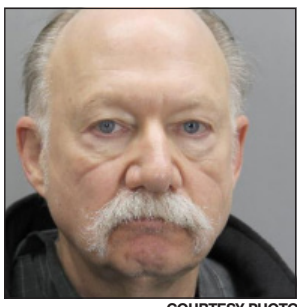




THIS WEEK INSIDE:



Music teacher arrested for aggravated sexual battery of a minor
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Community supports historic diner devastated by fire
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Kansas still going strong
 SEE PAGE A5



Creating a winter wonderland in “The Nutcracker”
 SEE PAGE B2

Board of Supervisors approves county redistricting plan

By Michael Marrow
 FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

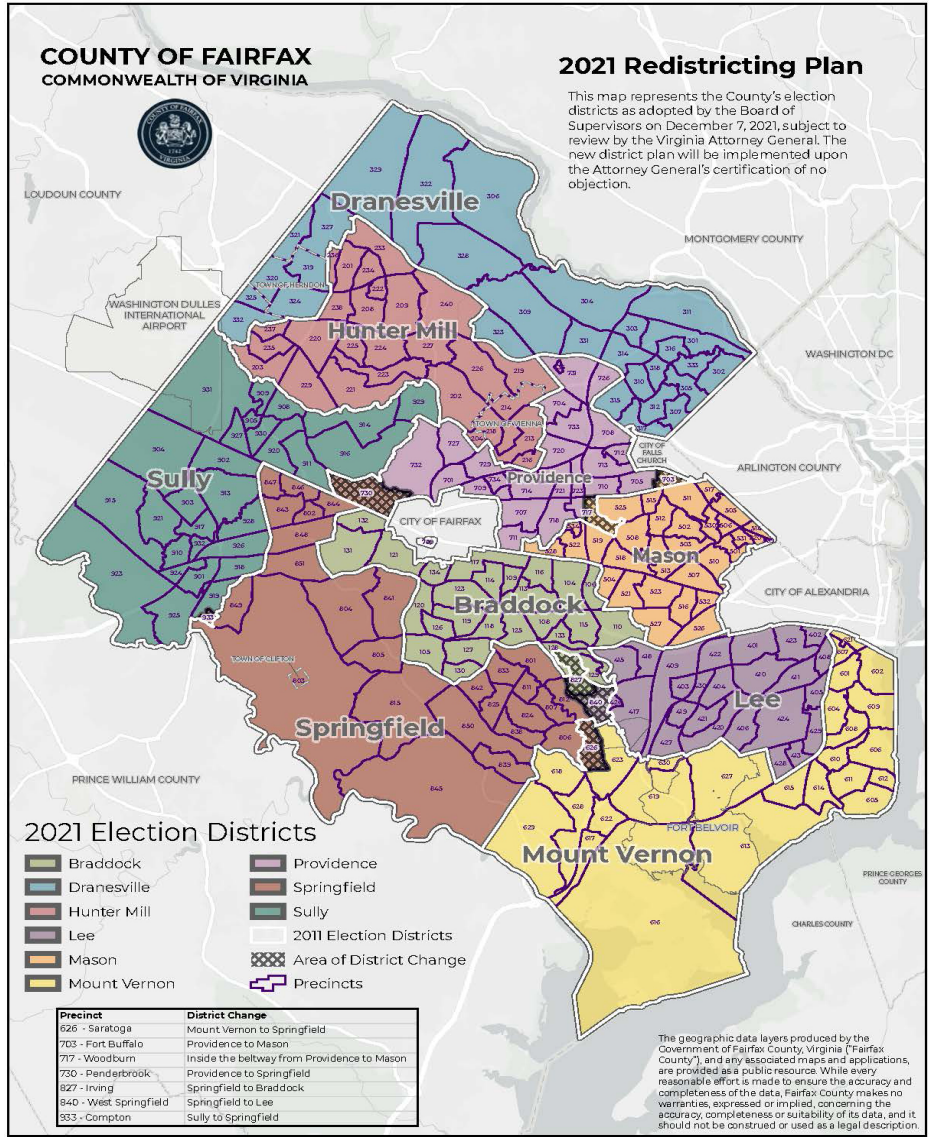
The Board of Supervisors (BOS) adopted a redistricting plan for Fairfax County last week, leaving the previous map mostly intact except for seven precincts. The new map maintains the nine electoral districts of Dranesville, Hunter Mill, Sully, Providence, Mason, Braddock, Springfield, Lee, and Mount Vernon, with Springfield mostly impacted by changing precincts. The new map moves three precincts – Saratoga, Penderbrook, and Compton – into Springfield. It also moves West Springfield and Irving precincts out and places them in Lee and Braddock districts, respectively. Additionally, the map switches the Fort Buffalo precinct from Providence to the Mason district and divides the Woodburn precinct between Providence and Mason.

Redistricting occurs every decade in response to the census. Like federal and state legislative districts, local magisterial districts must also be redrawn to balance out district sizes in response to population changes. Each county district is represented by a supervisor and a school board member. The BOS also has one at-large county representative and the school board has three.

Since 2010, the county’s population increased by 6.3 percent, increasing from 1,081,726 residents to 1,150,309. The Providence district gained the greatest number of new residents, adding about 14,000, whereas the Springfield and Mason district grew the least.

A 20-member Redistricting Advisory Committee (RAC) was appointed by the board in June to offer recommendations for altering the map, a process shortened by delayed census results due to the pandemic. It consisted of members of the public as well as representatives of groups like the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations, the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce, and others to consider criteria like communities of interest and equity in shaping district lines.

See REDISTRICTING, Page A4



COURTESY PHOTO

Some residents protest McLean library display



Residents protest outside the Dolley Madison Library December 11.

By Heather Zwicker
 FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

Approximately 60 parents gathered outside the Dolley Madison Public Library in McLean December 11 to protest a display that had been removed earlier in the week.

Library employees were directed to remove the display after citizen complaints about the content. The display, dubbed “Holiday Hate” in an email from a McLean resident to county officials, included gnomes next to the books, “Lawn Boy” and “Gender Queer” along with the “Holy Bible” in the hands of a third gnome. Pieces of paper with handwritten quotes from Salman Rushdie’s “The Satanic Verses” and

other books were pinned at the back of the display, according to witnesses.

By the time both Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity and Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust reached out to library officials, they were told the issue was being looked into. “After reviewing the pictures included in the email, I understood why the constituent objected,” said Foust. The display was removed a couple of hours later.

Several residents said that they thought the display was very carefully thought out to include the detail of bees in the bonnets in some of the gnomes, and a rainbow hat on the gnome holding the Bible.

“This is a community issue here in

See LIBRARY, Page A4

POSITIVE Vibes
 By Laura Scudder • FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

Pawfectly Delicious provides employment to young adults with disabilities

The nonprofit isn’t just making dog treats this holiday season

For Pawfectly Delicious, making dog treats for the community is not the sole part of the nonprofit’s mission. It also strives to provide young adults with disabilities the opportunity to engage in work.

Anne Tuccillo and her son Bryan founded the Alexandria-based team in 2017 after Bryan, who has mitochondrial disease, aged out of special education services in the school system and could not find meaningful employment.

In light of this, the duo teamed up to create something for Bryan and other individuals who face the same problem. “The two of us opted to not receive any compensation from our nonprofit, so that the young people who don’t have ... any kind of paid employment would be able to earn a paycheck. And that’s just the kind of guy that he is, he just thinks of others before he thinks of himself,” Tuccillo said of Bryan.

Aside from the four young adults working with the Pawfectly Delicious team, Tuccillo said that through Fairfax County Public Schools, there are students who work for them as employees.

“So they’re also differently-abled students who are now getting some work experience before they transition out at

See PAWFECTLY, Page A4

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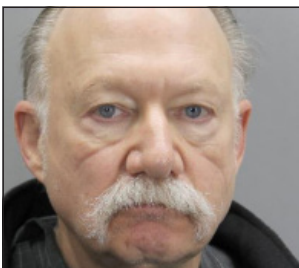
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PUBLIC SAFETY



COURTESY PHOTO
Roger McKay

Music teacher arrested for aggravated sexual battery of a minor

Detectives from the Fairfax County Police Department Major Crimes Bureau’s Child Abuse Squad have arrested a 69-year-old man for aggravated sexual battery against a juvenile that occurred between 2010 and 2013.

The investigation began in March after the victim disclosed the unlawful sexual contact to a therapist. Detectives were then notified and determined Roger McKay, of Fairfax, provided private music lessons to juveniles at his home in the 5400 block of Gainsborough Drive. During these private lessons, McKay unlawfully touched the juvenile. Detectives arrested McKay December 10 and charged him with two counts of aggravated sexual battery. He was held at the Adult Detention Center without bond.

Detectives believe that McKay provided lessons to juveniles through contacts he made as a music teacher in the Fairfax County Public School system. They did not identify any offenses that occurred on school grounds. Detectives believe that McKay has continued to provide music lessons at his home up to the time of his arrest and during his tenure with FCPS.

Anyone with information about this case or believe McKay had inappropriate contact with them or their child is asked to call our Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 3. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone – 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

Unattended cooking cause of apartment fire in Seven Corners

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, Arlington County Fire Department, and the City of Alexandria Fire Department were dispatched for a reported house fire in the 3100 block of South Manchester Street, in the Seven Corners area of Fairfax County at approximately 12:52 p.m. December 9.

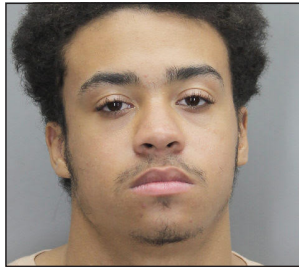
Units arrived on the scene of a nine-story, residential high-rise building with no smoke or fire evident. Upon investigation, crews located a fire in an apartment on the

eighth floor. A second alarm was requested. A fire in the kitchen was quickly extinguished. The fire was contained to the apartment. There were no reported civilian or firefighter injuries.

No occupants were home at the time of the fire. The tenant was warming a pot of cooking oil when he left the unit. The neighbors could smell something burning and called 9-1-1.

Fire investigators determined that the fire was accidental in nature and started in the kitchen. The fire was caused by unattended food cooking on the stove.

Two apartments were not able to be reoccupied. Red Cross assistance was offered and declined. Damages as a result of the fire were approximately \$50,000.



COURTESY PHOTO
Gavin Goffner

Fairfax man arrested after burglary at local car dealer

City of Fairfax Police observed that the glass front door of Fairfax Motors at 9909 Main Street, was shattered at 1:14 a.m. December 7.

In addition, multiple vehicles on the lot were found to have had their interior lights activated.

After an unknown subject was observed near the front of the business, the suspect fled the area on foot but was subsequently apprehended. Investigation revealed that the suspect gained entry into the business and stole several keys to vehicles that were stored on the lot.

Gavin Owen Robert Goffner, 18, of 4208 Hunt Club Circle, Fairfax was arrested for Burglary (18.2-91) and transported to the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center where he was held on a \$500 secured bond.



COURTESY PHOTO
Fire contained to one bedroom

Smoke alarm alerts residents to house fire

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, Arlington County Fire Department, and the City of Alexandria Fire Department were dispatched

for a reported house fire in the 3700 block of Lacy Boulevard, in the Bailey’s Crossroads area of Fairfax County at approximately 10:45 p.m. December 8.

Units arrived on the scene of a two-story, single-family home with smoke showing. Crews quickly located and extinguished a fire in an upstairs bedroom. The fire was contained to the bedroom. There were no reported civilian or firefighter injuries.

Three occupants were home at the time of the fire. The smoke alarm alerted the occupants to the fire. They could smell something burning and saw smoke in an upstairs bedroom. The occupants called 9-1-1 and self-evacuated.

Fire investigators determined that the fire was accidental in nature and started in the flue lining of the chimney. The fire was caused by radiant heat from the wood burning stove pipe inside the flue lining and extending to the interior walls of the bedroom.

Three occupants were displaced because of the fire. Red Cross assistance was requested and accepted. Damages as a result of the fire were approximately \$37,500.

Pedestrian killed in Gum Springs

Fairfax County Police continue to investigate a fatal crash that occurred at 8:08 p.m. December 9 on Richmond Highway at Napper Road in Gum Springs.

Preliminarily, detectives determined Andres Romero, 57, of Alexandria, was crossing Richmond Highway from west to east near Napper Road outside of a crosswalk. The driver of a 2018 Ford Mustang was traveling north on Richmond Highway and struck Romero in the roadway. Romero was transported to a hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. Preliminarily, speed and alcohol do not appear to be factors for the driver. Detectives continue to investigate whether alcohol may have been a factor for the pedestrian.

Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact the Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone -1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

This is the 12th pedestrian fatality in the County to date in 2021. Year to date, in 2020 there were 14 pedestrian fatalities.

