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Matthew Li, (fourth from left) is a seventh grader at Herndon's Nysmith School for the Gifted. He and the other members of the Nysmith Vex IQ Robotics team, Rising Phoenix, (from left) Sophia Lee, Samantha Li, Pranav Anumandla, David Han, Daniel Wu, and not pictured Cynthia Wu, won this year's Vex IQ Robotics Virginia State Championship, middle school division.

Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

IMAN
Foundation

NOVA SYSTEMIC

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Rising Phoenix At the World Stage

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CHAMPIONS

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Herndon Town Councilmember Jeffrey L. Davidson Dies

Town flags lowered to half-staff.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Herndon Town Councilmember, Jeffrey L. Davidson, 68, died Saturday, April 7, 2018, as a result of serious injuries sustained in a vehicle crash in Maryland on Thursday, March 29, 2018.

Mayor of Herndon Lisa C. Merkel announced Davidson's death on her Facebook page Sunday, April 8. "It is with a heavy heart that I share with you that our friend and colleague, Jeff Davidson passed away yesterday (Saturday) as a result of injuries sustained in last week's accident. The Coun-



Herndon Town Councilmember, Jeffrey L. Davidson died Saturday, April 7, 2018.

PHOTO COURTESY
TOWN OF HERNDON

cil and I are keeping his family in our thoughts and will let you know when any arrangements are announced."

An outpouring of condolences continues through Facebook. As of noon on Monday,

Anne Curtis, Chief Communications Officer Town of Herndon announced town flags would be lowered to half-staff, effective immediately.

According to the Town of Herndon website, Councilmember Jeffrey L. Davidson had been a resident of Herndon since 1986 and was serving his first term as a member of the Herndon Town Council. He represented the town on the Inter-Jurisdictional Committee and the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority's Planning Coordination and Advisory Committee (NVTA-PCAC).

Davidson had served the Herndon community as president of the Towns on the Greens HOA, as a member of the town's Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory and Historic Sign committees, and as a member of

the Herndon Historical Society, including a term as vice president. Up until his death, Davidson chaired the Herndon Parkway Advisory Committee and served as a volunteer for the Herndon Festival and Friday Night Live. He was a 2012 graduate of the Herndon Citizen's Police Academy.

Davidson was an FAA Certificated Private Pilot with an Instrument Rating. He built and flew his own aircraft and was a member of Sterling Flyers Flying Club based in Leesburg, the Experimental Aircraft Association (National and Local Chapter 186), and the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association.

The town website states, "In 2016, Davidson retired from the Defense Technical Information Center where he held technical, managerial, and program leadership positions over a 30-year career."



Matthew Li, a seventh grader at Nysmith School for the Gifted in Herndon, and his friends Cynthia Wu and Daniel Wu, all members the Vex IQ Robotics team, Rising Phoenix, were invited by the REC Foundation to present Vex Robotics to the nation's top STEM educators from each state. The presentation was at the Workforce of Tomorrow event presented by US News STEM Solutions on Wednesday, April 4 and Thursday, April 5.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Matthew Li, (fourth from left) is a seventh grader at Herndon's Nysmith School for the Gifted. He and the other members of the Nysmith Vex IQ Robotics team, Rising Phoenix. (from left) Sophia Lee, Samantha Li, Pranav Anumandla, David Han, Daniel Wu and not pictured, Cynthia Wu, won this year's Vex IQ Robotics Virginia State Championship - middle school division.

Students at Nysmith School Invited to the World Robotic Competition

Matthew Li's Vex IQ robotic team to face fierce competition.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Robotic teams across the globe, be afraid, very afraid. The Vex IQ Robotics team, Rising Phoenix with team member Matthew Li from Nysmith School for the Gifted in Herndon, recently won at this year's Vex IQ Robotics Virginia State Championship, middle school division, a one-day challenge in Doswell, Va., held Feb. 17, 2018.

The other members of the team are friends of Li's from his hometown elementary and middle schools and his sister, Samantha. Matthew's father, Yun Li is the Robotics Team Coach.

Kenneth Nysmith, Head of the Nysmith School for the Gifted said: "The team is super thrilled ... and can't wait to share that news with all friends and family!"

Team Rising Phoenix designed and built a robot in accord with strict VEX IQ requirements to compete against other teams in a

game-based engineering challenge of multiple robotic matches played on a 4-foot by 8-foot rectangular field. Classroom STEM concepts, science, technology, engineering and math, were put to the test as team members learned and practiced lifelong skills in cooperation, leadership and communication while building and competing with their robots.

