, Evie Infantides (with her certificate) and Mayor David Meyer.

her bike. Ever since then – except for in really bad weather – she's biked to and from work. Her office is now in the Willow Oaks Center near Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church, so her ride has grown longer – 6.3 miles each way – but that hasn't stopped her, a bit.

"Sometimes I park at Thaiss Park for a 3-1/2 to 4-mile bike ride, depending on what else I'm doing that day," she said. "But I try to do the whole, round trip, most of the time – 45 minutes each way. And I don't have to worry about traffic – it's a consistent 45 minutes."

HER ROUTE is half bike trail and half road. The toughest part, said Infantides, is on Old Lee Highway from Fairfax High to Home Depot because it's downhill on a two-lane road. She then takes the Wilcoxon Trail, continuing onto the Fairfax County Gerry Connolly Cross Country Trail, crossing Prosperity Avenue, taking a few more streets and eventually reaching her destination.

"It's a little dangerous going downhill near the hospital because of people cutting through to go to the hospital," she said. "A lot of trees have come down in my path and, depending on how big the tree is, I've either worked with people to move it out of



(From left) are David Meyer, Evie Infantides and David Bulova, during the bike ride.

the way, or they've helped me over or around it."

Infantides never had a goal of doing 1,000 rides and, since attaining it, she's continued to rack up even more of them. "The good thing is that I'm exercising for 90 minutes/day without thinking about it," she said. "And I've met incredibly nice and kind people along the way, walking their dogs, birdwatching or just enjoying being outside."

She also likes hearing and seeing nature – frogs at a pond, plus birds and other wildlife. "I enjoy seeing the different seasons," said Infantides. "And the trails are beautiful, with bridges going over waterways and creeks. I'd miss that in a car – I'd just see concrete. New research says that being out in nature, 100 minutes a week, is good for you. And I have more time to think about things and more energy to start my workday."

Her bike riding has also raised money for a good cause. In November-December, she helped raise \$1,400, via the FCPS Foundation, for Safe Routes to School. It teaches children how to ride bicycles safely, and the program even held a bike rodeo at one of the elementary schools. And the money raised purchases lights, helmets and other bike accessories for children needing them.

The day Infantides took her 1,000th ride also marked 9,585 miles total since she began bicycling in March 2012. For the special occasion, Del. David Bulova (D-37) and Fairfax City Mayor David Meyer joined her on the ride, as did Michelback and FCPS technology specialist Fran Migdal.

On the way to her office, they stopped at Daniels Run Elementary before school and received a warm and enthusiastic welcome. "It was fun to see the kids in the SACC program come out with signs to greet me," said Infantides. "And we talked to them about the importance of being outside and of exercising."

Then when the five of them arrived at her office, about 50 people were waiting outside to greet them with banners, posters and cheers to acknowledge Infantides's milestone.

"It was really great to see my colleagues out there – who've also celebrated many of my other rides," she said. "And my supervisors – all the way to the superintendent's office – have also been supportive, from the start."

She was also honored Dec. 10, at the start of a City Council meeting, when Bulova and Meyer presented her with a certificate of appreciation. After explaining why she was being recognized, Meyer said, "She's making a difference in the lives of thousands of persons in our community."

PLEASED, Infantides said, "That was unexpected, and I appreciate that the Council took the time to write up and present that certificate in a public way." She also encourages others to try bicycling. And if they need help finding routes or getting started, she advises them to contact FABB (Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling), WABA (Washington Area Bicycling Assn.) and its Women and Bicycles group.

The bottom line, she said, is that "The more we walk, run and/or bike to our destinations, the less cars are on the road – and that helps everybody."

NEWS

A happy Dave Burton of The Capital Candy Jar



PHOTOS BY
BONNIE HOBBS/
THE CONNECTION

Chocolate-Covered Joy on a Chilly Weekend

The Fairfax Chocolate Festival's Taste of Chocolate was Feb. 1-2.



(From left) are Juan Lopera, Esperanza Ruiz and Catie Cunningham of Cameron's Chocolates.



Thaomee Myers and daughter Carrington, 8, with ice cream from Sugar Mama's.



Chocotenango owner Ismael Neggaz offers colorful, filled chocolates.



Cameron Reinecke, 5, enjoys a chocolate-drenched marshmallow from Capitol Chocolate Fountains.



Will McNeill-Burton, 6-1/2, devours his chocolate-dipped strawberry.



Boyd Harrison and Brooke Tata of Chubby Squirrel Brewing Co. serve horchata chocolate stout.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/
THE CONNECTION

Liquid Chocolate: Beer, Wine and Ice Cream

Part of the City's Chocolate Lovers Festival, Liquid Chocolate was held Jan. 31-Feb. 1.



