

CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station

'The Camel Church'

PAGE 6-7

Harper Basquez, 5 yo, of Burke, forgets her stuffed animal toy in favor of interaction with a real goat at St Christopher's Episcopal Church in Springfield. The church celebrated the reason for the season with a living nativity scene on Dec. 3.

The Streets Have New Names

PAGE 3

Festival of Lights And Carols

PAGES 4-5

ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 9 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 10 ♦ SPORTS, PAGE 8, 12

PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

DECEMBER 7-13, 2022

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NEWS

Eagle View Aide Charged with Embezzlement

Fairfax County police have charged an FCPS employee with felony embezzlement. Arrested last week was Chantilly resident Denise Pitkin-Tilson, 55, who worked at Target and also at Eagle View Elementary School in Fairfax as an instructional assistant.

She's charged with stealing more than \$10,000 in cash, gift cards and merchandise from the Target store in Chantilly. Police were called Monday, Nov. 28, at 7:52 p.m., by a loss-prevention officer at the store at 14391 Chantilly Crossing Lane. Pitkin-Tilson worked there as a part-time cashier, and police say this officer had received word from Target headquarters that "the store was missing money at the

end of Pitkin-Tilson's shift."

According to police, she was recorded for more than a month and "was [allegedly] seen embezzling money from registers, as well as stealing gift cards and merchandise." After being questioned at the Sully District Police Station, Pitkin-Tilson was taken to the Adult Detention Center and later released on \$2,000 bond. In addition, FCPS was notified of her arrest.

Anyone with information about this case, or others possibly related, is asked to contact detectives at 703-246-7800. Tips may also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by calling 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

— BONNIE HOBBS

BULLETIN BOARD

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

TUESDAY/DEC. 13

Travel with a Dementia Patient – How to Guide Families. Virtual event. 2-3:15 p.m. Featuring Jennifer L. FitzPatrick MSW, LCSW-C, CSP of Generations Health Education. Panelist: Kiersten Parsons Moderator: Ni'Asia Griffin. For more information and to register, visit: <https://www.generationshealth.com/inglesideaugust>

be weapons (i.e., toy guns or knives of any kind) will not be accepted. Checks or money orders for donations must be made payable to TOYS FOR TOTS.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Stations will accept donations through Sunday, December 11, 2022. Toys will not be accepted after this date.

FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATING IN TOYS FOR TOTS CAMPAIGN

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department will be participating in the Annual National Capital Region Fire and EMS Departments' 2022 TOYS FOR TOTS Campaign. The intent of the campaign is to "bring holiday joy and deliver a message of hope to children." Stations will accept donations now through Sunday, December 11, 2022.

Collection boxes will be placed outside the front door of each fire and rescue station every morning. Residents will be able to drop off toys until 8 p.m., each evening.

Please help us to help those less fortunate this holiday season. Thanks to the generosity of those who live and work in Fairfax County, FCFRD was able to provide the Marines with approximately 25,000 toys last year!

Children who are served by this campaign include toddlers and youths through age 17. The campaign will only accept new, unwrapped toys. Toys used as weapons or considered to

ADOPT A WARRIOR FAMILY FOR CHRISTMAS

So many of our Military families today find themselves in financial crisis, now more than ever. This will be especially true during this Holiday Season.

To give back, Able Forces Foundation (AFF) is once again sponsoring the Adopt-A-Warrior Family Christmas program.

As in years past, Able Forces Foundation will adopt families from each of the five Military Service branches. All adopted families are identified by military Advocates on military bases or military Recovery programs in the Washington, DC Metro area. These families have been vetted and referred to AFF. Based on need, financial support will ensure each family will have:

- A Christmas Tree
- Complete Christmas Dinner (for up to 8)
- Stocking Stuffers
- the ability to provide up to 5 gifts per child 100% of all donations go directly to support this program. There are no administrative or overhead fees taken out of donations.

All donations contributed between Oct. 25 and Christmas will go directly to support this program. If you can help, go to: www.ableforces.org/adopt to make a contribution.

