

# Reston CONNECTION

HOME LIFE STYLE

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



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From left: Lucretia Mattar, Senior Financial Analyst and Lisa Martin, Administrative Assistant at the Tysons Corner office of Granite Telecommunications present a \$4,500 donation check to the South Lakes High School (SLHS) Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) Food Pantry on Feb. 2. Present to receive the donation is South Lakes High School Principal Kim Retzer, Paul D. Thomas, SLHS PTSA President and Roberta Gosling, SLHS Pantry Co-Founder.

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## HOME LIFE STYLE



PHOTO COURTESY OF PATINA POLISHED LIVING  
**Textiles in vibrant colors like these throw pillows, can brighten the day of your Valentine.**



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PICKET FENCE  
**A set of Swedish towels can be a game changer for those who are environmentally conscious.**

# Valentine's Day Gifts for the Home

**There's still time to give the gift of style.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**B**oxes of chocolates and bouquets of flowers are ideas that might come to the minds of those who are still on the hunt for the perfect gift to give on Cupid's Day. Though we celebrate St. Valentine in just two days, home décor aficionados come to the rescue with a few chic gift ideas for the home design enthusiasts in your life.

"Whether you love to cook or you just love to eat take-out, a pop of color on the countertop will bring a smile to your face every time you walk into your kitchen," said Anne Walker of Anne Walker Design. "For a gift that will bring joy for years to come, surprise your significant other with a bright red Kitchen Aid Stand Mixer and a set of red silicone spatulas for Valentine's Day. Such a joy to use and a delight for the eye."

A set of Swedish towels can be a game changer for those who are environmentally conscious and obsessively clean, says Courtney Thomas of the Picket Fence a home décor and gift boutique in Burke, Virginia. "You can use Swedish towels to clean anything you'd clean with a paper towel," she said. "But they're reusable and you can throw them in the dishwasher when they get dirty."

Eco-friendly and made entirely of biodegradable cellulose or a combination of wood pulp and renewable cotton, Swedish towels can be used for household cleaning projects that range from spills on a counter tops to water spots on a mirror.

For a gift that does double design duty, a candle in

a reusable vessel is an option that Thomas suggests. "We have some candles that come in a pottery container and once the candle is gone, you can still use the pottery," she said. "It's like a two-for-one. Pottery is food safe and can go in the oven and dishwasher if you want to make a dip or something in them."

For those who decide to give flowers on Valentine's Day, add a vase for displaying those buds, suggests Walker. "Instead of spending more than \$100 on roses for your sweetheart, spend under \$100 on [an] unbelievably gorgeous cocoon Vase by Danish design house, Holmegaard," she said. "Fill it with a beautiful selection of fresh flowers [and] instead of having the roses for a few days, your beloved will have this gorgeous, stylish vase for a lifetime."

Those who want to give a gift that offers a luxurious night's sleep should consider a silk pillow case, says Amanda Mertins of Patina Polished in Alexandria.

"They're a wonderful gift because they're good for your hair," she said. "And silk stays cool which might be good for those who get hot at night."

There's nothing more classic than a silver picture frame adorning one's side table or book case, suggests Mertins. "When we are designing a living room, we often walk into someone's house and see photos of their loved ones displayed in a hodgepodge of frames like wooden frames and ceramic frames. Giving silver frames allows photos of your family or children to be displayed tastefully in classic silver frames"

Bursts of color in the form of textiles can brighten them home of one's valentine, advises Mertins. "Tablecloths, runners and napkins in silk, velvet and cotton by Ardmore Design make a beautiful table setting," she said. "There are some wonderful, washable throws in all different colors that make great gifts. People love because their pretty and washable."

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# Stock Those Shelves Fighting child hunger on the weekend.

By MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

“More than 175 students and families in the South Lakes High School (SLHS) Pyramid use the Food Pantry every single week,” said Roberta Gosling, SLHS Pantry Co-Founder. That is because for some children, on weekends, when they are not able to receive free and reduced meals at school, a food gap exists. But that was before the South Lakes High School Parent Teacher Student Association answered the direct call for food support and opened a Food Pantry in the school.

On Feb. 2, Lisa Martin, Administrative Assistant and Lucretia Mattar, Senior Financial Analyst at the Greensboro Drive, Tysons Corner office of Granite Telecommunications presented a donation check on behalf of the company for \$4,500 to the South Lakes High School (SLHS) Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) Food Pantry. Present to receive the generous donation was SLHS Principal Kim Retzer, Paul D. Thomas, SLHS PTSA President and Roberta Gosling, SLHS Pantry Co-Founder. “It’s a very nice check that will go a very long way,” said Retzer. “I think it is an efficient way to support the community in terms of how far the money goes,” said Thomas.



