

Happy New Year!

Golden Gazette

January 2021



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www.fairfaxcounty.gov/OlderAdults

Charting a Course for the New Year with No Regrets

by Mary Jane Dye, Editor, Golden Gazette, Department of Family Services

Along with New Year's resolutions, January often brings back memories—especially the moments that make you happy and proud. For Debra Tinker, wife, mother, teacher, veteran, psychologist, editor, and dancer, reflecting on life's achievements and understanding that you are responsible for your own happiness moves her forward in an already full life.

Debra is a former lieutenant commander in the U.S. Navy, serving from 1982 to 1993. When she signed up her mother was not happy. Debra says, "I made the choice, and I knew it was a good one. No regrets." Debra's dad was an original Seabee in World War II, something she was always thrilled to hear about from him. Unfortunately, he passed in 1973, but she is certain he is very proud of her.

Her first days in the service were memorable. It was the first time that she ever lived so far from home. "I was excited and anxious to report to Officer Candidate School (OCS) in Newport, RI," she says. After reporting for duty, it turned out that she and another female officer candidate had incorrect orders. They were a week early! "They couldn't find much for us to do, so we basically had seven days of vacation," says Debra, but then the real challenge began.

For Debra, OCS was a 16-week nightmare. She was 31 years old while most of the other candidates were recent college graduates. Her expected challenges were exhausting physical exercise and strict

adherence to rules and regulations. She says that some stresses were not anticipated like extreme sleep deprivation and more tasks to do in a day than were humanly possible.

Debra understood that this stress was temporary. "I knew that to be commissioned I would have to pass the academic classes, pass the physical readiness testing, and pass the swimming test," she says. For her, the rest was extraneous and not worth worrying about.

When commissioning day arrived, all the training was worth it. "Even my mom was present and earning those ensign bars made me prouder than I was when I finished my undergraduate degree." She adds, "I certainly felt like I worked harder for those bars."

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Officer Candidate Debra Tinker Navigation Training on a Yard Patrol Craft in Narragansett Bay.

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Debra Tinker: Charting a Course for the New Year . . . continued from page 1

During Debra's career, she served in many job capacities, met interesting people, assisted various commands by educating them in drug and alcohol abuse and related topics, and suicide prevention. She even met her husband Charles Enos, now a retired navy captain, at her first duty station 38 years ago. She explains that every job allowed her to learn and hone leadership skills and prove to her commanding officers and herself that she could do an outstanding job.

When asked if there were any atypical stories while serving, Debra has a few. One that still captivates her occurred while at sea on a nuclear-powered submarine escorting female ROTC students for a day. According to Debra, her admiral thought she was a natural choice being that she was a former high school English teacher. "I was thrilled," she says.

It was 1988—long before women were permitted to serve aboard subs. "During my brief cruise, I not only kept track of the young women, but I had the opportunity to drive the boat while submerged in the Atlantic Ocean," she says. To add more excitement, when the ship was on the surface of the ocean, the commanding officer invited her up to the conning tower to watch the dolphins play. "It was mesmerizing. They jumped over the bow and swam all around, treating the sub like a giant toy. I sure wish I had a camera with me," she sighs.

Debra served our county for more than 11 years. She remembers that they gave her a beautiful farewell luncheon. "I remember going home and feeling free. I even had my second ear piercing because now I could wear as many earrings as I wanted," she laughs.

Of course, she took time off before starting substitute teaching. She was now a mom with two boys and subbing allowed flexibility. When her children got older, she worked part-time as a home-based therapist.



Left to Right: Debra Tinker, Anne Renninger and Judy Miller. Debra renews her love for tapping with Lincolnia Senior Center's Snappy Tappers. Photo, 2019.

While in the navy she completed an M.A. in clinical and community psychology. According to Debra, one of the reasons she and her family came to Fairfax County was so she could complete a Ph.D. at George Mason University. But, she says, "Being the mom of two, including one with multiple disabilities, did not permit me the time to pursue that dream of a doctorate, but again, no regrets."

Now since she and her husband are "empty-nesters," she is a visual artist who creates and teaches art for adults with special needs. She has also taught art and English virtually. "I can hardly wait to get back to teaching in person when the pandemic is over. It's so rewarding," she says. Despite the pandemic, she is still working as an editor, currently editing a friend's first book.

Retirement also has allowed Debra to rekindle her love of dancing. She took lessons in tap and ballet while in her 20s. "I read about the Snappy Tappers in the Golden Gazette and decided to join," says Debra. The Snappy Tappers meets weekly at the Lincolnia Senior Center in Alexandria. (The group is on pause until the pandemic is over.) "Tap was always my favorite. It's a great group, lots of fun, and a good way to exercise."

Like most, Debra hopes 2021 brings health and wellness. "I am looking forward to a new year with anticipation, expecting to recapture some normality of life, and being able to travel again."