Matthew Li's Vex IQ robotic team, Rising Phoenix took home the Excellence Award, beating out the other 17 qualified and

highly skilled teams from across the Commonwealth. Team members Rising Phoenix also won the Teamwork Champions Award.

The accomplishments of Team Rising Phoenix earned them a coveted invitation to compete in the upcoming 2018 Vex Worlds in Louisville, Ky. later this month. This will be Team Rising Phoenix's third year in a row heading to the Vex Worlds. According to the event website, the 2018 Vex World brings together the top robotics teams from across the world to compete under one roof.

Merkel Running for Fourth Term as Mayor

Merkel's supporters tell why 'Mayor Lisa' will get their vote.

Town of Herndon Mayor Lisa C. Merkel announced on Monday evening, April 9, that she is running for her fourth term as mayor in the upcoming November 2018 elections.

Merkel kicked off her candidacy at her Campaign Announcement event held at Jimmy's Old Town Tavern. Fairfax Supervisor John Foust, (D-Dranesville), Del. Jennifer Boysko (D-86) and Danica Roem (D-13), as well many members of the Herndon Town Council and citizens attended the Campaign Announcement to show their support.

In an interview, Merkel said her re-election platform has three points. "Downtown, the Metro and making sure Herndon is a hometown for everyone; where everyone is welcomed."

Merkel is currently running uncontested.

—MERCIA HOBSON



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Lisa C. Merkel announces she is running for her fourth term as mayor of the Town of Herndon.

VIEWPOINTS

Why do you support Lisa C. Merkel for Mayor?

—MERCIA HOBSON

Michael Rozner, Herndon

"Lisa has always been approachable and listens to the issues of citizens."



Rachel Eisenfeld, Herndon

"I support Lisa because she is a champion for independent small business in the Town of Herndon."



Cory Laws, Herndon

"I've been in Herndon since 2004, through several administrations. Herndon now is the coolest place in Northern Virginia, largely because of our Mayor Lisa and the people who support her. I love our little town, and she's got my vote and should have yours too."



Keven LaBlanc, Herndon

"I would say she truly embraces the same as we see on signs throughout Herndon, which is, 'hate has no home here.'"



'Lawyer Landau,' Herndon

"Mayor Lisa Merkel walks the walk and doesn't just talk the talk. She interacts with her constituents. She is in the schools and always willing to listen, which is why I continue to support her. Accessible Lisa is an asset for Herndon. Forward thinking, bright and articulate."

'Respect the Game' Award

Herndon High's Jeff Donlan exemplifies sportsmanship on the field, citizenship off the field and leadership in all endeavors.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Jeff Donlan, Herndon High School lacrosse player, received the 2018 Lou Peterson 'Respect the Game' Award during the annual Lou Peterson Memorial Lacrosse Game between Herndon High School and South Lakes High School. The presentation occurred before the start of the game in Herndon, which if it had not been for Peterson would more than likely have pitted rival team against rival team.

The award is given to both a South Lakes and Herndon High lacrosse player who exemplifies sportsmanship on the field, citizenship off the field and leadership in all endeavors. Spencer Alston, a South Lakes High School lacrosse player also received the award presented by Herndon-Reston Youth League (HRYL) in memory of Louis M. Peterson, who served as HRYL Commissioner from its inception in 1996 until his untimely death in 2013 during a kayaking trip.

Peterson was known as the ultimate champion and supporter of the Herndon Youth Lacrosse League and the Herndon High varsity girls' lacrosse team.

Stories are told how Peterson



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Jeff Donlan, Herndon High School lacrosse player receives the 2018 Lou Peterson 'Respect the Game' Award on Thursday, April 5.

instilled a positive work ethic and sportsmanship into his practices of the Herndon Reston Youth Lacrosse League (HRYL). Friendships and bonds were made between the children on the league, whether they were from Herndon or Reston, it did not matter. Peterson acted as a bridge between the communities. Respect was the name of the game and Peterson instilled respect on the field and off the field.

The Herndon varsity lacrosse team lost Thursday's home non-conference game against South Lakes High School by a score of 12-1.

WEEK IN HERNDON

Teen Job Fair to be Held at South Lakes High

Teens and young adults are invited to attend a free Teen Job Fair and Resume Building Workshop, on Saturday, April 21. The fair is open to teens in Fairfax County looking for employment or wanting tips to build their resume. More than 40 potential employers have signed up to meet with job seekers at this event.

The fair will focus on student job seekers (approximately 16 to 18 years old) looking for full time employment, after-school employment, seasonal positions, internship opportunities, or volunteer experiences. Volunteer opportunities and resume building workshops will be available for younger students looking to begin to build

their resume.

