

# Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

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The Scott family, Caitlin Dearing, Alistar, 2 1/2, and Cameron check out one of the newest Herndon Historic Markers, this one located on the Town Hall near the Herndon Depot. It is one of four new markers installed in the Town as a local site of significance.


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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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**Runnymede Park, Hawkins/ Carroll house:** This unique stone cabin was built c. 1909 by James A. Hawkins, a local banker and farmer. It originally served as the residence for a twenty acre farm that bordered Sugarland Run. The house was later occupied by the Martz and Carroll families up until the late 1980s. It is the only house in Herndon that remains in its original rural setting and stands as a reminder of Herndon agricultural heritage. Among the particularly distinctive architectural features of the house is the etched heraldry found above doors and windows that serves as a reference to the French lineage of some members of the Hawkins family.



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

**725 Center Street, Herndon School:** The house on this property was Herndon's first public school. It was built in 1868 as a one room schoolhouse and expanded to three rooms in the 1870s. It was a segregated school that the Herndon School Association operated for children of all grades. In the 1870s, it became part of the Fairfax County school system. The schoolhouse was vacated in 1912 when a larger public school was built on Locust Street.

# Chronically the Past in Bronze

Town installs four of the final six Historic Markers.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**T**own of Herndon crews installed four new Historic Markers in late January, adding to the Town's Marker Program. In October of 2016, Mayor Lisa Merkel unveiled the first marker, which commemorated "The Big Fire" that consumed most of downtown Herndon. The sites of the newly installed markers are Town Hall, 730 Elden Street-Herndon Dairy, 725 Center Street-Herndon School, 763 Grace Street-Herndon Seminary and 195 Herndon Parkway, Runnymede Park-Hawkins/ Carroll house.

"There are two more markers planned for installation, one for the Town Hall (730 Elden Street) and the other for the Herndon Theatre (757 Elden Street)," said Town's spokesperson, Anne Curtis.

Described as "really beautiful" by Mayor Merkel in 2016 when she announced the

**Town Hall, Herndon Dairy; The Scott family, Caitlin Dearing, Alistar, 2 1/2, and Cameron check out one of the newest Herndon Historic Markers, this one located on the Town Hall near the Herndon Depot In the early 1900s Herndon dairy farmers led the state in production. For decades, dairy farming was the primary industry and dominant land use of Herndon. Herndon downtown businesses flourished in support of the industry. The railroad provided a fast way to move fresh milk to markets in Washington, D.C. From a platform previously located on this site, farmers loaded their milk containers onto the train each morning and returned each evening to retrieve their empty containers for reuse the next day.**



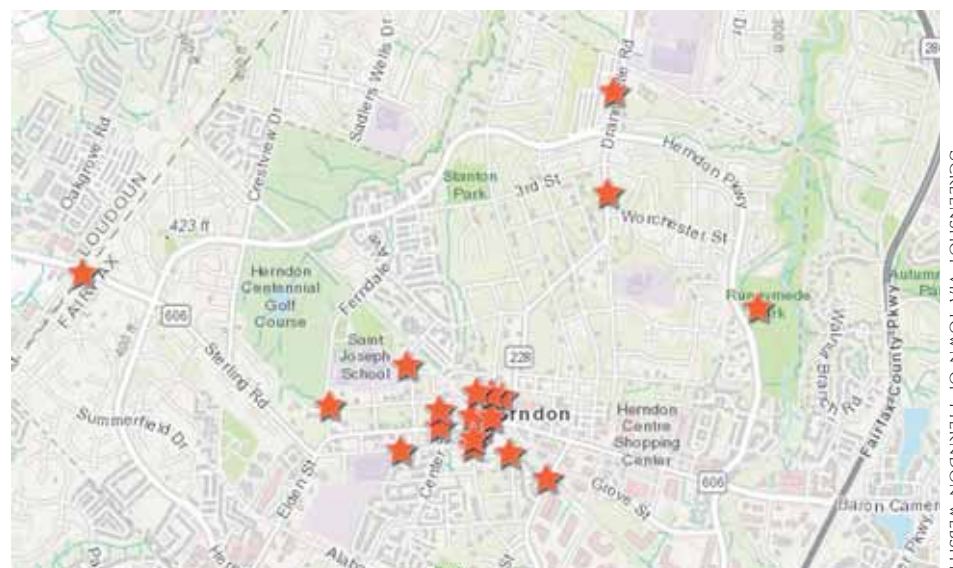
unveiling of the first marker during a Town Council Public Hearing, the plaques are cast bronze, etched with a stainless steel Town Seal and bronze photo with a traditional mount for freestanding markers with a fluted post. When the final two markers are installed, there will be a total of 21 markers. "The map on the marker webpage shows all marker locations and topic/content including those that have not been installed yet," said Curtis.