NEWS

Fairfax City Changing Confederate Street Names

By BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Culminating months of discussion, soul searching and public input, the Fairfax City Council last week approved the new names for 14 City streets originally named in honor of Fairfax's past association with slavery and the Confederacy. All had been identified for renaming as part of the Connecting Fairfax City For All initiative.

Nine of these streets are in the Mosby Woods community and relate to Col. John Singleton Mosby, a famous Confederate soldier. Following a lengthy public hearing in July, Council voted to change all their names, plus five others within the City limits that also refer to Mosby, as well as to Confederate Generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson.

"For many years, citizens have voiced concerns about our street names," explained Councilmember Janice Miller. "It's unusual to have a neighborhood and its streets named after a war that's a stain on America. The Confederacy fought to preserve slavery; and at that time, that's what this area was for. But it's not who we are today. We need to show through our words, actions and policies that we'll always be a place for everyone."

Since July, City staff came up with 14 name replacements. And after discussing them at their Nov. 29 meeting, Councilmembers voted on each name, individually, and



Confederate Lane will be renamed Continental Lane, and Plantation Parkway will become Fair Woods Parkway.

eventually adopted them all. However, Councilmembers Joe Harmon and Sang Yi objected to almost every one of them, so most of the votes were 4-2.

Harmon said Council shouldn't approve the new names then because he didn't believe the residents of the affected streets had been able to have enough input about them, and Yi agreed.

Yet, when Yi asked, "Has there been any additional feedback from the community

since the public hearing?" City Clerk Melanie Zipp replied that the only new comments the City had received came from some residents requesting that Ranger Road be renamed Cardinal Road.

Those who own property on the renamed streets will receive notification from the City, which will work with property owners on the next steps to be taken in the change process. All name changes will take effect Jan. 1, 2023.

The new names will be as follows:

Confederate Lane	Continental Lane
Plantation Parkway	Fair Woods Parkway
Mosby Woods Drive	Fair Woods Drive
Old Lee Highway	Blenheim Boulevard
Traveler Street	Old Robin Street
Raider Lane	Fox Lane
Ranger Road	Cardinal Road
Reb Street	Cross Lane
Scarlet Circle	Crimson Circle
Singleton Circle	Concord Circle
Stonewall Avenue	Stone Wall Avenue
Lee Street	Lilac Street

Lee Highway will have three, different names:

- ❖ Fairfax Boulevard (from Kamp Washington east to Fairfax Circle);

- ❖ Main Street (from Kamp Washington west to the City boundary line prior to the intersection with Shirley Gate Road); and

- ❖ Blenheim Boulevard (from Fairfax Circle north to the City boundary line prior to the intersection with Blake Lane).

Mosby Road will have two, different names:

- ❖ Orchard Court (the 10000 block, which connects to Orchard Drive); and

- ❖ Grege Drive (the 9000 block, which connects with Burke Station Parkway).

Fairfax County Park Authority Changes, Additions

Changes to enhance the gold standard they earned five times in the past.

By MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Park Authority is going through a few changes recently, beginning with the retirement of Judy Pederson, the public information officer for the past 20 years.

"I was proud to be the spokesperson," said Pederson, who has visited nearly 90 percent of the 420 parks in Fairfax County. "Every day is different," she added.

Ben Boxer, a county employee for the past 17 years, will move into the role along with newcomer Susan Kalish, the new director in the FCPA office of marketing and communications. Boxer lives in Herndon and his home park that he grew up visiting is Frying Pan Park. Boxer now has five children who enjoy that park too.

Boxer's children are all involved in the scouting program, which seems to go hand

in hand with the activities at the parks, he said. "When you are a scout, the world is your classroom," he said.

Kalish has worked in the park system in Arlington and Fairfax City, but is a resident of Fairfax County so she's glad to be working in the Fairfax County Park Authority. "I've always been a park person," Kalish said.