The Teen Job Fair will be held at South Lakes High School (11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston), from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event is sponsored by Hunter Mill Supervisor Cathy Hudgins, Reston Chamber of Commerce, Springfield Supervisor Pat Herrity and Connection Newspapers.

Pre-registration for students is recommended (not required) and can be done online at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/springfield/teenjobfairs>. Businesses and organizations can still participate – sign up at the website above. For additional information, contact the Hunter Mill District Office at 703-478-0283.

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HomeLifeStyle



PHOTO MERRIFIELD GARDEN CENTER

The colors of Camellia blooms can be enjoyed now, says David Watkins of Merrifield Garden Center.



PHOTO AMERICAN PLANT

Preparing a spring garden includes pruning, mulching and fertilizing, says Haynes Davis of American Plant in Bethesda.

Spring in Bloom

Preparing and planning a colorful warm-weather garden.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

One of the most anticipated rites of spring is the vibrancy of the first blooms on flowers and trees. However, this beauty can only be savored after the weeding, pruning and planting are finished. While preparing and planning a spring garden is not an effortless endeavor, local landscaping gurus say that an organized plan can make it more manageable.

"The first thing you need to do is cut back any ornamental grasses like Liriope two to four inches off the ground so the brown, tired-looking leaves are gone before the new leaves start to grow," said David Watkins, general manager of Merrifield Garden Center. "If you wait too long it's tough to separate old from new and you end up getting brown on the new leaves."

Removing all of the leaves and other debris from the flowerbed is the next step, advises Haynes Davis of American Plant in Bethesda. "Cut back any perennials or ornamental grasses that have not already been cut back and prune out any dead branches from existing shrubs," he said. "I fertilize at this point with ... a slow-release, organic fertilizer that works for blooming and evergreen plants. Lastly I put down a fresh layer of mulch and then the beds are ready for spring."

Preparing to have a perfectly manicured lawn for spring begins by raking removing all of the fallen leaves, adds Davis. "Having your PH tested would be a good idea because now would be the time to put down lime to get your soil to the correct acidity level which is 5.8 to 6.5," he said. "This is also the time to put down pre-emergent [herbicides] to keep the weeds from coming up, but you have to remember, if you put down a pre-emergent you cannot over seed for six to 12 weeks, depending on the product you are using."

Cutting away dead or overgrown branches to stimulate new growth comes next, says Watkins. "I would prune any branches on

shrubs and trees that are crisscrossing and rubbing against each other," he said. "Then edge, mulch and fertilize your plants. Remove old mulch first and put down two to three inches of new mulch, but make sure you don't put it too close to the trunk of the plant."

When whipping a garden into shape for spring, Alexandria-based landscape designer Ruth Tinsley believes in engaging the senses. "If you plant fragrant spring flowers like Honeysuckle, Phlox, Butterfly Bush and roses, they will give you a pleasant aroma when you are walking through your yard or garden," she said. "Plant them in large swaths to get the biggest impact."

Butterfly Bush and Stock are two flowering plants that do double-duty, advises Tinsley. "They not only have a nice fragrance, but they will add beautiful color to your yard or garden. Butterfly bush is relatively hearty and has vibrant pink and purple blooms, and Stock comes in a vivid, dark-red color."

Until temperatures are warm on a consistent basis, Davis offers a caveat about planting flowers. "I would only plant Pansies and Violas for flowers outside," he said. "They will give you good color all the way up to the time to plant summer annuals, which is when we have sustained night time temps around 55 degrees, usually around mid-April. For perennials about the only thing you can plant now would be hellebores."

"Forsythia bushes are blooming now. They're one of the first to bloom," added Watkins. "Shortly Camellias and Azaleas will start to bloom."

Options for plants that can tolerate cooler temperatures are plentiful, advises Watkins. "All of our trees and shrubs can be planted now and it's great to get your garden started early so there's less maintenance in the summer," he said. "All of our ornamental trees like Cherry, Redbud, Crabapple and Dogwood can be planted now."

"As for shrubs, you can plant anything right now as long as it has been acclimated and does not have new tender growth," added Davis. "We have all of our plants that are tender either in our greenhouses or covered with frost blankets until the temperatures warm up."



PHOTO AMERICAN PLANT

Pansies and Violas can be planted now to offer bright colors to a spring garden, says Haynes Davis of American Plant in Bethesda.

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PHOTO BY ROBERT MAXWELL

Herndon High School presents "Into the Woods."