Social Isolation, Technology and Wellness Identified as Key Issues Facing Older Adults During COVID-19

by Fairfax County Emergency Information

This has been a challenging year. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic loss of human life and presents an unprecedented challenge to public health. The pandemic has been especially hard on older adults. More than 80% of COVID-19 deaths in Fairfax County have been adults 65 and older and over 95 percent of all deaths have been adults 50 and older. For the older adult community, the pandemic has exacerbated physical and mental health challenges leading to social isolation and fear.

Recently, the Department of Family Services Fairfax Area Agency on Aging led the effort to develop a response plan, affirmed by the Board of Supervisors, to address the critical issues faced by older adults during the pandemic.

Three primary categories of needs were identified: 1) Social Isolation, 2) Technology, and 3) Wellness. Here's a partial list of resources and solutions for each category:

Social Isolation

- Fairfax Area Agency on Aging expanded Meals on Wheels criteria to serve older adults who are quarantining because of the pandemic. Over 300,000 meals have been delivered to older adults during the pandemic. By partnering with Neighborhood and Community Services, welfare checks were able to be provided during delivery, by using Fastran staff to deliver the meals. Care packages were also distributed to residents in need.
- As a result of Senior Centers and Adult Day Health Care Centers being closed, Neighborhood and Community Services implemented wellness assessments to connect those individuals and families to essential resources, demonstrate support during the



pandemic and use the data to meet ongoing needs of the community. The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging was able to provide home delivered meals to congregate meal participants who normally received their meals at a center.

- Neighborhood and Community Services in partnership with Service Source, the Department of Family Services, and other partners, created a virtual center, called the Virtual Center for Active Adults, where older adults and adults with disabilities can gather, learn, talk, exercise and remain engaged with one another.
- The Golden Gazette, a free monthly community newsletter with more than 26,000 subscribers has remained a steady source of information to keep older adults connected.

Technology

- The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board implemented virtual telehealth options to meet the needs of older adults, adults with disabilities and other eligible residents.
- Department of Housing and Community Development is piloting a “Tablets for Seniors” loan program at one of the senior communities.
- Fairfax Area Agency on Aging’s staff have established a virtual format to assist older adults who are enrolling in Medicare or needing help to identify appropriate insurance plans.

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Key Issues Facing Older Adults During COVID-19

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Wellness

- The Neighbor 2 Neighbor Program of the Health Department, in partnership with Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department volunteers, created a free grocery shopping and pharmacy pick-up program.
- The Health Department continues to provide vital information through the COVID-19 Toolkit including tips on slowing the spread of COVID-19 and resources on contact tracing, testing and more.
- ElderLink provides affordable care management to older adults and is now offering its evidence-based Chronic Disease Self-Management workshop via telephone. The program aims to build participants' confidence in managing their health and remaining engaged and active.

These areas were identified following feedback from the COVID-19 response plan workgroup and multiple focus groups with the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging, 50+ Community Ambassadors, countywide staff, nonprofit partners, mental health professionals, Health Department personnel and community members.

The complexities of COVID-19 have created a need for physical and social distancing that has led to new ways to connect with family and friends, as well as different strategies and tactics to manage our mental and physical health. Technology-based options have been provided to residents to enhance their physical, emotional, and mental well-being. In addition to the countywide resources and services outlined above, there are additional solutions that are being explored to address social isolation, improve technology access, and promote physical and emotional wellness to keep older residents healthy, connected, and informed.

For more information on the programs and services listed, please contact the Department of Family

Services' Aging, Disability and Caregiver Resource Line at **703-324-7948, TTY 711.**

Stay Informed

- Call our Health Department Call Center at **703-267-3511** with COVID-19 questions; open 9 a.m.-7 p.m. weekdays and 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. on weekends.
- Text FFXCOVID to 888777 to receive updates from Fairfax County about COVID-19; text FFXCOVIDESP to 888777 for updates in Spanish.
- Email questions or concerns to **ffxcovid@fairfaxcounty.gov**. This email account will be staffed Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Visit a web portal for coronavirus that serves as a one-stop online resource for information.
- Learn more about COVID-19 on the Health Department Coronavirus (COVID-19) webpage at **fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus**.



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Robert N. Keifert: A Life of Taking Care of Those He Loves

by Mary Jane Dye, Editor, Golden Gazette, Department of Family Services

This article was intended to celebrate Robert Keifert and his 101st birthday this January. The interview was conducted in November 2020, shortly before he passed away on November 17. Bob's life story is so much more than what is written below, but it still serves as a testimonial of a life well lived and loved.

Soon to be 101, veteran Robert Keifert has a big advantage when it comes to understanding life. Not only did he survive World War II, but also a witness to a century of historic events.

Bob was born in 1920 at the tail end of the Spanish flu epidemic. Remarkably, he is now living through another pandemic—COVID-19. In between these outbreaks—the Great Depression, wars, landing on the moon, Civil Rights Movement, technological and scientific progress—and so much more.

Bob is a second generation American and had 11 brothers and one sister. He is now the sole survivor. "My parents were German immigrants. We lived on a homestead in Sturgis, South Dakota," he says.