Pederson has been in front of notable events, many ribbon cuttings, plus more urgent events like the rabid coyote in Accotink, or an incident at one of the park centers where there was a fatal stabbing. She's got her sights on a family residence in Solomons Island where she will retire. The FCPA will welcome her as a volunteer if she is in the area.

"I have a boat I haven't been on for two years," she said.

Boxer is an alumnus of Oakton High

SEE FCPA, PAGE 11



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

Judy Pederson, center, with communications director Susan Kalish and new PIO Ben Boxer.

FESTIVAL



GMU's Tuba/Euphonium Ensemble plays, "Oh, Come All Ye Faithful."



Girl Scouts and Daisy Scouts singing, "Up on the Rooftop."

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City Gets into the Holiday Spirit

Fairfax City's annual Festival of Lights and Carols was Saturday, Dec. 3. The fun included Christmas carols and crafts, s'mores and cider, a petting zoo and a holiday market.



Erica Smith of Earth Essentials sells all-natural body products.



Karen Burns of Anything Bows selling holiday wreaths.



Eli Harrison, 5, and sister Libby, 8, display the foam, reindeer ornaments they made.



The Fairfax Jubil-Aires singing "Gloria in Excelsis Deo."



Attendees roasting marshmallows for s'mores.

FESTIVAL

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



The Daniels Run Elementary Singers performing holiday tunes.

Annual Festival of Lights and Carols



A volunteer helps children decorate a gingerbread house.



Brooks Franz, 5, petting a bunny.
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From left, sisters-in-law Leah and Ashley Webster, of Willow Light Designs, sell clay and metal earrings.

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LIVING NATIVITY

The Christmas Story Made Real for Children

St Christopher's Church presents living nativity.

By SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

For Christians, special tableau displays celebrating the birth of Jesus are a Christmas tradition. Nativity scenes of the manger, crib, baby Jesus, and Mary and Joseph, with attending animals, recall the birth story. During the holidays, creches may be found in home and yard displays, shopping malls, and churches.

While most churches displaying the creche use statues, some called "living nativity scenes" bring added realism by use of actual humans and animals.

St Christopher's Episcopal Church in Springfield celebrated the season with a living nativity scene on Dec. 3, inviting everyone to join them and their costumed actors.

Organizer John Quinn says they are now in their fourth year, the second year since they've included human enactors. The event has become so well known that he finds his church referred to as the "camel church" when attending community meetings.

The camel mentioned may be Delilah, one of six making her home at the Bar C Ranch in Berryville. Owner Jennifer Caton, who runs the ranch with her husband, says Delilah is the only female and "pretty much runs the show" among the males. Her mobile petting zoo is also providing the opportunity to ride a camel at NOVA Parks Bull Run Park Christmas Village, as part of their "Festival of Lights" going on now in Centreville.

St Christopher's has served the communi-



Nativity actors Marge Williams, Camilla Hick, Norbert Hymel, Daniel and Doug Gudakunst, Alton Kirk, Janet Quinn, Lilian and Kyle Johnson, and Jacob Gudakunst as baby Jesus.

ty in Springfield since 1957. Their seasonal efforts include a toy drive for ECHO and Second Story, providing student holiday meals to families at Crestwood Elementary School, meals for homeless people through FACETS. The church provides shelter, meals and services to people experiencing homelessness for a two week period in January.

The church's outdoor celebration of the nativity included readings, carols, live music, an opportunity to take pictures, and to participate in the toy drive. And of course, there was interaction with the sheep, goats, cow, and Delilah.

Although a donkey and ox are the usual animals depicted in nativity, as described in

the Gospel of Matthew, along with the camels of the Magi, everyone seemed delighted about the sheep, goat, and cow stand-ins being included as well. Perhaps with a nod to the spiritual influence of Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals, who is credited with creating the first nativity scenes in 1223.



Sunlight shines on baby Jesus, played by 15 month old Jacob Gudakunst.