'Into the Woods'

Multiple performances: Sunday, April 15 and Saturday, April 21, 2-3:30 p.m. Special Pre-Performance Experience for Young Children, Ages 3-7 from 1-1:45 p.m. Tickets: \$10/adult & \$5/child in advance online; \$15/adult & \$10/child at box office; Friday, April 13, 7-9:45 p.m.; Saturday, April 14, 7-9:45 p.m.; and Sunday, April 15, 2-4:45 p.m.; Thursday, April 19, 7-9:45 p.m. (pizza night); Friday, April 20, 7-9:45 p.m.; and Saturday, April 21, 2-4:45 p.m. at Herndon High School, 700 Bennett St., Herndon. Tickets: \$15/adult and \$10/student in advance online; \$20/adult & \$15/student at box office. Premium Seating Tickets: \$30/adult and \$20/student in advance online. Tickets at www.HerndonDrama.org.

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

ONGOING

Rebels, Masters, and Scoundrels: The Art of Star Wars. Through April 29 at ArtInsights, Reston Town Center, Reston. New art by LucasFilm concept artist Bill Silvers and rare images by movie campaign artist John Alvin will be on exhibit and for sale. Call 703-478-0778. Visit www.artinsights.com.

Craig Moran: Spaced Out. Through May 29 at GRACE at Signature, 11850 Freedom Drive, Reston. A D.C.-based painter known for his boldly patterned canvases, Moran's newest body of work is a whirl-wind of exuberant colors and energetic shapes, evoking elements of the natural world and portraiture in a dynamic flattened space. Call 703-471-9242 or visit www.restonarts.org.

Homegrown Yoga. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Alison Adams is bringing Homegrown Yoga to ArtSpace Herndon. All levels welcome. Drop in and take a class. \$25 two week unlimited pass or drop-in available. Visit www.homegrownpoweryoga.com

The Elden Street Tea Shop. Saturdays in ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Sip tea and enjoy a variety of locally made snacks and pastries while enjoying the latest art installations in the gallery. Visit www.eldenstreettea.com.

Over-40 Softball League. Fairfax-based league is looking for enough players to form another team. Players must be at least 40 years of age to be eligible. All games are doubleheaders - played on Sundays at Bready Park in Herndon between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. If interested, email skeduman@aol.com for more.

IMPROVING ENGLISH

One-To-One English Conversation. Mondays, 1 p.m. at Reston Library, Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Free. Multiple one-on-one practice sessions are available each week. Call 703-689-2700 to reserve a spot.

Pre-Beginners. Wednesdays 10-11 a.m. at Reston Library, Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Free. Call 703-689-2700

Beginners. Tuesdays 10-11 a.m. with Beth; Thursdays 10-11 a.m. with Genie; Fridays 10-11 a.m. with Ivan. At Reston Library, Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Free. Call 703-689-2700 to reserve a spot.

Intermediate. Mondays 10-11 a.m. with Rick; Wednesdays, 1-2 p.m. with Susan; Wednesdays 2-3 p.m. with Sharoni. At Reston Library, Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Free. Call 703-689-2700 to reserve a spot.

Advanced. Thursdays 10-11:30 a.m. with Richard; Fridays, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. with Mary. At Reston Library, Reston Library, 11925 Bowman

Towne Drive, Reston. Free. Call 703-689-2700
Vocabulary Building. Mondays 11 a.m.-1:15 p.m. at Reston Library, Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Free. Call 703-689-2700 to reserve a spot.

Speak & Write. Mondays, 1:30-3 p.m. at Reston Library, Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Free. Call 703-689-2700

Dialogs & Grammar. Tuesdays, 11:15-12:30 p.m. at Reston Library, Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Free. Call 703-689-2700 to reserve a spot.

Pronunciation. Thursdays, 1-2:30 p.m. at Reston Library, Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Free. Call 703-689-2700

THURSDAY/APRIL 12

Toddler Story Time. 10:30 a.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Fun stories, songs and finger plays. Age 2 with adult. Register at 703-689-2700.

Meet the Artists. 12:15-3:30 p.m. at RCC Hunters Woods - The CenterStage, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. With Oscar Paz-Suaznabar. Free. A Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award recipient, Paz-Suaznabar, 12, is a pianist who has performed on From the Top, an NPR radio show featuring gifted outstanding young musicians. Oscar attends Langley High School and is a student of Marjorie Lee. Learn more online at olli.gmu.edu. Email aclark24@gmu.edu or call 703-503-3384.

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

Maximizing Social Security. 7 p.m. at Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Experts will be on hand to answer questions and guide participants through the Social Security maze. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional.

FRIDAY/APRIL 13

Becoming an Empowered Patient. 10 a.m.-noon at Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. For ages 18-plus. Learn tools and resources to become a confident health consumer. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com or call 703-476-4500.