According to Bob, growing up on a farm during the Great Depression was not easy. "Like so many others, we struggled and had no money," he says. To escape being poor, in 1937, Bob enlisted in the Navy as a sailor, but his dream was to become a pilot. "I took a plane ride and fell in love with flying," says Bob.

When an opportunity arose to go to mechanics school to work on airplanes, Bob continues, he applied immediately. It was his chance to eventually become a pilot.

With hard work, his dream came true. After 23 years, he became a military officer known as a Mustang—he went from enlisted rank to Navy Commander as a pilot.

He says that his most memorable experience during the

war was being the personal pilot to a Navy Admiral in the 6th Fleet in Italy. "It was really something," he says.

During the war, Bob stayed in touch with his family by writing letters. He would send money to his mom in South Dakota and to his sister in Wisconsin. "I had the means to help them, so I did," he says. "I was fulfilling my main reason for enlisting."

Bob got married when the war was ending. "We lived in Italy and England. It was quite a life," he says. "After the war, I stayed in the service for 10 more years, stationed in Guam. Retiring was bittersweet. We moved back to the States. I finished up my degree at Georgetown University and went into commercial real estate as a broker and investor."

Bob and his wife had three children and their marriage lasted 55 years. She passed in 2000. His recommendation for leading a good life is to live an honest one. "That's what we did in our married life, and I continue to do at 100 years old."

According to Bob, his service and experiences affected how he has lived. He learned that self-discipline, not wasting anything, and keeping it simple are good rules to live by. He also adds that



Bob Keifert participates in Honor Flight ceremony for World War II veterans.

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Keifert . . . continued from page 8

there are methods to doing things: “Some are better than others. Some it doesn't matter and some it truly does.” He believes that brilliant is knowing when it matters and being able to do it in short order.



Navy Commander Keifert

Bob wants everyone to know that love is determined by how well you take care of someone. “I spent my life taking good care of those I love. It's been a good life. It's paid well.”

Special Note of Thanks from His Daughter:

A wonderful place that took care of Bob was the Lincolnia Senior Center. His daughter Peggy says it meant a lot to him, and he was sad when it physically closed due to the pandemic. “He really loved that place, and they even continued to bring him meals up until his heart attack.” She fondly remembers that just a year ago the center held a big 100th birthday party for him. “He cried on the way home.”

Thank you for your service and lasting words of wisdom, Robert Keifert. You will never be forgotten.

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Fairfax Area Commission on Aging News

by Jacquie Woodruff, Director, Livable Communities Development, Fairfax Area Agency on Aging

The Fairfax Area Commission on Aging (COA) is an advisory board mandated by the Older American's Act.

There is no COA Virtual Meeting in January.

Commissioners for the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging are appointed by the Board of Supervisors and the City Councils of the City of Fairfax and the City of Falls Church.

At the December Commission on Aging meeting, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) representatives presented to the COA.

CERT is a program to engage citizens in making their community safer, more prepared, and more resilient when incidents occur. CERT is a partnership between the Federal and Fairfax County Governments and is managed by the Fire and Rescue Department. The training prepares people to help themselves, their families, and their communities in case of major disasters when first responders are delayed.

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Caregiving Tips for January

by *Giuliana Valencia, Caregiver Support Specialist, Fairfax Area Agency on Aging*



As most physical and social environments have closed or moved online, caregivers are now limited in their opportunities to get relief from their responsibilities—especially caregivers whose loved ones are at home and can no longer attend a day program. The pandemic has not only impacted caregivers’ ability to access supportive services, but it has also affected daily routines.

If you are struggling to engage and entertain your loved one, why not develop a new daily routine to help? Incorporate activities in your day that your loved one can do at home—watching a movie or talking with family or friends via phone.

To learn more about caregiver resources and services, contact our Aging, Disability, Caregiver Resource line at **703-324-7948** or visit, **[fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/older-adults](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/older-adults)** and select Family Caregiver Support program.

ElderLink Caregiver Support Call

Even with good planning, caregiving is an unexpected adventure. Let's talk about the ups and downs of your journey. Join us on Tuesday, Jan. 12 from 7-8 p.m. The call is facilitated by two dynamic and experienced ElderLink social workers, Krystale Noriega and Jennifer Purcell.

Register online at **[fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/older-adults](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/older-adults)** look for the links in the Hot Topics. You can also call **703-324-5374** or email **Krystale.Noriega@fairfaxcounty.gov** or **Jennifer.Purcell@fairfaxcounty.gov**. An access link and phone number will be provided after registration.

Fairfax County Library: Digital Programs

Did you know that Fairfax County Library staff is busy creating and providing many programs, events, and services you can participate in from the comfort of your own home?

Some of their digital programs and online activities include book clubs, trivia happy hour, film clubs, workshops, book discussions, and even a scavenger hunt. To learn more visit: **[fairfaxcounty.gov/library](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library)**

Café Latino- Virtual Support Group

The Alzheimer’s Association is pleased to announce Café Latino, a support group in Spanish for caregivers who look after those with Alzheimer's or other dementias. This group is a safe environment where caregivers can share, listen, and enjoy “zoom” coffee with others going through similar experiences.

