January 2025

Volume 42, Issue 3

SCA Board of Directors

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March Meeting <u>Tuesday, March 18,</u> <u>2025</u> 7:00pm—Social 7:30pm—Meeting Crestwood Elementary School

Program: What Happens When Disaster Strikes?

> Scott Schermerhorn Macy Hunsicker

Fairfax County Urban Search and Rescue



Springfield Civic Association

President's Message—Gail Nittle

Happy New Year and warm wishes for a year filled with good health, prosperity and lots of fond memory-making occasions! Thankfully, our newsletter editor has recovered from her illness and is back in the saddle!



Due to the frigid temperatures and remaining ice on the road and sidewalks, we decided to hold our January 21st meeting via Zoom. Thanks to all of you who joined us! It was an important meeting for parents, grandparents or just concerned individuals! Sergeant D. Adam Curcio, FCPD School Resource Officer (SRO) Supervisor Division III gave a great presentation about the dangers of the smart phone, internet and especially social media to children, teens and adults. Some topics covered were: too

much screen time too early in life; the effects of too much screen time on focus and attention – and resulting personality changes; unmonitored access to websites/programs that are not age appropriate and often dangerous such as sexting; the dangers of social media – especially, but not exclusively, for girls; and scams. It's important to know what you can do to safeguard yourself and your family! Sergeant Curcio later provided additional invaluable resources which you'll find included in this newsletter as well as on our Facebook page.



Just before the Winter Holiday, the SCA delivered 30 beautifully decorated boxes of delicious homemade goodies to our advertisers and supporters. Thanks go to all those who baked, as well as to Jan Johnson who makes all the bows each year, Lisa Bache and Susann Finch who assemble the boxes, and to Marta Morrissey who helps me deliver our edible thanks! This marked the 13th year the SCA has continued this well-received and appreciated tradition!

As a result of his message at our November meeting, Luke Frazza was able to connect seven SCA folks with the <u>Veterans Connect program</u> that recruits volunteer drivers to help elderly and disabled veterans in Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William Counties. If you're interested in helping, please contact me at <u>springfieldcivic@yahoo.com</u> It's a great way to help our veterans who are unable to drive stay in their own homes. Our other speaker in November was Lt. Travis Tate from Search and Rescue (SAR), with focus on searching for critically missing individuals and searching for evidence from major crimes. What an eye-opening presentation!

There have been numerous comments about streets not being plowed or potholes making life miserable. Please contact Supervisor Rodney Lusk's office and let his staff know of all of your concerns – not just those snow and street related. Their website is <u>https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/franconia/franconia-</u> <u>district-staff</u> where you'll find a list of staff members and their contact information. They are there to serve you.

We have yard signs and need yards in which to put them the Wednesday before our meetings. If you are willing to have a sign in your yard, please contact me at <u>springfieldcivic@yahoo.com</u> If you already have a sign, please remember to place it in your yard. Thanks! ~Gail



A Thank You from ECHO

We at ECHO are brimming with gratitude for our donors and want to show what our community has accomplished through ECHO. Below are photos of our Clothing Room, Donation Door, array of toys in the Christmas Shop, and shelves in our Food Pantry.



ECHO by the Numbers- and From the Heart

At ECHO, our volunteers know seeking help is serious and private for each person, and we try to be equally serious about giving help and keeping confidentiality.

However, by sharing the raw numbers about ECHO, we can convey the extent of how we have served our neighbors in Burke, Springfield and the slice of Alexandria that falls within our service area. Take a look:

From January, 2024 through November, 2024, ECHO:

- provided 286,612 pounds of food (yes, we weigh it for our records) to clients during
- scheduled 1,710 appointments at our Food Pantry
- gave out \$46,880 worth of \$20 Food Coupons that allowed clients to get fresh produce or dairy items at a local store
- provided 900 families with a total of 3,698 bags of clothing
- paid rent or partial rent for 279 households for a total of \$214,986
- helped with vital transportation costs in the amount of \$3,416
- provided 644 boxes of diapers
- supplied 1,242 students with backpacks filled with school supplies
- made sure 1,221 people had a jacket or coat for the winter
- paid \$116,225 to utility companies to avoid cut-off of critical services
- began planning the distribution of holiday gifts for approximately 500 local children

On behalf of the clients we assisted and the volunteers who had the satisfaction of helping them, ECHO thanks those who:

- sent us a check
- shopped at our Yard Sales
- sponsored a family for a holiday meal
- sent us new socks or shoes from our Amazon wish list
- brought us non-perishable foods or shared fresh produce from their vegetable gardens
- "handed down" the clothes their children outgrew
- took the time to launder and donate sheets and towels they were replacing for themselves
- asked for donations to ECHO in lieu of birthday gifts
- Scouted for Food, and helped those Scouts and Leaders make a huge difference for our Pantry
- Stamped Out Hunger with the hard-working postal carriers
- walked in the CROP Walk
- held a food drive or held a coat drive
- prayed for us and prayed for our clients
- told someone how ECHO helps people



Thank you, neighbors!!!