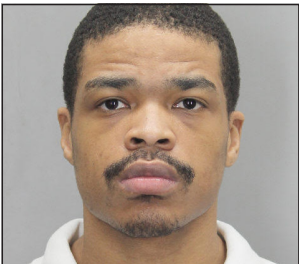
Alexandria Police investigate homicide

The Alexandria Police Department responded to a call for service December 7, at approximately 2:40 p.m. in the unit block of South Van Dorn Street. Upon arrival, police discovered a 23-year-old black female deceased in her apartment.

The Medical Examiner ruled the cause of death to be a homicide December 8.

The victim’s name is being withheld at the family’s request.

This incident is under investigation, and Alexandria Police are asking anyone with any information relating to this case to please contact Detective Michael Whelan by phone at 703-746-6228, email at Michael.Whelan@alexandriava.gov, or use APD’s non-emergency number at 703-746-4444. Tips and information can be made anonymously.



COURTESY PHOTO
James Chambers



COURTESY PHOTO
Cortez Dargin

Three from D.C., Maryland arrested in Springfield

Macy’s loss prevention office contacted Fairfax County Police at 4:42 p.m. December 6 after two men and one woman entered the business and took property with force. Responding officers quickly located the three responsible, and they were taken into custody.

James Chambers, 28, of Maryland was transported to the adult detention center and charged with robbery and false identification to law enforcement. Ranchja Johnson, 21, of Washington, D.C. was transported to the adult detention center and charged with robbery and false identification to law enforcement. Cortez Dargin, 24 of Washington, D.C. was released on a summons for petit larceny. No injuries were reported.



COURTESY PHOTO
Fire in single family home in Wakefield area

Unattended candle causes house fire

Units from the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department and the City of Fairfax Fire Department

responded to a reported house fire in the 4000 block of Doveville Lane in the Wakefield area of Fairfax County December 4, at approximately 10:13 a.m.

Crews arrived on the scene of a one-story, single-family home with smoke showing. They quickly located and extinguished the fire. One occupant was transported to hospital for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries. There were no firefighter injuries reported.

One occupant was home at the time of the fire. The occupant was alerted to the fire due to the activation of the smoke alarm. Upon investigation, he observed his couch on fire. He then attempted to extinguish the fire. The occupant was unsuccessful, so he called 9-1-1 and self-evacuated with his dog.

Fire investigators determined that the fire was accidental in nature and started in the living room. The fire was caused by an unattended candle that ignited the lampshade, and then spread to the nearby couch.

One occupant was displaced because of the fire. Red Cross assistance was offered and declined. Damages as a result of the fire were approximately \$37,500.

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department would like to remind residents to avoid the dangers of fire while burning candles to please follow the safety tips listed below:

- Use battery powered candles/lighting when power goes out
- Never leave burning candles unattended
- Keep all combustible materials away from open flames
- Do not burn candles near windows or doorways
- Place candles in glass or ceramic containers
- Place candles on a flat, sturdy non-combustible surface
- Never leave candles burning when children or pets are present



COURTESY PHOTO
Ramzee Womack

Alexandria man charged

Officers saw a 2015 Toyota Highlander in the 7900 block of Janna Lee Avenue that was reported stolen earlier in the day. The vehicle was occupied by Ramzee Womack, 21, of Alexandria and a juvenile.

Womack was taken into custody December 7 at approximately 11:44 p.m. and charged with grand larceny. He was also served with an outstanding warrant for failure to appear. The juvenile was released to a parent.

Alexandria Police investigate home invasion

The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a home invasion that occurred in the 1400 block of Catlin Drive in the city’s West End section.

The incident occurred at approximately 5:18 a.m. December 4.

Suspects gained entry to the home through unknown means, brandished a weapon, and took valuables and a vehicle from the victim. No injuries were reported.

This incident is being actively investigated. No suspect information or description is available for release at this time.

Alexandria Police asks anyone with information related to this incident to reach out to APD Detective Stephen Riley by phone at 703-246-6225, email Stephen.Riley@alexandriava.gov or call APD’s non-emergency line at 703-746-4444.

Ho, Ho, Ho, holiday scams!

If you’re doing online shopping this holiday season, be on the lookout for scammers trying to steal a deal, too!

During the 2020 holiday shopping season, the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3.gov) received more than 17,000 complaints regarding the non-delivery of goods, resulting in losses of more than \$53 million. The FBI anticipates this number could increase during the 2021 holiday season due to rumors of merchandise shortages and the ongoing pandemic.

“Oftentimes when we talk about cybercrimes, we are referring to massive intrusions into financial institutions or ransomware attacks against large providers. Smaller cyber scams run by individuals or groups can be just as frustrating and difficult for families this time of year when all you want to do is provide the perfect gift for your family. The best thing you can do to be a savvy shopper is to know what scams are out there and take some basic precautions,” said Kieran L. Ramsey, special agent in charge of the FBI in Oregon.

If you are a victim of an online scam, the FBI recommends taking the following actions:

- Report the activity to the Internet Crime Complaint Center at IC3.gov, regardless of dollar loss. Provide all relevant information in the complaint.
- Contact your financial institution immediately upon discovering any fraudulent or suspicious activity and direct them to stop or reverse the transactions.
- Ask your financial institution to contact the corresponding financial institution where the fraudulent or suspicious transfer was sent.

For additional information and consumer alerts, and to report scams to the FBI, visit IC3.gov.

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PEOPLE & PLACES



COURTESY PHOTO

Santa's helpers from the Freedom Foundation visited the Fairfax County Government Center.

Freedom Foundation makes a visit to Fairfax as part of their holiday swing

For years, the **Freedom Foundation** has been bringing holiday joy to government employees on the West Coast while infuriating the unions that exploit them by frequenting public office buildings to inform workers of their recently affirmed right to opt out of membership and dues.

On a brisk late-November day in Virginia and Washington, D.C., Santa's Freedom Foundation elves, Ashley Varner and Erin Volz, paid an unexpected visit to northern Virginia county buildings and Federal union headquarters to bring them Santa's "Naughty Union List" and spread Christmas cheer of paycheck savings to the workers they claim to represent.

The Freedom Foundation Santa's helpers want state, county and municipal workers to know about the U.S. Supreme Court's 2018 ruling in Janus v. AFSCME, which recognized that forcing public employees to financially support a union as a condition of employment is a violation of their First Amendment rights.

After a stop in Loudoun County, the elves found out – just in the nick of time – that Fairfax County workers, especially law enforcement needed to be warned, so they paid them a visit too.

Then off they went to shed light on Santa's repeat offenders — Teamsters, AFSCME, LiUNA and AFL-CIO.

"The workers need to know that the hundreds, or thousands, of dollars in dues that are deducted each year from their paychecks," Volz said, "under the guise of 'representation,' comes to these huge buildings in Washington, D.C., and is distributed to divisive politicians, organizations and causes."

"These huge, private organizations, are largely unaffected by the end results of their political and social meddling, while the workers suffer the consequences," she explained. "This year, the Freedom Foundation will bring workers some Christmas cheer and help guide their money and constitutional freedoms back to them and away from the unions."

Inova Fair Oaks earns top hospital award for 2021

Highlighting its nationally recognized achievements in patient safety and quality, **Inova Fair Oaks** was named a Top Hospital nationally by The Leapfrog Group.

Announced December 7, the Leapfrog Top Hospital award is widely acknowledged as one of the most competitive awards American hospitals can receive. The Top Hospital designation is bestowed by The Leapfrog Group, a national watchdog organization of employers and other purchasers recognized as the toughest standard-setters for health care safety and quality.

"In addition to all five Inova hospitals being awarded A grades for safety by The Leapfrog Group, we proudly recognize that Inova Fair Oaks and Inova Loudoun hospitals have the honor of

being named Top General Hospitals," said J. Stephen Jones, MD, president and CEO, Inova Health System. "Our team members truly understand the importance of providing every patient with a safe and quality care environment and we applaud their commitment to providing world-class healthcare to our community."

More than 2,200 hospitals were considered for the award. Among those, Inova Fair Oaks received the Top General distinction. A total of 149 top hospitals nationwide were selected as Top Hospitals, including:

- 8 Top Children's
- 46 Top General
- 23 Top Rural
- 72 Top Teaching

The quality of patient care across many areas of hospital performance is considered in establishing the qualifications for the award, including infection rates, surgery, maternity care, and the hospital's capacity to prevent medication and other errors. The rigorous standards are defined in each year's Top Hospital Methodology.

"We are pleased to recognize Inova Fair Oaks and Inova Loudoun hospitals as Top Hospitals this year," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "Even with the continued strain of the COVID-19 pandemic, Inova Fair Oaks and Inova Loudoun have demonstrated an extraordinary dedication to excellent health care in Northern Virginia. We congratulate the board, leadership, staff and clinicians who put their patients first."

To qualify for the Top Hospitals distinction, hospitals must rank top among peers on the Leapfrog Hospital Survey, which assesses hospital performance on the highest standards for quality and patient safety.



COURTESY PHOTO

Employees of The Rosendin Foundation present a check to Mike O'Reilly, Arts Herndon chairman.

Arts Herndon receives grant

Arts Herndon is the recipient of a special grant from the Rosendin Foundation.

The grant will help them continue their work in the community with the Children's Crafts at the Farmer's Market and Skyline Freestyle "Dragones Del Freestyle".

"A huge thanks to Herndon resident and arts supporter Jeannie Donhiser. She is a long-time employee of Rosendin," said Joanna Ormesher, ArtsHerndon CEO and president.



COURTESY PHOTO

The photo of rime ice at the summit of Mary's Rock during sunrise in Rappahannock County was a winning submission.

Springfield resident is a photo contest winner

The **Piedmont Environmental Council**

announced the winners of its 2021 Annual Photo Contest, in which professional and amateur photographers alike submit their best images of the beautiful Virginia Piedmont, from within Albemarle, Clarke, Culpeper, Fauquier, Greene, Loudoun, Madison, Orange, and Rappahannock counties and the City of Charlottesville.

Nick Palastro of Springfield, won in the category of Beautiful Landscapes for his submission "Glow Rime Glow". The photo depicts rime ice glowing during a cold sunrise in Rappahannock County.

"Part of our work at PEC is connecting people to the landscapes, communities and heritage of Virginia's Piedmont. The incredible, high-quality images that local photographers submit into this contest tell important stories and help people experience this wonderful place in new and exciting ways," said Hugh Kenny, PEC multimedia communications specialist and contest coordinator.

Finalists from among hundreds of entries are chosen by a team of professional photographers and PEC staff. The winners are selected by public vote. Winners in each adult category receive a gift certificate to a participating Buy Fresh Buy Local restaurant, and the youth winner receives an iTunes, Google Play or Amazon gift card.

Community members can learn more about the annual photo contest and see all finalists at: <https://bit.ly/31UWHsJ>.



COURTESY PHOTO

Town of Herndon recognizes employees for outstanding performance

One person's extraordinary effort to enhance safety for employees working at the Town Shop. A team working together to ensure the town was in compliance with COVID regulations and was mitigating risk of infection in the workplace. A comprehensive, holistic approach to employee well-being at the Herndon Police Department, spearheaded by two newly-hired, command level officers.

These initiatives were recognized with this year's Outstanding Performance Awards, annual awards presented by Town Manager Bill Ashton to thank employees who go above and beyond in their service to colleagues and citizens. The awards were presented at a ceremony on December 7; while attendance was limited due to pandemic protocols, the ceremony was recorded for all employees to view.

"In this challenging year, the creativity and innovation demonstrated by these employees made our workplace safer, our employees healthier and our team spirit stronger," Ashton said. "Often, leaders emerge in times of trial. Each employee recognized by these awards exemplifies leadership in the truest, best sense of the word."

The following Outstanding Performance Awards were presented in 2021:

Chris Mason, operations

manager, Department of Public Works received the award for individual excellence. At her own initiative, Mason conducted a safety and compliance assessment of town facilities, which identified issues that needed correction and/or repair. Her work significantly enhanced workplace safety and has established a template for ongoing safety review.

Lindsey Jones, systems technician, Parks & Recreation; **Mason; Roxann Fox Simkins**, risk manager, Town Attorney's Office; and honorable mention to **Lesa Yeatts**, Town Attorney were recognized for team excellence. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, town operations pivoted into emergency mode that, due to its unique challenges, was uncharted territory. While the roles and responsibilities of all town staff were impacted, these employees were on the front line in developing reporting systems, ensuring regulations were adhered to, keeping employees informed of protocols and – most importantly – mitigating the impact of the virus in the workplace and promoting employees' health.

