

Ewing Resigns from
Library Board Amidst
Public Outcry

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Route 7 BLM Protests
Continue Tuesdays

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Live Music Arriving to Meadowlark Gardens

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A wife-husband duo
Teri Lazar and Osman Kivrak
will perform at
Virginia Chamber Orchestra's
"Music at Meadowlark Gardens."

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Ewing Resigns from Library Board

Trustee Rosenthal apologizes for disruption.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Two members of the Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees, Phil Rosenthal, Springfield District Representative and Darren Ewing, Dranesville District Representative, made statements during the July 29 public meeting of the Fairfax County Library Board Trustees that caused the public, organizations, and top County leaders to voice concern. The ensuing aftermath continues to unfold more than a month following initial calls for Trustee removal from office.



PHOTO BY FAIRFAX COUNTY
Trustee Phillip Rosenthal,
(Springfield District), Fairfax
County Library Board of Trustees



PHOTO BY FAIRFAX COUNTY
Trustee Darren Ewing (Dranes-
ville District), Fairfax County
Library Board of Trustees

Emails from the public to the Library Board include statements that Rosenthal's remarks made during the meeting were dangerous. He contradicted Library policies and disparaged the needs and concerns of the community he was appointed to serve. On Aug. 11, Chair Fran Millhouser, Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees, released "Letter to the Public Regarding the July 29 Library Board Meeting from the Library Board Chair." In it, she wrote: "I have received many emails voicing public concern for statements made during that July meeting. If you have not had a chance yet, I invite you to watch the Board meeting in full. I do not take your comments lightly and am setting up our next meeting, scheduled for Wednesday Sept. 9 at 7 p.m. via Zoom, to allow for ample time for a presentation and Board discussion."

AN AUG. 20 LETTER, signed by the twenty-seven organizations, faith-based groups and unions of NOVA Equity Agenda Coalition catapulted public outcry concerning statements to the highest levels in Fairfax County government. The Coalition said that Rosenthal "made unmistakably racist, homophobic, anti-Semitic, and anti-Islamic comments while criticizing the County's attempts to promote inclusion in its library catalog." The Coalition addressed its letter to Chairman Jeffrey McKay, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Millhouse. The Coalition copied all members of the Board of Supervisors and Public Library Board of Trustees. It called on both bodies "to formally and publicly condemn Mr. Rosenthal's statements."

Ewing, an appointee of John W. Foust, Dranesville District Supervisor, commented during the meeting. He resigned on Aug. 25. Supervisor Foust provided a copy of Ewing's resignation. In it, Ewing wrote: "My remarks were not to lend support to Mr. Rosenthal's comments but to examine the idea of more neutrality in the presentation of the library's collection... I have decided to tender my resignation effective immediately. Perhaps my vacancy will help the board in developing a more diverse representation to further the library's mission."

Supervisor Foust responded in a statement that he had known Ewing for many years and many different volunteer roles. "He has and continues to provide valuable services to our community. That is especially

true of his many years of service on the Library Board. As noted in his resignation statement, he recognizes the value of having a Library Board that is more diverse and looks more like the community that it serves. As he suggests, I will seek to advance that goal when I appoint his replacement."

Unlike Ewing, recent outrage did not lead Phil Rosenthal, an appointee of Pat Herrity, Springfield District Supervisor, to resign. The NOVA Equity Agenda Coalition said on its Facebook page it was "sickening to hear Mr. Phillip Rosenthal... make unmistakably racist, homophobic, anti-Semitic, and anti-Islamic comments while criticizing the County's attempts to promote inclusion in its library catalog... To listen to his remarks, skip to the 1:37 mark." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQvU2CvpGUI>

THE COMMENTS led Chairman McKay to post a statement on Twitter saying he hoped "Mr. Rosenthal resigns." <https://twitter.com/jeffreymckay/status/1298982854693552135?s=12>

Rosenthal responded to Chairman McKay's statement the next day. He said, "I have the utmost respect for Chairman McKay, and I sincerely apologize for any disruption that my remarks caused and the way they have been interpreted. My intention was to address that all sides of the discussion should be highlighted at the library and on the library website. I am sorry that I offended anyone with my remarks." According to Rosenthal, he planned to meet with Supervisor Herrity's office sometime during the week of Aug. 31.

Supervisor Herrity issued the following statement: "My office has also received feedback supporting our appointees' views. I have always believed that open honest discussion gets us to better answers. Interestingly several other trustees agreed there was a need for further discussion and possible action to have the website present a diversity of opinions. The public library is one of the most important institutions in our democracy. For that reason, it is especially important that it offers a balance of viewpoints to remain neutral and nonpartisan in representing many ideologies, religions, ethnicities, and stories. I look forward to seeing how the Library Board of Trustees works to more holistically encourage diversity of thought for readers in Fairfax County."



FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

An FCPS graphic welcomes teachers back to begin their preparation period before school starts on Sept. 8.

Teachers Prepare for An Unprecedented Year

Teachers are adapting their curriculum to a remote setting this fall, with the first day of school fast approaching.