The Gudakunsts interact with 18 year old Zebu cow, Mini. Asked if Jacob had to audition for his role as baby Jesus, his dad responded, "It was a walk-on role."



Children standing with the Zebu cow, give rapt attention to learning about the nativity and animals.



Delilah's long neck was well suited to reaching all the treats offered from small hands.



Actor Camilla Hicks, of Springfield, felt easier learning the donkey was friendly.



Capturing children and adult hearts at the scene, camel Delilah, who will smile on request for the camera ... and a promised treat, with owner Jennifer Canon of Bar C Ranch in Berryville.



Five year old, Alex Saminuk, attending with his Ukrainian grandfather, offers a snack.



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FOOTBALL

PHOTOS BY WILL PALENSCAR



Fairfax's Tony Rojas #5 strips the ball from Madison RB Angelo Jreige #1

Kevin Chadwick Jr. #21 grabs the jersey of Tony Rojas #5

Fairfax's Rojas Explodes for 3 TDs in Loss to Madison

BY WILL PALENSCAR
THE CONNECTION

The Madison Warhawks took on the Fairfax Lions on Saturday, Dec. 3, with the winner advancing to the VHSL Class 6 state final in Norfolk, Va. on Dec. 10.

On Madison's second possession of the game, they would settle for a short field goal by Agri Hartman for a 3-0 advantage. Sonny Endicott would then bring in a 9 yard touchdown reception in the back of the end zone with 9:37 to play in the 2nd quarter giving the Warhawks a 10-0 advantage. Kevin Chadwick Jr. would then intercept Fairfax QB Jake Worthen for a pick-six with 3:17 to play in the first half. Madison's lead had grown to 17-0.

Penn State-commit Tony Rojas scored on a short run with :09 to play in the half to put Fairfax on the board. Trailing 17-7 at half the Lions of Fairfax would again go down by 17 points in the 3rd quarter after Cord Yates' 61-yard touchdown reception propelled the



Michael Delgado #25 has his eyes on bringing down Chase Miller #8



Students from Madison High School celebrate after a Madison touchdown

SEE FOOTBALL, PAGE 12



Angelo Jreige #1 stiff arms Fairfax defender Matthew Lush #17



Mac Lewis #16 prepares to take the snap in Madison's 31-21 win in the VHSL Class 6 State semifinal

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT 2022

DEC 1-23

"Snow Maiden." At Synetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell St, Arlington. In a frozen forest, a lonely boy builds a girl from snow. When she mysteriously comes to life, mischief, laughter, and enchantment abound. But what will happen when the ice begins to melt? Told through dazzling movement, dance, and acrobatics, Snow Maiden is a magical tale of hope, friendship and the transformative power of dreams. Based on the beloved folktale Snegurochka, Snow Maiden is a holiday treat for friends and fans of all ages.



The Traveling Players presents "Commedia Christmas Carol" now thru Dec. 11 in Tysons Corner.

DEC. 1-31

Home for the Holidays Art Show. At Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Works by local artists on display the entire month of December. Visit www.artsherndon.org. Call 703-956-6590.

DEC. 2-17

The PARC at Tysons Holiday Market. Fridays and Saturdays. Celebrate the holiday season with local makers, crafters, and artisans from the Fairfax County area! Visit the holiday market at The PARC at Tysons on the first three Fridays and Saturdays of December for a pop-up shop of local artisans and small businesses offering holiday-inspired goods. The PARC will be transformed into a festive indoors and outdoors winter village, featuring a local holiday market and (free!) snowtastic activities for the whole family to enjoy! Food and beverages can be purchased onsite from local businesses as well.



The Mia Saunders School of Ballet presents "The Nutcracker" on Dec. 10-11 at Centreville High School.