Lieutenants **Jay Carson** and **Mark Dale**, Herndon Police Department were recognized for innovation and creativity. Both brought on board in fall 2020, Carson and Dale were tasked with developing a comprehensive wellness program for HPD that would help officers coping with stressful incidents as well as contribute to overall positive mental health. The resulting program, developed in just eight months, is multi-pronged and incorporates a contracted police psychologist, annual wellness checks, peer support teams, meditation training and a dedicated wellness/meditation room, development of diversion policies in lieu of discipline, and acquisition of a facility dog for the department. "These efforts have not only increased the opportunities for personnel to maintain positive mental health in an increasingly difficult and stressful profession, but it has enhanced our ability to remain safe," said Chief Maggie DeBoard.

In addition to the Outstanding Performance Awards, Ashton also presented the Customer Service of the Year Award to **Matthew Ordemann**, utility equipment operator in the Department of Public Works, who went above and beyond his normal duties in assisting the Herndon Police Department with lighting during a crime scene. A new award category was presented for the first time in 2021, to **Timothy Whetzel, Jr.**, also a utility equipment operator, who referred three successful candidates for town employment. **David Higgins**, utility work crew supervisor, was recognized for 35 years of service to the town. "The commitment and service orientation of our employees is exemplified in these outstanding individuals," Ashton said.

The 2021 award submissions were evaluated and determined by **Martin Gruszka**, owner of Herndon's Office Evolution, providers of flexible shared workspace; and **Miriam Liggett**, owner of Herndon's Liddet Couture in Soliloquy downtown. Award recipients receive up to \$1,000 for individuals and up to \$2,000 for teams.



COURTESY PHOTO

Cadet Araceli Soto and CAP Lt. Mike Walker prep for Soto's first orientation flight in a CAP Cessna 182.

Burke Civil Air Patrol earns achievement award

Virginia Civil Air Patrol's (CAP) **Burke Composite Squadron** was recognized in November for earning the 2021 Squadron Aerospace Education (AE) Achievement Award for the second time.

The AE Achievement Award recognizes units that have vibrant aerospace education programs and have excelled in AE for the past fiscal year. CAP has both an internal and external focus for aerospace education and as a result units must complete a minimum of eight tasks which encompass both areas to qualify for the award. This year's award covered a time frame of one year from October 2020 to September 2021.

CAP's internal focus is to promote and educate the importance of aviation, aerospace, cyberspace, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) to its membership of adults and youth. Burke Composite Squadron dedicated itself to this endeavor through

Cadets recently participated in a High-Altitude Balloon Challenge with designed experiments going to an altitude of more than 87,000 feet. The Burke squadron was awarded the Innovative Science Award and received a \$600 grant.

The unit completed the AE Excellence (AEX) Award program. The AE program is hands-on, inquiry-based learning tool that meets national academic standards and provides aerospace, aviation, space, and STEM-related activities to the unit's members.

Cadets were introduced to model rocketry and had the opportunity to launch model rockets. The rocketry program introduced the unit's cadets to model rocketry and increased their knowledge and interest in rocketry.

Cadets participated in glider orientation flights and powered orientation flights. For the powered orientation flights, cadets were given the opportunity to control a Cessna 182 in flight.

Additionally, the squadron provides support to local charities and civic activities, most recently the Salvation Army's 5K run in October and will support Wreaths Across America at Arlington National Cemetery this month.

CAP's external focus

is to reach out to the general public, including schools and organizations, and help society understand the importance of aerospace, cyberspace, and STEM. This was accomplished through hosting an open house displaying aerospace opportunities, including flight simulators and information about two competition programs (StellarXplorers and CyberPatriot).

"This award exemplifies the teamwork of all our adult leaders and our cadets, said Capt. Sara Demyanovich, Burke Composite Squadron commander. "The dedication of our members towards providing leadership and aerospace education are evident in earning this award. I appreciate 2nd Lt. J. Paul Douglas serving as our squadron's aerospace education officer and Cadet Capt. Austin Martin serving as our squadron's cadet aerospace education officer whose leadership was vital to our success."

"Earning this award demonstrates that a unit is healthy and thriving," explained Col. Liz Sydow, Virginia Wing's commander. "This past year was particularly challenging because of the COVID-19 pandemic. I look forward to membership growth across the state into the next year as we continue to safely have in-person activities again, shaping our nation's future leaders."

Burke Composite Squadron meets on Thursday evenings at Washington Irving Middle School in Springfield at 6:30 p.m. For more information go to the Burke Composite Squadron webpage at <https://bit.ly/3oQ6cNH>.

Web firm moves corporate offices to Reston

Orpheus, a website design, web development and digital marketing firm, has moved its corporate offices to Plaza America in Reston.

Represented by Edward Saa and Timothy Jacobs, Orpheus was able to trade their old, dated space while increasing their footprint by 50 percent.

"We wanted a quality experience for staff at the office when they are not working remote," said Benjamin Portman, lead developer at Orpheus. "A building complex like Plaza America has convenient access to Dulles Toll Road for employees to easily get to work and an abundance of amenities that they can enjoy making this building an ideal location."

"This was a no brainer for Orpheus" said Edward Saa. "Taking advantage of the subleasing market to secure beautiful fully furnished sublet space that can be occupied with minimal upfront costs and a rent spend well below the buildings advertised rate makes it a perfect fit for Orpheus."

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REDISTRICTING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

The RAC held more than a dozen public meetings between July and October and presented its report with several recommendations in early November. Members of the public also submitted numerous alternatives.

The map approved by the board synthesized a map proposed by a member of the public (listed in the committee’s report as PUB_9_0919_2336) and a map offered by the committee. It was approved in a 9-1 vote, with Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity voting no.

In a statement released after the map was adopted, Herrity objected to its splitting of the West Springfield community, contrary to a recommendation by the RAC to consolidate it in the Springfield district, as well as the map’s removal of the only precinct with the name “Springfield” in it.

The plan that was approved ignored the recommended nine-district plan made by the RAC as well as 63 alternative plans, according to Herrity. “This plan instead combined an alternative plan with six additional changes made after the public hearing by Chairman (James) Walkinshaw that significantly impact the Springfield Magisterial District,” he said. Herrity explained that the plan was not shared with him until the night before the vote despite the fact that 70 percent of the changes were in his district.

“Unlike the RAC recommended plan, the adopted plan does not even

meet the board’s own criteria of not breaking apart established communities or significantly impacting existing representation,” said Herrity. He called the adoption of this plan politically motivated and said it was an example of “complete disregard for board decorum and how politics has replaced decorum on the Board of Supervisors.”

Following the November 9 public hearing, Braddock District Supervisor James Walkinshaw, chairman of the legislative committee, said he solicited feedback from colleagues as he worked to present a draft that was circulated the night before the December 7 board meeting. Walkinshaw said sharing draft motions with other supervisors ahead of a vote is standard practice.

He also added that Herrity wanted to consolidate three Springfield precincts – Irving, Keene, and Cardinal – in the Springfield district, but since population growth in the county is shifting west, it made better sense to consolidate those precincts in the Braddock district instead to anticipate future growth. “We wanted to prevent precincts that are flipping back and forth every census,” Walkinshaw said.

Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck also expressed some reservations about the map, though he ultimately voted in favor. Community organizations like the South County Federation have previously lobbied to create a new district in the Lorton area, which Storck acknowledged in a statement released after the map was adopted.

“I know this decision

is also disappointing to many Lorton residents who advocated for a new district that could be more Lorton-centric,” Storck wrote. “My advocacy to create at least 10 districts, from appointing [former Mount Vernon Supervisor] Gerry Hyland to the Redistricting Advisory Committee, many one-on-one conversations with other supervisors, etc., [was] not able to overcome the belief of many that making small changes... was preferable to making more significant changes,” he added.

Providence District Supervisor Dana Palchik, whose district was also significantly impacted by the new map, said census results showing that Providence grew the most while Mason and Springfield grew the least prompted the need to shift precincts. “My staff and I will be working with the impacted communities to ensure that there is a smooth transition and community needs will continue to be addressed by the new supervisor,” she said.

The RAC appointed by the BOS is also evaluating changes to district names. The committee will offer any name change recommendations by March, which must then be approved by the board.

Following voting rights legislation recently passed by the General Assembly, the new map must now be certified by the attorney general. It will then take effect for the 2023 elections and remain in place until the next round of redistricting.



PAWPECTLY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

age 22 ... So they prepare our dough for us twice a week and we pick it up, and then our team does the rolling, the cutting, the baking and the packaging, and then that product then is used — is sold,” she explained.

The team at Pawfectly Delicious all fulfill different roles, from baking to packaging. Individuals have come into their roles organically, but can also try to see what works best for them by trying out multiple positions, Tuccillo explained. The positions are filled based on interests as well as what they can do.

Tuccillo shouted out the team’s head baker, Joey Cahill, for his creativity.

“He’s very precise, he is very detailed, and he seemed to be most interested in the rolling and the cutting. And he takes great pride in his work,” she said.

Tuccillo also noted that it feels good to be able to help adults with disabilities seek gainful employment.

“I feel like we’re impacting the lives — giving these young people a sense of purpose, a sense of feeling pride in what they’re producing. Teaching them life skills, teaching them what it’s like to have a job and ... getting a paycheck, how that feels. Just knowing that they have a little bit of pocket money — it’s a wonderful thing.”

The pandemic did put a hitch in the nonprofit’s sales, according to Tuccillo. She noted sales declined by about

45 percent. While the team has not had a lot of retail and face-to-face sales recently because of COVID-19, online sales are still prevailing — especially during the holidays.

In a given week, the Pawfectly Delicious team makes hundreds of, if not more, individual treats by baking them in a church kitchen. Tuccillo said that a community of volunteers, who sign up to help and assist in the kitchen and packing, is also essential to getting that done.

“Just based on this week alone, I think we probably packaged well over 125 packages of treats, which is a combination of our eight ounce and our four-ounce bags. I think we go through, I want to say, probably over 50 pounds of dough,” she said.



COURTESY PHOTO
McLean resident Lin-Dai Kendall speaks with Fairfax County Police officers outside the Dolley Madison Library. Kendall was handing out postcards about obscenity laws.

LIBRARY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

McLean with this activist librarian,” said Andrea Forti, a 32-year resident of McLean. “I feel like she’s poking McLean parents in the eye. She’s pushing her social, sexual programming agenda on the children and families of McLean. As a parent and a citizen, I am alarmed and I do not appreciate it.”

“The Dolley Madison holiday reading display was intended to highlight the freedom to read and the fact that many library patrons have more time during the holidays to do so,” said Fairfax County Public Library Director Jessica Hudson in a statement. “It was not the intention of staff to create a display that could be construed as offensive.”

“Intentionally pairing the Bible with these books seemed to be a provocative act of needling or mocking the people who object to the books in the library in the first place,” said Jeff

Shapiro, a 13-year resident of McLean.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay did not respond to queries about the display and One Fairfax policy. And although Foust said he did not see a relationship between One Fairfax policy and the display, Shapiro disagreed.

“I think this display is a violation of the One Fairfax policy in both the letter and the spirit. It is not inclusive when you mock the belief of others,” Shapiro said. “The county should be going for common ground, not isolating some religions or groups at the expense of others. They don’t get to pick and choose who’s included in their inclusiveness. You can’t make it inclusion for some and have the government say who’s in and who’s out. As a county government for all, it’s their job to stay out of the disputes but instead find the common ground among us. They’re taking sides against their own policy. When the groups disagree, they (the county) needs to stay out. This is

the opposite of what one Fairfax is all about.”

Shapiro also said he felt the objection to the books was one of common decency. “The books are not an LGBTQ issue in my opinion. One of the books portrays adult/child sex in an inappropriate light,” he said.

The books have been drawing national attention since before late September when Stacy Langton, a Fairfax parent, had her mic turned off as she read excerpts and showed photos from the books at a school board meeting. Just last week, the books were among 100 books identified as containing obscene content by parents in North Carolina who have filed nine separate criminal complaints with the Wake County Sheriff’s Office against the school district in Wake County.

Fairfax Times reached out to the library to interview those who put together the display, but library officials declined the request.

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Community supports historic diner devastated by fire



By Brooke Lewitas
FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

29 Diner has long been known in the Fairfax County community for its charitable work as much as its breakfast. But in late November, Fairfax firefighters were called early in the evening regarding explosions in the back of the building.

After multiple fire crews responded, the fire was out in about an hour and a half. There were no injuries. However, owner John Wood announced that the restaurant will have to be closed for the next six months.

The fire broke out in a storage room containing chemicals used for cooking and cleaning that was next to the kitchen.

According to Wood, the kitchen experienced “total loss”. “We need to gut the entire kitchen,” he said.

29 Diner opened in 1947 and was designated as a Virginia historical landmark in 1992. The diner has long been a staple of philanthropy in the Fairfax community. 29 Diner hosts fundraisers for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, non-profits seeking cures for cancer, provides free food to local homeless and domestic violence shelters, as well as doctors, nurses, teachers, and food-insecure families.