**From left: Lucretia Mattar, Senior Financial Analyst and Lisa Martin, Administrative Assistant at the Greensboro Drive, Tysons Corner office of Granite Telecommunications present a \$4,500 donation check on behalf of the company to the South Lakes High School (SLHS) Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) Food Pantry on Feb. 2. Present to receive the donation is South Lakes High School Principal Kim Retzer, Paul D. Thomas, SLHS PTSA President and Roberta Gosling, SLHS Pantry Co-Founder.**

donation dollar for dollar. Each week a different teammate at Granite Telecommunications chooses an organization to nominate to be the beneficiary of the Jeans Day Initiative, one of Granite Gives Back’s longest-running programs.

The Pantry is available for students and families in the South Lakes High School Pyramid. It is open for student shopping after school on Thursdays until 5:30 p.m. and on Fridays, until 3:30 p.m.

**FAMILIES** can shop on Thursdays between 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. “Order forms are available in English, Spanish and Arabic,” said Gosling as she gave a tour of the Pantry. “It’s very empowering for the kids because they can really shop for their families, and the idea is to prepare them for the weekend. We also have toiletries, which are very big because you cannot purchase them with SNAP dollars, and they are very expensive,” Gosling said.

As for where the items come from, although a significant portion is donated, Gosling said that as of a few months ago, the Pantry could partner with the Capital Area Food Bank. “We can get food by the pound for very little money...We are then really able to supply the Pantry,” she said. Anything they cannot use, “which is very little,” they take over to the homeless shelter according to Gosling. Martin chose the South Lakes High School Food Pantry because her children went to SLHS, so she was aware of the program. “I think it is important to support others in our local community and to bring awareness to the pantry and the need in the area,” she said.

**ACCORDING TO MARTIN**, every Friday at Granite is Jeans Day when each Granite teammate donates \$3 to a charitable organization in exchange for enjoying the comfort of a pair of jeans. Granite, in turn, matches each donation dollar for dollar. “All

Granite Gives Back initiatives depend on the support of Granite teammates, but Jeans Day is driven by them. A teammate picks a worthy organization like SLHS (PTSA Food Pantry), and their coworkers dig into their own pockets to donate. We’re encouraged

that they do so with enthusiasm, bringing to life our core value of giving back, each and every week,” said Martin. She added that when a Granite teammate donates \$3 in exchange for enjoying the comfort of a pair of jeans, Granite, in turn, matches each

## A Real-world Learning Experience

SLHS students present final designs for large scale sculpture at Reston Town Center.

By MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

South Lakes High School and Reston Town Center Association are collaborating on a project to deliver a large temporary sculpture envisioned and fabricated by South Lakes students to Reston Town Center this spring. “Their belief and trust in our students through the design process has been amazing,” said Principal Kim Retzer.

On Feb. 5, it was showtime and review for final designs created by the STEAM Team students in art classes taught by South Lakes High School teacher Marco Rando. On the tables beside the students sat their three final designs, lenticular maquettes, one a sculpture with spaced columns, the next a solid-form column concept, and the third separate cylinders with negative space between them allowing movement.

According to Rando, the students were learning more than art. “(The project) is



**South Lakes High School students discuss the merits and disadvantages of each design.**

building on a foundation of emotional intelligence, which is inextricably tied to the human condition and, therefore, the multiple disciplines of STEAM, science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathemat-

ics. Students will build on: resilience – having the ability to bounce back when things are not coming together as planned; open-minded problem solving – when things

SEE STUDENTS, PAGE 6



**Geoffrey Lewis looks over a maquette before commenting to students.**

## New Deal for Virginia

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



Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected president when the entire country was in the midst of what historians term the Great Depression. His solution to the widespread economic and social challenges that existed at the time was the establishment of programs and services that became known as the New Deal.

### COMMENTARY

Virginia had fallen behind in responding to many economic and social challenges until the voters in 2019 signaled with their votes that they were ready for changes. Those changes are coming in what I described in my column last week as "dazzling" speed. This week I will give many more examples. I am highlighting bills that have been passed by the House of Delegates but still must be passed by the Senate and signed by the Governor. I feel certain that

there will not be major differences between the actions of the House and Senate.

Virginians supported candidates in the election that wanted to end discrimination against people because of their sexual orientation. The House responded last week by passing a bill that ends discrimination in housing, accommodations, employment, and others forms of discrimination. It is the first such bill to pass in a southern state and is one of the most comprehensive of any in the country. I was honored to be a co-patron of the bill and pleased that my bill to extend protections of the hate crime law to all persons regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity also passed.