Meetings are the second Saturday of each month from 10-11:30 a.m. Participants may join the zoom meeting via telephone or computer. Find out more by emailing **alz.CafeLatinoVA@gmail.com**.

Get Notifications with Fairfax Alerts!

If we can't reach you, we can't alert you. Family caregivers can receive email or text notifications of Fairfax County caregiver services and programs. Programs include case management, in-home respite, caregiver support and webinars, wellness workshops, and much more.

Visit **[fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts)** to create a Fairfax Alerts account, and select Area Agency on Aging.

Ombudsman: What Is a Compassionate Care Visit?

by Camden Doran, Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Volunteer Specialist, Area Agency on Aging

Residents in long-term care facilities have the right to receive visitors, such as family, friends, or organizations and individuals providing health, social, legal, or other services. However, there may be circumstances when visitation is restricted for various reasons. During these times, a resident may still be able to receive a visitor for compassionate care purposes. Compassionate care not only includes end-of-life situations, but also can pertain to:

- A resident, who was living with their family before recently being admitted to a nursing home, is struggling with the change in environment and lack of physical family support.
- A resident who is grieving after a friend or family member has recently passed away.
- A resident who needs cueing and encouragement with eating or drinking, previously provided by

family and/or caregiver(s), and is experiencing weight loss or dehydration.

- A resident who used to talk and interact with others is experiencing emotional distress, seldom speaking, or crying more frequently. (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, 2020)

As a mandated program under the Older Americans Act, the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is often called to assist residents and consumers to advocate for their rights to ensure quality of care and quality of life.

For more information about compassionate care visitation or other nursing facility and assisted living concerns, please call **703-324-5861** or contact the Ombudsman Program by email at **NVLT COP@fairfaxcounty.gov**.

Upcoming ElderLink Programs

Diabetes Self-Management. Jan. 20-Feb. 24, 1:30-3:30 p.m. **Free.** This program is for individuals interested in learning how to effectively manage their diabetes. Class offered via ZOOM. Contact Dianne Duke at **703-324-7721** or visit **tinyurl.com/DSMP123** to register.

Chronic Disease Self-Management. Jan. 28-March 4, 11a.m.-Noon. **Free.** This program is for individuals interested in learning how to live better by effectively managing symptoms. Learn how to manage pain and fatigue, eat healthier, and remain active. Offered over the phone. To register, call Dianne Duke at **703-324-7721**.

Caring for You, Caring for Me. Jan. 25-Feb. 22, 10 a.m.-Noon. **Free.** Program is a blend of interactive support and education for caregivers of older adults. Participants report increased confidence and competence in their caregiving role. Class offered via ZOOM. Contact Kristin Martin, **703-324-7577** or **https://tinyurl.com/CFYCFM4U** to register.

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Yahne Miorini, LL.M

Exercise Supports Emotional and Mental Health

According to the National Institute on Aging, research has shown that exercise is not only good for your physical health, but also supports emotional and mental health. During COVID-19, exercise can help relieve emotional stress.

Here are some exercise ideas to help lift your mood:

- Walking, bicycling, or dancing. Endurance activities increase your breathing, get your heart pumping, and boost chemicals in your body that may improve mood.
- Yoga. This mind and body practice typically combines physical postures, breathing exercises, and relaxation.
- Tai chi. This "moving meditation" involves shifting the body slowly, gently, and precisely, while breathing deeply.

Visit NIA's website at nia.nih.gov to learn more about the emotional benefits of exercise.

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- Meditation
- SAIL (Stay Active and Independent for Life)




Fairfax County
 Neighborhood and
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A Fairfax County, VA,
 publication.
 November 2020

Start a New Fitness Routine This Winter

by the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services

As temperatures drop and days get shorter, many of us are forced to stay indoors. This makes it difficult to maintain a fitness routine. Although many fitness classes are available online, where can you find live virtual classes created specifically for older adults and adults with disabilities?

Look no further than the Virtual Center for Active Adults (VCAA). Created to enrich the lives of older adults and adults with disabilities in Fairfax County while combating isolation, the VCAA offers more than 40 classes each week.

Roughly half the classes are dedicated to health and wellness and are hosted on the VCAA's Fit & FAB (Flexible, Active, Balanced) Zoom account. The classes range from low to high intensity and span a variety of interests and fitness objectives.

Want to improve muscle tone and balance? Consider taking a tai chi or Stay Active & Independent for Life class. Need to work on your flexibility? The VCAA offers yoga classes as well as full body stretching.

Want to have fun? Line dancing, dance fitness and high energy aerobics are energetic and enjoyable. Modifications can be made available so that anyone can participate. Best of all, VCAA classes are free!

To view the weekly schedule of classes, visit the Virtual Center for Active Adults at <https://bit.ly/NCSvcaa>. To join a fitness class, log onto the Fit & FAB Zoom account at <https://bit.ly/VCAAFitFAB>.