Wood, who took over ownership of the diner in 2014, has always made charity a part of his business model. As early as when he was studying business at George Mason University, Wood

decided that charity would always be at the center of his business mission.

“Everybody said I’m going to be out of business in year one or two,” Wood said. “They said John, be careful, you can’t give this away. I said, the more we give away the more we grow. And it worked like an absolute charm.”

That’s what motivated Fairfax High School gym teacher and longtime Fairfax County resident Rich Berk-Tator Witz to post a GoFundMe for the diner, which has since received nearly \$60,000 towards its \$100,000 goal.

“John Wood and the 29 Diner have been a staple in our community helping out every second they can. Now it’s time we help HIM,” Berk-Tator Witz wrote.

The comment section is filled with statements like “You’ve done so much for our community, it’s time we do a little something for you! Good luck, we’re here for you!” and “Used to take my oldest daughter here for breakfast when she was young. A special place to us both. Good luck with rebuild.”

One donor, Courtney Earll, said “I chose to donate because John has such a giving spirit. He’s a big advocate for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. I wanted to give back to him so he can continue serving his community through service and food.”

Even though the diner is closed, Wood still continues to give. Posts about a free holiday food pantry and toy tent can be found on the 29 Diner Facebook page.

Fairfax County School Board looks at ESSER funds and future distribution

FCSB conducts midyear review of budget at December school board meeting

By Laura Scudder
FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

In the Fairfax County School Board (FCSB) meeting held on December 2, the school board and district employees held the midyear review of the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) FY22 budget, specifically detailing the district’s use of the American Rescue Plan Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III funds.

The ESSER III fund “is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation’s students by addressing students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.”

FCPS was awarded \$188.6 million in ESSER III funds, and in August released a chart with the proposed spending plan of those funds. For funds not going to costs directly related to the pandemic, FCPS will use the money for different technologies, according to its website.

FCSB Mount Vernon District Representative Karen Corbett Sanders noted that these plans were approved in August, and the review at the early December meeting is to ensure that the midyear catches up with it.

She also noted during the meeting that Superintendent Scott Braband, is getting clarity on how to report on these specific plans for ESSER funds.

Chief Operating Officer Marty Smith, who oversees human resources amongst other departments,

noted that a position is being added to help the analysis of how ESSER funds are being used.

“A number of positions funded out of ESSER are funded for multiple years,” Leigh Burden, the assistant superintendent of the department of financial services, said of the funds specifically allocated for new FCPS employment opportunities.

Descriptions of recommended changes in the budget include security, graduation ceremony costs — which include transportation and live streaming services — special education audit and position authorization. It is yet to be known exactly how these changes will be implemented if they are at all.

Dranesville District Representative Elaine Tholen noted that the board and FCPS officials will be looking across the division on how best to use these funds for students.

For graduation, school board members addressed the fundraising efforts that typically go into having these ceremonies at EagleBank Arena on George Mason University’s Fairfax campus. Rather than do this during the pandemic, many schools pivoted to holding ceremonies in their own stadiums, which could be sticking around in the future.

“We have applied an equity lens,” Braband said of the allocations of funds to each school in relation to graduation, noting that “the schools with the biggest needs got the most money.”

Corbett Sanders said at the meeting that the ESSER plans will be posted on individual school websites. There will be a more in-depth discussion of these funds in January, with an opportunity for public comment.

As for funding related to enrollment numbers, the impact of Fairfax County’s decrease in enrollment on the budget is yet to be known. From 2019 to 2021, Fairfax County schools saw a decrease of more than 10,000 students — a 5.4 percent change.

“Only state funding is directly related to numbers of students. The majority of Virginia state funding provided to public schools is allocated based on the number of students attending public schools. During the pandemic, Virginia held divisions harmless from enrollment losses by providing additional funds to offset any reductions. Moving forward, the Virginia General Assembly will decide whether to continue holding divisions harmless, but their next session does not begin until next year so the impact is currently unknown,” said a spokesman for FCPS.

In terms of the budget as a whole, grant expenditures changes align with revenue changes, according to Burden.

FCPS revenue is going up \$3.7 million, and expenditures are \$3.7 million — meaning there are no additional funds available, she noted. Funds available from this year will increase the beginning balance of FY23, said Burden.



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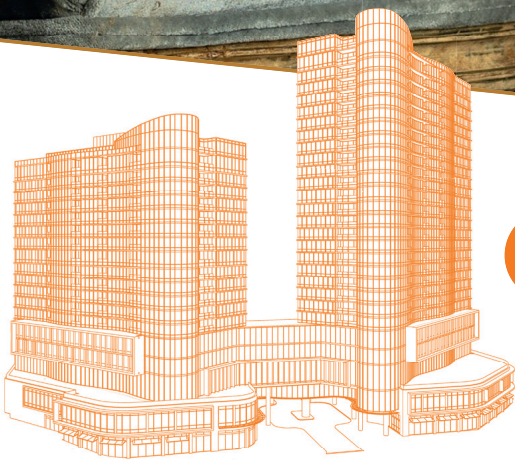
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Fairfax defeats West Springfield in overtime for boy's varsity basketball

By Michael Marrow
FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

The Fairfax Lions (5-0) continued their season-opening winning streak for boy's varsity basketball on December 14, tying up the game in the final seconds of regulation to defeat the West Springfield Spartans (2-3) in overtime. The final score was 62-56.

The two teams were neck-and-neck during the first period, an early display of the close game throughout. Carried by junior Margad Choijilsuren, who scored 13 out of 16 points, the Lions led the Spartans 16-15 at the end of the first period. As the game progressed, Choijilsuren would put up about half of the Lions' total score.

Action in the second period reflected much of the first. West Springfield began the period strong, making several shots unanswered, but Fairfax regained

its footing to hold the upper hand, even after getting beat for several rebounds.

Another consistent struggle for the Lions was 3-point shots. Fairfax would make just two out of 13 3-pointers through all four periods and into overtime. West Springfield, on the other hand, found relatively greater success, sinking six out of 12.

At halftime, the Lions narrowly led the Spartans 29-27.

A sizable group of Fairfax students showed up to support their home team, and junior Jack Balberson and sophomore Elijah Thomas said that it was important to root for their classmates, especially considering their impressive start to the season.

"Me being a football player, we see them come out and support us every Friday night, so we're here to do our thing and come out and support them," Balberson said.



PHOTO BY COLIN K.

Both noted that they were looking forward to a high-performing season for the Lions. "When football does well, a lot of other sports follow suit," Thomas

said.

"This year has been really strong for a lot of our sports," Balberson added. "I think it's going to be the exact same for basketball."

West Springfield seemed to make effective adjustments during halftime. Junior Kullen Robinson was the Spartans' leading scorer in the third period, though points were mostly evenly spread out among the team.

With consistent drives to the basket, as well as successful three-pointers and free throws, the Spartans led the Lions 45-41 at the end of the third period.

Action came down to the wire in an otherwise slow fourth period. The Spartans scored seven points to maintain a slim lead, one that looked like it would hold to the end of the game. Adding nine points to the board, the Lions trailed the Spartans 52-50.

With less than two seconds remaining, a miracle rebound kept the Lions in play. After Choijilsuren stepped out for an open three, the ball bounced off the rim and was tipped in by junior Tony

Rojas, tying up the game at 52-52 amid a roar from the Fairfax stands.

The two teams were then sent into overtime, where the Lions came out on top. With just over a minute remaining, sophomore Josh Smith broke the Lions' 3-pointer dry spell, sinking an open three to take a 59-56 lead. After a turnover, Smith made another two points, putting the Lions up for good. A free throw by Rojas then sealed their victory for a final score of 62-56.

After the game, Fairfax head coach Mike Barbee identified a couple of key reasons why the Lions pulled off a win. "The biggest thing was we were able to force a few turnovers late, and then we finally knocked down a few free throws, which was trouble for us all game long," Barbee said.

Rojas, previously an integral part of the Lions' powerhouse football season, said that the game-saving score was a welcome if unexpected, outcome. "It felt good," Rojas said. "I didn't know it would go in. I tried to get the rebound, but it did

the job."

Rojas started both ways for the Lions' football team and even punted. He is now contemplating early graduation. "It's been stressful, but it's been fun," Rojas said. "It's my last season if I graduate early, so I just came to ball," he added, saying he was "80 percent sure" he would graduate a year early.

Smith, who was hoisted on the shoulders of his teammates after the game, similarly said it felt rewarding to help carry his team to victory. "We came off a screen. My other teammates set me up with a 3-pointer. I saw the opening, so I took the shot," Smith said.

He credited their win to "staying disciplined after our halftime locker room talk," and said he was looking forward to more success for Fairfax's season.

"We've done great. We can always perform and do better," Smith said. "Practice like you've never won and perform like you've never lost. And if we stay as a team, we'll be good."



PHOTO BY COLIN K.

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Madison falls to Oscar Smith in state football championship

By Michael Marrow
FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

The Madison Warhawks were defeated in the Class 6 state championship for high school football at Old Dominion University December 11, suffering a 42-17 loss to the reigning champions, the Oscar Smith Tigers of Chesapeake.

The defeat marked the

end of a record-setting season for Madison. Prior to the state championship, the Warhawks notched 13 straight wins, the most in program history, as well as first-ever back-to-back region championships.

The Warhawks took an early lead in the first quarter after a clever fake field goal scored a touchdown. But the

Tigers quickly answered the Warhawks, subsequently taking control for the remainder of the game. At halftime, the score was 21-10.

The Warhawks scored their final touchdown in the third quarter, closing the gap 21-17, but the Tigers then scored two more touchdowns, widening their lead 35-17. In the fourth quarter,

the Tigers capitalized on their own fumbled snap during a field goal attempt, recovering it for a touchdown and putting Oscar Smith up 42-17 for good.

It was a disappointing end for Madison, though they had gone where no Warhawk had before: this year was the first that Madison ever appeared in the state championship.

What are normal labs anyway?

KEYS TO BETTER HEALTH
CINDY SANTA ANA



Have you ever been told your labs are “normal,” yet you still feel crummy or have unexplained symptoms? The reference ranges used in conventional medicine are broad ranges based on the average population...which is a mostly sick population.

These ranges also vary between different labs and states. Meaning in one state your TSH (which is a common thyroid marker and often the only one doctors order, which doesn’t tell the whole story) could be out of range in one state, but “normal” in

another.

The running joke is, the quickest way to correct a thyroid problem is to move to a different state where you’re no longer classified as hypothyroid.

On the other hand, when interpreting lab ranges under a functional lens, the reference ranges are based on values seen in a disease-free population. “Normal” is often NOT optimal and free of disease. And “normal” often means you’re still having symptoms.

Average lab ranges don’t reflect what is healthy. They reflect what is common amongst our population. Unfortunately, only 12 percent of the American

population is metabolically healthy. And frankly, that number has probably gone down in the last two years.

This also means, if we rely on what is “normal” we’re missing an opportunity to find dysfunction before it turns into disease and stop the snowball effect of symptoms. Very often, lifestyle changes, dietary changes and specific supplements can restore function in our bodies.

Unfortunately, by the time people come see me they’re in the thick of it with a handful of symptoms (usually more!) and once we run and review labs, most of the time - those “normal” ranges were never in optimal functional ranges.

For example, a “normal” Vitamin D level is 30-100 ng/ml. A functional lab range is 50-90 ng/ml – an optimal range. Another example is a TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone) at 4.0 might be normal on a conventional lab test, but speaking from personal experience, I feel like sludge when my TSH goes over 3.5! Addressing this early on can prevent dysfunction and disease.

To obtain functional lab tests, you can work with a functional medicine doctor or a practitioner trained in interpreting lab tests. I’d be happy to support you as well at www.UnlockBetterHealth.com.



UNSPLASH

Fitness tips for the holidays

How to maintain your weight during the season of indulgence and merriment



By Patricia Sullivan
SPECIAL TO THE
FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

We have all experienced the endless buffets, desserts and yummy baked goods that friends, family and coworkers tempt us with during the long season that started back on Thanksgiving and runs right up to New Year’s Day.

It’s very difficult to avoid packing on a few unwanted pounds, and maintaining our workout regime seems impossible when there are so many activities that call to us. However, with the proper plan, you can avoid the regret and the disappointment that leads us to make those familiar New Year resolutions to do better. Here are my top five tips to help you this season.

Remember your reason for your fitness goal.

It seems simple but starting each day with a reflection of our goal and why you are working towards it will help you make the right decision when confronted with the choice between a cupcake or a treadmill. It’s a simple daily routine that can make a huge difference.

