

James McGrath (Crickett the Danger Clown) juggles fire during the City of Fairfax Hometown Celebration Sunday evening, June 30.

# Fairfax Residents Enjoy Hometown Celebration

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION  
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Fairfax County Fire Chief John Butler helps a child with her toys at the Firefighters and Friends Toy Distribution Day in December of 2018.



Fairfax County Fire Chief John Butler, second from right, working with Liberian firefighters in January of this year.

## Fire Chief John Butler To Set Vision

The road from Liberia to Fairfax County, with vision to regain the reins of an organization bruised by claims of bullying and harassment.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Chief John Butler didn't grow up wanting to be a firefighter. Born in Liberia, he was 12 years old when his family was forced to flee the country following a military coup in April of 1980.

"My father was among those identified as someone the new regime wanted to do away with," Butler said in recalling the circumstances that led to his immigration to the U.S. "I'm not sure why since he was not involved in politics or the military — he was a businessman. But life had become tumultuous and my parents decided that was not how they wanted to raise their family."

Less than a month later, the family had resettled in Columbia, Md., where Butler graduated from Oakland Mills High School. He would go on to serve in the U.S. Marine Corps and was home on leave when he accompanied a friend to take the test to become a Howard County firefighter. That decision would change his life, leading to a career in firefighting and ultimately to his being named the first African American fire chief in Fairfax County.

"I wasn't looking for a job," Butler said. "I was loving being a Marine. But while I was waiting for my friend a recruiter convinced me to take the test and when I passed, I thought 'Why not this?' As I look back on this path, the wild ride from that lobby to where I am now is never lost on me."

**BUTLER WAS NAMED** last summer to

replace Chief Richard Bowers and was formally sworn in Sept. 4, 2018. Prior to that he served 26 years with the Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services. He began as a firefighter-paramedic, rising through the ranks to serve in a variety of roles, including as battalion chief, emergency medical services chief and administrative chief before being named Howard County's first African American Fire Chief in 2014.

"Howard County [Fire and Rescue] is a high performing organization, but it was time to take on new challenges," Butler said of his move to the helm of Fairfax County, a department three times the size of Howard County. "I always thought highly of Fairfax Fire and Rescue and am mindful of the more recent challenges. I thought I could bring something to the table — to help them get realigned and continue going in a positive direction."

In addition to his firefighting experience, Butler served in the Marines for 21 years, including two combat tours.

"Joining the Marines is one of the best decisions I ever made," Butler said. "In combat is where I grew a lot of my character. It's where I learned how to lead teams and how to lead others on a shared mission and vision."

Butler's vision for FCFRD is to regain the reins of an organization bruised by claims of bullying and harassment.

"I came here to establish guardrails, set a vision and build a healthy team," Butler



John Butler addresses the media after being sworn in as Fairfax County Fire Chief Sept. 4, 2018. Butler is the first African American to hold the position.

said. "We have a talented, diverse department but we can't solve problems using the same thinking that created those problems."

**BUTLER HAS CREATED** an equity and inclusion council and implemented code of conduct and social media policies. Social media policies in particular have been under scrutiny since the 2016 suicide death of firefighter Nicole Mittendorff following claims of online bullying.

"We need to reestablish and rebuild the relationships that have taken a hit over the years," said Butler, who was a defendant in a termination suit brought by a Howard County battalion chief based on social media postings.

"The case — Buker vs Howard County — went to the Supreme Court," Butler said. "We prevailed and stuck to strong social media policies and a code of conduct that basically says that if it disrupts the work-

place, we can hold you accountable. That's the platform I have for here — I won't tolerate cyberbullying or any behavior that disrupts the workplace."

Butler, 52, holds a Master of Science in management from Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Baltimore. He is a graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program and from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government Leadership in Crisis Program.

**IN 2014**, Butler was the recipient of Johns Hopkins University's Global Achievement Award for his humanitarian work in Africa. He has made multiple trips to the Republic of Liberia, most recently in January of this year, when he

assisted in training recruits for the Liberian National Fire Service and visited the Sayklon Orphanage. Butler uses his personal vacation time and pays for all expenses out of his pocket.

"Whenever I return from trips such as this, I am reminded of how fortunate we are to have the things we have, the infrastructure and quality of life that we enjoy and most often take for granted," said Butler following his most recent trip.

Butler, who is married with three adult children, hopes to have a positive impact in Fairfax County.

"I am really loving the department, the people I am working with and the direction we are going," Butler said. "Most importantly, I hope that my emphasis on trust, courageous conversations and human engagement is making a difference. But the best way I can impact the organization is by modeling good behavior."