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Five Tips for Eating Healthy in the New Year

by Maria Loh, Nutritionist, Area Agency on Aging

The new year is a great time to implement some easy changes to your regular mealtime routines.

Here are five tips that may help boost your health and feelings of wellbeing in 2021:

1. Stay Hydrated

- Strive to consume at least eight glasses of water or non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic, and unsweetened beverages each day. As we age, our sense of thirst diminishes, so we may need to make a conscious effort to consume the fluid we need.

2. Fill up on fresh fruits and vegetables

- MyPlate recommends that half of our plates should be comprised of fruits and vegetables (without heavy dips and sauces!)
- Make your plates as colorful as possible with an array of fruits and vegetables. You will reap health benefits from the various phytochemicals and flavonoids.
- Try a new fruit or vegetable each month. Most grocery stores carry interesting fruits and vegetables such as Dragon Fruit, Broccoflower, Kohlrabi, Rambutan, and Jicama. If you can't get out to the store due to the pandemic, Fairfax County has a volunteer Neighbor 2 Neighbor Grocery Shopping and Pharmacy Pick-Up Service. More information is at [fairfaxcounty.gov/health/neighbor](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/neighbor).

3. Enjoy plant-based proteins often

- Try frequently replacing the meat and poultry in your diet with healthy beans, nuts or seeds as a main dish or part of a meal.

4. Choose foods and beverages that are low in sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.

- Choosing foods lower in fat, sodium and added sugars can help improve health and reduce the risk of chronic conditions like hypertension, heart disease and diabetes.

5. Connect with others during mealtime

- While the pandemic has made it difficult to join friends and extended family for in-person gatherings, you can still gather virtually! Enjoy meals with others at the weekday Lunch Bunch, through Fairfax County's Virtual Center for Active Adults at [fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/virtual-center-active-adults](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/neighborhood-community-services/virtual-center-active-adults).
- If virtual visits are not your preference, you can still call a friend or family member during mealtimes and eat "together" while chatting on speaker phone.

It is important to implement these dietary changes gradually. Sometimes, if we try to change everything at once, it can become overwhelming and we can get discouraged and give up.

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Rich Locro Stew from Argentina

by Devaki Das, Culinary Instructor, FCPS-Adult Community Education

January is the perfect time for comfort stews. And since it seems like this winter we'll be hunkering down and generally staying put, it's also an opportunity to venture far from home—at least in the kitchen.

Locro is an Argentinian stew. It is thick and hearty made with pumpkin or butternut squash, a variety of meats, hominy, lima beans, and chickpeas. It also is creamy and slightly sweet. The veal, pork, cured chorizo and my addition of slabs of bacon is delicious.

Though it takes several hours of slow cooking, it is a one pot meal—no sides needed. It also freezes well, so a big batch is perfect to keep handy when all you want to do is curl up with a nice bowl of rich stew.

Locro—Argentinian Stew

Ingredients

1 large 28 oz. can hominy
1 small bag frozen lima beans
1 can chickpeas, 15 oz.
1 lb. veal or stewing beef cubes
1 lb. pork shoulder or butt
2 tsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. ground black pepper
1/2 lb. thick slab of bacon
10 oz. cured chorizo
large yellow onion, finely chopped to yield 2 cups
1 tbsp. tomato paste
1 tsp. dried oregano
1/2 tsp. ground cumin
2 bay leaves
4 cups butternut squash, cut in pieces
Juice of 1 lemon
1 cup finely chopped green onions

Sauce:

1/2 cup olive oil
2 tsp. sweet smoked paprika
1/2 tsp. crushed red chile flakes
8 cloves garlic, peeled & finely chopped

Preparation

Green onions: Remove woody ends and cut into thinly sliced circles. (Use only white and light green portions.)

Veal or beef: Cut into 1-inch cubes and set aside.

Pork: Discard any skin or excess fat. Cut into 1-inch pieces and set aside.

Cured chorizo: cut into 1/2-inch diagonal slices.

Butternut squash: Peel, seed, cut into 1-inch cubes.

Method

1. Whisk 1/2 cup oil, paprika, chile flakes, and 1/4 of the garlic in a bowl; set sauce aside.
2. Heat remaining oil in heavy bottom pot over medium-high heat.
3. Season veal and pork with salt and pepper; working in batches, add to pan, and cook, turning, until browned all over, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate.
4. Add chorizo; cook until fat renders, about 2 minutes.
5. To the same pot, add remaining garlic and onion & bacon. Cook until soft, about 5-7 minutes.
6. Add tomato paste, salt, pepper, oregano, cumin, and bay leaf; cook for 2 minutes.
7. Return meat to pan with hominy, beans, chickpeas, squash, and 8 cups of water. Add 1/2 tsp. baking soda to soften beans.
8. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook for approx. 1 hour until all the meat is cooked.
9. Stir in the lemon juice and taste and adjust seasonings.
10. Remove the slab of bacon and chop finely and return to the stew.
11. Divide the stew among bowls and drizzle with the oil and chile sauce.
12. Sprinkle with green onions and enjoy!