Franconia District News



Supervisor Rodney Lusk invites you to the annual

Franconia District Open House

Meet your neighbors and our new Franconia District and Mount Vernon Station Police Commanders. My staff and I look forward to speaking with you.

Saturday, February 8th, 2025

- U 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- 6121 Franconia Road Alexandria, VA 22310

Enter a raffle hosted by the Springfield Art Guild!



No RSVP required. Refreshments will be provided.

Woman's Club of Springfield

The Woman's Club of Springfield has been forced to close the Pink Elephant Thrift shop because our lease expired, but we are still a vital resource for support in our community.

This past quarter the club has supported the Alexandria Hospital Layette program with supplies for newborns, donated needed school supplies to Crestwood and Garfield Elementary schools along with gift cards for holiday purchases.

We assisted Richard Byrd Library with their twice-yearly book sale, took a trip to learn more about Operation Smile, and donated gift cards to Bethany House.

Our "Lunch Bunch" is dining in local restaurants, and our "Brunch and a movie" group meets regularly. Membership meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at 7pm with a speaker and a social hour.

If you would like to join us in any of these activities you are welcome, and you can find out more on our website:

Woman's Club of Springfield.org.



MARY KAY

Hypothermia Prevention Program

Fairfax County partners with faith communities in many ways to support neighbors in need. The Hypothermia Prevention Program prevents death and serious injuries among people experiencing homelessness by ensuring that no one must sleep outside during the winter months.

Faith communities and volunteers make this program possible each winter. In addition to warm shelter and food, they provide other supportive services to help connect guests to a variety of basic needs such as clothing, employment, housing, and more.

The program is available every day, countywide, until March 31. Overflow shelter capacity in the year-round adult shelters is available each night but is limited. If you see someone who you think is at risk of hypothermia, please call the County's nonemergency Police number at 703-691-2131.

Sign up for <u>Fairfax Human Services Corner Alerts</u>, specifically "Homelessness Cooling and Heating Resources," for information on overflow activation. If you have any questions about the program, contact Dee Johnson at <u>danien.johnson@fairfaxcounty.gov</u> or visit the County's <u>Office</u> to Prevent and End Homelessness website.



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Richard Byrd Library News

Greetings from Richard Byrd Library! On January 2nd, Richard Byrd Library kicked off the new year with a Winter Fun Fest attended by over a hundred kids and parents. Teen library volunteers hosted stations for a snowball throw, penguin craft, and winterthemed BINGO, along with other crafts, games, and a library scavenger hunt. Families left with snowflake art, sticker prizes, and big smiles!



Families enjoyed activities such as snowflake art, and "fishing" for sticker prizes at the Winter Fun Fest.

Winter Reading Adventure

You still have time to participate in our winter reading program (<u>bit.ly/FCPL_WRA</u>). From December 1 through January 31, readers of all ages can participate in the program by reading or listening to books or by completing activities. Once you've met the reading goals for your age group, visit us at the library to receive a prize.

Upcoming Events at Richard Byrd

The new year is bringing new adult programming to the library. We have expanded our volunteer technology assistance program from Thursdays 12-2pm to include Saturdays from 11-1pm. Our volunteers can answer questions you have about using your laptop or tablet like setting up email access or navigating the Internet.

We also have great programming for arts and crafts lovers, including:

- Saturdays from 12-2pm, Knitting and Crochet Craft Time. Drop in with your project to meet other hobbyists, share patterns, and see FCPL's yarn art books with new ideas.
- January 29 at 2pm, Animal Portrait Painting Party. Use your creativity to help some Fairfax County Animal Shelter dogs and cats find their new homes. We will be painting pet portraits using photos of currently adoptable animals. Please register (bit.ly/RB_Pet_Portrait) so that we have enough pet images for everyone.



In addition to these great programs, we host storytimes, book clubs, English conversation groups, and other activities each month for the whole community to enjoy. For more information on all of Richard Byrd's programs, visit bit.ly/RB_Programs.