Fairfax High freshman Hank Hawkins playing Jenga and drinking chocolate-hazelnut and Milky Way chocolate beers.



Jenna Gietl and Tom Corona enjoy chocolate ice cream from Freddy's Frozen Custard.



The Wine House's sommelier, Kevin McGuire, and General Manager Dinah Herring offering a sweet, chocolate, Italian dessert wine, Bera Brachetto.

NEWS



PHOTO COURTESY OF CARRIE DORSEY

Rotary Club Gives Constitution to Students

The Rotary Club of Fairfax recently purchased more than 500 copies of the U.S. Constitution for every eighth-grade student at Lanier Middle School. The booklets, complete with the Constitution, Declaration of Independence and questions relevant to middle schoolers, will complement the students' social studies curriculum. The booklets were presented to the students Dec. 2 during an assembly at Lanier. (From left) are School Board member Mitch Sutterfield; Rotary member Thomas Palmer; Superintendent of Schools Phyllis Pajardo; Rotary member Art Hamerschlag; Councilman Jon Stehle; student Keeran Jones; City Mayor David Meyer; Rotary members Julia Strickland and Paula Kelley; student Lauren Reddinger; Lanier administrator Kathryn Teague; student Gianna Allina; Fairfax Rotary President David Roller; and student Suman Zarzullaeva.

Bakery Manager Charged With Sexual Assault

Fairfax County police have charged Alberto Figueiredo, 73, of Fairfax, with object sexual penetration against a developmentally disabled adult. Detectives from the Major Crimes Bureau's Sex Crimes Squad began their investigation in late January when the victim disclosed the alleged assault to her parents.

Figueiredo

According to police, she was an employee at the Wildflour bakery in Chantilly, where Figueiredo is also employed as the general manager. The bakery routinely hires individuals with developmental disabilities, and Figueiredo has been employed there for more than a decade.

After a thorough investigation, detectives arrested Figueiredo last Thursday, Jan. 30. He was then held without bond in the Adult Detention Center. Meanwhile, victim spe-

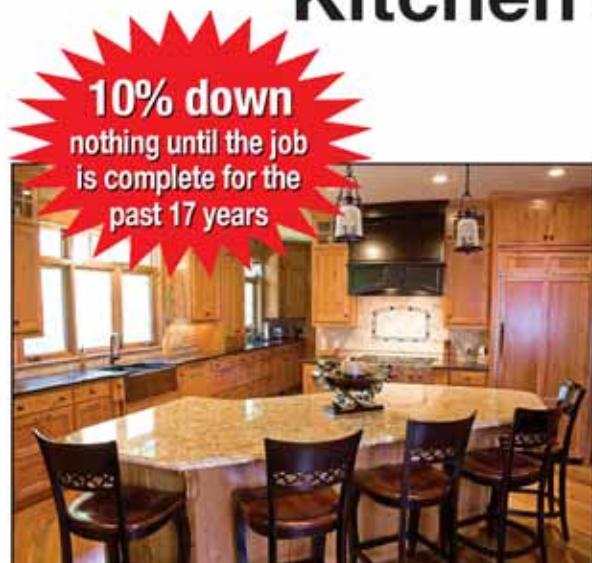
cialists from the Police Department's Major Crimes Bureau's Victim Services Division are making sure the alleged victim is receiving the appropriate resources and assistance.

In addition, detectives are asking anyone who has information or may have had inappropriate contact with Figueiredo to call Major Crimes Bureau detectives at 703-246-7800, option 3.

Tips may also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone, 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477); by text, type "FCCS" plus tip to 847411; and online at <http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org/>. Or download the mobile tip411 App, "Fairfax Co Crime Solvers." Anonymous tipsters are eligible for cash rewards of \$100 to \$1,000 if their information leads to an arrest.

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OPINION

Important Bills Are Moving

BY SCOTT SUROVELL
STATE SENATOR (D-86)



In the fourth week of our historic General Assembly session, both the Senate and the House of Delegates voted to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment after a 50 year battle. Our Clerks transmitted the ratifications to the Archivist of the United States of America and now the battle moves to Congress and the courts.

We had a lengthy debate in the Senate on repealing unnecessary restrictions on women's access to reproductive health, including requiring an intrusive, medically-unnecessary ultrasound before seeking an abortion and rules designed to make abortion clinics extremely expensive to construct. The Senate voted 20-20 and the Lieutenant Governor broke the tie to approve the measure.

