

The Democrat

The Newsletter of the Fairfax County Democratic Committee

September/October 2015 Volume 2, Issue 7



Bridging the Nutritional Divide in Virginia

Dorothy McAuliffe

Childhood hunger is a serious problem in our nation and in our Commonwealth. One in six of our children in Virginia struggle with not having enough food to eat. With the school year beginning, it's particularly important to think about just how devastating struggling with hunger can be to our most vulnerable - our children, and their ability to learn, grow and thrive. Hunger has a devastating impact on our children and communities all over the Commonwealth. Malnutrition affects physical and emotional development, and the ability to succeed in school. Our kids cannot be hungry for knowledge, if they are just plain hungry.

It's proven that students perform better in the classroom in vocabulary, math, and on standardized tests when they have eaten breakfast. We know we all perform better when we have the right nourishment, and that it's hard to concentrate and be our best when our stomachs are grumbling. Yet, only 53 percent of children in Virginia who rely on free or reduced price lunch at school receive a school breakfast.

With 523,767 Virginia children eligible for free and reduced price school meals, we must pay attention to where and how these children will get their next meal when they are not in school - during the

(continued on page 2)



Message from the FCDC Chairman Sue Langley

Labor Day weekend previously marked the date when campaigns for the November election would heat up and stay in high gear until Election Day. The Mason District Crab Feast, held the Saturday after Labor Day, has been the traditional launch of the higher intensity fall campaign season. This year, however, many of our candidates have spent both spring and summer months recruiting volunteers, knocking doors, building supporter lists, and raising funds for the final push to Election Day.

Delegate Kaye Kory hosted the County Committee for an afternoon picnic along Lake Barcroft in mid-August. The picnic raised funds to help with Joint Campaign expenses. The Joint Campaign this year includes Back-to-School nights, the Absentee Voter program, the Voter Guide, and sample ballots. The picnic crowd was joined by our featured speaker, former Congressman Jim Moran, plus elected officials Delegate Kory, Delegate Filler-Corn, Supervisor Gross, and School Board members Ted Velkoff and Sandy Evans. Every one enjoyed grilled foods and salads, refreshments, and desserts on a pleasant

(continued on page 2)

Deadlines for The Democrat

November 2015 Edition

Thursday, November 5,
2015

December 2015 Edition

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2015

Articles/ photos must be submitted as attachments to thedemocrat@fairfaxdemocrats.org. All submissions are subject to a word limit and editing. For more information, contact thedemocrat@fairfaxdemocrats.org.

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Message from the FCDC Chairman *Sue Langley*

(continued from page 1)

summer afternoon. Candidates Janet Oleszek, Karen Corbett Sanders, and Dalia Palchik were also in attendance.

Nearly all Fairfax County Public Schools begin their school year right after Labor Day. For the first time this year, flyers featuring the Democratic candidates specific to each school's boundaries', were distributed at Back-to-School nights. Since school boundaries are completely unrelated to elected office boundaries, this was no small task. The data FCDC compiled from candidates for the Voter Guide was used to produce flyers that respect school boundaries. We hope this information, coupled with a school calendar of teacher work days and holidays, will be useful to drive turnout for Election Day.

Absentee voters receive mail that is a modified version of the Voter Guide. Through years of development and refinement, the Absentee Voter program mails Democratic literature to absentee voters on the same day the Election Office mails its absentee ballots. Due to FCDC's program, we regularly outdo our opponents in absentee vote margins. We have even won close elections with our margins of victory in absentee votes.

More than 100,000 copies of precinct-specific literature highlighting the Democratic candidates on the 2015 ballot are ready to be mailed to targeted voters in October. In

this complicated election year for state senators and delegates, local officials, and constitutional officers, the 242 precincts generate some 76 ballot combinations by the 54 Democratic candidates across Fairfax County. Only the candidates running in a given precinct will appear in that precinct version of the guide. This program promotes awareness of the Democrats running down-ballot, since only the candidates for state senator or delegate are labeled by their political party affiliation on the ballot.

Candidates' names by office formatted just like the actual ballot appear on the sample ballots distributed by precinct letters at the end of October and at all of our voting locations on Election Day. We print enough sample ballots to hand out at all 242 Fairfax County precincts.