APRIL 13-21

"Into the Woods." At Herndon High School, 700 Bennett St., Herndon.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 6

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 5

Announcements

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Multiple performances: Sunday, April 15 and Saturday, April 21, 2-3:30 p.m. Special Pre-Performance Experience for Young Children, Ages 3-7 from 1-1:45 p.m. Tickets: \$10/adult & \$5/child in advance online; \$15/adult & \$10/child at box office; Friday, April 13, 7-9:45 p.m.; Saturday, April 14, 7-9:45 p.m.; and Sunday, April 15, 2-4:45 p.m.; Thursday, April 19, 7-9:45 p.m. (pizza night); Friday, April 20, 7-9:45 p.m.; and Saturday, April 21, 2-4:45 p.m.; Tickets: \$15/adult and \$10/student in advance online; \$20/adult & \$15/student at box office. Premium Seating Tickets: \$30/adult and \$20/student in advance online. Tickets at www.HerndonDrama.org.

SATURDAY/APRIL 14

K-12 STEM Symposium. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at The Nysmith School, 13625 EDS Drive, Herndon. Nearly 4,000 people are expected to attend this free symposium, which is Northern Virginia's largest K-12 STEM event featuring 50 interactive exhibits like 3D printers, flight simulators and an egg drop contest. Also features top science fair projects. Visit the website at stemsymposium.com.

Founder's Day. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Lake Anne Plaza, Reston. Founder's Day is a fun, family-friendly event celebrating the 54th anniversary of Reston's founding by Robert E. Simon, Jr. Join the Reston Historic Trust and Museum for a full day of activities and music. Visit www.restonmuseum.org/foundersday, call 703-709-7700 or email restonmuseum@gmail.com.

Sensory-Friendly Music and Motion. 11 a.m. at Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. As part of Autism

Awareness Month, Mr. Matt, music teacher for students with learning disabilities, presents music through songs, movement and stories. All ages. No registration required. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/reston-regional.

SUNDAY/APRIL 15

Strings on the Promenade - Harp Performances. 2-3 p.m. at The Promenade at Reston Town Center. Enjoy harp music on Sundays in April, featuring Carmen Robinson playing tunes for all ages: Celtic, rock, R&B and popular theme songs. Free. Visit www.restontowncenter.com.

MONDAY/APRIL 16-FRIDAY/MAY 4

Pet Supplies Drive. Collection bins in building lobbies at Reston Town Center has teamed up with GoodDogz.org of Reston to collect supplies for organizations treating pets in need. Items such as dog beds, blankets, toys, leashes, and crates can be donated in building lobby collection bins. Visit gooddogz.org.

TUESDAY/APRIL 17

Wil Maring & Robert Bowlin Concert. 7:15 p.m. at Amphora's Diner Deluxe, 1151 Elden St., Herndon. Singer/songwriter Wil Maring and guitarist and fiddler Robert Bowlin have combined to create beautiful original acoustic music which straddles the fence between bluegrass, folk and country music. Tickets \$10/members, \$11/non-members at the door or contact Dave at DAHurdSr@cs.com. Call 703-435-2402 or visit www.restonherndonfolkclub.com.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 18

R4 Collection Day. 1-4 p.m. Pavilion at Reston Town Center. Reduce.

Reuse. Recycle. Bring computers, components, electronics, cell phones, paper for shredding, compact fluorescent bulbs, eyeglasses, and hearing aids. Visit restontowncenter.com.

THURSDAY/APRIL 19

Herndon Farmers Market. Open Thursdays, through Nov. 8, 8 a.m.-noon at 777 Lynn St., Herndon. Fairfax County Park Authority markets are strictly producer-only meaning that vendors must grow or make from scratch everything they bring to market. Call 703-642-0128 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets.

Cabaret Concert. 2:15 p.m. at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods CenterStage, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Free. A celebrated cabaret singer in the Washington area, Beverly Cosham will perform songs from the Great American Songbook and other favorites. Visit the website at olli.gmu.edu or call 703-503-3384.

Entry Deadline. Arts Herndon's Tech Arts Competition and Young Artists Scholarships applications are now open. All entries must be submitted on the FCPS server and a completed entry form delivered to the Fairfax County Public School Fine Arts Office by April 19, 2018. Visit artspaceherndon.org to apply.

FRIDAY/APRIL 20

11th Annual Empty Bowls. 5:30-8 p.m. at Floris United Methodist Church, 13600 Frying Pan Road, Herndon. Receive a supper of soup, bread, beverage, dessert, and a handmade pottery bowl, a reminder that some are hungry. Giving Circle of HOPE. \$25 for adults in advance/\$30 adults at the door/\$15 for children under 12. Visit www.givingcircleofhope.org.