A bill to raise the minimum wage is making its way through the House with multi-year steps to get to \$15 per hour. My minimum wage bill that I have been introducing for many years was incorporated into the bill that is headed for passage. Immigrant workers that need a driver's permit to get to work will be able to get one under a bill before the House. For the last several decades there have been a series of laws designed to make it more difficult for

a woman to have access to an abortion when necessary, but those laws are being repealed. Likewise, a number of laws that have made it more cumbersome and difficult to register and vote have been repealed.

Bills to clean up our environment are passing this year including a bill I introduced to help clean up the Chesapeake Bay. The Governor's goal for the state to become carbon neutral by 2050 is being incorporated into energy legislation that makes way for more solar and wind power. Some advocates called their efforts the "Green New Deal." While the omnibus bill that incorporated their goals into a single piece of legislation did not pass as it was found impossible to determine its fiscal impact, I believe that most if not all of their goals will have been met when the many other bills with a narrower focus that have passed are considered. The advocacy of the Green New Deal members was very important in getting the many other single-purpose bills passed.

I have not exhausted the list of good bills that are passing. What is happening in Richmond this session is a really good new deal for people in the Commonwealth!

### Speaker Filler-Corn Statement on Passage of Virginia Values Act

Speaker Eileen Filler-Corn released the following statement on the Virginia House of Delegates passage of HB 1663, the Virginia Values Act.

"Discrimination against our gay, lesbian and transgender friends, family, neighbors and co-workers in employment, housing and public accommodation has always been abhorrent and unacceptable.

Today, we have laid a marker down that every Virginian can work hard, earn a living wage, and live their lives without fear of discrimination based on who they are or who they love. The sun shines brighter on the Commonwealth of Virginia with the House's passage of this landmark legislation.

Thank you to House Chief Patron Mark Sickles, Chief Co-Patrons Delores McQuinn and Mark Levine, and all of our partners and allies who made this momentous day possible."

## Tackling Affordable Housing And Frustrating Traffic

BY IBRAHEEM SAMIRAH  
STATE DELEGATE (D-86)

Traffic is an issue that everybody in Northern Virginia can relate to. Economic growth has made NoVA a desirable place to live, challenging a road network that didn't anticipate the boom. The knee jerk reaction to unforgiving traffic can often be to jump to solutions that are centered on cars and roads.

### COMMENTARY

However, experts agree that approaches like widening roads often fall short or even make traffic worse. Instead, solutions that focus on housing are in many situations a better way forward for addressing traffic in a comprehensive way.

It shouldn't surprise anyone that a regional shortage of available and affordable housing has coincided with traffic issues. These intertwine most when housing shortages in job-rich, fast-growing areas push out residents and contribute to suburban sprawl. As the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy writes: "There is considerable evidence that conventional dispersed, auto-centric development patterns (aka "sprawl") are inefficient, wasteful of land and natural resources, and difficult to sustain. In contrast, community designs that

emphasize higher-density/more compact forms...have been shown to reduce auto reliance, cut average trip lengths, and reduce vehicle miles of travel." In 2015, the Victoria Transport Policy Institute estimated that sprawl costs Americans more than \$1 trillion per year.

To curb sprawl, I introduced HB152 and HB151 in Virginia's General Assembly. These bills would legalize modest forms of higher-density housing in places that are already zoned for single-family, low-density housing only. At first, it may be easy to assume that adding housing to the area would make traffic worse. But traffic isn't a question of more vs. less growth. Rather, traffic comes down to smart vs. wasteful growth.

If housing isn't available in job-centers because zoning doesn't permit it, the only place left for

many to go is into new subdivisions farther out into the suburbs, increasing their drive time to work.

And driving is often the only option because low-density development does not yield itself to valuable alternatives like biking, walking, or taking the bus. Plus, when housing is sprawled out rather than clustered together, it makes it harder and less efficient to utilize Metro and develop new rail systems that can connect the region and reduce car-reliance.

It's clear that by legalizing more high-density housing in the neighborhoods that people want to live in, we can help tackle the dual problems of affordable housing and frustrating traffic. It's time to listen to the experts and be innovative with how we leverage land use to make life better for Virginians.