# OPINION

## George Mason's Role in Founding our Nation

Establishing three branches of government, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and civilian military control were all elements from Virginia's founding documents.

BY JOHN C. COOK  
BRADDOCK DISTRICT SUPERVISOR



The fireworks and burgers we all look forward to on Independence Day can make us forget the incredible history behind the celebration. As a public servant, I cannot help but reflect on the remarkable political events and the figures who took

### COMMENTARY

incredible risks to shape the government of our young country. The work of one local man in particular inspired the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. His name was George Mason.

Mason resided in Gunston Hall and actively involved himself in the Fairfax County community. He was elected into the Virginia House of Burgesses in 1758 alongside George Washington and Patrick Henry. He left his office a short time later due to illness and a reluctance towards politics. However, he was one of the greatest and most respected political thinkers of his time. A follower of the political philosopher John Locke, Mason firmly believed in the rights of individuals and was an early adopter of the Revolutionary cause. When the British began imposing taxes on the colonies, Washington asked Mason to draft official responses

in protest. This resulted in the Fairfax Resolves, a countywide document that opposed the increasingly harsh British policies and called for an American "general congress, for the preservation of our Lives Liberties and Fortunes." While many counties wrote their own resolves, Mason's was considered the most forceful and influential.

After the House of Burgesses was dissolved by the British governor in 1774, Virginians formed their own legislative body in protest called the Virginia Convention, which created a new government structure in Virginia. As a member of the convention, George Mason drafted the groundbreaking Virginia Declaration of Rights and the 1776 Constitution, which laid the "basis and foundation" for a government in Virginia. It called for a government based on individual liberty that only received its power from the people it served. The document opened with the bold statement "That all men are by nature equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights..." Thomas Jefferson adopted similar language for our national Declaration of Independence. These radical thoughts, so deliberately laid out, sent a shockwave through the colonies and history changed forever.

When the fighting finally ceased years later

it was time to build a stable government for the expansive territory the Americans had secured. Mason was once again invited to share his wisdom in building a government as a Virginia representative in the Constitutional Convention. Mason had a clear vision of what he would like to see in the Constitution. He strongly advocated for individual rights, popular elections, and a three-part executive branch. He was especially wary that the new government would too closely resemble England's. As the convention went on Mason's concerns grew. He opposed the slave trade and wanted to see it eradicated in the new government. When he proposed a bill of rights to be included in the body of the constitution, his motion was rejected by a majority of the convention. These two key issues led Mason to vote against the Constitution. His was one of only three dissenting votes. Many elements of Mason's philosophy, however, made their way into the subsequent Constitution and Bill of Rights. Establishing three branches of government, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and civilian military control were all elements from Virginia's founding documents.

I hope you and your family have a safe and happy Fourth of July. I also hope you take some time to remember the history and people behind the holiday. Without the courage and conviction of people like George Mason, our country would not be the beacon of liberty it is today.

## Threats to Our Government as We Know It

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM  
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)

The threats to our democratic-republican form of government are more numerous than weeks of this column could enumerate. While I will not mention the more obvious ones brought on by the current administration in Washington, I do want to focus on two that have come about in the recent past—one just last week. They impact all levels

### COMMENTARY

of government and come about not from the executive branch of government or the dysfunctional Congress but rather from the judicial branch and its highest level, the Supreme Court! While I have always viewed the Supreme Court as a safety backstop that would save our republic from harm by the Congress or the president, in recent years it is the Court that has become one of the real threats to democratic governance.

One of the biggest inhibitors of advancement on progressive issues in Virginia has been the un-

restrained ability of the members of the party in power at the time of the decennial census to choose the voters they want to represent for the next decade by gerrymandering district boundaries. For some of us there has been a struggle to put in place a non-partisan method of drawing district lines. With the great organization OneVirginia2021's efforts there has been real progress towards meeting that goal. A Constitutional amendment passed the last session of the General Assembly that would establish what is described as a non-partisan and transparent process for redistricting. It must pass the 2020 session without change in order to be sent to the voters in a referendum before becoming part of the state constitution.

In the meantime lawsuits were successful in federal courts to have the Virginia Congressional and House of Delegates districts redrawn to eliminate discrimination based on race. The Supreme Court



refused to review the new House of Delegates districts drawn by a lower federal court on a technicality that the current members bringing the suit did not have standing.

Of great concern, however, is the Supreme Court decision last week saying in effect that federal courts do not have the power to redraw politically gerrymandered district lines. The outcome could be more devastating to a republican form of government as the dominant party would be left free to establish itself in power without a way to challenge it.