On Tuesday, the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee passed my legislation to eviscerate predatory lending in Virginia. The bill provides a 36 percent interest rate cap with monthly fees that result in annual percentage Interest rates (APR's) of 50-110 percent, depending on the length of the loan. The longer the loan, the smaller the rate. The bill would prohibit the 267percent loans currently allowed at title lenders, businesses that have exploded along U.S. 1 and online loans currently made at rates exceeding 400 percent. I expect a tough Senate floor fight. The House has already passed similar legislation.

The Senate Transportation Committee approved my bill to repeal the 2004 law requir-

ing drivers to prove legal status to obtain a Virginia driver's license. I have worked for five years with Senator Jennifer Boysko and Republican Delegate Rob Bloxson to pass this bill. The implementation of federal Real ID rules eliminates the need for drivers to prove legal status which is required for a Real ID compliant driver's license and this proposal is the top priority for my Hispanic constituents. It will make our streets safer and enhance everyone's quality of life. Imagine trying to live in our society without a driver's license.

On a 33 to seven vote, the Senate passed my legislation prohibiting drivers from using handheld phones in moving vehicles. Similar legislation is moving through the House and enactment looks promising. This will reduce accidents and make our roads safer.

My legislation to empower Northern Virginia localities to hold retailers accountable for failing to control their shopping carts passed the Senate 20 to 19. To me, this is like someone, in effect, allowing their property to be stolen thousands of times and continually expecting others to clean up the mess. I am thankful for support from Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay and Supervisors Rodney Lusk and Dan Storck who have promised to implement this authority when enacted.

The Senate approved my bill to prohibit hydraulic fracturing or "fracking" east of Interstate-95 and now the House of Delegates will consider it.

On Jan. 27 and 28, my eight Puller Institute

students from West Potomac, Mount Vernon, Hayfield, Osborne Park and Brooke Point High Schools visited Richmond. They met with the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, other elected officials, government relations professionals and were interviewed for public access cable television. I look forward to their project submissions.

Mike Rizzo, the General Manager of the Washington Nationals baseball team also visited us and I learned that many Nationals' employees, including the team's Communications Director, live in the 36th District (It's an easy Metro ride or commute to and from Nats' Park!).

A few of my bills found their lives cut short. The Senate Finance Committee continued my proposal to reinstate the estate tax to the next session. The bill exempted family farms, closely-held businesses and any couple worth less than \$23.5 million and would generate about \$600 million per decade. I will try again next year. My bill to rename and refocus the Crime Commission on broader justice issues also failed, along with my bill to create an exception to contributory negligence for bike and pedestrian collisions.

This coming week we will address major issues, including the death penalty, decarbonizing our economy, criminal justice reform and protecting personal data. Hard work on the budget also begins.

Please visit me in Richmond, complete my constituent survey at <http://scotturovelli.org/2020-constituent-survey/> and email me at scott@scotturovelli.org if you have any feedback! It is an honor to serve as your State Senator.

only the recognition they deserve, but it will pave the way for other states and even nations to recognize and embrace equal rights as well. If we—as residents of the state of Virginia—are one step closer to becoming a more equal and inclusive community, then we must hold a responsibility to report on these views and enlighten others along the way.

Rudan Balay
Springfield

Don't Abolish The Death Penalty

To the Editor:

I am an American, but my origins lie in a country where you cannot exercise your rights as a human being, let alone as a woman. Women are forced into marriage at a young age, girls need permission from their fathers or brothers to leave their homes, and embracing your sexuality is unfathomable—and illegal at times.

It is for this reason that I write to you.

As a local newspaper serving the people of Northern Virginia, I ask that you write an article on the Jan. 15 ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in Virginia. It is crucial that we shed light on this recent event in Virginia that, while long overdue, must be celebrated.

On Jan. 15, 2020, Virginia voted on a resolution to ratify the ERA, making it the 38th state to pass this resolution. For decades feminists have been fighting to add a simple yet monumental phrase to the U.S. Constitution: "equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

Shedding light on this century-long issue will give our daughters, mothers, and sisters not

It's become quite clear that the movement to abolish the death penalty has reached Virginia. Death penalty opponents have suggested replacing it with life without parole (LWOP). They advocate for it as a more humane alternative to execution. That it's "punishment enough." Except you shouldn't believe that death penalty opponents will keep LWOP.

Recent legislation in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Vermont is seeking to end LWOP, using the exact same arguments that have been used against the death penalty. "Few civilized countries have LWOP, it's too harsh," et cetera. The movement to abolish the death penalty has become a moving of goalposts, as oppo-

Daniel Garcia
McLean

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.