In a separate article, FCDC's move to Executive Park Drive in Merrifield is covered in greater detail; the lease at our Hartland Road address terminated on August 31. All equipment and furnishings have been moved to temporary space, sold as excess property, or discarded in preparation for the relocation. The new lease will deliver more spacious accommodation, a more professional work space, and upgraded furnishings and equipment at lower lease cost to the Committee both initially and over the life of the lease. We were lucky to acquire surplus furniture and equipment for free, or near free,

Message from the FCDC Chairman *Sue Langley*

(continued from page 2)

from the relocation of the nearby Dell headquarters. The financial incentives provided by the new landlord more than covered the cost of the move and the upgrades, ensuring that our donor money will continue to go to work electing Democrats.

This new space will position the Committee to upgrade the support we give to Democratic candidates in future election cycles. During the month of September and October, we have made some temporary accommodations for certain committee activities while buildout of the new space is completed. Also in

September, Supervisor Penny Gross has generously offered shared space at her campaign office near Columbia Pike in Annandale for the September meeting of the FCDC Steering Committee. We expect to take full occupancy of the Executive Park Drive location after the November 3 election.

Update on the Fairfax County Democratic Committee (FCDC) Headquarters Move

FCDC's lease ended on August 31 and we have moved into temporary space in our new building while the new space is completed. It was scheduled for completion by the end of September, but we were recently informed by the landlord that it would not be ready until late October. Therefore, we will move in immediately after the election.

While it is unfortunate that our lease ended so close to the election, we are fully functional in the temporary location. As discussed in the previous issue of the Democrat, we made a point of ensuring that the new lease will end in the spring, March 31, 2026, (with the delay, it will now probably be April 30, 2026) to minimize the impact on November elections of a possible future move.

The lease meets several objectives, including maintaining a county central location in the Merrifield area, a larger space and a lower total lease cost.

The savings in office and storage rent will save FCDC thousands of dollars a year.

The new space will be an improvement for conducting meetings and training sessions over our current space. At the Hartland Road office, to access offices or the rear meeting room that doubled as storage, one had to pass through the main conference room. In the new space, the large conference room will be separate and will contain technology upgrades not available in our current space.

We will also have a workroom that doubles as a kitchen. Having a room with this configuration allows us the flexibility to use it in a variety of ways: kitchen/lunch room; the mail room; a workroom for a mailing or other project; or a meeting room if the large conference room is in use.

We will also have two cubicles in another open area for phone banks or volunteer work. One extra private office also is avail-

able for the absentee lead, finance, precinct ops, or other vice chairs for their quiet work.

Evening and Saturday meetings and training sessions will be easier and more pleasant because the building access and air-conditioning run later during the weekdays and until 3 pm on Saturdays.

In upcoming issues of the Democrat, we will be featuring more information about some of the upgrades to technology and furnishings that we will be receiving at no cost to FCDC donors.

These enhancements will go a long way toward meeting our training and support needs to allow us to be more effective in electing Democrats.

If you would like to help volunteer with the move or to volunteer at the headquarters in general, please contact our HQ Committee Chair, Barbara Caputo at headquarters@fairfaxdemocrats.org.

Countdown to Election Day with Congressman Joaquín Castro



You're invited to join Congressman Castro for an exciting evening as we count down to Election Day, also featuring Congressman Don Beyer and other special guests. Buffet dinner, drinks, music, and good friends getting ready to elect Democrats this November.

WHEN: Tuesday, October 27, 2015 7:00 pm

WHERE: Kena Temple (9001 Arlington Blvd, Fairfax, VA 22031; [map](#), [click here](#))

TICKETS: [click here](#) (purchase tickets by October 24 and receive two free drink tickets, \$5 value)

\$75, **General Admission:** one ticket to the event, dinner (buffet)

\$45, **Union Members, and Young Democrats:** one ticket to the event, dinner (buffet)

\$150, **Individual sponsor:** one ticket with special recognition, access to VIP reception, priority seating, dinner (buffet) and drinks

\$1,250, **Table Sponsor:** special recognition, 10 tickets with access for five to VIP reception, priority seating, dinner (buffet) and drinks

Bridging the Nutritional Divide in Virginia *Dorothy McAuliffe*

(continued from page 1)

summer, after school, during school holidays, and during weather events. We need to broaden the reach of the Summer Food Service Program and the Child and Adult Food Service Program At-Risk Afterschool Provision to improve access to good nutrition among those most in need.

Providing children with the nutrition they need year-round is good for their physical and mental health, ensures that Virginia's future workforce is prepared and able to grow our economy, and that families are able to break out of the far too common generational cycle of poverty. While child hunger is a bipartisan issue and everyone can agree that no child should go hungry, it is too often debated in budgets and put on the backburner.