The Supreme Court has historically sidestepped cases in the past that would have brought them into resolving partisan redistricting. I am fearful that the Court's decision will result in rampant gerrymandering of legislative districts creating unparalleled control of legislatures. This unfortunate decision by the Supreme Court may have been exceeded in its partisan implications only by Citizens United that many people feel may have been the Court's greatest mistake by bringing uncontrolled corporate influence into elections.

As usual the checks, although extremely limited to these kinds of bad decisions, continue to be voting the very best people into elective office.

### Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to: Letters to the Editor • The Connection

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# Stuffing the Bus for Britepaths' Food Pantry

The community lent a much-needed hand, last Saturday, June 29, during the Stuff the Bus food drive for nonprofit Britepaths at the Walmart in Fairfax City. Britepaths Programs Director Christina Garris couldn't have been happier.

"The local food banks struggle in the summer because people are away on vacation, so donations are down," she explained. "And since school's out, children receiving free and reduced-priced lunches can't get them. So for both these reasons, our food pantries become depleted."

And when money is tight – as it is for the families Britepaths serves – people often have to choose between buying food or paying their rent. That's why, said Garris, "Britepaths is ecstatic to be able to replenish our pantry, courtesy of Stuff the Bus and the local community. And we also want to thank Walmart for its participation and support in hosting this food drive for us."

The event was a collaboration among Fairfax County's Neighborhood and Community Services, Office of Public-Private Partnerships and MV Transportation. From 11 a.m.-4 p.m., volunteers at the Fairfax Walmart greeted customers and passed out fliers asking for donations of food or money so Britepaths could continue assisting local families in need.

What was collected was then stuffed into a Fastran bus and brought to the organization's



Front row, from left, are Mahesh Madineni with Volunteer Fairfax; volunteer Christina Zaso; Amy Yates, Fairfax County Neighborhood and Community Services; Walmart Store Manager Shabnam Ighani; Britepaths Programs Director Christina Garris; and students Michael Park and Christine Rolfe. Back row, from left, are Fair Oaks District Station police: Sgt Jason Trunzo, MPO Wayne Twombly and Officer Sladzana Resnik; and Auxiliary Police Officers Ruta Bailey and Beth Myers.

pantry. And at the end of the day, the donations totaled \$1,577 in cash and gift cards, plus a whopping 907.6 pounds of food.

"The food, alone, would be valued at \$1,561," said a delighted Garris. "That gives

us a total of \$3,138 – which is a record for Britepaths with Stuff the Bus. We really appreciate everyone's help and generosity."

— BONNIE HOBBS

## BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

### SOBER-RIDE FOR JULY 4

**Free Sober Rides.** Thursday, July 4, 7 p.m. through Friday, July 5, 2 a.m. Area residents, 21 and older, may download Lyft to their phones, then enter a code in the app's "Promo" section to receive a no cost (up to \$15) safe ride home. WRAP's Independence Day SoberRide promo code will be posted at 6 p.m. on July 4 on [www.SoberRide.com](http://www.SoberRide.com).

### CAMPS

**Art Camp Registration.** Summer Art Camp in Burke for 5-8 year olds, 8 years and up, and teens/adults. Camp is held through Burke Centre Conservancy at the Woods Community Center, 10100 Wards Grove Circle, Burke. Camp weeks run July 22-26; July 29-Aug. 2; and Aug. 5-9. Call 703-250-6930 or visit [www.czartlessons.com](http://www.czartlessons.com).

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## WELLBEING

# Burnout at Work

Recognizing the symptoms and strategies for relief.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE ALMANAC

**M**aria Cogswell says she used to sob in her car each day as she drove to her job on Capitol Hill. She complained of stomach cramps and indigestion during the time she spent in her office.

"I was rude to people and short and irritable with my friends," she said. "I was miserable. My brain was fried and I was completely burned out at work. Eventually I just quit my job."

Cogswell is not alone. According to a recent Gallup study two-thirds of full-time workers experience burnout on the job. Researchers who conducted the study concluded that employee burnout can lead to a downward spiral in performance and can damage an employee's self-esteem and confidence. In fact, the World Health Organization (WHO) recently labeled workplace burnout as an "occupational phenomenon" that could lead to health issues.

"Burnout is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that negatively affects self-esteem," said Linda McKenna Guly, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at Marymount University. "It affects the quality of services the burned-out employee provides. For example, nursing is a field with high burn-out, so this is a concern if the employee is not able to perform well."