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By e-mail: editors@connectionnewspapers.com

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ENTERTAINMENT

Fairfax Symphony Spotlights Vivaldi's 'The Four Seasons'

Paired with Pizzolla's sensual
"The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires."

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Northern Virginia audiences have a distinctive concert in store with the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra (FSO). It is an evening pairing Vivaldi's classic masterpiece "The Four Seasons" with Astor Piazzolla's lush "The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires."

What's more, the concert features the violinist Simone Porter as a special guest performer with the FSO. "We are delighted to present guest soloist, Simone Porter—a remarkable, young virtuoso making her FSO debut...in a performance you won't want to miss!" said Jim McKeever, Fairfax Symphony Board Chairman.

Chris Zimmerman, Music Director and Conductor, Fairfax Symphony Orchestra described the concert as "One virtuoso violinist playing two irresistibly entertaining pieces, with a smallish group of colleagues (a string orchestra)."

"The two pieces are connected in title—'The Four Seasons'—one being directly inspired by the other, yet in a completely dif-



PHOTO BY JEFF FASANO/COURTESY FSO

Violinist Simone Porter will be performing with The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra.

Where and When

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra presents "The Four Seasons" with special guest violinist Simone Porter at the Center for the Arts, George Mason University, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Performance Feb. 8, 2020. Tickets: \$25, \$39, \$50, \$53, and \$65. Student tickets are \$15. Visit online at <https://www.fairfaxesymphony.org/> or by phone at 703-993-2787. **Note:** Stories behind the music with music director Christopher Zimmerman and special guests before the Feb. 8, 2020 concert at 7 p.m.

ferent musical style," noted Zimmerman. "Vivaldi's music steeped in the baroque style of 17th century Italy; Piazzolla's music steeped in the sensuous, steamy, heavily rhythmic music of the Tango."

Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" is composed of four violin concertos depicting the seasons of the year; spring, summer, autumn and winter. "Whether it is the summer storm portrayed by the super-fast cascading runs of violins, or the lone 'woof' of a dog on the viola in the countryside in spring, or the antics of a drunkard conjured up by the unpredictable rhythms and melodic leaps of the solo violin in autumn, the connection between music and the scene it evokes has always captivated the listener," noted Zimmerman.

"The listeners will get a real kick out of Piazzolla's 'Four Seasons of Buenos Aires.' Not only are the rhythms and tunes totally awesome, you'll want to also listen closely for quotes from his inspiration Vivaldi," added Zimmerman.

In an interview, Simone Porter, who is 23, indicated "The Four Seasons" and "The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires" provide an opportunity to showcase what is possible with a violin. The violin can conjure in the mind the seasons of the year and "a delightful night in a tango dance hall." The violin can be utilized to sound "emotionally stimulating, sensual, exciting and even flashy."

Jim McKeever noted that the FSO is working with Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). "For this concert, we're partnering with FCPS's Woodburn School for the Fine and Communicative Arts and Westlawn Elementary Schools as part of our ongoing partnership for their Multidisciplinary Arts Integration program. It's a wonderful partnership."

The FSO/FCPS partnership includes not only the students learning about Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" but providing free tickets for the students and their families to attend the Center for the Arts concert.

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CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

The Beauty of Wood. Feb. 4 thru March 2. At Artists' Undertaking Gallery, 309 Mill Street, Occoquan. The Artists' Undertaking Gallery presents "The Beauty of Wood". This exhibit features photography and digital paintings by David and Jane Ernst of Springfield, and wooden boxes by Jon Kaufman of Fairfax Station. A Meet the Artists Reception will be held on Saturday, Feb. 8, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The exhibit runs Feb. 4 through March 2. Contact the gallery at 703-494-0584 or at info@artistsundertaking.com. Visit the website www.artistsundertaking.com

Funday Monday. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Mondays now thru March. At Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Play, paint, sing and dance at Funday Monday in the City of Fairfax. This season they are bringing back My Gym to help everyone move and play together. Oh Susannah! with her guitar to sing some old songs and have just as much fun with new ones, and Good Gollie it's Mollie will be coming 'round with more games and playtime fun. They would like to welcome some new friends as well like Drew Blue Shoes, a magician whose magic will leave you mystified and a kids' nature puppet show will come to teach us about the jungle in our backyard. This season they have the local animal shelter and local Spanish emersion group Mi Chu Chu Train coming with specially made programs. Visit the website: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts>

All You Need is Love. Now thru Feb. 16. At Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic, 2905 District Ave., #105, Fairfax. In celebration of Valentine's Day, Torpedo Factory artists are tackling one of society's most complex human emotions — Love. In its newest exhibit titled All You Need is &e, the gallery is presenting a selection of original paintings, photographs, jewelry, scarves, ceramics and more, that reflect its artists' interpretations of love. Open Wednesday thru Sunday 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