DEC. 2-11

Traveling Players presents "Commedia Christmas Carol." Tickets are now available for "Commedia Christmas Carol," which runs Fridays-Sundays, Dec. 2- Dec. 11 at Traveling Players Studio in Tysons Corner Center. Performed by Traveling Players middle and high school students, the play is a new imagining of Dickens' classic ghost story, a perfect holiday treat for the whole family. Visit <https://www.travelingplayers.org/performances/>

DEC. 2-18

Holiday Market. At 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans 27th Annual Holiday Market offers unique handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Choose from wall art, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass, and much more! Plus 2023 wall calendars to support Del Ray Artisans nonprofit. Free admission. Market is the first three weekends in December (Dec 2-4, Dec 9-11, Dec 16-18). Different artists each weekend! Open Fridays 6-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Details: delrayartisans.org/holiday-market

DEC. 2-11

Fairfax City Holiday Market. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The Fairfax City Downtown Holiday Market will be open the first two weekends of December on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Shop at the market of craft vendors as you enjoy Old Town Square in the heart of Historic Downtown Fairfax covered in holiday lights. The festival will include live holiday music, hot drinks, heated tents and gourmet treats, and more!

HOLIDAYS AT THE GRANGE

Saturday/Dec. 10. 3 p.m. Holiday Afternoon Tea. Sunday/Dec. 11. 4:30 p.m. Amadeus Presents Sounds of the Season. Visit the website: www.gfgrange.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Wintermarkt. 12-7 p.m. Bringing the Old World charm of Christmas in Europe to Herndon. Family-focused events, entertainment, and items for all members of the household. Downtown Herndon, 777 Lynn Street, Herndon. Visit Herndonwintermarkt.com or call 571-323-5300.

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Christmas Around the World. 4-8 p.m. At Parkwood Baptist Church, 8726 Braddock Road, Annandale. "Christmas Around the World," celebrating Jesus' birth features concerts, costumed reenactors, live animals, biblical stories. Tickets at www.parkwood.org/registration beginning Nov. 28. Free parking. Visit the website: www.parkwood.org

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Holiday Cheer. 7:30 p.m. at Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Blvd., Arlington. Presented www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

by the National Chamber Ensemble. This program brings the finest classical masterpieces and traditional holiday favorites together for a fun and memorable evening for the entire family. Festivities begin with a "Sleigh Ride" - Leroy Anderson's classic and "Chanukkah Festival". Soprano Nancy Peery Marriott (soprano), a long-time NCE favorite, will perform seasonal favorites and lead a Carol Sing-along that will have the entire audience joining in the spirit of the holidays. Tickets: <https://www.nationalchamberensemble.org/tickets.htm>

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Christmas Carol Sing-Along. 3-5 p.m. Historic Pleasant Grove is holding its annual Christmas Carol Sing, followed by cookies and hot cider, at our quaint historic site. Free community event at 8641 Lewinsville Road, McLean. Visit www.HistoricPleasantGrove.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Christmas Calamity Improv. 7-9:30 p.m. Come ring the bells! Improv with a seasonal twist! At Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Visit artsherndon.org. Tickets \$15. Call 703-956-6590.

DEC. 10-11

"The Nutcracker." 4 p.m. At Centreville High School, Centreville. Presented by the Mia Saunders School of Ballet. Tickets available at the door or online for Saturday and Sunday shows for \$10 for children under 5 and \$12 for ages 6 & up. Proceeds benefit CVHS Drama Scholarships and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. More info at Mia-SaundersBallet.com.

DEC. 10-18

"The Perfect Christmas List." At Richard J. Ernst Theater, NOVA Annandale Campus. Encore Theatrical Arts Project (ETAP) presents a glamorous and dazzling holiday musical that features 30 performers, creative choreog-

SEE HOLIDAY CALENDAR, PAGE 11

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Announcements

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PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN (Never Known to Fail)

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mt Carmel, fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity.

Oh Star of the sea, help me and show me herein you are my Mother.

Oh, Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in this necessity.

There are none that can withstand your powers.

Oh, show me herein you are my Mother. Oh Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to Thee. (Repeat three times)

Oh, Holy Mary, I place this cause in your hands. (Repeat three times)

Holy Spirit, you who solve all problems, light all roads so that I may obtain my goals, You gave me the divine gift to forgive and forget all evil against me, and that in all instances of my life, you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things as you confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in eternal glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. Amen.