The feeling that one has little or no autonomy at work can cause frustration and stress that leads to burnout. "Keep in mind [that] those jobs, across all professions in which the employee has little control and competing demands of both family and work, lead to this serious problem of burnout," added Guly, who taught the topic of stress and burnout in a recent class.

Learn to recognize the early signs of burnout, advises Carolyn Lorente, Ph.D., Professor Psychology at Northern Virginia Community College. "Often times the first indicator of work burnout and stress may be felt in our bodies," she said "Especially for those of us who learned as children to tough it out, we may have been socialized to not cue into our stressors or emotions. This can really take a toll on our physical health. We may find ourselves getting more frequent headaches, having stomach issues, or catching colds more often."

Such extreme levels of chronic stress can damage one's overall physical and mental wellbeing, added Chris Harrison, Professor of Health and Physical Education at Montgomery College. "Individuals reach the condition of burnout when they are exhausted and can't replenish their energy levels, they lack motivation, develop a chronic pessimistic attitude with feelings of frustration and hopelessness. ... Job related burnout can result in lower productivity, lower quality of work, increased accidents and increased absenteeism," continued Harrison, who teaches a class called "Controlling Stress and Tension."

One of the most effective ways to ease stress and prevent burnout before it happens is to make time throughout the day to practice self-care, advises Lorente who encourages people to take what she calls "peace pauses."

"For instance, during a lunch break take a walk outside rather than eating inside, treating yourself



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

**Yoga and meditation teacher Debbie Helfeld practices alternate nostril breathing which she says can relieve the type of stress that can lead to workplace burnout.**

to a favorite afternoon tea or coffee, or listening to books on tape or an interesting pod-cast to and from work."

Stress often comes from feeling a lack of control over how one's time is spent, advises Lorente who is also a psychotherapist at Belle Point Wellness clinic where she helps patients manage stress. "These peace-pauses can help us begin to take back even small parts of how our day goes and help protect against stress-related ill health," she said.

Make time to take care of one's physical health, advises Harrison. "Work to improve your sleep habits, eat a healthy diet and participate in regular physical activity," she said. To ease stress, Harrison also recommends a holistic approach. "Explore activities ... such as yoga, meditation, guided imagery or tai chi," she said. "Mindfulness is the act of focusing on your breath flow and being aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the present moment without interpretation or judgment."

Yoga and meditation teacher Debbie Helfeld recommends alternative nostril breathing for calming.

Adjusting the way one views stress and changing one's thoughts, behaviors and relationships might be necessary, suggests, Jerome Short, Ph.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Associate Professor of Psychology at George Mason University. "The more that we view stress as a challenge and we develop coping skills the more we can experience growth and not harm," he said.

For those who feel a sense of hopelessness, Harrison suggests exploring available options. "Discuss specific concerns with your supervisor," she said. "Maybe you can work together to change expectations or reach compromises or solutions. Try to set goals for what must get done and what can wait."

Sometimes the best option is to get help from a therapist or simply change jobs, says Short. "In the workplace, it helps to have new challenges, a sense of purpose, autonomy to make decisions, and opportunities to master skills," he said.

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Participating in the ribbon-cutting are (from left) Michael DeMarco, Page Johnson, David Meyer, Tom Scibilia, Syed Ahmed and daughters Farjana and Syeda, and John Sabo.

# ‘Cozy Environment, Tasty, Well-Made Food’

Welcome to the Corner Coffee House.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

When Corner Coffee House in Fairfax held its grand opening last fall, City Mayor David Meyer said, “Nations have risen and fallen over coffee. It also brings people together – deals are made, and people fall in love over coffee. We’re pleased to have you, and we hope this will be here for generations to come.”

Since then, more and more people have discovered this cozy and cheerful place at the corner of Fairfax Boulevard and McLean

Avenue. It shares a front porch with the Baskin-Robbins ice cream shop relocated from the defunct Fairfax Shopping Center.

Both businesses are owned by Chantilly’s Syed Ahmed, who also owned the old Baskin-Robbins for 20 years. “Every time people came to Baskin-Robbins, they asked for coffee,” he said. “Now, children can go to the ice-cream store while their parents come next door for coffee. There’s seating in both places, plus on the front deck for summer.”

He searched two years before finding this

SEE CORNER COFFEE. PAGE 10



Fairfax Economic Development Director Chris Bruno (far left) and Mayor David Meyer (far right) flank owner Syed Ahmed (in argyle sweater) and his daughters Farjana and Syeda (behind him), plus Paul VI students, at the grand opening.

**SUMMER Seas-on!**

Cedar Plank Salmon & Shrimp Combo

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Glory Days GRILL

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**SECOND SATURDAY**

Join us for coffee & conversation.  
Fairfax Divorce Workshop.