Employment

Manager - Customer Practice for Urban Science Applications, Inc. in Herndon, Virginia.

Duties include:
Perform services on customer product areas, including supporting account growth for both contracted and ad-hoc projects. Respond to our clients to answer any Enterprise Lead Solution (ELS) related inquiries; handle ad-hoc requests, such as manual reports using Microsoft Excel, Power Point and/or Tableau or automated reports and web application development using C#, Visual Studio.NET, ASP.NET, SSIS packages, SSRS reports and/or Microsoft SQL Server, including Profiler and Transact SQL. Integrate proprietary business systems and databases including client agency DMP, and internal digital marketing platforms. Ensure optimal operation for sustainment activities for the ELS application, detecting and resolving any application or data problems. Serve as liaison between client and Urban Science technical staff on installations, and ensure that systems are properly installed, set up, and functioning at established quality level. Assist with establishing long-term business relationships with clients, provide insight to senior management in creating estimates and proposals for clients, and participate with team in presenting project conclusions to client representative. Using a basic understanding of dealer retail network planning, liaise between client and Urban Science technical staff on communicating clients' needs by defining requirements for new features, enhancements and bug fixes of the ELS solution; ensure that changes are properly deployed, set-up and functioning at established quality level. Guide project teams, including setting objectives and reviewing work. Engage in all aspects of recruiting, selecting, training, managing and motivating of selected staff. Position Requires: Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science, Information Technology, Applied Mathematics, Computer Systems

Employment

Engineering, Management Information Systems, or Industrial Engineering and Operations Research or related field, or foreign equivalent education, and 3 years work experience in a software consultant or development or data analysis position. 3 years of experience is required in all of the following:
SQL Server database design and implementation including Transact SQL, SQL Server Profiler, SSIS package, SSRS Reports, and writing, modifying and optimizing complex stored procedures, views, scalar-valued and table valued functions. Windows and web application development using C# and Visual Studio.NET and ASP.NET. Dealer retail network planning in the automotive industry including primary market area, sales registrations, and segment adjustments to calculate expected volume, opportunities, sales and registration effectiveness. Data analysis using MS Excel, including advanced text manipulation and mathematics, graphing, charting, pivot tables, using functions and writing formulas including Macros. Client facing experience liaising between client and technical teams for business analysis, project requirements gathering and project coordination and training clients on proprietary software solutions and processes. Working with digital marketing platforms.

Experience can be acquired concurrently, Three (3) Senior Consultants and one (1) Analyst report to the Manager - Customer Practice.

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Employment

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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.

PARENTS HELPING PARENTS

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 or www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

THURSDAY/APRIL 12

FY 2019 Budget Meetings. 1 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center (Board Auditorium), 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. The advertised budget plan can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/advised-budget-plan. Sign up to speak at the public hearings on the FY 2019 budget at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/bosclerk/speakers-form or call 703-324-3151.

Herndon High School PTSA Meeting. 7 p.m. in the Herndon High School Cafeteria, 700 Bennett St, Herndon. Includes a presentation from Herndon Police about gangs. Visit herndonhs.fcps.edu.

FRIDAY/APRIL 13

Collaborative IEP Meetings: Parents as Partners. 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1 - Room 100, Dunn Loring. Parents are essential partners in the special education process. Join us for this important workshop to learn more about the IEP process and it's components, your role in the IEP meeting, responsibilities of the IEP team members, and planning for your child's IEP meeting. Visit www.fcps.edu/node/28279.

TUESDAY/APRIL 17

Joy Of Living for Seniors. 11 a.m.-noon at St Timothy's Episcopal Church, 432 Van Buren St., Herndon. As part of an ongoing series, St Timothy's Episcopal Church in Herndon, will hold a presentation about Israel/Palestine and the Two State Solution, followed by a light lunch. Donation offerings for lunch accepted. RSVP to jgdops@gmail.com.

THURSDAY/APRIL 19

Community Food Packing. 10-11:30 a.m. at Dominion Energy, 3072 Centreville Road, Herndon. Assistance League of Northern Virginia, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization, invites community members to help pack food for its Weekend Food for Kids program. This critical program provides nonperishable food over the weekend to children who receive free or reduced-price meals. Arrive at 9:30 if you would like to help with setup. Free. Email LynnB517@verizon.net or visit www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org.

Blood Drive

FROM PAGE 8

and die from sepsis and organ failure.