Channel 16 Programs

by Amy Carlini, Department of Family Services

Watch Channel 16 for a taste of community! The award-winning station provides an interesting mix of county news and government proceedings and features interesting people and places that make Fairfax County a great place to live.

Shows include 16 Around Fairfax, County Magazine, the library's Check it Out, and Parks Plus. Each of these programs include beautiful footage of county parks and facilities as well as interviews with county staff and residents.

You can enjoy Channel 16 programming online, anytime, or just turn on your television. For online programming, live streaming and the complete broadcast schedule, go to fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/channel-16/fairfax-county-government-television.



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FTC Scam Alert

Give Wisely in COVID Times

Thanks to COVID-19, many charitable organizations are faced with greater demand for their services, but less in donations as people have less to give. Now, more than ever, it's important to make sure that your donation will be used wisely.

Remember these four tips when giving:

- Search online for the cause you care about — like “help COVID victims” or “homeless kids” — plus phrases like “best charity” or “highly rated charity.” Once you find a specific charity you're considering giving to, search for its name plus “complaint,” “review,” “rating,” or “scam.” If you find red flags, it might be best to find another organization.
- Check out the charity's website. Does it give information about the programs you want to support, or how it uses donations? How much of your donation will go directly to support the programs you care about? If you can't find detailed information about a charity's mission and programs, be suspicious.
- Use one of these organizations to help you research charities: BBB Wise Giving Alliance, Charity Navigator, CharityWatch, and GuideStar. The IRS's Tax Exempt Organization Search tells you if your donation would be tax deductible.
- See what your state's charity regulator has to say about the charity. Don't know who that is? Look it up at nasconet.org.
- Donating on social media or through a crowdfunding campaign? Don't assume solicitations on social media or crowdfunding campaigns are legitimate. Do your own research. And remember that crowdfunding campaigns are not tax deductible.

Find more tips at FTC.gov/Charity. If you spot a bogus charity, report them to ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

Silver Shield Team on Staying Safe from Scams

by Melissa Smarr, Silver Shield Task Force

We are all hoping for a healthy and safe year ahead, and part of that includes staying safe from scams. As we look at the scam outlook for 2021, there are, unfortunately, many scams on the horizon looking to take our money.

The most discussed new scams are the ones related to the upcoming COVID-19 vaccines. According to **businesswire.com**, the top predicted scams for 2021 include fake contract tracing apps, fraudulent phone calls, phishing attempts and ransomware attacks.

All of the scams listed above try to trick the potential victim by contacting a person by phone or email, then using scare tactics related to the current global pandemic. The fake contract tracing apps are created to look like the ones states and local governments are using, then ask for money to find out the latest coronavirus cases in a victim's area.

The phishing scams related to the pandemic include emails offering possible cures for COVID-19. The scammers are hoping potential victims will click on the links included in the emails and pay money for so-called cures. Another COVID-19 related deals with vaccines. Scammers are convincing victims that they will receive the vaccine faster if they pay a fee. These scammers are charging hundreds of dollars for the advance fee of securing a vaccine, which is not possible for them to provide.

In addition to all this, there are ransomware attacks that include attempts to take control of the potential victim's computer by taking personal financial information and adding a virus on the computer to distract the victim from the actual theft.

There's a lot out there to be wary of, but there are also ways to protect yourself. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

1. Think about not answering the phone if you do not recognize the phone number. If you feel you need to answer the phone, do so. However, if the phone call is not the one you are expecting, you can go ahead and hang up.
2. Be careful when clicking links in emails that look suspicious. Follow your gut instinct; if it is too good to be true, it is.
3. Do not give control of your computer to anyone who has called you. If you need assistance with your computer, there are local computer stores that can assist you with most problems. If you want telephone assistance with your computer, please ensure that you make the telephone call yourself, rather than answering a call from an unknown person. This will help better protect you, your computer and the information you have stored.

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Sage Advice for Driving in Fog

by Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department

Is it a little foggy out? Well . . . maybe not, but when there is fog, please drive safely. Fairfax County firefighters and paramedics do not want to meet you at a preventable accident.



Follow these Driving in Fog safety tips provided by the National Weather Service:

- Slow down and allow extra time to reach your destination.
- Make your vehicle visible to others both ahead of you and behind you by using your low-beam headlights since this means your taillights will also be on. Use fog lights if you have them.
- Never use your high-beam lights. Using high beam lights causes glare, making it more difficult for you to see what's ahead of you on the road.
- Leave plenty of distance between you and the vehicle in front of you to account for sudden stops or changes in the traffic pattern.
- To ensure you are staying in the proper lane, follow the lines on the road with your eyes.
- In extremely dense fog where visibility is near zero, the best course of action is to first turn on your hazard lights, then simply pull into a safe location, such as a parking lot of a local business and stop.

For 2021, an Emergency Preparedness Resolution

by Courtney Arroyo, Emergency Management Specialist, Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management

Let's talk about an important New Year's resolution—emergency preparedness. The steps are simple, and if you break them up throughout the year, you can be successful.