St. James Intramural High School Basketball League. Now thru March 10. At the St. James Sports, Wellness and Entertainment Complex, 6805 Industrial Road, Springfield. The St. James invites you to participate in its Middle School Basketball League for Boys & Girls (8th to 12th grade). Now thru March 10, in the new 33,000 square foot Basketball Courthouse on four high school regulation sized courts. The TSJ Intramural High School Basketball League registration fee is \$250 per player and \$600 per team. All games are officiated and statistics provided. The TSJ Intramural High School Basketball league also includes a Playoff round where top teams in the league will meet. Visit <https://www.thestjames.com/sports/basketball/sessions/8/courses/tsj-basketball-winter-team> or contact Alpha or Pele with any questions at 703-239-6841.

NOW THRU FEB. 29

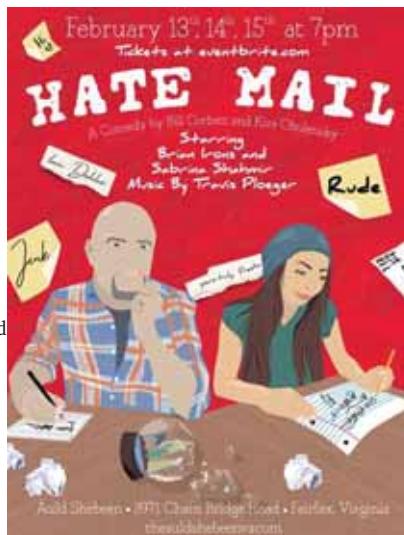
Fairfax City Golden Ticket. 12 p.m. Fairfax City's Economic Development Authority has partnered with the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce to host the 2nd Annual Fairfax City Golden Ticket contest in support of the 2020 Chocolate Lovers Festival. The Fairfax City Golden Ticket Contest features three golden tickets hidden within 1,200 chocolate

"Hate Mail"

"Hate Mail:" A comedic play at the Auld Shebeen on Feb. 13, 14, and 15.

FEB. 13, 14, 15

"Hate Mail." 7-8:30 p.m. At The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. A fast-paced, quick-witted comedic play about outrage, scandals, and falling in and out of love. Tickets on Eventbrite. Cost is \$20. Visit the website <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/hate-mail-a-comedy-play-tickets-90457752573>



Lesson Zero

Lesson Zero will perform at The Mixing Bowl on Feb. 15 in Springfield.

SATURDAY/FEB. 15

Lesson Zero. 8 p.m. At The Mixing Bowl (formerly J W and Friends), 6531 Backlick Road, Springfield. Music and dancing with Oasis recording artist Lesson Zero. Visit www.youtube.com/lessonzero or www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero for more information.

bars made by local chocolatier Cameron's Coffee & Chocolates. The chocolate bars are available for purchase at participating Fairfax City businesses beginning Jan. 31 for \$3 each while supplies last. The contest offers three lucky winners who find the golden ticket a Chocolate Lovers gift basket featuring chocolate and items from participating Fairfax City businesses valued at \$200. To purchase a Golden Ticket chocolate bar, visit any of the businesses listed at fairfaxcityconnected.com/goldenticket2020.

THURSDAY/FEB. 6

Nutrition & Healthy Eating. 6-7 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Nutrition and Healthy Eating for Teenagers, Young Adults, and Adults. Learn how nutrition affects growing young people, ways to eat more healthy, and what families can do to make a difference in their family's diet. Free. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/5832187>

SATURDAY/FEB. 8

Animal Sweethearts Dance. 10 a.m. to noon. At Hidden Pond Nature Center, 8511 Greeley Blvd., Springfield. Bring your youngster to the nature center for a morning of dancing, refreshments and crafts. There will be costumed animal characters, as well as live animals to entertain. The program runs from 10 a.m. to noon and is designed for children age 3 to 5. The cost is \$10 per child. Call 703-451-9588 or visit

SUNDAY/FEB. 9

T-Trak Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia T-TRAK members will hold a N gauge Model Train Display. Admission: museum members, free; adults 13 and over, \$5; children 5-12, \$3; under 4, free. Seniors (65+) and military (active & retired), \$4. Call 703-425-9225. Visit the website www.fairfax-station.org.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 9



PHOTO BY JIMMY LAWLER/COURTESY OF VIRGINIA OPERA
Cast of Virginia Opera's production of Rossini's "Cinderella."