We would also love the chance to visit you! If you'd like to invite us to participate in an upcoming event with your organization or share information about the library and its resources, please reach out to us at librb@fairfaxcounty.gov. We hope to see you soon!

Sponsor Spotlight

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MALEK'S PIZZA PALACE ...so much more than pizza

More than 40 years ago, Joseph and Joanne Malek came to the United States of America to live the American dream. In 1981 they bought Plaza Pizza; and by 1994, it was remodeled and reinvented to become Malek's Pizza Palace. One of the first restaurants in Springfield, Virginia to offer dine-in, carry-out and delivery. Joseph kept the restaurant open until 10pm, but the demand was so high that he started to stay open until 11pm, then 12am, and eventually 4am. Joseph never had the heart to turn a customer away. Often times, Joseph's children Elizabeth and Jonathan would sell pizza slices, coffee and hot cocoa to customers stuck in traffic during snowstorms.

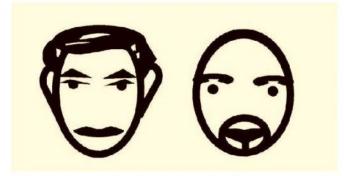




Jonathan currently manages the restaurant. He has been a part of Malek's since the age of nine. Flipping pizzas high in the air and perfecting the array of international dishes is his focus. In 2004, Jonathan wed Viviana and together they are dedicated to continuing a long tradition of quality and excellence. They have been blessed with three beautiful children; Caleb, Eli and Juliana.

Malek's Pizza Palace offers everything from appetizers, soups, salads, subs, Greek, Italian, and Mediterranean specialties to their famous New York Style Pizza. Visit today and help them celebrate over 40 wonderful years of serving the community!

More than just a community business, Malek's Pizza Palace is a true supporting member of the Springfield Community. On the last Monday of every month, Malek's Pizza Palace donates 25% of that day's sales (not proceeds, total sales!) to the chosen charity of the month. The chosen charity may be local, domestic, or international. Thus far they have raised over \$144,667 since the program began in September 2010. (The Cause of the Month Charity has been pausedt until further notice. Stay tuned!)



Friends of Richard Byrd Library Update

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Richard Byrd Library hours:

Mon - Tue 10am - 9pm, Wed - Sat, 10am - 6pm, Sun, closed

Be sure to check the Richard Byrd Library website events calendar for regular updates: <u>https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/</u> <u>branches/richard-byrd</u>

Friends' Choice Awardee!!



On Wednesday, October 9th, we were super excited to recognize longtime volunteer (more than 10 years) Mary Catherine Flythe with a Friends' Choice Award! She supports the Friends in multiple capacities: weekly in the workroom with sorting, shelving, packing donations; untold hours during the semi-annual book sales setting up appealing displays, matching gift quality children's books with plush/cuddly stuffed animals and beanie babies, unpacking and organizing donations, printing/posting signs to help shoppers find their favorite categories and anything else that is needed. She is masterful at organizing hobbies, sports (especially baseball!), home & garden, politics/culture, biographies, and foreign languages and pricing the best items appropriately. Mary Catherine is extremely flexible and willing to do whatever is needed. She is always happy to help customers, young and old, find an old favorite or their next great reading adventure. We are extremely grateful for her faithful, generous support!

Winter Book Sale!

What an outstanding group of volunteers we had at this year's Winter Book Sale!! From setup to clean-up, your hard work and dedication to making the sale rooms look inviting and organized paid off! Thank you for being at the library throughout the week...it was enjoyable to host you. We had many compliments about how well the books were organized. Thanks to our wonderful team we raised \$9,011 (nearly \$1,300 more than last Dec!) to support our library!

We had 39 volunteers over the course of the week working a total of 678 hours!! The revenue helps fund many programs and activities at Richard Byrd throughout the year. You can be proud to have been a part of supporting your community; we could not do it without you!

We hope to see you for the next sale!

Upcoming events:

Coffee & Classic Movie, Feb 7, Mar 7, 10:30am

Legos, Feb 20, Mar 20, 4:30pm

Book Donations Welcome!

If you have an especially large volume, please let us know in advance (<u>rbfriends@gmail.com</u>) so we can meet you at the loading dock area in the back of the library. Otherwise leave your donations in the large box under the paper mâché penguin in the front foyer.