Say this prayer on three consecutive days. After three days the requested will be granted.

This prayer must be published after the favor has been granted.

Thanks from the Stokes family.

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT 2022

FROM PAGE 9

raphy, elaborate sets, stunning costumes, and 20 musical numbers. Show dates: Saturday, December 10th at 12 p.m., 4 p.m., 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, December 11th at 12 p.m., 4 p.m.; Friday, December 16th at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, December 17th at 12 p.m., 4 p.m., 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, December 18th at 12 p.m., 4 p.m. Visit www.encore-tap.org

SUNDAY/DEC. 11

Toys for Tots Concert. 6 p.m. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. The Vienna Community Band is partnering with the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation to celebrate 75 years of giving! There's no charge for admission. They ask you to bring a new unwrapped toy to the concert. All collected toys are distributed to children in Fairfax County. Visit <https://www.viennacomunityband.org/>

SUNDAY/DEC. 11

Celtic Holiday Concert. 4-5 p.m. At St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Join in this annual concert by Karen Ashbrook and Friends. The popular duo (Karen Ashbrook & Paul Oorts) will be joined by cellist Sophie Chang featuring carols and music from Belgium, France, England and Germany. Paul Oorts, Belgian multi-instrumentalist, will share delightful childhood Flemish traditions of the season. The shimmering strings of the hammered dulcimer, harp guitar, cello, and the reeds of the accordion, ring in the holiday time of year! Funds collected from this concert will be split between ECHO and the FACETS Hot Meals program. Website: www.standrews.net

SUNDAY/DEC. 11

Brunch with Santa. At The Watermark Hotel, 1825 Capital One Drive South in Tysons Corner. Enjoy a bountiful and delicious brunch buffet with the season's most popular celebrity, Santa. Guests are invited to enjoy a jolly brunch including signature favorites like scrambled eggs, bacon, breakfast potatoes, sausage, and other delightful bites. During brunch, guests are invited to share their holiday wishes with Santa, take a photo with him, and enjoy the hotel's festive holiday decor. Seatings are available at 11:30 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 1:15 p.m., and 1:45 p.m. and pricing is \$49 for Adults, \$29 for children age 6-12. Children age 5 and under are complimentary.

TUESDAY/DEC. 13

Holiday Concert Series. 8 p.m. Presented by Encore Creativity for older Adults. At George Washington Masonic Memorial, Alexandria.

Encore's local choral ensembles – Encore Chorales, Encore ROCKS and Sentimental Journey Singers - will perform crowd-pleasing holiday songs with live musical accompaniment in a variety of venues in Virginia. Visit the website: encorecreativity.org/events/category/performance

THURSDAY/DEC. 15

When Christmas Hurts. 7-8 p.m. At St. John's Lutheran Church, 5952 Franconia Road, Alexandria. This is a service designed for all who may be experiencing this holiday season with hurt, grief, or sadness. All are welcome to attend in-person or virtually on Facebook Live. Visit the website: www.sjlc.com

FRIDAY/DEC. 16

Appalachian Bluegrass Christmas. 7-9:30 p.m. Music and readings with Shoestring Theatre, Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Visit artshernon.org. Tickets \$10. Call 703-956-6590.

SATURDAY/DEC. 17

Open for the Arts – Holiday Open House. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Children's activities with A Thousand Stories, Herndon Books Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Visit artshernon.org. Call 703-956-6590.

SATURDAY/DEC. 17

Wreaths Across America. Noon. Volunteer wreath laying ceremony honoring veterans. At Chestnut Grove Cemetery, 831 Dranesville Road, Herndon. Visit herndonwomansclub.org. Call 703-435-3480

DEC. 17-18

"The Nutcracker." 4 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Presented by Fairfax Symphony Orchestra and Fairfax Ballet. The FSO production of Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker is unique in the Washington, D.C. region to feature live, musical accompaniment by a full orchestra, together with dancers on stage.