### 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:

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:  
reston@connectionnewspapers.com

**Kemal Kurspahic**  
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414  
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

**Mercia Hobson**  
Community Reporter  
mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com

**Andrea Worker**  
Contributing Writer  
aworker@connectionnewspapers.com

**Jean Card**  
Production Editor  
jcard@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:  
For advertising information  
sales@connectionnewspapers.com  
703-778-9431

**Debbie Funk**  
Display Advertising/National Sales  
703-778-9444  
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

**David Griffin**  
Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

**Classified & Employment Advertising**  
703-778-9431

**Editor & Publisher**  
Mary Kimm  
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com  
@MaryKimm

**Executive Vice President**  
Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

**Managing Editor**  
Kemal Kurspahic  
**Art/Design:**  
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,  
Ali Khaligh  
**Production Manager:**  
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION  
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com



# Reston Market Up 5 Percent

BY JENNY MCCLINTOCK

We reached the end of a decade and the statistics for 2019 real estate transactions in Reston have been tallied. The news is good! The numbers are up 5 percent from 2018, with **1383 total transactions\* in 2019**, an increase from 1316 total transactions in 2018. That's on top of a 2 percent increase in total transactions from 2017 to 2018. So the Reston market has had considerable improvement in the past three years in all three zip codes.

There are a number of economic factors that affected real estate in 2019. First, interest rates have bounced around, yet remain at historic lows. As interest rates rise (which could happen in 2020), buyer's purchasing power is affected and they can afford less. The positive side of that is buyers feel urgency to purchase and lock in their interest rate. Second, in most price segments inventory levels are low relative to demand. In the lower price points buyers do not have many choices available and those priced at under \$500,000 will sell quickly.

In analyzing the price segments (see chart), the \$1M and over market was the only bracket that experienced a decrease in sales from year to year. There were a total of 21 sales in 2019 compared to a total of 27 in 2018. Half of the over \$1M sales were

single family homes in North Reston 20194. Conversely, the \$500K to \$750K market experienced the biggest increase in number of transactions, going from 339 sales in 2018 to 384 sales in 2019, an increase of 12 percent.

One of the key factors contributing to the double digit increase in the \$500K to \$750K bracket is the new construction of condominiums at Wiehle Metro, the Lofts at Reston Station. There were 29 sold in 2019 ranging in price from \$535,000 to \$822,500! This represents the changing face of Reston, and more new construction is on the horizon for 2020 with townhouse projects planned for North Reston Tall Oaks and South Reston Sunrise Valley.

Reston zip code 20190, which includes in and around Reston Town Center (and also includes the aforementioned new construction at Wiehle Metro Station) experienced the biggest volume increase, from 408 sales in 2018 to 488 sales in 2019, a whopping 16 percent increase. The two market segments that led the charge is the under \$500K price point and the \$500K to \$750K price point.

South Reston zip code 20191 experienced a much needed increase in number of sales after a slight dip from 2017. There were 596 home sales in 2019 compared to 574 in 2018. Their largest increase was in the upper brackets, \$750K to \$999K, up 28 per-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Jenny McClintock**

## Reston Annual Market Analysis Home Sales (Based on Final Closed Price):

2019 compared to 2018 and 2017					
2019 Total Sales: 1385					
	\$1M and over	\$750K-\$999K	\$500K-\$749K	Under \$500K	Total # Sales
Zip Code					
20190	5	18	145	320	488
20191	7	64	153	371	595
20194	9	54	86	151	300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>1383</b>
2018 Total Sales: 1316					
	\$1M and over	\$750K-\$999K	\$500K-\$749K	Under \$500K	Total # Sales
Zip Code					
20190	12	23	83	290	408
20191	3	46	161	364	574
20194	12	54	95	173	301
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>1316</b>
2017 Total Sales: 1295					
	\$1M and over	\$750K-\$999K	\$500K-\$749K	Under \$500K	Total # Sales
Zip Code					
20190	5	25	88	292	410
20191	3	34	136	415	588
20194	10	48	91	148	297
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>1295</b>

cent. One factor that contributed is the new construction luxury townhomes at Sunrise Valley Dr. which started construction in 2018.

As we move into the new year of 2020, there are strong indications that Reston homes priced well and in good condition will sell for solid prices. If demand in Reston continues to remain strong relative to supply, some market segments may continue to experience multiple offers and price appreciation.

Home Buyers in the area can still purchase with the confidence that buying in

an up market cycle frequently proves advantageous over time. Now is the time to work with a professional agent to be in your new home in 2020!

Jenny McClintock is with HBC Group at Keller Williams and is an active and experienced Realtor in the Northern Virginia market place. Jenny resides in Reston and she and her team work with sellers, buyers, investors and builders in all price ranges. 703-731-2412, Jenny@HBCGroupKW.com

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-Werner Heisenberg

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**Announcements**

**NEWS**

**Students Create a Sculpture For Reston Town Center**

FROM PAGE 3

don't go as planned, students will build on the ability to roll up their sleeves and go back to the drawing board so to speak to resolve problems; communication - research and contacting professionals who can help them solve issues, learning to compromise when group dynamics are in disagreement; caring - taking pride in their work, learning to self-regulate a standard of achievement that affords them confidence to autonomously grow into their potential; and serving - the practice of sharing their achievement with the intent to enrich the community with creative dialogue," Rando said.