Have a plan and stick to it. It’s great to have a goal but without a plan, there is no way that you are going to stick to the behaviors that make progress towards that goal. It might be blocking out a time on your calendar to exercise 3-5 times a week. Maybe it’s a plan to avoid overindulging at your office party by filling up with a healthy salad beforehand and skipping the dessert. Remember, those who fail to plan, plan to fail.

Write it down to make it real. Without a written goal and a plan of action, your fitness goals are just a wish and the likelihood of reaching

your target is slim. I suggest starting a journal with your goal, your timeframe for achieving it and your plan of action. It will help tremendously to track what strategies are working and what needs to change.

Measure it. I have seen many folks avoid the scale all season long, only to be unpleasantly shocked at the reading when they finally check after the holidays. Regularly checking your stats helps you see what is happening and can help you avoid letting things get out of hand. Remember it’s just a number on a scale and the scale is a tool to track how we are doing on our goals. Don’t let it make you feel bad or defeated.

Use accountability partners. We all start out motivated when we have a goal but we can quickly forget our goals or justify our procrastination since we are so busy this time of the year. An accountability partner can be

there to remind us along the way why we are sticking to our plan and help us stay the course. Use friends, family or a professional to hold you accountable if you really want to succeed. You can also find someone else with a goal and hold each other accountable.

The holidays should be a time to enjoy festivities with friends and loved ones but it doesn’t mean you have to regret the consequences to your waistline. A little planning and accountability will help keep you on track to maintain your progress and even reach your fitness goals before the

year is up. Make sure to stay the course!

Patricia Sullivan is the owner and co-founder of All Bodies Fitness, LLC. She leads a team of 10 personal trainers throughout the U.S., providing online and in-person training and life coaching. Contact her at www.AllBodiesFitness.com

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UNSPLASH



PETS: MAKE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL FOR YOUR PETS
Page B3

Encore Theatrical Arts Project puts on holiday spectacular "Christmas is Just Around the Corner"

By Keith Loria
SPECIAL TO THE
FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

The Encore Theatrical Arts Project has been putting on shows for 25 years, and the Annandale performing arts not-for-profit is celebrating the holiday season with its beloved "Christmas is Just Around the Corner" production.

"We are so happy to be back in the theatre, it's been two long years of not being there," said Raynor van der Merwe, director of Encore Theatrical Arts Project. "We put on a new original musical each and every year."

"Christmas Is Just Around The Corner" will be staged this weekend at The Ernst Theatre in Annandale with performances at noon and 3:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

The synopsis for "Christmas Just Around the Corner" is it takes place in small-town Centertown USA, a community where everyone knows everyone else, and a new visitor arrives in town.

"We're not sure of her intentions or what she's doing there," said van der Merwe. "The owner of the town Christmas shop questions her intentions because of the way she is behaving and calls for backup at the North Pole and an elf investigator is sent down."

But the elf investigator is new to the job, so doesn't yet possess the best detective skills. That leads to lots of laughter and plenty of things to enjoy.

"It's a fun, upbeat performance with lots of dance numbers and lots of musical numbers and it's sure to get everyone in the holiday spirit," van der Merwe said. "It's geared towards audiences of all ages and there's something in it for everyone."

The 32-member cast of the show come from the residents of the pre-professional performing arts company (ages 11 and up) with additional adult roles played by local professional actors.

Even though they are children, Encore holds each cast member up to high standards and prides itself on the professionalism that the cast exhibits.

"We set up this program 25 years ago to give training and performing opportunities to future young professionals," van der Merwe said. "I'm happy to say we have members who have gone on to be in Broadway shows and The Rockettes."

Last year, because of the pandemic, Encore was forced to cancel the live show, but filmed an in-house show and broadcast it so they could present something.

"It was an interesting experience for them to go through that," van der Merwe said, explaining that the performers could rest in between scenes and not worry about the quick-change that a live performance needs. "I'm always looking for the silver lining. Now they have a little idea of what a film is like, that you do it over and over until it's perfect."

But for van der Merwe, there's nothing better than a live performance and she's so thrilled to be able to welcome performers back.

"There's nothing like live theatre," she said. "No performance is ever identical and there's a feedback you get from the audience and the energy the performers get from them—and vice versa—there's a great sense of going through this together. More than ever before, we want that sense of community."

That makes "Christmas Is Just Around The Corner" a perfect show for that, as it highlights the importance of a community coming together.

"It's warm-hearted, even though there's the evil protagonist, and it of course has a happy ending," van der Merwe said. "This is why everyone loves the Hallmark movies, they love the happy ending."

There are 16 musical numbers in the show, with plenty

See **ENCORE**, Page **B4**



COURTESY PHOTOS



Kansas STILL GOING STRONG

THE LEGENDARY BAND IS COMING TO TYSONS FOR ITS "POINT OF KNOW RETURN" ANNIVERSARY TOUR

By Keith Loria
SPECIAL TO THE
FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

If you've ever looked at the liner notes of Kansas' 1974 self-titled debut album, the band had quite the prophetic statement: "From the beginning, we considered ourselves and our music different and we hope we will always remain so."

More than 45 years later, Kansas has proven that statement to be true. Today, the band is comprised of original guitarist Richard Williams, original Drummer Phil Ehart, Bassist Billy Greer, Violinist David Ragsdale, Keyboardist Tom Breslin and has featured Ronnie Platt on vocals ever since Steve Walsh left in 1914.

"Kansas has always been very diverse," Platt said. "You have total rockers and a classical music element. From being

in the band for seven years now, the one thing I've learned is the band never stops drilling. We still work these songs to death. The mindset of this band is to achieve perfection."

With a catalogue that includes 15 studio albums and five fan-favorite live albums, Kansas has always had a knack for being different, and that uniqueness has earned them eight gold albums, three sextuple-platinum albums, one platinum live album and two million-selling gold singles, "Dust in the Wind" and "Carry On Wayward Son."

"These are positively timeless songs," Platt said. "Take 'Dust in the Wind' for example. Hearing it back in 1977 and through my entire life, and still hearing it today is wild. It just shows how timeless it is and people still love it."

Kansas originally began as a garage band in Topeka and offered a mix of American-style boogie rock and complex, sym-

phonic arrangements with changing time signatures.

One of Kansas' biggest albums—both in terms of sales and in critical and fan reception—is the 1977 release, "Point of Know Return."

Kansas will be performing that record in its entirety December 19 at Capital One Hall in Tysons.

There will, of course, be other classic tunes and fan favorites from throughout the band's history, as well as selections from the most recent studio album, "The Absence of Presence."

"It's just two hours and 20 minutes of jam-packed music," Platt said. "We start with five or six songs acoustically and then go into the classic set and there's no breaks. It's songs from all the albums. Then we go into playing 'Point of Know Return' in its entirety."

See **KANSAS**, Page **B4**

HOTLINKS BY COLLIN COPE



Seasonal Storytelling • December 18 • 10-11 a.m. • \$8

On the morning of December 18 from 10 until 11 a.m., join Alexandria's Green Spring Gardens for a holiday-themed session of stories perfect for children and their families. During the session, various pictures, as well as puppet performances of popular seasonal stories, will excite younger crowds and provide parents with a fun holiday activity to get the whole family into the spirit of the season. Registration for the session will be \$8 per person and registration is available online at <https://bit.ly/3EYVmuD>.

Christmas Illuminations at Mount Vernon • December 18

This December 18, visit George Washington's Mount Vernon for Christmas Illuminations. While touring the grounds, witness various colorful lights and holiday decorations set up throughout the property with fireworks accenting the night sky later into the evening. Bring your friends and family for a night sure to get everyone into the holiday spirit. More information about times, as well as tickets, are available online at <https://bit.ly/3GROYWB> with general admission tours starting at \$60.



**A Visit With Santa • \$7
December 19 • 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

Visit the Historic Sully site in Chantilly for a fun photo opportunity with Santa! Just off of Route 28, come down to "Mingle with Kringle" and tell Santa what you want for Christmas this year. Additionally, enjoy an opportunity to craft your own festive holiday ornament to add to your home's holiday cheer. Visitor fees are \$7 per person and the event will run between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on December 19. For more information, call (703) 437-1794.

COURTESY PHOTOS

ADORABLE ADOPTABLES

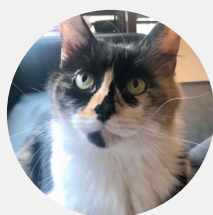
THE FELINE FOUNDATION

See these pets and more at:
www.ffgw.org

CALLIOPE

Breed: Domestic long hair
Age: 1 year
Gender: Female

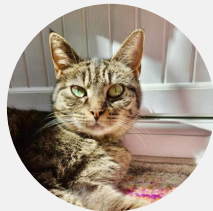
Calliope ("Callie") is a calico beauty with special needs, but please don't stop reading about her! She is beautiful, loving, funny and outgoing and just might be the perfect cat for you. Callie has a heart condition called hypertrophic obstructive cardiomyopathy. She takes her daily medication without a fuss. You wouldn't know she has a heart issue. She plays, loves her catnip and kicker toys, runs around and chases anything you give her. She enjoys lap time, sleeping in bed with you, and helping unpack the groceries when you come home.



STRIPEY

Breed: Domestic short hair
Age: 5 years
Gender: Female spayed

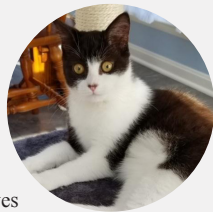
Stripey was rescued from a rural shelter. She's very sweet and loves being pet. She's been enjoying playtime and lap time in her foster home. As you can see by those stunning emerald eyes, she's a beautiful blend of brown tabby and poise. Looking for a companion while you work - Stripey has been a fantastic kitty to have around during this pandemic.



SUGAR

Breed: Domestic short hair
Age: 5 months
Gender: Female spayed

Sugar has gorgeous dark chocolate brown and white fur with near perfect eyeliner and two sweet black dots on her nose tip. She has been the leader of the pack in her litter and is always up for a good time with her kitten toys. She is a talker when she wants something and LOVES attention. She also loves to climb and would need a tall cat tree to enjoy in her new home.



FLORA

Breed: Domestic short hair
Age: 1 year
Gender: Female spayed

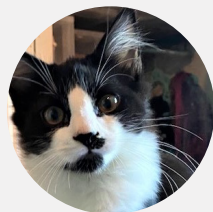
Are you looking for an affectionate, friendly lap cat? Look no further! Flora has settled in wonderfully in her foster home and always sleeps next to her humans. When they're watching TV she's right behind their head hanging with the family. Flora likes to be with her humans and for all of you who want a lap cat, Flora will be happy to oblige! She's a laid-back kitty and has some bursts of playtime throughout the day.



WHISKERS

Breed: Domestic medium hair
Age: 5 months
Gender: Male

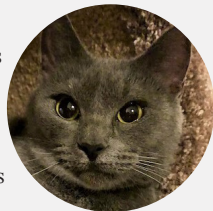
Whiskers is a soft snuggly boy of cotton. He adores playing with his siblings and he loves to be held by his humans. Whiskers loves everyone, dogs and cats too! Whisker needs to be adopted to a home with a younger cat he can enjoy playing and paling around with. Or he can be adopted with another FFGW kitty.



CHRISTINE

Breed: Domestic short hair
Age: 1 year
Gender: Female spayed

Christine is a sweet, playful, cuddly little beauty who adores hanging with her people. This gorgeous dark gray lady loves to cuddle up against you and will follow you around asking for pets. Christine was brought to a local shelter after someone saw her and her older kittens living behind a convenience store. We believe she may have been abandoned, as she clearly has lived in a house before and is very people-friendly.



FROM THE DOG'S PAW

Make Christmas special for your pets



UNSPASH

By Noah! Samson! Abby!
SPECIAL TO THE
FAIRFAX COUNTY TIMES

“Woofs! This time of year is so much fun. I enjoy seeing the lights, decorations, and smiles of the humans rushing home with their pawsome treasures for their loved ones. Barks, sometimes, with all the activities and busyness going on, I feel a little left out of the festivities. This year, I heard Dad say he wants to make the day extra special for all three of us.”

“Noah, how is he going to do that? Every day with our humans is special.”

“Meows! Oh, Abby, you’re such a young pup. Don’t let the humans hear that, or they’ll think they’re spoiling us too much. Have you heard the pawlans yet, Noah?”

“Barkingly, woofs, a few things, my fine feline brother. To start with, Samson will get to have a meowingly grand time playing with his wand toys, catnip toys, and pawlenty of extra cuddling time. Dad pawlans to play wand toy with you more than usual too.”

Dad is pawlanning to take Abby and me on an extra-long walk on Christmas day. We might hike a new trail as a special pawresent. We love exploring new pawlaces, and sometimes Dad gets so busy with chores we can’t go, so he’s pawlanning to celebrate the day with us.”