Plan: Make your emergency plan and practice it. **Emergency Kit:** Make your own emergency kit over the course of a year and add things that you use daily as you go along.

Emergency Information: How will you get official emergency information?

- **Fairfax Alerts.** Fairfax County's free public emergency alerting system. You can customize your alerts to what you want to get, such as traffic, weather, and community updates. Fairfax Alerts also has the Functional Needs Registry,

a subscription for you to receive additional notifications when emergencies are upon us. Sign up at [fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/alerts).

- **Social Media.** Follow the Office of Emergency Management on social media [@ReadyFairfax](https://twitter.com/ReadyFairfax) and [@Fairfax County @FairfaxCountyGovernment](https://twitter.com/FairfaxCounty).
- **News.** Watch the news daily and stay up to date on what is going on.
- **Weather Radio.** Have a weather radio that can alert you of incoming severe weather.

Fairfax County also has a Community Emergency Response Guide (CERG) that will walk you through the steps to preparedness. You can download a copy at [fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/cerg](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/cerg).

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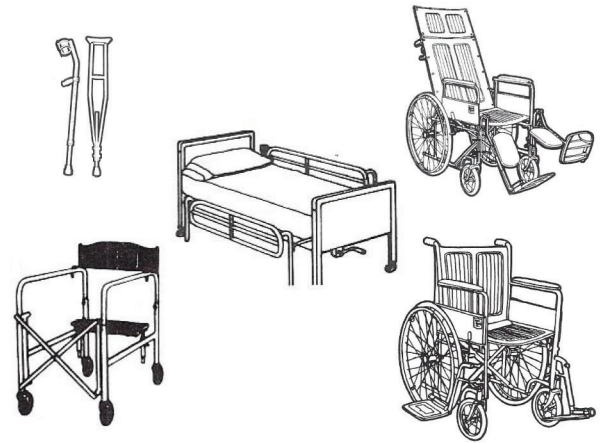


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Fairfax County is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. To request special accommodations, call 703-246-5101 or TTY 711. Please allow 48 hours in order to make the necessary arrangements.



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New Caring Cards Program Lifts Spirits

by Tanya Erway, Recruitment Manager, Volunteer Solutions

Many centuries ago, Aesop once declared something that still holds true today, “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.” During this tumultuous time that has tested everyone, there are people of all ages who have demonstrated how to live by this motto. Here, in Northern Virginia, it’s been heartening to see that many have found safe ways to make a difference in their communities.

Due to the pandemic, Fairfax County senior centers began offering activities virtually. In an effort to remind older adults that others were thinking of them and to reduce social isolation, Volunteer Solutions created a program called Caring Cards.

Volunteer Solutions volunteers Carol Dexter, Eleanor Dymment, Abby Lekezime, Marion Glass and Deb Richlen have been busy creating and writing cards for older adults at the Lewinsville Senior Center. These compassionate ladies have written nearly 200 cards.



Carol Dexter, Volunteer

Carol Dexter expressed these thoughts, “Hearts are the universal language. Sending these cards is my way of letting these individuals know

they are loved and not forgotten. Giving awakens my gratefulness for my own blessings!”

Volunteer Solutions also partnered with Girl Scout troops, Young Men’s Service League of Oakton-Vienna and the Department of Housing to create and write cards for older adults in senior living residences. Since the senior housing holiday events were cancelled, these kind notes helped to spread cheer to residents during the holiday season. The group “Women of Good Works” generously

donated a variety of craft supplies so that some of the youth would have what they need to make cards at home. Girl Scout troops also helped earlier in the year by writing cards to senior housing congregate meal clients.

Girl Scout Cedar Skaggs

It’s safe to assume that Eleanor Dymment echoed the thoughts of many volunteer note-writers when she shared, “It was a joy to send messages of connection and love to so many seniors who might be lonely during the epidemic. I didn’t know who got my cards, but I honestly tried to pour my love into each word I wrote and hoped they would feel it.”



Cedar Skaggs, Girl Scout

So far, more than 1,000 cards have been created and distributed to older adults in Fairfax County! We hope that ongoing acts of kindness will be a helpful reminder that we are all connected, despite physical distancing precautions.

Volunteer and Donation Opportunities

Free Daily Phone Calls Available from CareRing

If you struggle with isolation and loneliness, consider using CareRing of PRS, Inc. CareRing is a free program for the Northern Virginia 60+ community, dedicated to providing clients with daily phone calls to chat, remind them of their medications, and make sure they are OK. Go to <https://bit.ly/CareRing> for more information about the service or to volunteer. You may also call **703-516-6769**.

Help Alleviate Hunger

Food For Neighbors, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit created in 2016, needs volunteers to help alleviate hunger

... continued to page 22

Volunteer and Donation Opportunities

... continued from page 21

in Northern Virginia by providing food assistance to middle and high school students. Their Red Bag Program addresses weekend food insecurity. Red Bag Program participants shop for nonperishable items at their convenience and set them on their doorsteps for collection approximately five times per year. Volunteers are needed to collect, sort, organize, and deliver food.