Support. Information. Hope.

Date: Saturday, July 13, 2019  
Saturday, September 14, 2019

Time: 9:00-9:30 a.m. Registration  
9:30-1:00 p.m. Workshop

Place: Duff & Kronfeld, P.C.  
Fair Oaks Commerce Center  
11320 Random Hills Road/Suite 630  
Fairfax, VA 22030

Please join us for coffee at our Second Saturday Divorce Workshop and get the information and support from professionals: a family law attorney, a financial adviser, a family therapist, a private investigator, an estate planning attorney or other professionals who will help guide you through the divorce process. Speakers vary for each workshop.

Registration at the door; however, pre-registration is recommended as space is limited.

Online Registration: [www.secondsaturdaynova.com](http://www.secondsaturdaynova.com)  
 Email: [nancy@secondsaturdaynova.com](mailto:nancy@secondsaturdaynova.com)  
 Phone: (703) 591-7475

You’ve come to the right place!



# CALENDAR

Submit entertainment announcements at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## ONGOING

**Art Exhibit: Somewhere Between You and Me.** Through July 20, Fridays and Saturdays, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Olly Olly, 10417 Main St., 2nd Floor, Fairfax. In Somewhere Between You and Me, young nonbinary transgender artists intimately seek to understand and bring understanding to what it means to experience life as a nonbinary person. Call 703-789-6144 or visit [ollyollyart.com](http://ollyollyart.com) for more.

**Art Exhibition: Virginia Watercolor Society.** Through Aug. 2, gallery hours in the McGuireWoods Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Free and open to the public. Visit [www.workhousearts.org/](http://www.workhousearts.org/) or [www.virginiawatercolorssociety.org](http://www.virginiawatercolorssociety.org) for more.

**Kingstowne Farmers Market.** Fridays, through Oct. 25, 4-7 p.m. in the Giant parking lot, 5870 Kingstowne Towne Center, Alexandria. Call 703-642-0128 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/kingstowne](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/kingstowne).

**Wakefield Farmers Market.** Wednesdays, 2-6 p.m. through Oct. 30, at Wakefield Park, 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale. Call 703-642-0128 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/wakefield](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/wakefield).

**Lorton Farmers Market.** Sundays, 9 a.m.-noon, through Nov. 17, in the VRE Parking Lot, 8990 Lorton Station Blvd., Lorton. Call 703-642-0128 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/lorton](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/lorton).

**Springfield Farmers Market.** Saturdays, through Nov. 23, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Springfield Town Center, 6699 Spring Mall Drive, Springfield. Visit [www.community-foodworks.org](http://www.community-foodworks.org) or call 202-697-7768.

**Burke Farmers Market.** Saturdays, through Dec. 21, 8 a.m.-noon, VRE parking lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke. Call 703-642-0128 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/burke](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/burke)

## THROUGH SATURDAY/JULY 6

**Be the Art.** ARTSFAIRFAX launches its third Imagine Art Here project on June 21. Imagine Art Here: INOUT:Springfield, a public art installation will feature interactive cuboids that collect community feedback and project community photos, temporarily installed July 13-Aug. 9 at Old Keene Mill Shopping Center and Aug. 10-23 at Springfield Town Center. The public will be able to take their picture, individually, as a group, with pets or with their family, and answer six questions about their role in the community and their opinions on art. Visit [www.INOUTEXPERIENCE.com](http://www.INOUTEXPERIENCE.com).

Photo booths will Pop Up July 6, 6-8 p.m., Old Keene Mill Shopping Center

## THURSDAY/JULY 4

**Red, White & Blue Tournament.** 8 a.m.-noon at Burke Lake Golf Course, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Teams of two players will compete in an 18-hole scramble format from 8 a.m. to noon in three divisions. Ages 7 and older. \$75 per team, which includes lunch. Limited to the first 48 teams. There is no rain date. Call 703-323-1641 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/golf/burke-lake](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/golf/burke-lake).



## Be the Art

ARTSFAIRFAX launches its third Imagine Art Here project on June 21. Imagine Art Here: INOUT:Springfield, a public art installation will feature interactive cuboids that collect community feedback and project community photos, temporarily installed July 13-Aug. 9 at Old Keene Mill Shopping Center and Aug. 10-23 at Springfield Town Center. The public will be able to take their picture, individually, as a group, with pets or with their family, and answer six questions about their role in the community and their opinions on art. Visit [www.INOUTEXPERIENCE.com](http://www.INOUTEXPERIENCE.com).