“Meows, when do we get to open our Christmas pawresents? That’s what I look forward to every year. I hope I get that work of art by the famous painter, Pawcasso or Meownet!”

“I don’t know about any paintings, Samson, but Dad

likes to celebrate Christmas by buying us toys that are a little more expensive. I can’t want because there are some cool Kong toys (no affiliation) that I would love to have.”

“Woofs, being the young puppy I am, Noah and Samson, I am looking forward to all the new toys and pawssibly a new dog bed.”

“Paws, HISS!, Abby if you would quit chewing up your toys and dog bedding...!”

“Woofs, since shopping is beneath our dignities to do Abby, Samson, and I love giving Dad a list of presents we want to give Mom for him to buy from us and the same for Mom to buy for Dad. On Christmas morning, it’s so much fun to watch them open their gifts from us. Last year, I gave Dad a new pair of gloves to keep his hands warm on winter walks. Samson bought Mom a beautiful sweater with a darling purrster on it.

If we have friends and family over, our humans will include us in some of the games they pawlay. Barkingly, it may have to be in the backyard depending on how many humans come over and if they all want to include us. A few games they might pawlay are tug-of-war, fetch, hide-and-seek with our favorite treats, and Round Robin. Round Robin is new to us but sounds tasty, er fun! All the humans gather in a circle with a treat hidden in their hands. The human calls our name; if we respond to them, we get a treat.”

“Meowingly, if our humans were to have humans over who weren’t comfortable with pets, they would put them, er us, in our safe room or crates. Barks! We will get our dinner, water,

special treats, watch DogTV, listen to music, or whatever we want on our comfy plush pillows.

WOOF! WOOF! My most-est favoritest tradition is Christmas dinner. Here’s how it goes. Paws, Dad doesn’t want us at the table when dinner is served, nor are we fed from it. Doing so can lead to dogs becoming beggars at mealtime. Dad has trained us to go to “our rooms” at mealtime. WOOF! Christmas dinner is a little different. When Mom begins slicing the ham and turkey, she will “accidentally” drop pieces of meat for us. Paws, Dad has been known to buy a few of those specially prepared meals from the local pet shop for our Christmas dinner, including for Samson.”

“MEOWS! I just love my salmon dinner.”

Paws, though we have some extra fun things to do on Christmas day, it’s best to keep pets in their routine as much as pawssible. Pets do better with routines than changes to them.

Woofs, Meows, barks, we wish you the Merriest Christmas and happiest holidays!

About us!

WOOF! MEOW! Do you enjoy our articles? Barks and purrs, pawlease follow us at www.fromthedogspaw.com by email to enjoy our adventures. Noah, Samson, and Abby are pawthors pawing about dog/cat care tips using facts and humor, and entertaining stories about their lives with humans! Our human, Allen Pearson, is a dog, nature, and railroad photographer and writer. Find us all at: www.fromthedogspaw.com, www.instagram.com/fromthedogspaw, www.facebook.com/fromthedogspaw.



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Art News

Home for the Holidays Hum along to holiday carols at this performance featuring the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra and dancers from BalletNova. 7:30 p.m. December 17. Tickets are \$65 to \$85. Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center, 4915 E. Campus Dr., Alexandria. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3dZnotK>.

The Mystery of Edwin Drood Based on Charles Dickens’ final unfinished novel, this hilarious whodunit invites the audience to solve its mystery by choosing the identity of the murderer. 8 p.m. December 17 and 18. 2 p.m. December 19. Cost is \$30. Workhouse Performing Arts W-3 Theater, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. For

more information visit <https://bit.ly/3GPAA13>.

Every Christmas Story Ever Told (and Then Some!) A fast, furious, and slightly irreverent look at holiday classics and traditions. Just about every seasonal character makes an appearance in this racy comedy. Friday, Saturday and Sunday through December 19. Admission is \$25. NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Dr., Herndon. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3DtvKEh>.

Kids Holiday Crafts in the studio with Elaine from 10 a.m. to noon December 18. Also enjoy the Holiday Model Train Show from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free. ArtsSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. For more information call 703-956-6590.

Waterfront Art Market discover new artworks from a rotating lineup of studio artists. This is the last market of the season. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. December 18. Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3Gellie>.

Holiday Performances Come sing along and enjoy holiday performances by local performers including ukulele and carolers. 11: 30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. December 18. Lohr Family Entertainers 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. December 19. Free. Fountain Square, 11921 Freedom Dr., Reston. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3GKEbxm>.

Wolf Trap Holiday Sing-A-Long from Home on two separate nights, each with

special guests. The two festive pre-recorded video performances, each containing unique special guests and different songs, will be premiering December 18. The concerts will be streamed free and available for viewers at home throughout the winter holidays. Concert goes live at 4 p.m. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3xEIkzA>.

The Nutcracker Experience the magic of The Nutcracker with the Fairfax Symphony & Fairfax Ballet. Enter the winter-wonderland of The Nutcracker Prince & Sugar Plum Fairy. 4 p.m. December 18 and 19. Cost is \$54 to \$94. Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Dr., Fairfax. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3DIKT53>.

Christmas is Just Around the Corner The people of tiny Centertown, USA know how to celebrate the holidays, and welcoming a new neighbor is just an added bonus in this performance by Encore Theatrical Arts Project. Various show times on weekends through December 19. Admission is \$22 to \$30. Richard J. Ernst Theater, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3ons8PU>.

A Child’s Christmas in Wales Experience a musical celebration of Welsh poet Dylan Thomas’ iconic story, the “never to be forgotten day at the end of the unremembered year,” when songs are sung, cakes and sweets are abundant, and the frozen city parks are laden with mysteries and

adventures for wild boys and girls to explore. Fridays and Saturdays at 7 p.m. through December 18. 10 a.m. matinee December 18. 2 p.m. matinee December 19. Cost is \$10 to \$15. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., NE., Vienna. For tickets visit <https://bit.ly/3o3CrZi>.

Traveling While Black Virtual Reality the immersion of 360° footage draws viewers into living history lessons told around a booth in Ben’s Chili Bowl. Through February 12 with the exception of county holidays. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3EoGaXa>.

Community Information

Holiday Lights on the Farm Tour the farm in the safety and warmth of your vehicle on a one-mile route to see the farm animals, wooded wonders, and luminous lights decorating the pastures and historic buildings. 5:30 to 8 p.m. December 17, 18 and 19. Cost is \$20 to \$25 per vehicle. Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Rd., Herndon. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3oWllgI>.

Burke Farmers Market Markets are open for in-person shopping. Some vendors offer online ordering with pickup at the market. 8 a.m. to noon Saturdays through December 18. VRE Parking Lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3HFMIII>.

Holidays at Walney Farm Take a holiday food

walk, learning about preservation and meals for the holiday. Create a historic holiday ornament, play historic games and enjoy treats and cider. 3 p.m. December 18. Cost is \$9. Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Rd., Chantilly. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3oUWUQt>.

Holiday Preparations & Decorations Tour Tour the Miller’s House and learn how local resident would have been preparing for the holidays. 4 p.m. December 18. Cost is \$10. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Rd., Great Falls. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/31Sj8tY>.

Age of Elegance Tours Enjoy an elegant candlelight tour of Sully decorated for the holidays in 18th century style. Make a craft and

enjoy refreshments. 4:45 p.m. December 18. Cost is \$10. Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3s2c6NP>.

Sunday Bird Walks Friends of Dyke March hosts bird walks every Sunday at 8 a.m. Free. Meet in the Belle Haven Park south parking lot, 6401 George Washington Memorial Pkwy., Alexandria. For more information visit fodm.org.

Visit with Santa Bring your camera to take a picture outdoors in this historic setting. Tell Santa your wishes and make a festive ornament. 11 a.m. December 19. Cost is \$7. Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3dP8eXZ>.

Winter Bird Walk Take a hike through the woods with a naturalist to listen and look for the winter avian residents and migrants. 10 a.m. December 22. Cost is \$7. Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, 5040 Walney Rd., Chantilly. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3m1VLoE>.

ONGOING

Vale UMC Tree Sales Buy a freshly-cut Christmas tree from Vale United Methodist Church (11528 Vale Road, Oakton), and your purchase will provide, on average, 100 life-saving meals for hungry families around the world. Proceeds from Vale Church’s tree sale will be donated to the global relief organization Rise Against Hunger, as

well as being used for local anti-hunger efforts in Fairfax County. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays, 6 to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, call 703-620-2594 or email christmastrees@valechurch.org.

Bull Run Festival of Lights Drive through more than two miles of festive light displays. Runs through January 2. 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 5:30 to 10 p.m. weekends. Cost is \$30 per vehicle in advance, \$40 at the gate. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/31kiLrp>.

Winter Walk of Lights Stroll along this half-mile long, one-way route for an enchanting and safe evening activity. 5:30 to 10 p.m. Runs through January 2.

Purchase timed-entry tickets starting at \$16 plus an online fee. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3mwtl6Q>.

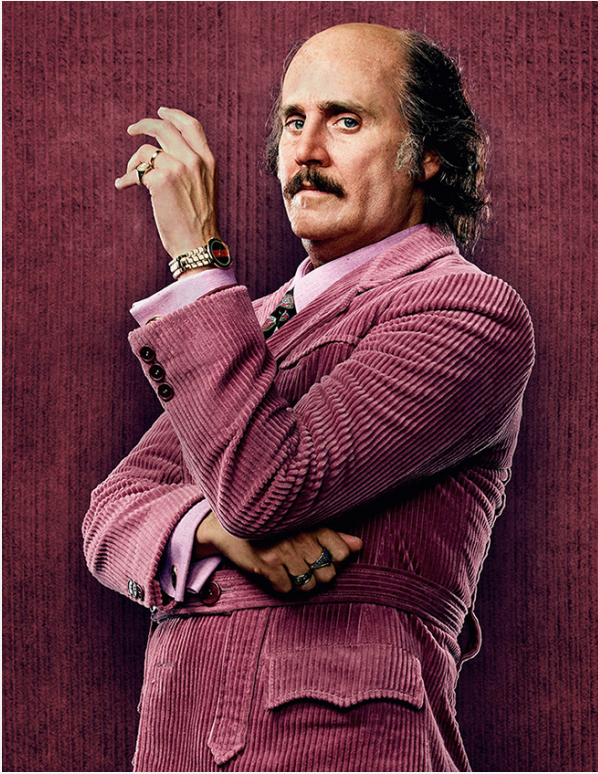
Virtual Mental Help Events and Support Recovery Program Solutions of Virginia holds a variety of free online events and support groups each week. Meet new friends, stay healthy and fit, participate in art therapy and more. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3vokjut>.

Help Children in Need through volunteer work with Assistance League. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/305C3ge>.

Volunteer Fairfax has volunteer opportunities and donation needs. Please visit <https://bit.ly/3b169oZ> for more information.

HOLLYWOOD

by Tony Rizzo



Jared Leto won an Oscar for “Dallas Buyer’s Club” (2013) and proved he’ll go the distance for his characterizations. In “House of Gucci” (which opened Nov. 24), he’s unrecognizable playing Paolo Gucci. On his first day (deep in character), he ran into Al Pacino (playing Aldo Gucci) and said “Dad.” Pacino didn’t recognize him, thought he was a weirdo and walked away. Later, Leto saw him again and said, “Father.” Pacino was rushing away until another cast member whispered, “That’s Jared.” Pacino turned, arms stretched out, and said “son!”

Leto also has “Morbius” (in IMAX), due Jan. 28, with former “Doctor Who” and “The Crown’s” Matt Smith. Morbius suffers from a rare disease and tries a dangerous cure that turns him into a vampire. What woman wouldn’t want him nibbling on her neck? Sequels are already in the works. Leto next stars for director Aron Aronofsky in “Adrift,” about a fishing boat crew discovering a ghost yacht in open sea (coming Aug. 19). Leto pursued the rights for 10 years and brought it to Aronofsky and Jason Blum; now all three are producing.

Meanwhile, Lady Gaga is getting a Cher “Moonstruck” Oscar buzz for “House of Gucci.” Critics are saying the film has a “‘Godfather’ vibe” and that Gaga is “incredible,” as is Jared Leto. Director Ridley Scott, a three-time Oscar director nominee for “Thelma & Louise” (1991), “Gladiator” (2000) and “Black Hawk Down” (2001)

and as a producer of “The Martian” (2015), has never won, though he did win an Emmy and was knighted in 2003. Scott is currently prepping yet another remake of “The Boston Strangler” (which starred Tony Curtis in 1968 and David Faustino of “Married With Children” in 2008). Keira Knightly plays the reporter who pursues the case, with co-stars Chris Cooper and Alessandro Nivola. Ridley Scott’s recent “The Last Duel,” with Matt Damon, flopped.