Scam Awareness

Internet and Social Media Safety Resources

The January 21 SCA Meeting featured Sergeant D. Adam Curcio, FCPD School Resource Officer speaking about the dangers of smart phones, the internet and social media to children, teens and adults. He talked about too much screen time and its effect on focus and attention in kids and resulting personality changes. Sergeant Curcio has now provided some additional resources that he thought would be helpful.

Identity Theft	National Elder Fraud Hotline	
www.identifytheft.gov - this is the resource page for anyone who has been the victim of ID theft hosted by the Federal Trade Commission. It has a step by step guide to report the incident, create a recovery plan, and enact the recovery plan.	Office for Victims of Crime, a national hotline to help deal with the aftermath of a scam or fraud. https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/stop-elder-fraud/ providing-help-restoring-hope	
Beware of Lost Pet Scams—FBI https://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field-offices/elpaso/ news/fbi-tech-tuesday-beware-of-lost-pet-scams. This link explains the "lost pet scam" in which scammers claim to have your pet, and send doctored photos, threaten to harm your pet, and ask for money or sensi- tive information to get your pet back.	Scam-Tracking Map AARP Guide to scams and scam tracking. AARP Fraud Watch Network Scam-Tracking Map shows scams re- ported in your area. Report your scam to warn your neighbors and see what else has been reported near you. https://www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/	
World Flder Abuse Awareness Day T	oolkit: How to Prevent Online Scams	

A resource to help prevent Elder Abuse and scams. Links to information and a step by step guide.

https://www.ncoa.org/page/ncoa-zelle-world-elder-abuse-awareness-day-social-media-toolkit/



KEEP YOURSELF AND YOUR LOVED ONES SAFE!

Christmas Cookie Smiles







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Delegate Vivian Watts



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Dr. Malekuti



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Lynbrook Elementary School

SCA recognizes our advertisers and supporters with cookies at Christmas time. This year was no exception. Thanks to all who made cookies, assembled cookie boxes, and delivered the cookies! Our advertisers and supporters are always happy to see us walk through the doors!





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Christmas Cookie Smiles









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Christmas Cookie Smiles





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Charlie Lewis, Crestwood's Springfield Triangle Maintenance



Richard Byrd Library



Kait Morrissey, Mary Kay Cosmetics



Lake Accotink Park



Jason Planakis, Crestwood's Springfield Triangle Maintaince

Volunteer with GrandInvolve

Do you know an older adult who's looking for ways to make a meaningful difference in the lives of elementary schoolchildren? Neighborhood and Community Services is offering classroom volunteer opportunities to support the education of our most vulnerable popula-



tions in Fairfax County elementary schools through the GrandInvolve program. GrandInvolve aims to prevent social isolation and ageism through building intergenerational relationships between our younger and older community members. Classroom assistants are especially needed in Springfield and Alexandria for the spring semester. Bilingual abilities are also in high demand, including Spanish and Farsi. For additional questions, email NCS-Volunteers@FairfaxCounty.gov. For more information, click here: Learn more.

Urgent Need for Blood Donors

Multiple traumatic incidents and other medical emergencies have left INOVA's blood inventory for Type O blood critically low. They need all blood types, but a boost to the supply of Type O will help patients in need significantly. Call 1-866-BLOODSAVES (1-866-256-6372) or visit inovablood.org to schedule an appointment.



Prevent the Spread of Norovirus

Norovirus (sometimes called stomach flu or stomach bug) is a virus that causes vomiting, diarrhea, nausea, and stomach pain. Norovirus spreads very easily and very quickly. People of all ages can get sick from norovirus.

Like other gastrointestinal (stomach and intestines) illnesses, norovirus spreads throughout the year, but is most common from November to April. Each year, 19-21 million people get sick and there are about 2,500 reported outbreaks in the United States.

Norovirus is very contagious, but there are ways you can prevent it.

• Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. <u>Hand sanitizer</u> <u>does not work well against norovirus</u>. It is especially important to wash at key times: after using the toilet or changing diapers, before and after eating, and before and after caring for someone who is sick.

• Practice food safety steps to help prevent norovirus. Keep up the healthy habits in your kitchen:

- Wash your hands before, during, and after preparing food.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables well.
- Keep your kitchen utensils and surfaces clean.
- Cook oysters and other shellfish to an internal temperature of at least 145°F.

Home Heating Assistance is Available

The cold weather is coming, and you may be eligible to receive help with home heating bills through two energy assistance programs that are accepting applications now.