Goodness Triumphs in Rossini's 'Cinderella'

Virginia Opera performances Feb. 15 and 16 at Center for the Arts.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Human connections are at the heart of Rossini's "Cinderella" ("La Cenerentola"). It is a comic opera unlike the fairy tale some may recall or read to children and grandchildren.

Rossini's "Cinderella" differs from the more classic fairytale. It is not full of the supernatural or magical characters. "There is no fairy godmother, no magic pumpkin, or even a glass slipper," noted Kyle Lang, Virginia Opera director. Rossini's opera has glimmering splendor, comic characters, "with an ending about forgiveness and transformation."

Rather Rosinni's "Cinderella" has "characters who are quite human and tangible," added Lang. There are "disguises and mistaken identities" as key points for the opera's story. And the opera is full of "movement and music and that entwine in the story." Adam Turner will conduct the orchestra for this production provided by the Virginia Symphony Orchestra.

Rossini's enduring "Cinderella" was composed in late 1816 when he was 25 years old. In place of the traditional evil stepmother, the character of Cinderella is mistreated by an obnoxious, rather broke aristocrat. Instead of a fairy godmother, Cinderella is helped by a kindly tutor. There are two conceited step-sisters. And a love-struck prince with his clever valet who trade places

Where and When

Virginia Opera presents Rossini's "Cinderella" ("La Cenerentola") at Center for the Arts, Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Performance Feb 15 at 8 p.m. and Feb 16 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets: \$110, \$70, \$40. Call 703-993-2787 or visit www.cfa.gmu.edu. Note: Sung in Italian with English supertitles. An "Opera Up Close" pre-performance discussion with Dr. Glenn Winters begins 45 minutes prior to the performance. Seating is limited. Special Note: There is a Valentine's Package available including a Fairytale Valentine photo station. The special Valentine Date Package includes: Two tickets for "Cinderella, Champagne and chocolates, two commemorative champagne glasses and two spill-proof tumblers to enjoy the champagne during the opera! Valentine Date Package tickets: \$255, \$175, \$115. This offer valid for either performance, Feb. 15 or 16. To purchase package call the Center for the Arts Ticket Office at 703-993-2787. Package is non-refundable and cannot be exchanged.

with a critical purpose in mind. Another difference from the classic fairy tale; no sparkling, showy glass slippers. There are a matching pair of bracelets for the lovers to find each other.

What makes Rossini's "Cinderella" unique; his "vision of forgiveness; not just transformation at the heart of the production. It is emotionally moving," noted Lang.

The role of Angelina (the character of Cinderella) is sung by the vocally distinctive Alyssa Martin. "Cinderella" is marvelous. It is funny and thought provoking. Envy and pride are vanquished as goodness wins the

SEE CINDERELLA, PAGE 9

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

MONDAY/FEB. 10

Healthy Living, Healthy Aging. 7-8:30 p.m. At Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Learn about research in the areas of diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity and social engagement. Presented by the Alzheimer's Association. Light refreshments will be provided. Free. Call 703-978-5600.

FRIDAY/FEB. 14

Winter Beauty in the Garden. 4-5 p.m. At Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. This program is for dazzling winter. Winter offers its own special charm. Let Master Gardeners show you how to create visual interest with berries, seed heads, colorful branches, garden accents - even flowers. Presented by Green Spring Master Gardeners. Free. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/6344889>

SATURDAY/FEB. 15

Country-Western Dance. At Accotink Universalist Unitarian Church, 10125 Lakehaven Ct, Burke. 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-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Trial memberships available at door for member level entry fee. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. Visit www.nvcwda.org.

Valentine's Day Banquet. 6:30-11 p.m. At Waterford Receptions at Springfield, 6715 Commerce Street, Springfield. The Family Ministry of the Greater Little Zion Baptist Church in Fairfax is sponsoring their Annual Valentine's Day Banquet. All couples and singles are invited to join with us and enjoy an evening of fine dining, music, dancing and featured entertainment. This is a great opportunity to treat someone special to a wonderful night of Christian fun and fellowship. Cost is \$60 per person (Payment deadline is Feb. 9, 2020). Tickets can be purchased on the church's website at www.glzbc.org.

Country-Western Dance. 7-9:30 p.m. at AUUC, Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a dance with lessons, 6-7 p.m. and open dancing, 7-9:30 p.m. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Admission for members \$10; non-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. Visit www.nvcwda.org for more.



LEGO Model Train Show

Monty's Trains Special LEGO Model Train Show will take place Feb. 29 and March 1 at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum.