**AT THE MOMENT**, the students' communication skills would be put to the test. In front of them sat nearly a dozen stakeholders and professionals ready to interface with them, ask hard questions and provide comments. Sapna Yathiraj, Boston Properties Regional Marketing Director, Doug Carter, professional architect and member of the Reston Town Center Design Review Board, Anne Delaney, Executive Director of Public Art Reston, Geoffrey Lewis, Chair of Public Art Reston's Public Art Committee and more were ready to review the maquettes.

For the next hour, select students took the professionals on a journey. They showcased the attributes and requirements of the similar but, as they learned, very different lenticular designs with different traits. The students explained how they would keep the sculptures stable on the uneven terrain. "The width

is something you've been working with and weights," said Robert Goudie, Executive Director Reston Town Center Association. Students discussed material options, their merits and disadvantages, Dibond-an aluminum composite material, Omega-Bond-a solid core aluminum composite and plywood. After the students proposed weighing down the sculpture columns with sand or water to prevent tip-over, Carter said, "Why is it not possible to anchor this properly with some pressure treated timber that could go down."

**THE DIALOGUE** continued as students addressed safety, weather, lighting and architectural considerations. One student suggested a climate awareness design. "What you said, I think it is very, very important, said Carter. "If you can incorporate some responsible environmental reaction and incorporate that into your art, I think you should do it."

"The challenges of creating a piece that stands up to both the elements and the rigors of a dynamic, interactive, public space are many, and the students are really rising to meet those challenges," said Goudie. "I think this is an expression of education and community building at its finest."

Principal Kim Retzer expressed her gratitude to Reston Town Center Association for reaching out to SLHS. "We appreciate the area business who are supporting various elements of the final project allowing this idea to become a reality: Reston Town Center Association, Boston Properties, Hyatt at Reston Town Center, Power Services and KCS Landscape Management," she said.

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Showmasters Gun Shows 540-951-1344 | 540-951-2344  
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\$1 Off One Adult Admission

f t v i

**Announcements**

# BULLETIN

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.

## NOW THRU FEB. 18

### Herndon Accepting Arts Grants Proposals.

The Town of Herndon is accepting grant proposals up to \$4,500 through the Virginia Commission for the Arts (VCA) Creative Communities Partnership Grant for projects to be implemented in FY 2020. For information about this program and other grant opportunities, review the 2020 Guidelines for Funding which are available at [http://www.arts.virginia.gov/grants\\_guidelines.html](http://www.arts.virginia.gov/grants_guidelines.html). Nonprofit arts organizations incorporated in the Town of Herndon must meet general policy guidelines as published by the VCA. The Commission's Guidelines for Funding and other resources are available on the website at [www.arts.virginia.gov](http://www.arts.virginia.gov). Applicants should provide full documentation of projected budget, program planning, and a detailed description of the implementation of the project. Organizations who intend to apply for grant funding must submit their proposals by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 18 to the Performing Arts Supervisor at the Town of Herndon Department of Parks and Recreation. Proposals may be mailed to Herndon Parks and Recreation Department, 777 Lynn Street, Herndon, VA 20170, hand delivered to the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave, Herndon, VA, 20170, or sent electronically to [parksandrec@herndon-va.gov](mailto:parksandrec@herndon-va.gov). Applicants are encouraged to confirm receipt by the department prior to the deadline. To learn more about the Town of Herndon Parks and Recreation Department, visit [herndon-va.gov/recreation](http://herndon-va.gov/recreation) or call 703-787-7300.

## TUESDAY/FEB. 18

**DMV2GO at the Library.** 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. The wireless office on wheels offers all DMV services: driver's license and ID card applications and renewals, driving records, vehicle titles, license plates, decals, order disabled plates, and more. Information on all services available at [dmv.virginia.gov/general/#dmv\\_2go](http://dmv.virginia.gov/general/#dmv_2go).

## MONDAY/FEB. 24

**NARFE Dulles Chapter 1241 Luncheon.** 11:30 a.m. At Amphora Diner, 1151 Elden Street, Herndon. Featuring speaker Pete Kirby, Retired Fire Chief, Centreville Fire Department, who will speak on fire prevention and response. The cost of the luncheon is \$18.15 which includes tax and a small gratuity.