**City of Fairfax Independence Day.** The 53rd Annual Independence Day Celebration. Visit [www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/special-events/independence-day-celebration](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/special-events/independence-day-celebration)

- ❖ **Independence Day Parade,** 10 a.m.-noon, Downtown Fairfax (rain or shine)
- ❖ **Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center Open House,** 9 a.m.-4 p.m., 10209 Main St.
- ❖ **Ratcliffe-Allison-Pozer House Tours,** 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., 10386 Main St. - free guided tours of the 1812 and the 1927 sections of the house.
- ❖ **Old Fashioned Fireman's Day,** noon, 4081 University Drive - firefighter competition, food & beverages, fun for the kids.
- ❖ **Evening Show & Fireworks,** 6:30-10:30 p.m., Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run; rain date - July 5th (fireworks only). Children's activities, live music by the Darby Brothers, and award presentations. Fireworks begin at 9:30.

**Declaration of Independence Reading.** Noon-1:30 p.m. in Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. The community is invited to a reading of the Declaration of Independence in Historic Pohick Church by historical re-enactor, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Costa, portraying the Rev. Mr. Massey, rector of Pohick Church in 1776. The reading will take place at noon, with free docent tours of the colonial church of George Washington and George Mason following the reading. Free. Call 703-339-6572, or visit [www.pohick.org](http://www.pohick.org).

**4th of July in Clifton.** 4 p.m. Join the Clifton Betterment Association for 4th of July in Clifton. Parade begins at 4 p.m. with a BBQ Potluck (bring a side dish or dessert) and games in the park beginning at 5 p.m. Volunteers needed, sign up at [www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b4fafa92ca57-4thofjuly3](http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b4fafa92ca57-4thofjuly3). Visit [www.cliftonva.org](http://www.cliftonva.org) for more.

## FRIDAY/JULY 5

**B-I-N-G-O.** 7 p.m. at Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive, Fairfax. Enjoy free coffee, entertaining callers, a friendly atmosphere, \$1,000 guaranteed jackpot, treasure chest progressive raffles, and good food available for purchase. All proceeds go to purchasing fire and rescue equipment. Visit [www.fairfaxvfd.com](http://www.fairfaxvfd.com) or call 703-273-3638 for more.

**Old Town Village Performances: Nitehawks Swing Band.** 7-8 p.m. at Old Town Plaza, 3955 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. The weekend starts here - Friday night on the Old Town Village Plaza - music and dance to relax by. Fridays, June-September, weather permitting. Performances are free. Call 703-385-7858 or visit [www.oldtownplazafairfax.com](http://www.oldtownplazafairfax.com) for more.

## SATURDAY/JULY 6

**Children's Entertainment Series.** 10-10:45 a.m. at Burke Lake Park Amphitheater, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Featuring The Great Zucchini (comedy, magic). Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/springfield-nights](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/springfield-nights).

**Summer Saturdays.** 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Join Gunston Hall for a summer of fun. Stop by for a historic adventure. 703-550-9220 or visit [www.gunstonhall.org/visit/guide/upcoming-events](http://www.gunstonhall.org/visit/guide/upcoming-events).

**Author Event: Loubna Hassanieh.** 2-4 p.m. at Barnes and Noble Mosaic District, 2921 District Ave., Fairfax. Meet author and scientist Loubna Hassanieh, PhD, and purchase a signed copy of her book *Where Will My Heart Beat?*, a poignant story of good and evil and loss and redemption. Free. Visit [www.facebook.com/events/300004840878912/](http://www.facebook.com/events/300004840878912/) for more.

**Country-Western Dance.** 6-9:30 p.m. at

Accotink Universalist Unitarian Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a dance with lessons, 6-7 p.m. and open dancing, 7-9:30 p.m. A DJ provides music. Couples and singles of all ages welcome. Admission for NVCWDA members \$10; non-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5. Smoke-free, alcohol-free. BYO refreshments. Visit [www.nvcwda.org](http://www.nvcwda.org) for more.

**Americana Family Night.** 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Children's Science Center Lab, 11948 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. Explore Revolution-era inventions and spy communications. Wear your red, white and blue. \$13. Contact programs@childsci.org or 703-648-3130, or visit <https://childsci.org/event/americana-family-night>.

## SUNDAY/JULY 7

**How Railroads Changed Life in Northern Virginia.** 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The introduction of railroads changed life in Northern Virginia in many ways, some of them unexpected. Learn how the "Iron Horse" changed daily life forever. Ages 16 and older, \$4; 5-15, \$2; 4 and under, free. Visit [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org) or call 703-425-9225.