SUNDAY/DEC. 18

Home for the Holidays with the Treble Clefs. 5-7 p.m. Join the Treble Clefs and Friends. Includes refreshments and a special visitor. At Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Visit artshernon.org or call 703-956-6590.

SATURDAY/DEC. 31

New Year's Eve Golf Tournament. 10 a.m. Shotgun start. Annual four-person scramble. Entry fee includes green fee, cart fee, range balls and prizes. Entry deadline December 26. At Herndon Centennial Golf Course, 909 Ferndale Avenue, Herndon. Cost is \$80 per player. Call 703-471-5769 or visit herdongolf.com.

FCCA Changes, Additions

FROM PAGE 3

School and was working with the Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services for years in their communication's department so he is familiar with county procedures. He's seen a couple of other opportunities come open but jumped at the park possibility.

"I love the outdoors," he said.

FCCA Reorganization

The Fairfax County Park Authority will now have four brand managers covering the golf courses, corporate messaging, resource management and park services which includes the recreation centers.

Jai Cole, Executive Director of the Fairfax County Park Authority, is made

it her mission to visit all 420 parks her first year. "Finished that on public lands day last year," she said. Cole was at the changing of the guard meeting with Pederson and Boxer.

Everyone at the park authority looks at the budget and the passage of bonds for funding, but much of the funding for operations comes from admission fees and rentals from park users. Sliding scales enable the lower income residents to also enjoy the park system. Cole noted that the quality of the parks needs to remain consistent throughout the county, and equity in accessibility of parks is a priority.

The park authority also has invested in translations, so signs and web material is available in several different languages. The park authority also hired a new videographer.

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CENTRE VIEW

Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers.

All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

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"IN THE GRASP"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

(Recent emails have prompted this column.) "In the grasp" is a football expression most often associated with quarterbacks being "sacked," (a defensive player having a secure hold of the quarterback). This basically means that the play is over/"the play is dead." It could also characterize an online scam. (I should know.) It occurs when you are speaking with someone at the end of an 800 number who is asking for remote control of your computer to install, upgrade, download, upload, and/or fix whatever computer problem precipitated this call. You're asking/need help and consequently, you might be putting yourself at risk.

I experienced this circumstance one time and it nearly cost me \$3,000. I responded to an online solicitation that seemed to offer a reward/payout for something. It seemed harmless enough, so I made the call. Given how our consuming patterns have evolved with the internet, responding to emails from mostly familiar brands and buying some of what they're selling, "cyber-Monday" comes to mind, is how much of our consuming is done these days. And of course, you pay with a credit card to complete the transaction. However, sometimes the solicitations/sites are not what they purport to be. It's difficult to discern, occasionally, whether "it's live or if its Memorex." Sometimes, it's hard to tell fact from fiction/ to know what's real or what's not (dangerous). (Beginning in the 70s, Memorex advertised Ella Fitzgerald "scatting" into a microphone, live, and showing a glass breaking from her sound. Then they played their recording from the performance and again the wine glass shattered. And then the voice-over asked: "Is it live or Memorex?")

I think this is what happened to me when "I was in the grasp" after multiple hours on the phone. My innocent inquiry into the "real" offer lead me down more than just a garden path. Instead, it led very nearly to my bank – to pay the piper. It all started innocently enough (so I thought) with me giving control of my computer to this voice on the other end of the phone to process the purchase/payment due me. The payment was made to my bank, and I was told to go online and check my account. When I looked, I noticed a \$3,000 (not \$30) deposit. They made a mistake or so it seemed. Still on the phone with this far-away person, he admitted they made a mistake and to receive my real reward, I needed to repay them the \$3,000. I suggested that they simply retrieve the money the same way they deposited it. He said they couldn't do that - for whatever reason, and that I needed to repay them, this time said with a bit more urgency. I began to sense that I was being manipulated and slowed my roll accordingly.