## THURSDAY/FEB. 27

**Affordable Housing For Seniors: Preservation Project Kick-off.** 1:30 p.m. At Hunters Woods Fellowship House, 2231 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Join in a kick-off of a major renovation project on the 225-unit Hunters Woods Fellowship House. They are investing \$12 million to modernize and upgrade this important community landmark that helps so many seniors who otherwise could not afford to live in the Reston area. Hear from all the key stakeholders – including the residents – what this project means to them and to the community.

## SUPPORT GROUPS

**Parent Support Partners**, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax) or [www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html](http://www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html).

## ONGOING

**STEM Professionals Needed.** Volunteers are needed to assist K-12 STEM teachers in northern Virginia as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, [stemvolunteers.org](http://stemvolunteers.org), during the 2019-20 school year. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488 or [donaldrea@aol.com](mailto:donaldrea@aol.com).

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## All Gowned Up



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

All Gowned Up And somewhere to go, or so I thought. I had checked in at the front desk. I was given a number, and almost immediately, it was called. I said good-bye to Team Lourie and was led back to a staging area (beds, curtains, doctors, nurses) where I was told I would see them both before surgery. There I was given a gown, no-slip socks and a hair net to change into, and instructed to place all my clothes (underwear, too) into two plastic bags and then told to pull back the privacy curtain and lie back on the bed.

Within a few minutes a female nurse, part of a very attentive and conscientious staff, began to attend me. She started an I.V. in my left forearm, wrapped a blood pressure cuff around my right bicep and then stuck half-a-dozen or so EKG contacts over the front me and down my legs to monitor my heart. In addition, the typical other vitals: oxygen, pulse and temperature were taken. At that point, it appeared that I had passed muster. My surgeon stopped by for a brief visit and all was progressing normally. Until that is when the anesthesiologist came by for what I thought was the final step. It was the final step alright. She said that "due to an abundance of caution," she was uncomfortable proceeding with the surgery. She explained that the facility (not a hospital) where I was to undergo the surgery, was not fully equipped to respond to certain potential complications which might occur which involved a breathing tube, a ventilator and the weakness of my lungs, so she sent me packing (unpacking actually). Disappointed, as you might imagine, we all left the facility and waited for further instructions.

By the end of the day, arrangements had been made to reschedule my surgery at a local hospital on Wednesday, a mere two day delay. I could live with that. At home, I resumed my post-shower, pre-surgery, infection-preventing scrub as I had for the previously scheduled surgery. This time surgery was scheduled for 1:30 pm instead of the 10:50 am it had been on Monday. Still, if all went well, I could be released that same day, under someone else's recognition of course, given the late hour, but likely recuperating at home in my own bed.

On Wednesday, I arrived at the hospital two hours before surgery as directed and began the now familiar process. Once again I was prepped and ready. This time there were no slip-ups. Around 2:15 I was wheeled into the operating room and introduced to the staff on hand. I was asked my name, date of birth and the reason for surgery that day. Answering correctly, the next step involved an oxygen mask coming down over my nose and mouth and being asked to breathe normally, which I did, and the rest, as they say, is history.

It turned out that the anesthesiologist was right to be cautious. My four-hour outpatient surgery turned into a seven-hour admission-to-the-hospital major surgery with complications. Due to my "Adam's Apple" tumor being embedded into/under my collarbone, a thoracic surgeon was brought into consult about possibly cracking open my chest to get at the remaining cancer. Fortunately, a decision was made not to do so and I was wheeled back to recovery and eventually to my room for the night where at 12:35 am, while lying in my bed, my eyes opened and I saw my wife, Dina and close friend, Rita, who had stayed into the wee hours in an amazing show of support.

The next day, after an uncomfortable night in my hospital bed, I was discharged, four hours after the process began. (As you may or may not know, getting discharged from the hospital is hardly a straight line from your hospital room to your curbside pick up.) I was given instructions, prescriptions and follow-up appointments. My thyroid gland, parathyroid, "Adam's Apple" tumor and a few lymph nodes stayed behind. Can't say that I miss any of them. Still, my body may miss them so I'll likely have some post-op work to do at home. Nevertheless, progress has been made for which I'm grateful.

*Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.*

# CALENDAR

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

## ONGOING

**Audubon Photography Awards Show.** Now thru Feb. 26. At Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Dr, Reston. Bringing the joy of birds to us, this traveling exhibition features 12 large-scale photographic prints. Nine are the award-winning and runner-up photos. Three have been selected from the gallery of top 100 photos. The photos cover a range of species and geographic locations. Hours are Monday and Wednesday-Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Sundays 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. Events to include a film night for adults, Birds on Film (Feb. 21, 7-9 p.m.) plus an all ages open house (Feb. 9, 1-3 p.m.). Co-sponsored by Audubon Society of Northern Virginia and Friends of Reston.

