



**FAST AND FUN FITNESS**  
MOMS LEAD HIGH-INTENSITY WORKOUTS  
D1

< HEALTH



**SPANBERGER VISITS SPOTSY**  
U.S. REP TALKS TO RESIDENTS AT TOWN HALL  
C1

< REGION



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VIRGINIA DENIES LOUISVILLE'S BID FOR UPSET  
B1

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# The Free Lance-Star

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WEATHER: HIGH 66, LOW 35. B6

FREDERICKSBURG, VA. FOR 24-HOUR UPDATES, GO TO FREDERICKSBURG.COM

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2019

## Stafford mulling school shift plan

BY ADELE UPHAUS-CONNER  
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

The Stafford School Board will consider three new plans for redistricting the county's 17 elementary schools for the 2019-20 school year.

ARCBridge Consulting, the Herndon-based firm hired by the school board to develop redistricting plans, presented the three new plans at a work session Saturday morning.

Under the original redistricting timetable, the board was to have voted this week on a final redistricting plan. But the board sent the consultants back to the drawing board earlier this month after the first two plans were met with widespread disapproval by Stafford parents.

The plans presented Saturday were developed using new criteria, explained ARCBridge's Priti Mathur.

The updated guidelines include ensuring no bus rides are longer than they are now, keeping the percentage of free and reduced lunch recipients at or below 53.8 percent—the

SEE STAFFORD, A8

## Big crowd expected for Spotsy solar hearing

BY SCOTT SHENK  
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

The public hearing is looming for the proposed 500-megawatt solar facility in the western part of Spotsylvania County.

The Board of Supervisors public hearing, for three special-use permits, is scheduled to start at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday.

The hearing will be held at Spotsylvania High School because a large crowd is expected. The county's Planning Commission was forced to hold its meetings on the three special-use permits at the Marshall Center to accommodate the crowd.

If the supervisors' hearing resembles past meetings on the contentious proposal, it will be a long night, with the applicant,

SEE SOLAR, A8

### COMMENTS ON TRAFFICKERS AND VICTIMS

What kind of person would take another's soul like that and damage them to such a degree? To look at a human being and say, 'I don't care who you are. You are a product for me to sell and make money.' What kind of person does that?

—DEDE WALLACE, STAFFORD COUNTY RESIDENT AND VICTIM ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST WITH HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS

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[Traffickers] will get a tattoo gun and tattoo their mark on them, right there in the hotel room. It's like marking cattle to them, these girls are a possession. They mark 'em, they brand 'em.

—SGT. GORDON RIDINGS, SPOTSYLVANIA SHERIFF'S OFFICE

• • •

I look at it like this, 99 percent of the time, these women don't have a choice. I've only met maybe one or two women that were independent, and I don't really think of it as a choice, either. One of them was a school bus driver, and I think she was just trying to keep the lights on.

—DETECTIVE ROB GRELLA, STAFFORD SHERIFF'S OFFICE

• • •

Human trafficking is real, it is out there, it is in your communities, and it can happen to anybody.

—SUSAN YOUNG, A TECHNICAL ADVISER WITH JUST ASK. HER DAUGHTER WAS LURED INTO SEX TRAFFICKING BY A GANG MEMBER.