**Films in the Park: Tangled (2010).** 7 p.m. at Strawberry Park in Mosaic, Fairfax. Mosaic's summer movie lineup. Grab a blanket, friends and family and watch favorite films underneath the stars. Visit [mosaicdistrict.com/events/event/films-in-the-park-2/](http://mosaicdistrict.com/events/event/films-in-the-park-2/).

## MONDAY/JULY 8

**Try Girl Scouts.** 3-4 p.m. at Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St., Springfield. Come see what Girl Scouts is all about. Over four weeks (July 8, 15, 22 and 29) participants will make new friends, sing new songs, play games, and learn about Girl Scouts. \$25 for four weeks. For girls going into grades kindergarten through grade 3. Contact Cheryl Osborne for information for older girls at [cosborne@gscnc.org](mailto:cosborne@gscnc.org) or 703-372-4341.

## WEDNESDAY/JULY 10

**The Clifton Cup.** 8 a.m. shotgun start at Westfields Golf Club. The Clifton Cup is back bigger and better than ever. All proceeds go to the Clifton Betterment Association. Sign up at [www.cliftonva.org/events/clifton-cup](http://www.cliftonva.org/events/clifton-cup).

**Try Girl Scouts.** 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Pohick Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Come see what Girl Scouts is all about. Over four weeks (July 10, 17, 24 and 31) participants will make new friends, sing new songs, play games, and learn about Girl Scouts. \$25 for four weeks. For girls going into grades kindergarten through grade 3. Contact Cheryl Osborne for information for older girls at [cosborne@gscnc.org](mailto:cosborne@gscnc.org) or 703-372-4341.

**Nine and Wine.** 5-8 p.m. at Laurel Hill Golf Club, 8701 Laurel Crest Drive, Lorton. Enjoy a round on Virginia's newest golf course. Price includes range balls, golf cart, nine holes of golf, a glass of wine. This event welcomes the first 12 people who RSVP. Member, \$32; non-members, \$42. RSVP to Roberta Korzen at 703-324-8782 or [roberta.korzen@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:roberta.korzen@fairfaxcounty.gov)

**Springfield Nights: Randy Thompson Band (Americana Country, Roots Rock).** 7-8:30 p.m. at Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Springfield Nights returns for a second summer season with free musical performances on Wednesday evenings at Burke Lake Park ranging from bluegrass and pop, to rock and R&B. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/springfield-nights](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/springfield-nights).

SEE CALENDAR. PAGE 11

# COMMUNITIES OF WORSHIP



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A slew of Superheroes visits the Hometown Celebration.



Friends and families picnic on the lawn of the Veterans Amphitheater.

# Fairfax Residents Enjoy Hometown Celebration

Fairfax residents enjoyed the City's first "Hometown Celebration," Sunday evening, June 30, at the Veterans Amphitheater outside City Hall. Highlights included the City of Fairfax Band, food, games, a fire juggler and a dunk tank.



Kent Ashley, of American Legion Post 177, grills hamburgers.



State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) teased friend Brian Drummond that he couldn't throw a ball that would dunk him. Petersen said, "Drummond, you got nothin'." Drummond replied, "I got money and I'm comin' for you," and in the water went Petersen!



James McGrath (Crickett the Danger Clown) juggles fire.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/  
THE CONNECTION



From left, Pam Cunningham and Annie Bolger sell Fairfax Fourth of July T-shirts.



The Main Street Brass Quintet of the City of Fairfax Band plays "St. Louis Blues."

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**Legals**

**ABC LICENSE**

WAVA Merrifield LLC trading as GAMA Chicken & BBQ, 2727 Merrilee Dr, Apt G, Fairfax, VA 22031. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer on Premise and Mixed Beverage Restaurant license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. James Lee, Member. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them. -Werner Heisenberg

**Announcements**

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**Announcements**

**Announcements**



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**NEWS**

**Corner Coffee House Opens in Fairfax**

FROM PAGE 7

120-year-old, two-story house. "I spent \$410,000 to rehabilitate and renovate the building," said Ahmed. "And I knew I couldn't pay the mortgage unless I had more than one business here." So he's glad to have many repeat customers, plus new ones through word-of-mouth.

"People like it because it's homey and not like a crowded, noisy, corporate store," he said. "And they love our Stumptown Coffee; it's all organic, with hand-picked beans and a special, roasting process. We researched coffees for two years and tested a lot of them before deciding on this one. It's a high-quality coffee."