"The historic marker program has been successful in its mission to memorialize historic sites important to Herndon and help enhance awareness of local history. A lot of Herndon's character and sense of community can be traced to the places, people, and events highlighted in these markers," said Bryce Perry, Deputy Director of Community Development Town of Herndon. For more information about the program, visit [www.herndon-va.gov](http://www.herndon-va.gov), search historic-marker-program and [herndonhistoricalsociety.org](http://herndonhistoricalsociety.org).



**763 Grace Street, Herndon Seminary:** Mary Lee Castleman, an active member of the St. Timothy's Episcopal Mission, wanted to establish a proper school for girls. She first established the Herndon Seminary on the upper floor of the old mission building, formerly

located at the corner of Grace and Vine Streets. In 1881 Mrs. Castleman built the house on this site, where she and her daughters lived and continued to run the Herndon Seminary, a private boarding and day school for young ladies. The seminary was in operation until 1926.



SCREENSHOT VIA TOWN OF HERNDON WEBSITE

Map showing Herndon Historic Marker locations.



## New Deal for Virginia

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



**F**ranklin 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)

**T**raffic 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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Published by  
Local Media Connection LLC

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# No Grad Left Behind

Parents raise \$7,500 at Casino Night and Silent Auction Fundraiser for HHS Class of 2020 grad celebration.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Herndon High School All Night Grad (ANG) Celebration for the Class of 2020 is a parent organized and self-funded event scheduled in the evening following graduation ceremonies on Tuesday, June 2. Hosted by Herndon Community Center from 10:30 p.m. - 5 a.m., the celebration does not receive financial assistance from Fairfax County Public Schools but instead relies on donations and community fundraising efforts, to make the all-inclusive celebration a reality.

With only 16 weeks and counting down until graduation, on Saturday, Feb. 8 the Herndon All Night Grad (ANG) Committee presented the Casino Night and Silent Auction Fundraiser to help support expenses for the All Night Grad Celebration. Held at "Mile 20 at Mediterranean Breeze" in Herndon, parent Gretchen Nedzi of Reston said, "I'm here to create a community with fellow parents and raise money for a successful, all-inclusive graduation party." Julie Saylor of Herndon, who staffed the welcome table, added, "Because we love them all." Restaurant owner Phil Orme has been a supporter of the Casino Night and Silent Auction Fundraiser for decades. He said he welcomed the opportunity to support the biggest fundraiser for the All Night Grad party, "one that keeps students safe."

The goal of the celebration is to give all Herndon High School Class of 2020 grads a memorable and safe after graduation event, one to which they will say yes to attend and be with their classmates in an alcohol and drug-free celebration during a high-risk night. However, a party such as this, one that could entice reticent Herndon High School grads to forfeit any possible combination of partying, alcohol, drugs and driving, takes dollars to produce. According to organizer Joan Koss of Herndon, the cost is upwards of \$35,000 or more depending on the number of ticket holders.

"Activities include an internationally renowned illusionist, casino, large inflatable games and obstacle courses, airbrush tattoos, photo booth, massages, music and lots of food. Prizes are given out all night long, and those who stay for the entire evening have a chance to win grand prizes. Think flat screen TVs, iPads, gift cards, and so much more," promoted the event website [herndonang.org](http://herndonang.org).

With the price of the ticket currently \$72 if purchased online, the price tag could be a hardship and deterrent for students eligible for free and reduced price school lunches based on household income and family size. According to the online ticket site, if a student receives free/reduced lunch, the ticket price is free or reduced to \$25 respectively. "We cover their ticket price, so no student is excluded due to lack of funds," said Koss. The ticket price increases to \$82 on March 1. It includes all activities throughout the evening, food and prizes. "History indicates 60 percent of graduates will attend the All Night Grad party, but we would love every senior to attend and celebrate with their class," said Koss.

Upstairs cards and strategy flashed at the Black Jack and Texas Hold 'Em tables, and chance dictated where the ball rolled at the Roulette table. The silent auction lured guests to outbid even their closest friends but all for a good cause. By Monday morn-



**It's all chance at the Roulette table for players at the annual Casino Night and Silent Auction Fundraiser for the Herndon High School Class of 2020 All Night Grad (ANG) Committee, which produces the All Night Graduation Celebration 2020 for Herndon High School graduating seniors.**



**From left: Rosemary DeBenedittis and Joan Koss of Herndon watch as Scott Steiger of Herndon hands Jarrett Goldfedder of Vienna and Susanna Blackman of Herndon their wrist bands, "\$25k in Casino Cash" and drink tickets at annual Casino Night and Silent Auction Fundraiser. The event is a fundraiser by the Herndon High School Class of 2020 All Night Grad (ANG) Committee.**

ing, the initial tallies showed the event raised \$7,500, according to Koss. Additional donations are needed. Visit [www.herndonang.org](http://www.herndonang.org) to donate or for more information.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



PHOTOS COURTESY NEXTSTOP THEATRE

**Cast of the musical "Ordinary Days" at NextStop Theatre, From left — Carl Williams, Anna Philips-Brown, Bobby Libby and Sarah Anne Sillers.**

## Making Connections In a Hectic City

NextStop Theatre's upcoming musical "Ordinary Days."