### THE SERIES

**MODERN-DAY SLAVERY**

**SUNDAY:** Sex trafficking in the Fredericksburg area.

**MONDAY:** Victims tell their stories.

**TUESDAY:** Local resources to combat human trafficking.

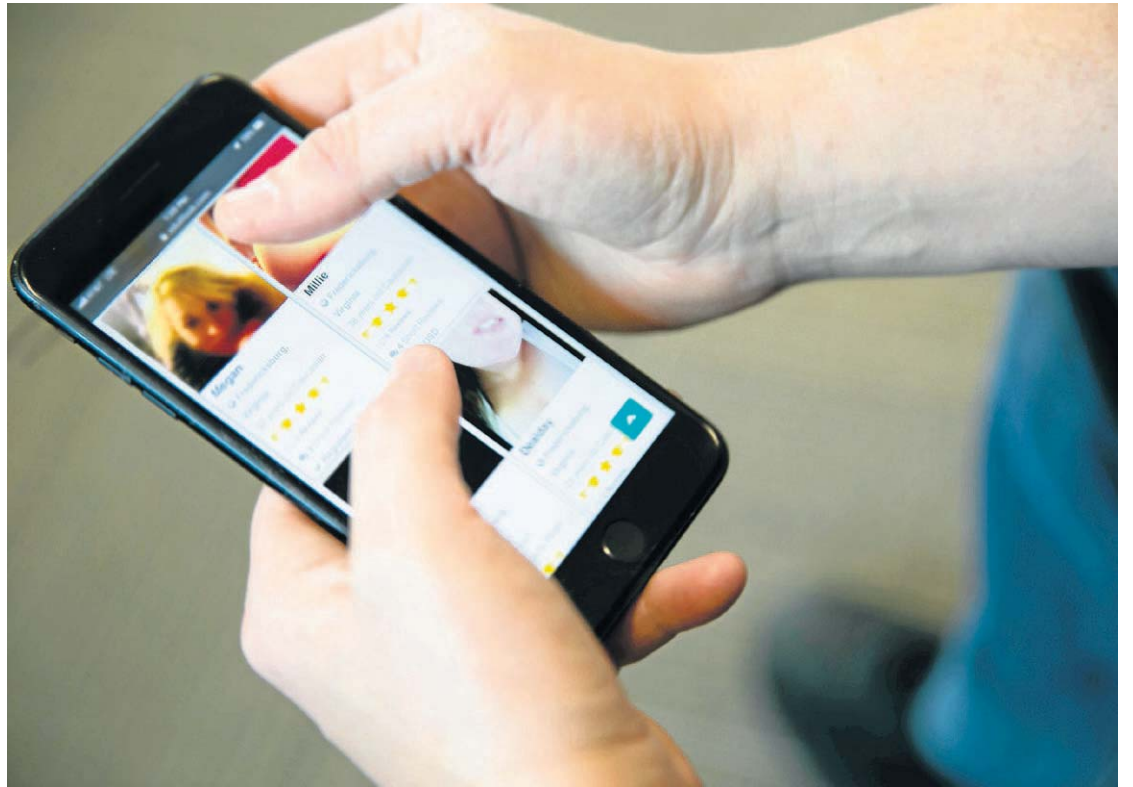


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE MORONES / THE FREE LANCE-STAR

One local law enforcement official said finding an escort is as easy as ordering a pizza.

## 'I CAN ORDER A PIZZA AND A PROSTITUTE'

BY CATHY DYSON  
THE FREE LANCE-STAR

During a recent forum on human trafficking, DeDe Wallace got the attention of the 110 people in the room when she asked about those who trade sex for money.

"If I said I work with prostitutes, how many of you would be here?" wondered Wallace, a Stafford County resident and victim assistance specialist with Homeland Security Investigations.

Wallace then explained the difference between the oldest profession in the world and human trafficking, one of the fastest-growing crime categories in the United States.

"If you're a prostitute, it's because something happened, and your body is your commodity," she said. "You stop being a prostitute and become a human-trafficking victim when somebody controls you, when you can't make the decision."

Human trafficking involves transporting people from one country or area to another for forced labor or sexual exploitation. The most common type is when adults are forced to provide sex in exchange for money, food or drugs—or when minors are involved in sex acts.

The Fredericksburg, GFWC Mary Ball and King George women's clubs hosted the recent forum, which was attended by at least two women, plus the mother of a third, who had been lured into sex trafficking.

One was Amy, a single mother who needed money for her baby's medical needs. Another was Marie, a graduate of Stafford County schools who wasn't on the agenda, but attended to network with local advocates. Her heroin addiction led to trafficking, and for two



### HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 describes human trafficking as as involuntary servitude, slavery or practices similar to slavery, debt bondage and forced labor, according to the U.S. State Department.

years, she was sold for sex at Fredericksburg-area hotels.

The third was a ninth-grader, living in a well-to-do home in the shadow of the nation's capitol, when she was targeted by a member of the MS-13 gang.

Each was manipulated into believing she would be taken care of or loved.

All were broken into submission when the so-called protection morphed into brutal domination. The men became pimps who put photos of the women and descriptions of services they could provide on raunchy

websites that advertise escorts.

The pimps arranged the encounters and pocketed the money. If the women didn't comply, the pimps beat them, denied them drugs and food or threatened to harm their loved ones.

"I was told, if I don't do what I'm supposed to be doing, I won't get back to my baby," said Amy, a quiet woman in her 30s who recounted events from a decade ago. "That was more powerful than the violence, and there was a lot of violence."

### STATERANKS SIXTH

Reports of human trafficking are on the rise across the country because either the problem—or awareness of it—is growing, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Because it's often mixed with other crimes, such as selling drugs or guns, human trafficking can be hard to identify, investigate and prosecute, according to the Virginia Department of Criminal

SEE TRAFFICKING, A10

VOL. 135 NO. 55 INDEX BOOKS..... D6 COMICS..... F1 EDITORIALS..... A6 HOROSCOPE..... E6 REGION..... C1 SUDOKU..... E6 TV PAGE..... E6  
© 2019 Free Lance-Star Publishing Co. ADVICE..... E5 CLASSIFIEDS..... E1 COMMUNITIES..... C5 HEALTH..... D1 OBITUARIES..... C2 SPORTS..... B1 TRAVEL..... D4 WEATHER..... B6



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