**AARP Tax-Aide Program.** Now thru April 14. At RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Tuesdays: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Thursdays: 4:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.; and Saturdays: 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. Free. For taxpayers with low and moderate incomes with special attention to those 60 and older. AARP's Tax-Aide program was created nearly 40 years ago to assist older adults as well as persons with low and middle incomes in successfully navigating the tax code. All tax preparation is free and confidential. For more information, contact the Lifelong Learning Program Director, Casmera Lebron at 703-390-6157.

**RCC Collecting Dresses and Accessories.** Now thru Feb. 29. Reston Community Center is accepting donations of gently used dresses and accessories for its 18th annual Diva Central Dress Drive. From Feb. 1 - 29, RCC will be collecting the items at its Hunters Woods and Lake Anne locations. In addition to dresses, RCC needs donations of shoes, jewelry, handbags and shawls. Donations are tax-deductible and may be dropped off Monday - Saturday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., Sundays. Donations will benefit middle and high school students in Reston and surrounding areas, who can outfit themselves for prom and spring dances for free. This year's dress and accessories giveaway event is planned for Saturday, March 28, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at RCC Lake Anne, 1609-A Washington Plaza in Reston. All local middle and high school students are invited to attend and "shop" for dresses, shoes and other accessories for free. There will also be door prizes and refreshments. Registration is not required.

## WEDNESDAY/FEB. 12

**Wednesday Morning Book Club.** 10:30 a.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. This month's title is "The Last Days of Night" by Graham Moore.

**Memory Depot Orientation.** 10:30 a.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Let them introduce you to our Memory Depot station, a do-it-yourself location for scanning your slides, negatives and photos and to transfer your VHS or audio cassettes to digital formats.

**Reston, a Photographer's Muse.** 7 p.m. At 1609 Washington Plaza, N, Reston. Featuring Charlotte Geary who will be speaking on why she is so drawn to photographing Reston. She will be offering her observations about culture, urban planning, and photographic technique while presenting photographs of Reston places, people, and events.

## THURSDAY/FEB. 13

**Valentine Make & Take.** 1-5 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Stop by the Children's Department and make a special craft for your friends and family. All Ages. No registration required. Call: 703-689-2700.

**Preparing for Downsizing: Buying and Selling.** 7-8 p.m. At RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. This class will discuss the preparation process for selling a primary residence as well as the identification of and purchase of the next property. Free, registration required, #503541-0A.

**Teen Advisory Board.** 7 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Join TAB to gain leadership and volunteer experience and share your ideas about how to make the library a wonderful place for teens! Volunteer hours granted. Age 13-18. No registration required. Call 703-689-2700.

## Yours for the Asking

The exhibit **Moira Dryer: Yours for the Asking** will be held from now thru April 18 at GRACE in Reston.

### NOW THRU APRIL 18

**Moira Dryer: Yours for the Asking.** At GRACE, 12001 Market Street, #103, Reston. Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE) presents a selection of works by artist Moira Dryer (b. 1957, Toronto, Ontario; d. 1992, New York, New York) in conjunction with the major exhibition of Dryer's early work at the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC, entitled *Moira Dryer: Back in Business*. Both exhibitions are curated by GRACE Executive Director and Curator Lily Siegel. Dryer is primarily known for her large abstract paintings on wood panel. A majority of the works on view were given as gifts to, or purchased by, friends and family directly from the artist. Also included are selections from the artist's archive and a final painting left in Dryer's studio at the time of her death. Visit [RESTONARTS.ORG](http://RESTONARTS.ORG).



## Weekend Food for Kids

The Weekend Food for Kids event will take place Thursday/Feb. 20 at Dominion Energy.

### THURSDAY/FEB. 20

**Weekend Food for Kids.** 10-11:30 a.m. At Dominion Energy, 3072 Centreville Road, Herndon. Join in this fun event to support local children. Assistance League of Northern Virginia invites community members to the Weekend Food for Kids monthly packing. This critical program provides nonperishable food over the weekend to children who receive free or reduced-price meals at local Title I elementary schools. Arrive at 9:30 a.m. if you would like to help with setup. Free. Visit the website [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org)

### FRIDAY/FEB. 14

**Valentine's Night Out.** 6-9:30 p.m. At Herndon Community Center 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Herndon Parks and Recreation Staff will supervise and entertain children on Valentine's Day so that parents/guardians can enjoy a night out. Event participants will make crafts, play games and socialize with other children. Visit the Town's website at [herndon-va.gov/recreation](http://herndon-va.gov/recreation) or call 703-787-7300.

**Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides.** 4 - 9 p.m. Departures on Market Street by the Pavilion in Reston Town Center. Celebrate Valentine's Day with a ride in a carriage pulled by Belgian horses. Presented by Reston Town Center. All proceeds received by a local charity. \$5 per person; children 5 and under ride free. Visit [www.restontowncenter.com](http://www.restontowncenter.com)

### SATURDAY/FEB. 15

**Zumba Fitness.** 12 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Join us for an exciting new dance fitness class. Lose yourself in the music and find yourself in shape! No experience necessary. Adults, Teens.

### SUNDAY/FEB. 16

**Chess Club for Kids.** 2 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Learn openings, tactics, and end game strategies. Players will be able to play against players at their strength. Age 8-16. No registration required. Call: 703-689-2700.

### MONDAY/FEB. 17

**Rocknoceros.** 10:30-11:15 a.m. At Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Coach Cotton, Williebob, and Boogie Woogie Bennie perform wildly popular award-winning music for the whole family. Rocknoceros has dominated the DC children's music scene for many years. Visit [herndon-va.gov/recreation](http://herndon-va.gov/recreation), or call 703-787-7300.

### TUESDAY/FEB. 18

**Baby Play and Explore.** 11 a.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Join an hour of unstructured play and social time for babies. Cosponsored by Friends of the Reston Regional Library (FRRL). Age birth-18 months with adult. No registration required. Call 703-689-2700.

**Yoga with Rupa.** 2 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Local yoga and wellness coach Rupa Shah will discuss the benefits and practice of yoga, and we will also practice these techniques. Please bring a mat or towel. Adults.

**Memory Café.** 2-4 p.m. At RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Rd, Reston. Free; drop-in. This program is for those with early-stage dementia and their caregivers to explore music, activities, and discuss life stories and challenges.

**Preschool Open House.** 6-8 p.m. At Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. The Herndon Community Center Preschool will host an open house and registration will be taken for the 2020-2021 school year. Visitors can meet the staff and tour the preschool room. The preschool is a state licensed program for children ages 4-5. The program operates weekdays from Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. for 4-5 year-old students and 1:00-3:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday for 3-4 year-old students. It follows the Fairfax County School calendar and runs September 2020-June 2021. Children must be potty-trained. Visit [herndon-va.gov/recreation](http://herndon-va.gov/recreation), or call 703-787-7300.

**Sam's Book Club.** 7 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Join former FCPL library director Sam Clay for a lively book discussion. This month's title is "Hero of the Empire" by Candice Mallard.

**Spanchats.** 7 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. Join the ongoing Spanish conversation group. All levels from beginner to fluent are welcome. Adults.

### FEB. 18-21

**S.T.E.A.M. Learning.** At the Goddard School, 2400 Dulles Town Blvd., Herndon. Little ones will participate in S.T.E.A.M.-centric activities (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) and take on the role of engineers for National Engineers Week. During this week, preschoolers will spend their time designing and building structures (mini bridges, buildings, roller coasters, etc.) from classroom materials like blocks, popsicle sticks and more. The fun, hands-on S.T.E.A.M activities promote creativity, imagination and the love of learning.

### WEDNESDAY/FEB. 19

**The Search for Life Beyond Earth.** 2:15-3:40 p.m. At RCC Lake Anne, 1609-A Washington Plaza N, Reston. Join George Mason University Professor Michael Summers to learn about advances in planetary science that have led to discoveries of other Earth-like places in the universe that have environments that appear conducive to life. Cost is \$10 (R)/\$8 (R55+)/\$15 (NR), #503565-0A

**Podcast Club.** 6:30 p.m. At Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Dr., Reston. If you enjoy bite-size stories that you can listen to, come discuss a monthly selection of podcasts. You can listen on a computer or a mobile device through any of several free apps. Every month listen to at least four episodes of your choosing of the podcast.

### THURSDAY/FEB. 20

**Managing the Loss of a Loved One.** 2-4 p.m. At RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Rd, Reston. Participants will learn how to manage all of the practical and legal details that follow the death of a family member. Free; registration required, #500489-0A.

**Creative Response at GRACE.** 7 p.m. At GRACE, Reston. A short presentation by an expert is followed by open conversation responding to the gallery's Moira Dryer exhibit. Free. Sponsored by Reston Community Center. Call 703-471-9242; Visit [www.restonarts.org](http://www.restonarts.org)