Childhood hunger and nutrition have long been priorities of mine, and they have been my top priorities while having the privilege of serving as the First Lady of Virginia. Last year, with a Republican-controlled General Assembly, Virginia passed the Governor's School Breakfast Budget Amendment to grant \$537,000 to schools that implement alternative breakfast programs that make it easier for kids to get breakfast at school during the school day. Additionally, I have partnered with Share Our Strength, a nonprofit based in Washington D.C., to create the

Virginia No Kid Hungry Campaign that tackles child hunger in partnership with Virginia's Department of Health and Department of Education. We are grateful for this progress! However, there is much more work to be done and it will take communities across Virginia working together to reach our ultimate goal of eliminating childhood hunger in Virginia.

There are a number of steps that individuals and communities can take to advocate for increased access to existing nutrition programs. Locally, individuals can educate school boards, their PTAs, and community leaders about the benefits of alternative breakfast models that ensure each hungry child can access breakfast and nutritious meals when school is out. On a national level, individuals and stakeholder groups in education and health can advocate that representatives consider and pass critical legislation like the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act. I am especially excited about the Hunger Free Summer for Kids Act, recently introduced in the U.S. Senate, which would significantly strengthen the reach of the Summer Food Service Program for the long summer months when school meals are not an option and too many children and families struggle with the extra burden placed on their limited budgets.

Income Inequality in America: The Fight for Fifteen

By Michael Fruitman

An imbalance between rich and poor is the oldest and most fatal ailment of all republics.

—Plutarch, Greek historian (45–120 AD)

How do we win the fight against income inequality which has been called the defining issue of our time? The gap between the wealthiest Americans and the rest of us is larger than it has ever been, and it keeps growing. This disparity undermines our economy, our community—our very notion of democracy. More

Americans are struggling every day to make ends meet. Is the old American Dream still achievable?

To explore answers to these questions, and strategize about how to address them, FCDC was joined at its July 28 bimonthly general membership meeting by a panel intimately familiar with these issues:

David Broder, President, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 512

Kevin Pittman, President, Fairfax County Deputy Sheriffs Union, SEIU 512

Del. Marcus Simon (D–53)

Tonya Wilson, Richmond fast food worker; leader, *Raise Up Virginia*

Keith Bullard, *Raise Up Fifteen* campaign

With the growth of this income gap, however, a movement to fight back has been born, one that is winning extraordinary victories. Fast food workers, university adjunct professors, child care providers, and others are uniting to demand living wages and a voice in their work. Voters



From left: Kevin Pittman, David Broder, Del. Marcus Simon, Tonya Wilson, and Keith Bullard, with FCDC Chair Sue Langley.

in conservative states including Arkansas, Nebraska, and South Dakota have recently secured raises in the minimum wage, and the city of Los Angeles is raising its minimum wage to \$15/hour. This alone is expected to lift 1 million people out of poverty. Similar battles are being won across the country, including in

our area; D.C.'s minimum wage is now \$10.50/hour. But Virginia is still fighting.

David Broder presented a unified picture of this struggle. He quoted noted economists/policy analysts Robert Reich and Paul Krugman as saying that income inequality is the major cause of labor unrest. Out of 141 nations, the United States *ranks only 41st* in the percentage of its population living above the poverty line. *As labor goes*, it has been said, *so goes the middle class*. He

also demonstrated with a show of hands that if you take together those who are unemployed, underemployed, and those who have put off retirement because they can't afford it, that population is almost all of us.

Keith Bullard, of the *Raise Up Fifteen* campaign, discussed some of the difficulties involved in making \$15/hour a reality.

Perhaps you've heard people say, "Oh, I worked as a teenager in the '70s for just \$3.25/hour. It wasn't so bad." That \$3.25 translates to \$9.50 in today's dollars. Real worker wages have not risen since 1972—43 years! Tonya Wilson works for \$8.25/hour at a Richmond-area McDonalds. She has done so for

(continued on page 6)

Income Inequality in America: The Fight for Fifteen

By Michael Fruitman

(continued from page 4)

10 years. And she supports a daughter on that salary. How is that working out? Sometimes she goes without needed medicine. She has been instrumental in educating other workers at her restaurant about the political and economic struggle for higher wages.

Delegate Simon talked about the struggles in the Virginia legislature. He and like-minded progressives such as Delegates Ken Plum and Dave Marsden face unrelenting opposition from Republicans who are as anti-labor

as the Wisconsin legislature (and you know what happened there). But these Democrats keep pushing . . . for a higher minimum wage and for student loan debt relief, Medicaid expansion, and a progressive tax system where corporations pay their fair share.