BY LAURA GERSONY
THE CONNECTION

Diane Hausman, a fourth grade teacher at Colvin Run Elementary School, is entering her ninth year of teaching; but in many ways, she said, it feels like her first.

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) announced in July that it will begin the 2020-2021 school year entirely online, with four days of "live, face-to-face" online instruction on Tuesday through Friday, and asynchronous "independent learning" on Mondays. For many teachers, this means learning new skills for remote instruction and creating lessons that are adapted for the online setting, sometimes from scratch.

"I know I'm going to have to work a lot more this year: not learning what to teach them, but putting it into a virtual format that's engaging for kids," Hausman said.

The Fairfax County School Board voted in early July to delay the first day of school by two weeks, until after Labor Day, in order to provide staff members with more time to prepare for the fall: a change that Hausman welcomed.

"My work-life balance [in Spring] was nonexistent," she said. "I'm grateful I have until the 8th of September, because I'm gonna need all that time."

Lamya Alany, an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) specialist at Kent Gardens Elementary School in McLean, said that preparing for

the virtual setting also leaves her with a mental load.

"I haven't stopped working since March 13. Whether I'm actively on the computer or not, it's always on my mind: 'How am I going to do this? How can I make this better? How can I learn something new to make sure that I can do my job?'" Alany said. "We're all really, really trying."

FCPS has faced backlash over its fumbling transition to remote learning in spring, as well as its decision to resume fall classes virtually.

Hausman said that these controversies have put some pressure on teachers for the upcoming fall. She has tried not to look at Nextdoor, the hyperlocal social networking service, where frustrated parents vented their complaints in the spring.

"People were blaming teachers for things, and our hands were tied," Hausman said. "We were doing what we were supposed to do, and could do, under the circumstances."

ACCORDING TO FCPS, teachers and other school-based staff have received instructional training in virtual teaching techniques. Still, many teachers expressed concern about the emotional and social dimensions of the classroom.

Patty Hansen, a 6th grade teacher at Colvin Run, found that her students were "quieter" in remote classes, and

SEE TEACHERS, PAGE 10

A Special Special Session

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



COMMENTARY

Until the early 1970s the Virginia General Assembly met every other year in the even-numbered years. For the very conservative state that it was, every other year was deemed adequate to limit the power of government. With all the changes that had occurred in the world with wars, growing and competitive economies among nations and states, and increased expectations from the citizenry particularly for more educational programs, Virginians approved a Constitutional amendment in 1971 that added a "short" session in the odd-numbered years, so called because it is 45 days in contrast to the regular session that is 60 days. In the 1980s another Constitutional amendment added a "reconvened" session each year after the regular session to deal with the governor's amendments to legislation. This happened because the state became more competitive between the major political parties, and the party controlling the General Assembly could no longer be counted as controlling the governorship

as well. In any year, the governor has the constitutional power as does the General Assembly to call a "special" session to deal with unique needs. Although the regular "long" session held this year along with its reconvened session were considered among the most productive ever there was general agreement among political leadership and the active community at large that a special session would be needed. As the Commonwealth faced the devastation of an international pandemic, a crashing economy as great as the Great Depression, and social unrest that demanded that issues overlooked or delayed for decades had to be faced, a Special Session was called by the Governor. In his proclamation of July 17, 2020 calling the General Assembly into Special Session, Governor Ralph Northam stated its objectives as being "for the purpose of adopting a budget based on the revised revenue forecast and consideration of legislation related to the emergency of COVID-19 and criminal and social justice reforms." Never has a Special Session of the past had such broad intent with any one of the purposes being more than adequate to have the legislature's attention. The session is special also in that the General Assembly for the first time in its history is meeting virtually. The Senate has some social-distanced meetings at the Science Museum, but as a House member I meet almost daily in virtual meetings of committees on which I serve and every several days with the entire 100-member House. I have a single-purpose secure electronic device that permits me to cast my votes electronically. The Special Session must grapple with a \$2.7 billion shortfall in revenue as a result of the tanking of the economy. The Governor's proposals that leave more than a billion dollars in a "rainy-day" fund require close scrutiny. Finally, the most important "special" feature of this session is that issues related to fairness and safety in voting and police and criminal justice reform are being addressed. In a future column I will enumerate these special bills as they are passed by the House and Senate and signed by the Governor. I am proud to represent my constituents in such an historic and special Special Session!