BY DAVID SIEGEL  
THE CONNECTION

### Where and When

"Ordinary Days" is a rare gem that you are not going to see anywhere else. It is full of funny, exciting, and poignant music," said Evan Hoffmann, Artistic Director, NextStop Theatre. "It is a show that will just make you feel good about life."

The musical "Ordinary Days" by Adam Gwon is the heartfelt story about people craving connections in their increasingly fret, stressful lives. The show follows four city dwellers in 2008, exploring how their everyday lives intersect in unexpected ways. There is a couple struggling to confront a fracture in their relationship as well as two friends who have an idiosyncratic bond based upon a love for arts. Is it possible that the smallest acts can have the most profound effects on your life?

Jay D. Brock, who is directing "Ordinary Days," called it "probably one of the most realistic musicals that is in the canon. Although it is through-sung it more like a play than what one would typically think of when considering the musical genre."

"So often our lives are about milestones and 'badges of accomplishment.' It is so easy to miss the beautiful in the ordinary process of living," added Brock describing the musical. "Our brains are literally wired to ignore information that is expected or part of a regular pattern. You can walk past a beautiful piece of art every day and eventually start to no longer see it; it takes intentional focus

Next Stop Theatre presents "Ordinary Days" at NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive (Inside the Sunset Business Park on Spring Street), Herndon. Performances Feb. 20 to March 15, 2020. Thursday Feb. 20, March 5 & 12 at 8 p.m., Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday Feb. 22 and March 2 at 8 p.m., Feb. 29 & March 14 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., Sunday Feb. 23, March 1 & 15 at 8 p.m., Mar. 8 at 2 p.m. & 7 p.m. Tickets: General Admission: \$40-\$55\* (NextStop strongly encourage booking in advance. Ticket prices increase as performances get nearer and fill up). Call 866-811-4111 or visit: [www.nextstoptheatre.org](http://www.nextstoptheatre.org). **Note:** "Ordinary Days" contains adult language and themes that may not be appropriate for all audiences.

and energy to give our attention to the beauty of everyday life and to the every-day things that comprise our existence."

"All of the story-telling for 'Ordinary Days' is done through music," said Elisa Rosman, the production's music director. "The music has a forward pulse. Each song feels to me to be crafted just right for the story it is telling. It is a joy."

The production features actor/singers Anna Philips-Brown, Sarah Anne Sillers, Bobby Libby and Carl Williams. Sillers portrays Claire; "a tightly wound grad student struggling to find her place in life and what truly makes her happy, meanwhile being terrified of not measuring up to the expectations of herself or others. She's a very sassy and driven person...with ambition despite what appears to be a never ending stream of obstacles."

"Ordinary Days" is a musical that also has surprises to savor. "It is a jolt of optimism," said Hoffmann inviting audiences to the NextStop production.



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**News**



By Samy Derbaul/PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENT

The group of students, the McNaair instructors and Ms. Molek and Mrs. Martin of the Fairfax Academy.

**Visiting the Academy**

Fairfax Academy welcomed the McNaair Elementary Boys & Girls Mentoring group. Mrs. Martin (Academy school counselor) & Ms. Molek (Career Experience Specialist) spent two hours with a group of 15 students and three instructors from the McNaair Elementary Boys & Girls Mentoring group. This is the second year this group from McNaair has visited Fairfax Academy.

During "the tour" they attended five Academy classes of the students' choice to do interactive/hands-on activities correlated to the class, and learn all about what they do in the particular classes. (The

students got to vote ahead of time to pick which classes they were most interested in).

They got to actively participate in each class – dancing, using autotune, creating a beat, taking photos in the studio, browsing the Fashion In Motion magazine... and they also got to see students perform and utilize professional equipment. In addition, they got to hear from Academy students in each class (who attend a wide range of FCPS high schools) in regards to their middle/high school path and what the Academy has meant to them and what careers they are thinking of pursuing because of the Academy.

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## 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 [donaalrea@aol.com](mailto:donaalrea@aol.com).

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## All Gowned Up



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

All Gowned UpAnd 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.



### 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)