FEB. 29 AND MARCH 1

Monty's Trains Special LEGO Model Train Show. 12-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Local modeling enthusiast, Monty Smith, will share his LEGO (R) model train layouts in a special two day event. Admission: Museum members and ages 4 and under, free; ages 5-12, \$3; ages 13 and older, \$5; seniors 65 and older and military, both retired and active, \$4. Visit the website www.fairfax-station.org, or call 703-425-9225.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/FEB. 15-16

Virginia Opera's "Cinderella." 8 p.m. Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday. At GMU Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Gioachino Rossini's Cinderella (La Cenerentola) is one of his funniest and best-known comic operas. Following on his success of The Barber of Seville, Rossini and librettist Jacopo Ferretti worked day and night to create this opera in just three weeks. The story differs somewhat from the classic fairytale: there is no fairy godmother, magic pumpkin, or even a glass slipper! Even so, this enchanting tale delivers with all of the glimmering splendor, the comic characters, and the happy ending, of course. Best of all, it includes Rossini's effervescent score with the epic orchestral storm before the Prince finally finds Cenerentola, and the arias "Miei rampolli femminini," and "Nacqui all'affano...Non piu mesta." Directed by Kyle Lang. Sung in Italian with English supertitles. Tickets are \$45-\$115. Visit the website: www.cfa.gmu.edu.

SUNDAY/FEB. 16

NTrak Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold a N gauge Model Train Display. Admission: museum members, free; adults 13 and over, \$5; children 5-12, \$3; under 4, free. Seniors (65+ and military (active & retired)), \$4. Call 703-425-9225. Visit the website www.fairfax-station.org.

MONDAY/FEB. 17

George Washington Birthday Service and Breakfast. 8:30 a.m. At Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Hwy., Lorton. The Brotherhood of Saint Andrew, Pohick Chapter, will sponsor a breakfast following a commemorative service celebrating the birthday of George Washington. The Service will follow the Order for Morning Prayer taken from the 1662 English Book of Common Prayer, which is the service Washington followed in his usual Sunday worship at Pohick Church. Following the service there will be a breakfast hosted by the Brotherhood of St. Andrew with a guest speaker. The Docent Guild will be conducting tours of Historic Pohick Church following the breakfast. Ticket are \$10 per person, \$25 per family group. Call the church office at 703-339-6572. Visit the website www.pohick.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 22

Off the Wall. 2-5 p.m. At the Art and Design Building, GMU Fairfax Campus, Fairfax. Every year GMU opens its Art and Design Building to alumni, parents, prospective students, and the public for a showcase of the visual arts at Mason. Tour 15 open studios and hands-on exhibits with student and faculty artists, enjoy the music, plus create your own works of art - it's a great party. Cost is \$30/regular; \$20/Mason alumni, faculty and staff; \$10/ages 14-18. Ticket and sponsorship proceeds support arts scholarships and guest artist residencies. Sponsorship opportunities begin at \$500. Contact Emily Rusch at 703-993-3872 or erusch2@gmu.edu. Visit the website: offthewall.gmu.edu.

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'Cinderella'

FROM PAGE 8

day," said Martin.

Martin grew up in a small rural town outside of Greensboro, N.C. She knew from an early age that she wanted to sing. With the support of her family and local music and voice teachers she discovered and nurtured her voice talent.

The role of Cinderella is one Martin indicated is "a favorite; if fits my voice range" Martin added the character Cinderella is "a woman who makes her own choices. She is powerful and authentic; not an object. Love, family, and connections are what matter to her.

"The human voices can do so much when not amplified," said Martin inviting audiences to take in the Virginia Opera production.

Off Topic, Way Off



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

From cancer to toilet paper. Is that 'off' enough? My reason for writing this column might be because I need a diversion (see last week's column), and because, as is so happened recently, I needed to replenish our toilet paper supply. (It had nothing to do with a winter advisory in the forecast.) As the consumer in the house, I am keen and motivated to spend our money wisely. I look for sales, I use paper coupons, I use digital coupons and of course, I peruse the advertising circulars, in print and online (if necessary) regularly. In addition, I have a number of plastic bonus cards hanging on my keychain. In short, I am prepared and ready for any retail or wholesale opportunity that might present itself.

With respect to toilet paper, I believe us regular users have been victimized by the toilet paper manufacturers. I refer specifically to the increase in the size of the actual roll itself; from single to double to triple to jumbo to mega and now super mega. Since the manufacturers can't exactly increase demand, they've devised a strategy to increase supply - in our homes. And though using myself as an example is hardly empirical evidence, I will nonetheless continue to do so in an effort to justify my accusation.

If you're like me, you probably like to have an ample supply of toilet paper in the house, just in case (it happened once in college; not good). And to that end, the toilet paper manufacturers have offered up multipacks equivalent to as high as 96 rolls, if I'm not mistaken, to address this potential shortage. However, my beef is not with the number of rolls in these multipacks, my beef, as I've said, is with the size of the rolls. In these cases, size does matter.