The website, katescause.com reports that Kate's cancer had a reputation for being the "good cancer"...the most treatable and with the best prognosis. After she died, "we (her family) promised that her death would not be in vain. We launched Kate's Cause in her honor and memory to raise awareness, raise funds for better and less toxic treatments for kids and give back to the pediatric cancer community."

The Red Cross recommends that donors eat iron-rich foods and drink plenty of water before donating blood. If you have eligibility questions, call 1-866-236-3276. A photo ID is required

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It's A Miracle (Not a Cancer Column) ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... that the green, cotton, chino-type casual-Friday pants I often wear on -in-the-office-Thursdays, lasted as long as they did. Given the number of years I've been stuffing myself into them (not every Thursday mind you, but very regularly), and the weight I've gained, especially since the ultra low point during heavy duty chemotherapy nine years ago, the miracle is that these pants hadn't split wide open on any number of previous occasions.

As it actually happened yesterday, the split was gradual, not along a seam and not offensive to anybody, least of all, me.

And though the tear was understandable, given the psi (pounds per square inch) of pressure they were under, the loss however expected was sad nonetheless. For someone who exults in a limited wardrobe as much as I do, the reduction in available garments I choose to wear - repeatedly, is impactful.

Hardly do I have too many other go-to-pants in the closet. Considering my lack of interest, lack of need and lack of properly fitting alternatives hanging in the balance, when a split occurs, such as the one I've described "heretofore," (Ben Affleck in "Good Will Hunting"), not only is the loss palpable, it is downright inconvenient. Now what? Not that my appearance is ever a priority, but I'd rather not dress for failure.

The problem is, when your clothing options can be characterized as "either or," you're in a bind which, given the pounds that have been added over the winter (let's be honest; more like the preceding fall, summer, spring, winter and fall), you're constantly challenged, especially when attempting to zip up your fly and/or button your pants. Talk about a pointless effort.

If there was a cash reward for such failure, I'd be basking somewhere warm, in semi retirement - with an elastic waistband to do my bidding.

"But alas, poor Yurick." No such reward exists, but thankfully, elastic waistbands do, and not just on underwear, bathing suits, shorts and sweatpants. The question becomes then: How committed do I want to become to such elasticity? Isn't it kind of a slippery slope to rubberize my waistline? My fear is, once I go elastic, I may never go back, and in never going back, I'm also afraid there may be no stopping me, if you know what I mean? And if I'm not to be stopped then am I prepared to live with myself, my ever-expanding self, that is?

I imagine my oncologist wouldn't approve. And I know my internal medicine doctor wouldn't approve (I've already received some electronic advisories to that effect); and I know with 100 percent certainty that my wife, Dina wouldn't approve. She might have married me "in sickness and health, and thick and thin," but she'd much rather I be thin than thick.

Granted, I may be mixing metaphors here, but I trust you get my point. She liked me the way I was, and sort of likes me the way I am, but I'm doubtful she would like me nearly as much if I were to morph into another being.

Ergo, the future is now. Do I continue to pack on the pounds and have less and less clothing that fits - and fewer and fewer excuses as to why that old thing seems to be that same old thing, again; buy new clothes that reflect and lock in my girth, or bite the bullet - not the Entenmann's Pop'ems, Hostess CupCakes, Oreo Mega Stuf cookies or M&M's plain/peanut butter candy and try to lose weight and save some face, literally?

I believe I know the answer. I'm just not sure of the start date. It better be soon because the underwear I bought myself for Christmas is beginning to lose its shape and I'm pretty sure I know the reason; and it's not a manufacturer's defect.

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

OPINION

Expansion of Health Care in Virginia?

After years of hoping, it's possible Medicaid expansion will come on April 11; say a prayer.

The most important, impactful accomplishment of the Virginia General Assembly session for 2018 is set for Wednesday, April 11, after our newspapers' presstime. In agreeing on a budget, assembly members are expected to approve expanding Medicaid which would provide health insurance some

EDITORIAL

200,000 to 400,000 Virginians who have been living without coverage, and consequently mostly without health care.

More than 10 percent of residents of Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax County do not have health insurance.

The benefits are huge. A celebratory press release goes out any time 10 or more jobs come to any place in Virginia. But estimates are that finally accepting the available federal money

to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act would generate about 30,000 jobs.

It will make all of us who live and work in Virginia healthier by ensuring that our fellow residents have access to healthcare, to medications to treat contagious illnesses, to vaccinations, to preventive and acute care. We don't want the people who ride with us on the Metro or wait in line at motor vehicles to be sick without a reasonable way to be treated. We want the people around us to be healthy. It makes everyone healthier.

Virginia has bypassed about \$10 billion by not having expanded Medicaid since it was possible.