Once there were 13 soaps on three networks, but today there are just four left. A recent growth in their audience has kept “The Young and The Restless” at No. 1. “General Hospital” is No. 2, followed by “The Bold and The Beautiful” and “Days

of Our Lives.” “Days” has received a two- year pickup from NBC, and thanks to the recent success of “Days of Our Lives: Beyond Salem” on Peacock, toplined by super couples Thaaq Penghlis and Leann Hunley, and Deidre Hall and Drake Hogestyn, Peacock greenlit “Days of Our Lives: A Very Salem Christmas” (due Dec. 16), toplined by Emmy-winner Chandler Massey (in a recent Hallmark film) and Eileen Davidson. I met Thaaq Penghlis on his first day at “Days of Our Lives,” and now he’s celebrating his 40th anniversary with the show. He’s such a great actor, you’d never know he’s from Australia ... “G’day mate!”

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KANSAS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1

From the reactions the band members have heard from doing the show, there are some very satisfied customers.

“It’s a treat for us as well,” Platt said. “Of course, we want everyone to be careful and stay healthy. But life is short and we want everyone to come out and enjoy life and enjoy music.”

When the pandemic hit, the band was about to embark on a year’s worth of performances, and for the first time in decades, Kansas couldn’t play live.

“Since I’ve been in the band, we’ve had a relentless

tour schedule,” Platt said. “We were in the midst of another jam-packed schedule for 2020, and they all fell through the cracks. It ended up, we didn’t even see each other for 14 months.”

Waiting to play, he added, seemed like an eternity as this was all something new to him.

“When I joined the band, it was a complete life change,” Platt said. “When I originally met with Phil and Rich, they told me Kansas would probably do between 45-60 dates a year, but my first year we did 98 shows and the next year we did 99. And in between, we recorded an album.”

It was in May when Kansas finally got to play again,

outdoors. An indoor show in Florida came next, and the band decided it would regroup for a tour and made up for lost time.

“I remember that first show, we probably paid attention to each other more than we usually do,” Platt said. “By that second show, we were back firing on all cylinders and right back into the swing of things.”

In 2022, Kansas will hit the road hard with an ambitious schedule and possibly even get another studio album completed.

“We all had time off to write and explore, so there’s a lot of stuff on the table,” Platt said. “We just need to know what to attack first. We can’t wait.”



COURTESY PHOTO

ENCORE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE B1

show will also welcome a jolly man from the North Pole as a special guest, so little ones have an even bigger treat ahead for them.

“It’s an absolute joy,” van der Merwe said. “We hope everyone will come

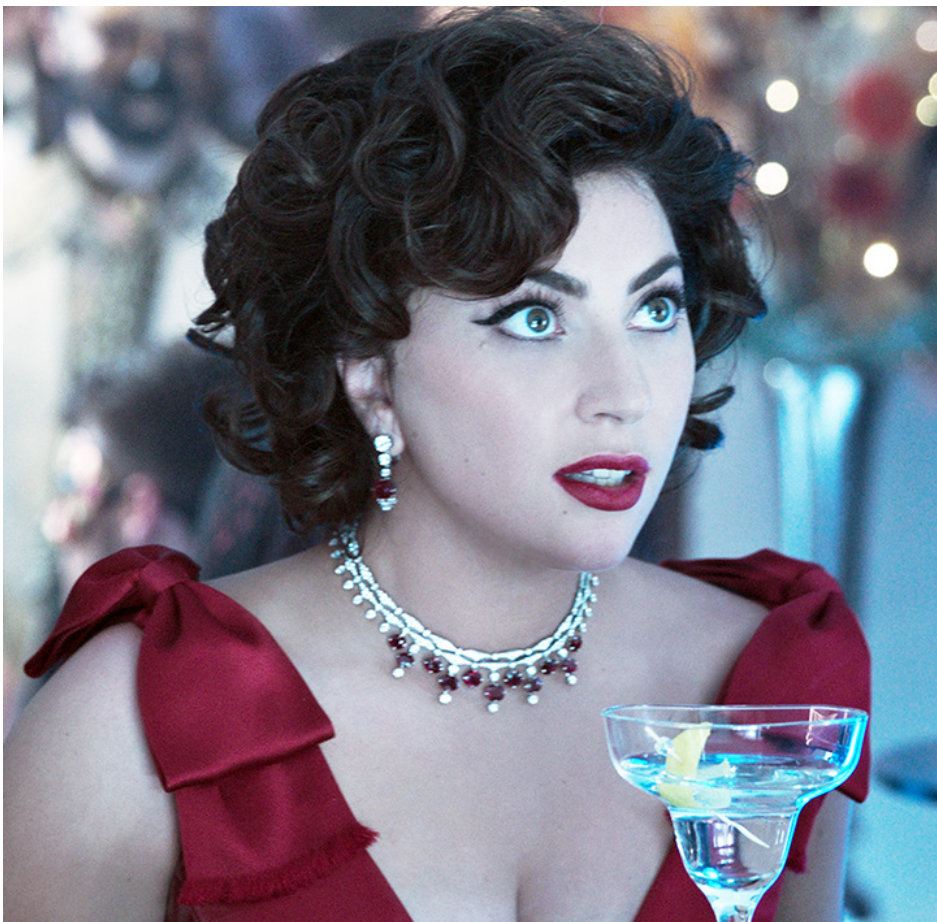
of singing and dancing, including many holiday favorites people know. The

be a part of this wonderful experience and support this joyful show.”

For more information or to purchase tickets to this fun show, visit [www. Encore-Tap.org](http://www.Encore-Tap.org).

celebrity
extra

by Dana Jackson



Lady Gaga in “House of Gucci”

Q: Is NFL football reporter Jac Collinsworth related to longtime announcer Cris Collinsworth? He sure looks like him. Did he ever play football like his dad? – N.C.

A: Yes, 26-year-old Jac Collinsworth has joined NBC Sports, the broadcast home of his father, Cris Collinsworth, who hosts “Sunday Night Football” with Al Michaels on NBC. You can see Jac on the sidelines Sunday nights, and while some might scream “nepotism,” Jac seems like a natural talent who was hired on his own merits.

According to Sporting-News.com, Jac has been working in front of and behind the camera since he was in eighth grade. He worked as a sports reporter while attending Notre Dame, but was never a college athlete like his father. Cris Collinsworth, who is now 62, played for the Florida Gators and then subsequently the Cincinnati Bengals.

Before joining NBC, Jac worked for ESPN as a host and features reporter. When Cris learned that NBC executive Sam Flood wanted to make his son an offer, he pleaded with them not to, saying that Jac was doing great making his own mark

at ESPN. Flood explained that the network needed to build their young talent pool and that Jac was “the best I’ve seen.”

Q: I recently saw the movie “House of Gucci.” I always wonder how accurate these biographical films really are and what the family must think of how they are portrayed. Did they have any input on the making of the movie? – R.V.

A: According to USA Today, the Gucci family hasn’t been involved in the Gucci fashion house since 1993, when Maurizio “sold his remaining stake to the Bahrain-based company Investcorp” and was later bought by the French group Kering.

In the movie “House of Gucci,” Lady Gaga plays Patrizia Reggiani, who hired a hitman to murder her husband, Maurizio Gucci, played by Adam Driver. The Gucci family issued a statement recently saying that the film is “anything but accurate” and that they were not consulted at all before or during production. Director Ridley Scott defended his film, stating that he tried to be “as respectful as possible by being as factual as possible.”

The reviews have been mixed, with audiences enjoying the film more than critics, but both groups seem to agree that Lady Gaga’s performance will likely result in another Oscar nomination for the talented singer/actress.

Q: Who was the little girl who played Annie in the recent live musical? She was incredible. Was she a new discovery? – E.E.

A: Celina Smith earned the title role in NBC’s “Annie Live!” through a nationwide search, but it wasn’t her first professional acting role. At only 12 years old, she’s already played a Young Nala in a national touring production of “The Lion King” and has been a regular on the Nickelodeon sitcom “Young Dylan.”

“Annie Live!” aired Dec. 2 on NBC and starred crooner Harry Connick Jr. as Daddy Warbucks, Taraji P. Henson (“Empire”) as Miss Hannigan and Tituss Burgess (“Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt”) as Rooster.

Send me your questions at NewCelebrityExtra@gmail.com, or write me at KFW5, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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“1883”
Sam Elliott’s glorious mustache needed a new project, so it was cast in this prequel to the wildly popular “Yellowstone” series. A Paramount+ Original series, “1883” is the story of the Dutton family’s own attempt at manifest destiny as they traverse the Great Plains with hopes of a better life in Montana. The road west was a journey of adventure and wonder, and of danger, death and despair. With its grand, expansive scenery and movie-quality score, this show has a real “Dances With Wolves” feel. The main cast also includes Tim McGraw, Faith Hill, Billy Bob Thornton and Isabel May. (Paramount+)

“Ron’s Gone Wrong”
(PG) -- Kids in the 1980s fantasized that their Teddy Ruxpin bear could actually come alive and be a real friend. Disney has modernized this fantasy with an animated story about B-Bots, which are cute, tic-tac-shaped, digitally connected best friends for kids. All the cool kids have one, so main character Barney begs his dad for a B-Bot of his own. But something is amiss with his bot, Ron (voiced by Zach Galifianakis), who doesn’t quite behave like the other bots. A series of hilarious personality malfunctions proves he requires very literal instruction on everything from proper language to personal safety. Amid the cute mishaps and hijinks is an underlying message about social media dependence and the danger of toxic relationships. (Disney+)

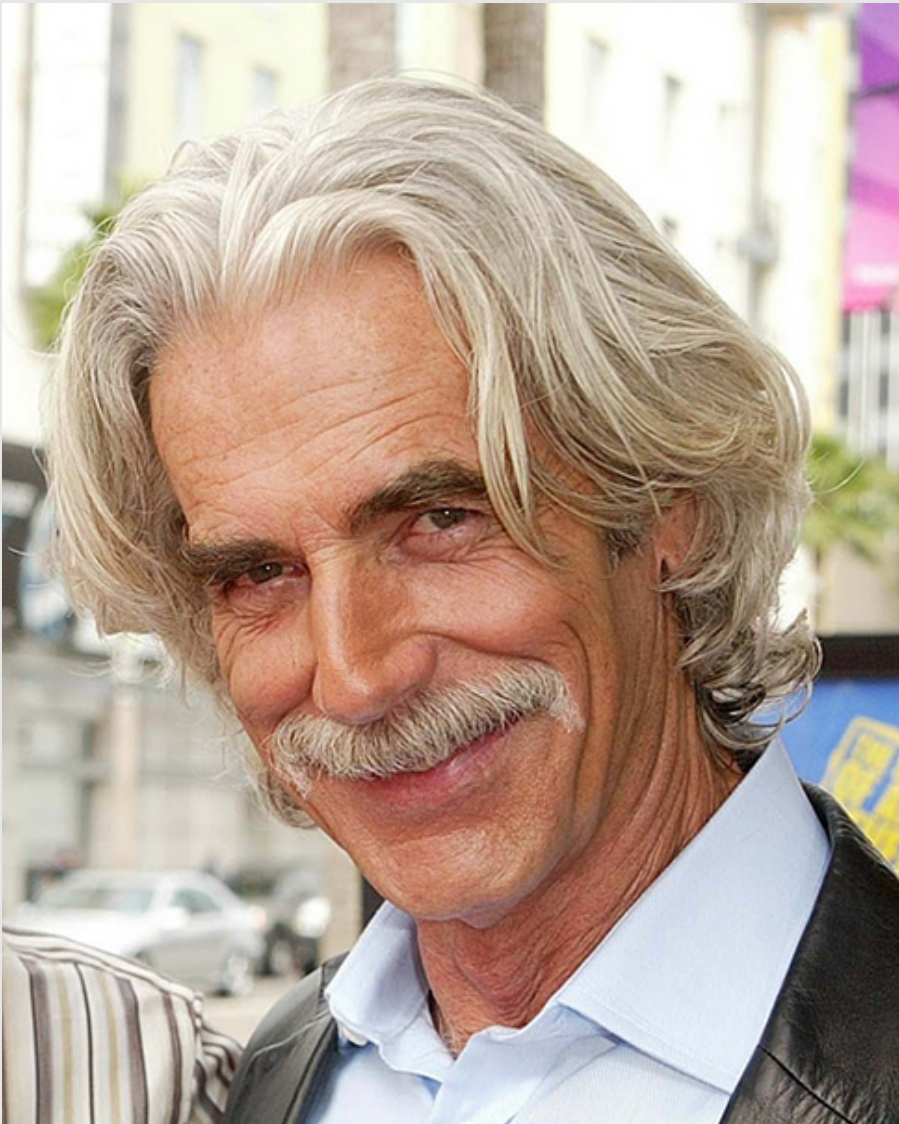
“Finding Magic Mike”
A bunch of guys from

all-Black real-estate agency, which is a nice change from the plastic blond bombshells lorded over by male owners of the L.A. cast. The eight episodes drop Dec. 15. (Netflix)

across America who have lost their personal magic converge to learn the enchanting moves of Las Vegas’s hottest stage show. In other words, dudes with dad bods want to be strippers. This competition reality show from executive producer Channing Tatum attempts to find a “real” Magic Mike, who will earn a wad of cash along with that title. (HBOMax)