For years, we've been buying 4-, 6-, 9-, 12-, 24-, 36- and even 48-roll multipacks, some single and some double to stock the bathroom linen closets, so we're used to having a specific number of rolls on hand/in inventory. Now the rolls are double or even triple the size we had grown accustomed to having as back-ups. But we're still, in spite of the gargantuan size of the newer mega/super mega rolls, wanting to have the same number of rolls in the closet as we've always had (I do, anyway). Sort of a comfort level, you might say. The problem is that having the same number of super mega rolls in inventory as previously one had as single or double rolls gives one way more toilet paper in the house than you ever had. In effect, we have over-purchased. The toilet paper manufacturers have used our predispositions against us in order to take a greater share of our household budget previously allocated for toilet paper.

I don't need six super mega rolls in our bathroom. But I do want to see at least six rolls in reserve (aid and comfort you might say). If the six rolls in reserve were single or doubles, their size would be irrelevant. The number of rolls was more important - in my head. And now, because of the toilet paper manufacturer's insistence that size matters, I am forced to buy these spare-tire, donut-sized rolls that I can't possibly use no matter what "snowmageddon" might hit us. But I can't stock my shelves with reasonably-sized rolls because their unit cost is prohibitive compared to the big roll multipacks. As the consumer I am, I am loathe to overpay for such household necessities. So I buy in bulk, stuff my shelves with ply and go about my business. I just wish I had more than a hand in their decision-making.

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

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AREA ROUNDUPS

Fairfax Salvation Army Helping Others

The Fairfax County Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary held their first meeting of the year Wednesday, Jan. 15 at the Army Corp on Ox Road, Fairfax. Acting President Meg McLane reported she delivered cakes to the Salvation ARC on Little River Turnpike for the monthly birthday celebrations. The auxiliary provides cakes every other month throughout the year.

month throughout the year.

Committee reports from chairpersons for the Fashion Show/Luncheon to be held April 3 were given. The Hat contest will be held again this year with prizes to be awarded for the most decorative hats worn.

Major Jean Wilson reported that 1502 children from 658 families, along with 34 senior citizens, were served through the Angel Tree project.

The next meeting will be held Feb. 19 at 10:30 at the Corp office at 4915 Ox Road, Fairfax. Ladies interested in attending this meeting are welcome. Call Lori Smith, 301-717-3029 or Meg McLane 703-750-3568.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

PIPE REPLACEMENT FEB. 3-7

Woodfair Road between Little Ox Road and Sydney Road will be closed to through traffic (weather permitting) from 8 a.m. Monday, Feb. 3 to 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 7 for crews to replace a stormwater pipe, according to the Virginia Department of Transportation. Those needing to reach properties along Woodfair Road will have access; however, traffic will not be able to go beyond the point of pipe replacement in either direction. Through traffic will be detoured via Little Ox Road and Sydney Road back to Woodfair Road.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 12

TBI Recovery Group. 10:30-12 p.m. At Brain Injury Services, 8136 Old Keene Mill Road, Suite B-102, Springfield. Educational group for survivors, families, and caregivers, to answer questions about mild TBI or concussion. February Speaker: Dr. Alec Lebedun Topic: What happened to my brain? How does brain biology affect me? Free. Visit the website: www.braininjurysvcs.org

SUNDAY/FEB. 23

Town Hall Meeting. 1 p.m. At 8390 Laurel Crest Drive, Lorton. Sen. Scott Surovell and fellow legislators will host town halls throughout the 36th District in February. The legislators will discuss their legislative agendas and take questions from the audience. Some topics will include: Transportation, Education Funding and Reform, The State Budget and Tax Reform, Redistricting, Medicaid Expansion, Marriage Equality and LGBTQ Rights, Firearm Violence Prevention, Civil/Criminal Justice Reforms, Consumer Protection/Predatory Lending, Investing in Green Energy, Reproductive Choice Issues, Protecting Environmental Interests.

Britepaths Seeking Volunteers

Fairfax-based nonprofit Britepaths is seeking volunteers to sponsor families in need who live throughout the Fairfax County area. Sponsors are matched with families who have demonstrated need, and may opt to provide a December holiday meal and/or gifts for children under 18. Britepaths also has a great need for cash donations and gift cards to grocery stores or Target/Walmart to assist those who are not sponsored. A wonderful family, company or group holiday service project. Register and learn more at: britepaths.org. Contact 703-273-8829 or sryan@britepaths.org.

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