Now is the time.

So many advocates have pressed for this for

so long, that it seems almost surreal as the possibility approaches. While I don't often pray for particular outcomes, I think a prayer for hundreds of thousands of people to receive life-affirming health care is in order.

Del. Ken Plum of Reston wrote in his weekly column: "By the time you are reading this column I will be back in Richmond for the serious work of the legislature of passing a budget for the next biennium. The outstanding issue to be resolved is the expansion of Medicaid to nearly 400,000 Virginians who do not have health care even though taxes are being collected in Virginia to pay for the program. I support the Governor in his insistence that we approve the expansion. Thanks to all the citizens who have been calling and writing supporting the program. I will be back with details on the budget issue as soon as it is resolved."

Fingers crossed.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Protesting County Budget, Real Estate Increases

An open letter to Sharon Bulova, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Supervisor Kathy Smith (D-Sully District).

Dear Mrs. Bulova and Mrs. Smith:

My wife and I have been homeowners and taxpayers in Fairfax County since 1968. Again, we protest the increases in the overall county budget and real estate taxes. As usual, the board plans to raise the county budget and the real estate rate along with the assessment increase more than twice the inflation rate for FY 2019. The FY19 General Fund Disbursements will increase \$181.48 million or 4.42 percent over the FY2018 Adopted Budget which will be \$4.288 billion. According to Kiplinger's Newsletter February 2018, the official consumer price index (inflation rate) increased 2.1 percent for calendar year 2017. With the rate increase and the real estate assessment increase, the

overall increase in real estate taxes is projected to be almost an average of 5 percent. For the last five years, real estate taxes have increased 26 percent which is almost three times the inflation rate for that period.

The Educational Employees Supplementary Retirement System of Fairfax County (ERFC) is an additional supplemental plan that applies to Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) employees who are on the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) and are paid the same amount of Social Security (SS) that he or she would receive at age 66. So if a teacher retires at 55 with 30 years of service, that teacher receives 75 percent of his or her retirement based on the highest three years of service and includes the Social Security supplement as if they were already on Social Security until they reach the Social Security age. No other county or city in the metropolitan

area offers this very generous ERFC system. The proposed budget for ERFC is \$94.6 million for FY 2019. This program should be phased out for those FCPS employees less than 40 years of age and terminated for all new employees.

The Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) allows employees retirement payments prior to actual retirement. DROP allows the employee to continue to work and receive their salary for a period of up to three years. During the DROP period, the pension plan accumulates the monthly benefit in an account balance identified as payable to the member only at the end of the DROP period. The monthly benefit that is credited to the DROP participant's account balance is calculated using service and final compensation as the date of entry in DROP, and the employee does not earn service credit toward retirement trust funds during the DROP period. In FY 2017,

approximately \$43.6 million in retirement benefits were paid out of the retirement trust funds as DROP lump sum payments. For FY 2019, the DROP budget is approximately \$37 million. It is time to drop the DROP!

It is time for county officials to look at the costly defined benefit retirement systems and carefully review what the Federal Government did over 30 years ago when they went to a hybrid system called the Federal Employees Retirement System. In addition, the county should raise the retirement age to 67, which is the SS age to retire, for all new employees which is the same position of the Fairfax County Taxpayers Alliance (FCTA). Last, but certainly not least, is the Fairfax County Unfunded Pension Liability of \$5.6 billion which seems to be ignored by the County Board.

Charles McAndrew
Linda McAndrew
Oak Hill

Blood Drive in Herndon

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Green Lizard Cycling, LLC and Prayers for Kate host an American Red Cross Blood Drive at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon, 20170 on Wednesday, April 11, 2018, from 1:30-7 p.m.

Sign up online at www.redcrossblood.org and search by keyword "Green Lizard Cycling" or call 1-800-REDCROSS.

Beth Meyer, one of the owners of 'The Lizard' shared why she, a business owner in the Town of Herndon is helping to organize the event. Meyer said that she would not be alive today without the generosity of people who donated

blood so many years ago. When Beth's mother was six months pregnant with her, a school bus jumped the curb and struck her mother. Four pints of blood saved her mother's life and that of her unborn child, Meyer. Meyer reports that one-pint of blood can save up to three lives. "Give blood, you never who you might save."

Meyer is partnering with Prayers

'You never know who you might save.'

for Kate, an organization of the Herndon-based katescause.com formed to honor the memory of Kate Rhoades who was diagnosed with cancer at 26-months old. Young Kate Rhoades finished her intense treatment protocol 25 months later only to relapse a couple of months later

SEE BLOOD DRIVE, PAGE 7

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CONNECTION

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