The Fuel Assistance Program helps eligible households in meeting their energy needs by supplementing the cost associated with their primary heat source. The Crisis Assistance Program is designed to help households overcome energy emergencies that cannot be met by other resources.

If you or someone you know needs help with home heating costs during the coldest months of the year, apply to the Fuel Assistance and Crisis Assistance programs <u>online</u> or by calling 833-5-CALL -VA (833-522-5582).





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Police, Fire, Ambulance (Emergency)
Police (Non-Emergency)703-691-2131
Poison Control800-222-1222
Dominion (Virginia Power)866-366-4357
Washington Gas
Fairfax Water(Day)703-698-5800
(Evening/Emergency)703-698-5613
24-Hr. Emergency Services (Mental Health, Drugs, Alcohol)
703-573-5679
Animal Control703-691-2131
Tax Information/Real Estate Assessments703-222-8234
Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)804-497-7100
Metrobus and Metrorail (WMATA)
Virginia Railway Express (VRE)800-743-3873
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Need Information?

Contact the SCA

Do you have a question for the SCA?

Contact us via email at

springfieldcivic@yahoo.com.

Check out our website at www.springfieldcivic.org.

We're on Facebook ! Check us out at

Springfield Civic Association.

Time to Pay SCA Dues!

The new membership year for the Springfield Civic Association (SCA) begins in September of each year so dues for the 2024-2025 program year are due now.

Due to increased activities and expenses, dues for one year were increased to \$20.00 per household.

The funds raised from dues go directly to help support the SCA and its programs which directly benefit our community. If you have supported the SCA in the past by being a member, thank you! We hope you'll renew your membership now. If you have attended meetings or joined in activities as a non-paying participant, please consider becoming a paid member. One of the SCA's goals is to bring people together and encourage them to be active in community affairs. We advocate for our community's interests and concerns through local government and other entities. Please partner with us by renewing or starting your paid membership NOW and by getting involved!

Dues can be paid via PayPal, using our website at <u>www.springfieldcivic.org</u>, or by sending a check to SCA, P.O. Box 842, Springfield, VA 22150. Thank you in advance for supporting the SCA in its effort to enhance the quality of life in Springfield.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP & SUPPORT!

Upcoming SCA Membership Meetings:

- * Tuesday, March 18, 2025
 - Tuesday, May 20, 2025



Free Income Tax Preparation

If you or your family earned less than \$67,000 in 2024, you may qualify for this free service!

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program is a national program sponsored by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to help families maximize their tax returns and avoid the fees businesses charge to prepare taxes. Northern Virginia CASH is a coalition of community partners who support the VITA sites in Northern Virginia. Since 2008 Fairfax County Department of Family Services has provided operational support to the coalition partners.



In 2024, the Department of Family Services VITA program prepared a total of 2,151 tax returns which yielded a total federal tax refund amount of \$2,888,787, an increase of over \$570,000 from 2023. In addition, VITA helped individuals and families claim \$1,203,777 in Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC), further maximizing tax benefits to support households.

In-person VITA services are available at several sites in Northern Virginia. Walk-ins are welcome, no appointments are needed. For more information, please send an <u>email</u> or call 703-533-5320 (please leave a message).



Mental Health Services Are Available

George Mason's Center for Community Mental Health, located at 9900 Main Street, suite 400 in the City of Fairfax, provides evidencebased, accessible, affordable, and culturally sensitive therapy and testing services to those in need, regardless of income. The center sees children as young as age 5, works with community members of various ages, and addresses the mental health needs of veterans.

The center's Emotional Help Line provides FREE, anonymous, confidential support in both English (703-215-1898) and Spanish (703-914-3878). The line is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Learn more about the center at <u>https://ccmh.gmu.edu/</u>.



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SHOP WITH US THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

FCPA Summer Camps

Registration for Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) spring and summer camps begins next week. Mark your calendar so you don't miss out.

FCPA has taken steps to improve the camp registration process based on community feedback. This year, camp registration times will begin on two separate dates, based on your selected camp location.

Camp classes located in the eastern region of Fairfax County are designated as Team Green Camp and will start registration on February 4. Classes taking place in the western region of the County, Team Blue Camp, will begin registration on February 6.

Visit the Park Authority Camp Registration page to search camp locations and listings and find tips to prepare for registration day.





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If you are thinking about h

COMPASS

Exciting news!

Compares it in Reserved work errors because an editors by Equal Hausters (ppe-All neurosceneerits and spaces bottopes are supervised). This is but biseded to a

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