And lest one think that “wealthy” Fairfax County is immune, **one-third** of the children entering kindergarten this fall will qualify for free or subsidized meals.

Finally, Kevin Pittman stated that

income inequality is not simply the byproduct of a free-market system. Other nations manage to pay their workers a living wage; in Norway, in fact, the minimum is \$22/hour!

It comes back to political will and muscle and making our voices heard. Again, this is a central difference in values between Democrats and Republicans. *I am my brother’s/sister’s keeper v. I’ve got mine, you get yours.* This is what elections are all about.

Quote for Month:

We must remember that...

“While all elections are important, it’s the local ones that have the most direct and daily impact on people’s lives. That’s why it’s so important for all Democrats to talk to their families, friends, and neighbors about the importance of our local races. “

— Jeff McKay, Supervisor, Lee District

Announcing Part 2 of Precinct Operations Training!

Part 2 covers preparation for Election Day, Election Day procedures, and voter protection. Three of the four identical sessions have been held; one remains.

All precinct captains, Election Day volunteers, and district vice-chairs of precinct operations should plan on attending. The last training will be Monday, October 12, 6 – 9 p.m., Sully Government Center, Centreville

To register, [click here](#).

Campaigns are welcomed and encouraged ...

to share a human interest story from their campaign travels or a campaign update. Candidate article submissions must be limited to 250 words and be about the candidate’s experience on the campaign trail or a campaign update. One picture may be submitted with narrative. No fundraising promos, please. Articles/photos must be submitted as attachments to thedemocrat@fairfaxdemocrats.org by 5 :00 pm on Thursday, November 5. All submissions are subject to editing.

Condolences

Chris Spanos. Long-time Democratic Activist

Christopher James Spanos, a former long-time member of FCDC and Democratic activist, passed away on Friday, September 11 at the age of 69. He was born in Auckland, New Zealand and later came to the U.S. where he attended public schools and colleges in the state of Maryland. Chris spent many of his years working in public policy to build, strengthen, and protect the safety net for vulnerable Virginians. He was a retired lobbyist and former political aide to populist politician Henry Howell when he was lieutenant governor of Virginia; Chris then coordinated Howell's campaign in the 1973 election for governor. Chris assisted many Northern Virginia political campaigns in the 1980s. He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Anne Elizabeth Spanos, two children and their spouses, Courtney and Tim Wyatt, Stephen and Shauna Spanos, and five grandchildren, Alexandra, Morgan, Hallie, Whitney, and Annie James. He is also survived by his brother, Curt, and his sister, Kim. He was known for his generosity, kindness, and friendship, his wonderful sense of humor, his curiosity and keen intelligence, and his devotion to his family

Bob Simon. A Visionary and Creator of Reston Reston's founder, Robert E. Simon Jr. died at his Lake Anne home on Monday at age 101. Simon was a community leader whose vision for development of thousands of acres of Fairfax County farmland in the 1960's has created a vibrant and diverse community that even 50 years later continues to be a desirable place to live and work. Major employers located in Reston include Accenture, BAE Systems, Fannie Mae, the corporate headquarters of Lafarge North America, Lockheed Martin, Sprint, Northrop Grumman, Oracle, Qinetiq North America, Raytheon, Sallie Mae, Siebel Systems, Unisys, and the U.S. Geological Survey. Simon's vision of high-density housing

combined with townhouses and single family homes, as well as open space for recreational activities was the essence of what Simon planned for the entire area. Even today, Reston embodies the sense of planned community that Simon treasured.

Sue Langley, Chair of the Fairfax Democratic Committee, commented on Bob Simon's passing, "Bob Simon lived the dream by developing Reston into a model community that others have copied in various places around the country. Rather than a suburban bedroom community common in the 1960's, Simon mixed single family homes with high density housing, employment centers, retail, recreation, and controlled growth to form Reston into a very desirable place to live and work. His vision has benefited thousands who call the Reston community a part of their lives."

Congratulations

Second District Delegate candidate Josh King and his daughter Josclyn (who has autism) presenting an award to Congressman Gerry Connolly at the DPVA DisAbility Caucus luncheon commemorating the 25th anniversary of the signing of the American Disabilities Act (ADA).



From left: Representative Gerry Connolly (D-8 VA), Josclyn King, and Josh King.