If you can volunteer or donate food, grocery gift cards or even help financially, visit <https://bit.ly/FFN-RedBag>.

Drivers Needed in the Herndon Area

Herndon Village Network relies on volunteers to drive older adults to doctor appointments, grocery shopping, and other activities. This service allows seniors to age in place, and it also helps them to remain connected with the community. If you or someone you know might be interested in helping, get more information here, <https://bit.ly/HerndonVillageVol>.

Be the Voice for a Vulnerable Child

Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) provides volunteer advocates to abused and neglected children referred by the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court. Volunteers must commit to their assigned child(ren) throughout the life of the case (an average of two years) and visit them twice monthly, with COVID-19 safety precautions. The CASA volunteer is often the only consistent adult in the life of that child. The first step to becoming a CASA volunteer is to attend a virtual information session. Visit fairfaxcasa.org, and/or email Shaina Goldberg at volunteer@casafairfax.org for more information.

Submit county volunteer opportunities to Tanya Erway at Tanya.Erway@FairfaxCounty.gov.

Transportation Options

The Shepherd's Center

Losing the ability to drive poses real challenges to getting around. When a pandemic is added to this scenario, the need for volunteers becomes greater. If you need services, or would like to volunteer to help adults (55+) and their caregivers, select a Shepherd's Center below. Drivers are needed throughout the county, and some centers are also looking for administrative support, too.

Driving includes going to the grocery store, pharmacy, bank, picking up food from a restaurant, taking others to medical appointments, and more. Volunteers choose their hours and preferred task. The Shepherd's Center adheres to CDC safety guidelines for volunteers.

- Annandale/Springfield, 703-941-1419
shepherdscenter-annandale.org
- Fairfax/Burke, 703-323-4788
scfbva.org
- Great Falls, 703-586-9696
theSCGF.org
- McLean/Arlington/Falls Church, 703-506-2199, scmafc.org
- Oakton/Vienna/Reston/Herndon, 703-281-0538, scov.org
- South County, 703-799-0505,
email scsc-transport@verizon.net
- Western Fairfax County, 703-246-5920
scwfc.org

More nonprofit driving programs . . .

Herndon Village Network

703-375-9439, herndonvillagenetwork.org

Mount Vernon at Home

703-303-4060, mountvernonathome.org

Reston Community Center

703-390-6198, restoncommunitycenter.com/about-reston/rcc-rides

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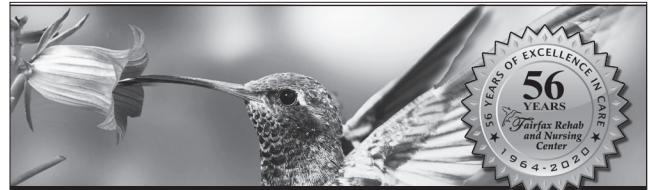
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January Community Calendar

Tuesday, January 5 & Tuesday, January 19, Caregivers Support Group, Zoom, 10:30 a.m. Free. Shepherd's Center serving Oakton-Vienna-Reston-Herndon hosts a support group for caregivers of adult family members with dementia the first and third Tuesdays of each month. Contact Jack Tarr, at jtarr5@verizon.net for details on joining the meeting via zoom or go to scov.org/announcements.

Wednesday, January 6, Lifetime Learning Institute/NOVA Forum, Patient Centricity in Pharma During the Time of COVID-19. Free. Hear expert speaker Dr. Kalahn Taylor-Clark highlight how the pharmaceutical industry is responding to COVID-19 and its handling of health inequities. All are welcome, but you must register at <https://lino.org> by January 4.

Sunday, January 10, 2-3 p.m. Historic Green Spring, Virtual Afternoon Tea: The History of Humor. Take an amusing tour through the ages to explore the history of humor and laughter. From the knee-slappers of Ancient Rome to political satire past and present, discover the cultural significance of humor and what comedy tells us about life and attitudes of the past. Register online at fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes/ (code AK1.RU88). Lecture is \$12.

Tuesday, January 19, 1-2:30 p.m. Virtual Genealogy Program. Your Family in Print. Free. The Mount Vernon Genealogical Society is hosting a free lecture using Zoom by genealogist Sharon MacInnes about how to find and download county and family history books, articles, newspapers, manuscripts, etc. from different websites, libraries, and repositories. Details on accessing this presentation provided by email. Register by January 15 by emailing contact-us@mvgenealogy.org. Further information is at mvgenealogy.org.

Sunday, January 31, 1:30 p.m., Park Authority Winter Virtual Lecture Series: Eight Essential Tips for a Deer Resistant Garden with Karen Chapman. \$10 per person. Deer can turn a vibrant garden into a sea of chopped stems and damaged trees. Designer Karen Chapman offers eight key solutions that go beyond pungent chemicals and unattractive fencing. To register, go to fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/green-spring/deer-resistant-garden/01312.

Information is correct at the time of publishing. But, please verify all information by calling the provided phone numbers and web addresses.