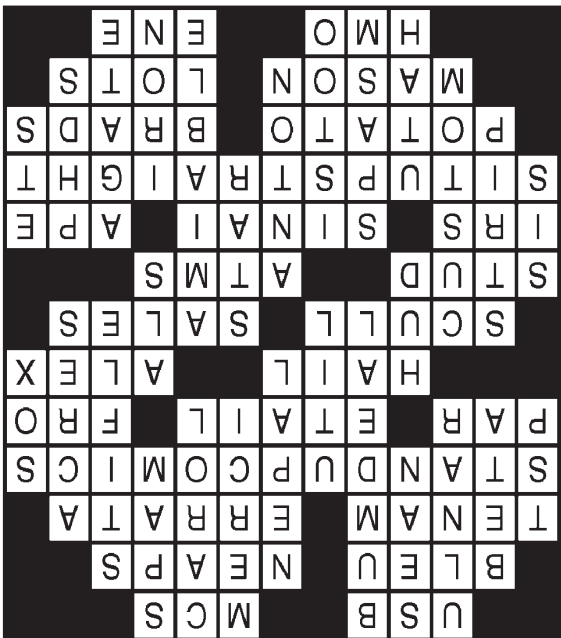
“My Dream Kitchen: Giada DeLaurentis” and “My Dream Kitchen: Carla Hall”
Two separate episodes drop Dec. 18, combining a healthy portion of house renovation with a pinch of cooking talk. The two celebrity chefs each tackle constructing their dream kitchens in their personal homes, DeLaurentis in her L.A.-area mid-century house, and Hall in her longtime D.C. home that she shares with her husband (though they don’t share the same kitchen vision). As per usual, unexpected delays and supply-chain snafus snarl each project, but the big reveals make everything worth the effort. (Discovery+)

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Sam Elliott

DEPOSITPHOTOS



Solution time: 24 mins.
Answers
— King Crossword —



COURTESY PHOTO

Chris Leonard, Fairfax County deputy executive for Health, Housing and Human Services (left), and County Executive Bryan Hill (right) participated in the Traveling While Black Virtual Reality Experience during the opening reception December 10 at the McLean Community Center. In “Traveling While Black VR,” the immersion of 360° footage draws viewers into living history lessons told around a booth in Ben’s Chili Bowl. The Washington, D.C. restaurant has been a mainstay of the African American community since 1958, bearing witness to significant Civil Rights milestones that are woven into the film in powerful snippets of footage. The Traveling While Black VR experience/film was directed by Academy Award-winning director Roger Ross Williams. Patrons can sign up for hour-long appointments Wednesday through Saturday, from noon to 8 p.m., and Sunday, from noon to 6 p.m. through February 12. MCC is located at 1234 Ingleside Ave. in McLean. The experience was funded with support from the Québec Government Offices in New York and Washington as well as the Embassy of Canada to the United States and in cooperation with the Fairfax County Public Library. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/3yqdzv>.

Delightful dishes to dazzle holiday guests

Courtesy of
Family Features

Entertaining guests during the holidays isn't just about a main course that calls all to the table. What often makes a festive gathering more fruitful is a spread of delicious appetizers, delightful drinks and divine desserts that keep loved ones coming back to the kitchen for more.

For appetizing dishes from the first guest at the house to the last out the door, you can heighten the flavor and appearance of favorite recipes with one simple ingredient: apples. Ranging from tart to sugary sweet, finding the right balance for your palate is key. Scent can also influence taste, especially when you have a balanced sweetness with an uplifting, fresh aroma.

Turn to an option like Envy Apples this holiday season for satisfying texture and taste with a consistently balanced, refreshing sweetness coupled with a crisp, elegant crunch. They make for an easy snack when eaten fresh out of hand but are also perfect for holding over pre-dinner appetites in small plates like this Bell-Issimo Brie Melt or Apple Stuffing Bites with Rosemary Gravy.

Easy to spot with their crimson red skin over a golden background that practically glows, Envy Apples offer an easy, eye-catching way to try new tastes and celebrate joyful occasions together. The bright white flesh is naturally slow to brown when sliced for a fresher flavor in sweet treats like Apple Oat Crumble and Citrus Caramel Topping for a tasty way to elevate your holiday get-togethers.

Find more sweet holiday recipes at EnvyApple.com.

Apple Oat Crumble and Citrus Caramel Topping

3 tablespoons sugar

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

2 Envy Apples, diced into large cubes

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1/2 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup all-purpose flour

1/2 cup old-fashioned oats

1/2 cup cold butter, diced small

1/2 cup caramel

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 orange, zest only

1 tablespoon orange juice

vanilla ice cream

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.

2. In bowl, stir together sugar and ground cinnamon.

3. Toss apples in lemon juice then in cinnamon sugar mixture. Spread in 9-inch pie dish.

4. In another bowl, stir together brown sugar, flour and oats. Using hands or fork, cut in butter until pea size crumbs form. Sprinkle evenly over apples.

5. Bake 40-45 minutes until mixture is bubbling and golden brown. Remove from oven and let cool 15 minutes.

6. In small pot, whisk caramel, salt, orange zest and orange juice until warm.

7. Spoon apple oat crumble over large scoop vanilla ice cream and top with salted citrus caramel.

Apple Stuffing Bites with Rosemary Gravy

1 box Stovetop stuffing

2 tablespoons butter

2 cups diced Envy Apples

1/2 onion, diced small

Gravy:

3 tablespoons butter

3 tablespoons flour

2 cups beef broth

2 teaspoons kosher salt

20 turns fresh cracked pepper

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

1 tablespoon finely chopped rosemary

1. Preheat broiler.

2. Cook stuffing according to package directions; set aside and allow to cool slightly.

3. In large saute pan, melt butter saute apples and onion until tender. Set aside to cool slightly.

4. Stir together stuffing and apple mixture. Spread stuffing on sheet tray and allow to cool in refrigerator.

5. After cooling, form stuffing into medium bites and place on sheet tray lined with parchment paper.

6. Broil bites until golden brown and slightly crispy.

7. To make gravy: In small pot, melt butter and whisk in flour. Cook flour 1 minute, whisking frequently.

8. Whisk in beef broth, salt, pepper and Worcestershire sauce; bring to boil, whisking frequently. Remove from heat and stir in rosemary. If desired, continue gently simmering gravy to thicken.

9. Arrange stuffing bites in serving dish and drizzle with gravy. Serve hot.

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Help Wanted

Sr TIBCO BW Developer - Fannie Mae, Reston, VA. Devel, mod, or update apps. Participate w/ tech staff & bus mgrs to determine sys rqmts & functionalities needed in large/complex devel project. Participate in/review all SDLC steps. Assess/devel high level dsgn rqmnts & communicate in writing & meetings. Assess specs against dsgn rqmts. Rev coding. Devel test protocols, plan for testing revised app, & review results. Serve as project lead or lead tech staff in app devel project. Req'd: Bach Degree in Comp Sci or Engg + 5 yrs exp w/ TIBCO EMS, BW & Hawk, XML & schema definitions, Oracle RDBMS and SQL, SOAP and RESTful services. Apply to job REF93180 @ fanniemaecareers.com.

Help Wanted

Software Developers (multiple positions) Degree in comp/eng related. MS (2 yrs) or BS (5 yrs) of exp. Require expertise in Software Eng, Software Project Mgmt, JAVA prog, QA testing & DB design & analysis. Tech. skills in Web serv (JSON, SOAP), Spring Framework Modules, Spring Boot, MVC patterns, Restful Serv, DevOps tools (Jenkins, Git, Urban code), Selenium & Agile methodologies. Travel/Reloc.

Send Resumes to: PMG Global Corp, 13800 Coppermine Road, Suite 238, Herndon, VA 20171.

Granules Pharmaceuticals (Chantilly, VA) is recruiting. Send res w/code to HR at 3701 Concorde Pkwy, Chantilly, VA 20151.

Mechanical Engineer (SAM010)-Desn, plan, construct, test, & maintn pharma utilities, equipmt, & facilities sysms & processes. Req BS in Mech Engg or Industl Engg +3 yrs exp in job offrd or as Sr. Technical Service Engineer. As alt to BS, Asso Deg +1 yr exp is acceptbl. Req skills & workg knowledge of IQ/OQ/PQ, CAPA, API, PLC, FDA regulations, cGMP/ SOPs.

Quality Control Analyst (RUA001) – Analyz & eval company's document control & archival system to ensure quality control & compliance w cGMPs/ICH/ USP & FDA regultms. Req BS in Pharma Sci, Pharma Chem, or Pharmacy Tech +3 yrs exp in job offrd. As alt to BS, Asso Deg +1 yr exp is acceptabl. Req skills & workg knowledge of HPLC & GC, IR, UV, Hospitals Infection Control.

To apply, send resume to: 3423@google.com. Must reference job # below:

Customer Engineer (Reston, VA) Ensure Google technology satisfies the business needs of internal & external users. Job Code **1615.59466** Exp Inc; Java, JavaScript, or C++; Scala, R, Python, or Shell; Dev of techl solutions for cloud computing, big data, or distributed systems tech platforms; Linux; Data migration, data warehousing, or database mgmt; TCP, Firewalls, Proxy Servers, VPN, & VPC; coordination of tech projects or programs; architecture design, implementation, tuning, schema design, & query optimization of scalable & distributed systems; & ETL workflow solutions.

Position reports to the Google Reston office & may allow for partial telecommuting

Help Wanted

Portfolio Strategy Manager/Herndon, VA – Manage the projects that support the growth of the automotive brands through identifying, optimizing, and implementing product-related strategies and processes, resulting in achieving the appropriate growth initiative targets; participate in highly confidential projects that support product and competitive strategies, along with positioning and pricing for future products; among other duties. BS +7 yrs experience; hybrid office/home-based. Send resume to J. Hinschlager, Global Assignments Manager, Volkswagen Group of America/VW Credit, 2200 Woodland Pointe Ave., Herndon, VA 20171. Ref. PSM-VA. No phone calls please.

Roofing Technician: Inspect, calculate estimates, and repair roofs, siding, gutters and related materials. Req. 2 yrs exp., 2 day shingle master training & pass MSA test. Commonwealth Roofing & Siding, Chantilly, VA. email res to Genny@uncommonquality.com

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comScore, Inc. seeks Product Support Analyst II in Reston, VA. Data analysis, data verification, and problem-solving abilities to find and report product issues to engineering teams and track the resolution of these issues. Telecommuting permitted. Applicants who are interested in this position may apply <https://www.jobpostingtoday.com/Ref: 14155>.

Legal Notice

Legal Notice

[(Full name(s) of owner(s))]:
PYM Holdings, LLC

Trading as:
Taco Bamba Taqueria
10629 Braddock Rd Ste B8
Fairfax, Fairfax County, VA 22032-2202

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Wine and Beer on Premises and mixed Beverage on Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

William Susinski, Manager

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

3009042 (12-17-21, 12-24-21)

Legal Notice

[(Full name(s) of owner(s))]:
PYM Holdings, LLC

Trading as:
Taco Bamba Taqueria
6691 A Backlick Rd
Springfield, Fairfax County, VA 22182-5727

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Wine and Beer on Premises and mixed Beverage on Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

William Susinski, Manager

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

3009043 (12-17-21, 12-24-21)

Legal Notice

JOINT PUBLIC HEARING FOR TOWN OF CLIFTON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TOWN CODE
JANUARY 4, 2022

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Clifton Town Council and the Town of Clifton Planning Commission will hold a Joint Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 7:30 PM at 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton, VA 20124 to review and implement changes to certain provisions of the Subdivision Ordinance of the Town Code Chapter 10. The proposed changes are available for review and downloading on the Town's website at cliftonva.gov and a hard copy may be examined at the Clifton Post Office, 12644 Chapel Road, Clifton VA, 20124. All interested parties are invited to attend and express their views with respect to the proposed changes to Clifton's Town Code.

[(Full name(s) of owner(s))]:
PYM Holdings, LLC

Trading as:
Taco Bamba Taqueria
6259 Little River Turnpike
Alexandria, Fairfax County, VA 22312

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Wine and Beer on Premises and mixed Beverage on Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

William Susinski, Manager

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

3009040 (12-17-21, 12-24-21)

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