Unfortunately, they sped up their roll and said if I didn't repay them, blah, blah, blah. I didn't agree and then their grip/manipulation got tighter. Having control of my computer, he deleted all my icons. I couldn't quite figure out what they were doing. Then when I asked for the icons to be returned, the scam took a nastier turn. He said, he was going to "lock" my computer unless I repaid the \$3,000. Being into the second hour of this negotiation, I began to get nervous – and flustered, realizing that unless I paid this ransom, my computer and all its memories would be gone, and since my computer is my business (and I have minimal computer skills/knowledge), I acquiesced and asked how what I should do to resolve this matter. He said I need to go to my bank and get a certified check (payable to whom I don't remember) and then go to a local Western Union office near me home and wire them the money. Now I officially realized that I was as in trouble/at risk of losing this \$3,000. With no alternatives, so far as I knew (which wasn't very far), I went outside and got into my car and started driving to my bank, while still on the cell phone with this "solicitor." About halfway there, I decided I didn't want to be a victim and so I told the man I was not going to pay him. He got mad and said he "was going to lock my computer," (I determined that the \$3,000 payment would be more harmful to me than the computer lock). I turned the car around and returned home to find out if I had suffered any consequences for not paying. Sure enough, when I got home, I tried to turn on the computer, but I found it impossible to do so. Apparently, this man was indeed a man of his word, as far as locking my computer is concerned anyway. Now, whenever I receive emails from unfamiliar sites, they remain unseen. I learned my lesson, very nearly the hard way (unlocking the computer simply required a trip to Best Buy, computer in hand and to pay a fee for unlocking services rendered). I may not be the sharpest knife in the drawer but thankfully I'm not the dullest, either.

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

FOOTBALL

PHOTOS BY WILL PALENSCAR



Tony Rojas #5 reaches for the endzone on one of his three touchdowns. Rojas has committed to play for Penn State.



Tony Rojas #5 explodes for one of his three touchdowns in his team's state semifinal loss to Madison.

Fairfax's Rojas Explodes for 3 TDs in Loss to Madison

FROM PAGE 8

Warhawks up 24-7 with 10:23 to play in the 3rd quarter.

Tony Rojas' 25 yard touchdown run, his second of the game, came with 6:22 to play in the quarter putting Fairfax back to a two score game, 24-14.

Angelo Jreige then scored Madison's final touchdown with a run from 10 yards out with 11:13 to play in the 4th quarter.

But Tony Rojas would score his third touchdown of the game, the game's final points, on a 20 yard touchdown reception with 3:43 to play, 31-21.

With the 31-21 win, Madison will take on the other Class 6 semifinal winner, Freedom - Woodbridge, who defeated Western Branch 69-14. This marks Freedom - Woodbridge's 11th consecutive win and advances Madison (11-3) to their second consecutive Class 6 State Championship to take on Freedom Woodbridge. Fairfax ends their season at (12-1).

Madison's football program has gone 92-38 since 2012-13, and came up short last year in the state championship against Oscar Smith. Having started this season with three losses by a combined 7 points to Stone Bridge, Yorktown and Lake Braddock.

"Our first three games were against very strong opponents and I thought we did a lot of very positive things in those games," Madison Head Coach Justin Counts said. "There were obviously things we had to do better but our kids did a great job of accepting coaching and accepting responsibility for making adjustments in the way we were practicing and the way we were preparing as a team in order for us to get better. We also have great senior leadership and those kids were able to hold everyone accountable to make sure we were doing things the right way."

Playing Freedom-Woodbridge, an undefeated team that also put up some impressive scoring is up next for Madison. Counts said, "I am not sure past performance will have anything to do with the game on Saturday. I think they are a very talented team and are very well coached. They put a lot of pressure on you on both sides of the ball. ... We are going to have to play our best football for sure."



Angelo Jreige #1 runs with the ball just before scoring a Madison touchdown.



Class 6 C/ D First Team All Region