There's also WiFi, and customers come individually or in groups for meetings and small events. The upstairs is decorated with original, Baskin-Robbins signs, and the eating area on the main floor has tables, comfy chairs and photos of Virginia and the Washington Metropolitan area.

**THE FOOD** runs the gamut from hot panini sandwiches to salads, filled savory croissants, muffins, cakes and pastries. Besides regular and cold-brew coffee, patrons may enjoy cappuccinos, lattes, frappuccinos, teas, juices and soft drinks.

Breakfast items include bacon, egg and cheddar croissants; spinach, tomato, egg and Swiss croissants; bagels; and multigrain toast with avocado spread or cream cheese with plum or mango chutney. Lunch offerings include a ham and Swiss panini with spinach and mustard aioli; a turkey panini with bacon, pepper jack cheese and avocado spread on multigrain bread; chicken or tuna salad over mixed greens; a grilled-chicken salad; and a chicken sandwich made with cranberry chutney from Flint Hill.

"We also sell a lot of lattes, especially with European flavor shots such as vanilla, caramel, raspberry, lavender and hazelnut," said Ahmed. "It tastes better, and the younger generation is always looking for something new. And when they try it, they like it. We offer both soy and almond milk, besides regular milk, as well as spicy chai tea."

People may also pick up grab-and-go salads and yogurt parfaits, and delivery is available via DoorDash.

Corner Coffee House also prides itself on its service. "Our first priority is taking care of the customers and making them happy to be here," said Ahmed, "I tell my employees, 'Always greet people and smile when they come in the door. And later, thank them for coming and wish them a good day.' We do our best to satisfy them so they'll come back."

**EVERY DAY**, he likes "meeting new people from all walks of life. I like to welcome new customers and encourage them to enjoy their neighborhood coffee shop. Local places are becoming popular again, and we wanted to create a place where people could gather and have some delicious food and coffee. We aim to be a haven where the local community can relax, chat and enjoy themselves."

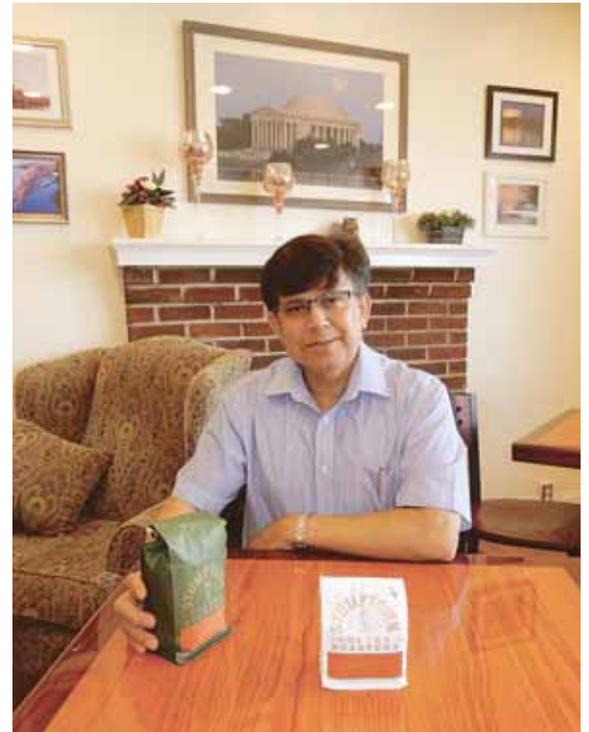
And that's exactly how Elaine Di Bartolomeo and her college son, Frank, felt during a recent visit there. "My son and daughter have eaten here before and liked it, so I came here, too," said Elaine. "I had the grilled chicken sandwich and thought it was wonderful. The chicken was nicely cooked, and I liked the cheese and red onion on it. It was just a tasty sandwich."

Noting that she'd recommend Corner Coffee House to others, she said, "It's very cute in here - a delightful, little place. It's quaint and has delicious food."



From left, Corner Coffee House employee Peter Guidotti and owner Syed Ahmed hold red velvet cake and spinach-feta croissants, respectively.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Syed Ahmed offers Stumptown coffee at Corner Coffee House.

Her son had the same thing and pronounced it "a good-tasting sandwich, made well, with fresh bread and not too much sauce, so it's not soggy. And they offer fruit with the sandwiches, and that's not something you see everywhere."

He, too, encourages others to come here, saying, "If you want a cozy environment, along with tasty, well-made food, it's a good place for lunch."

**To Go**

Corner Coffee House is at 10655 Fairfax Blvd. Hours are Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-9 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m.-9 p.m.; and Sunday, 8 a.m.-7 p.m. Park on the McLean Avenue side or in the back.





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