Police Brutality, Peaceful Protest and Crime

BY JOHN LOVAAS
RESTON IMPACT PRODUCER/HOST



INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE

It was my intention to dedicate this week's column either to the adventure of running the Reston Farmers Market during Covid-19 or the whereabouts of the RA CEO. As you see, I am doing neither. I cannot ignore the endless police brutality and killing with impunity of people of color. And, I fear it could happen here. Images of shocking brutality on black people by rogue cops keep coming, courtesy of videos by ubiquitous cell phone videos. The latest from Kenosha, Wis. shows an officer holding Jacob Blake and pumping seven bullets into his back beside a car with Blake's three young children inside. Then we see footage of rioting in Kenosha as police stand by watching, and even socializing a white man with an assault rifle he allegedly used to spray bullets at protesters, killing two of them. A few weeks before that we watched a Minneapolis officer execute George Floyd, asphyxiating him face down in the street with a knee in his back. Will the officers be held accountable for these vile acts? Not if history is our guide. Floyd's killing resulted in massive protests all over the USA. In some cases, protests were followed by small groups rioting and looting, criminal acts using the peaceful protests as camouflage for destruction and robbery. These acts by thugs, among them white supremacists and others encouraged by the right, deserve

condemnation by us all and prosecution to the full extent of the law. Law breakers' violent acts divert attention from the urgent need to reform the police and, as Joe Biden says, not to defund them. End immunity, restore community! Fairfax County worked to reform our Police Department in 2015, following public uproar over the unprovoked killing of a white resident and a subsequent coverup. I served on the Ad Hoc Commission created to review police practices. The Commission unanimously adopted over 200 recommendations for transformation of the force. Since then, there has been progress, e.g., improved police training, new use of force regs, and better public information. However, key recommendations were not adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Others stalled in implementation, e.g., adoption of body-worn cameras for police officers. The most crucial shortcomings, ones that make the community vulnerable to continued police impunity, were the Board of Supervisors' failure to adopt recommendations for independent investigation of police use of force and killings. The Commission recommended the County provide funding for both the Commonwealth Attorney and the Civilian Review Panel to contract independent investigators responsible to them, not to the other police officers. Without these reforms, police remain account-

able to investigation only by fellow officers for killings and other use of force misdeeds. Without corrective action by the Board, impunity lives on in our Police Department. Another shortcoming in the reform effort is the failure of the Police Department to recruit, hire, and promote woefully under-represented minority officers, especially blacks and Latinos, to assure that the force resembles the community it serves. Despite assurances of recruiting in minority areas and the formation of a special diversity advisory group to the Chief, blacks and Latinos are just as under-represented in hiring and promotions to management levels as they were in 2015. One excuse I hear is: they just aren't interested in being police officers. That is surprising considering that officer salaries start around \$55,000. Again, one wonders when will the Board take corrective action? Finally, there is the matter of the impunity in the other law enforcement agency of Fairfax County. The Sheriff's office, with 600 uniformed deputies, is a constitutionally independent unit which did not agree to participate in the reform process. It is the same outfit that in 2015 brutally tasered Natasha McKenna, a mentally ill black prisoner, to death while taking her from her cell to a vehicle for transfer to another jurisdiction. In this case, an official video was released for all to see. An "investigation" by County Police determined that none of the Sheriff's staff was at fault. The steel blue curtain promptly closed. In this case, reform cannot be mandated by the Board of Supervisors. Reform falls to Sheriff Kincaid.

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VIENNA POLICE HIGHLIGHTS

The following summary contains various incidents of general interest handled by the Town of Vienna Police Department from Aug. 21 – Aug. 27, 2020

INCIDENTS

Animal Case -- 300 Block Mill Street, NE August 6 2:54 p.m. A citizen was bitten by her own dog on her ear while playing.

Fraud -- 200 Block Commons Drive, NW Between Aug. 8, 12 p.m. and Aug.11, 12 p.m. A resident reported several fraudulent charges on his bank account.

Petit Larceny -- 600 Block Kearney Court, SW Between Aug. 17, 10 p.m. and Aug. 20, 8 a.m. A resident reported that someone stole tools from his carport.

Property Found -- 300 Block Church Street, NE Aug. 21, 9:14 a.m. A citizen turned in found property.

Suspicious Event -- Park Street, SE / Locust Street, SE Aug. 21, 5:30 p.m. A teen approached an elderly man that appeared to be in distress to check on his welfare. The teen later reported that the elderly man made some inappropriate statements to her before leaving the area.

Arrest - Drunk In Public -- Southside Park 1317 Ross Drive, SW Aug. 22, 12:12 a.m. While on routine patrol OFC McElhattan observed a suspicious vehicle where a man was sleeping. Upon the officer's interaction with the man, he detected signs of impairment. PFC McElhattan arrested the 22-year-old man with an unknown address. He was

transported to the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center and charged with Drunk In Public.

Natural Death -- 400 Block Troy Court, SE Between Aug. 22, 5 p.m. and Aug. 23, 11 a.m. A citizen requested police assistance with a deceased elderly person. After investigating, it was determined that the person died of natural causes.

Found Property -- Vienna Community Center 120 Cherry Street, SE Aug. 22, 8:55 p.m. A citizen turned in found property.

Found Property -- Church Street, NE / Mill Street, NE Aug. 23, 4:20 p.m. A citizen turned in found property.

Emotionally Disturbed Person -- 200 Block Courthouse Circle, SW Aug. 23, 7:58 p.m. A resident requested police assistance with an emotionally disturbed person. After speaking with all parties involved it was determined that the emotionally disturbed person had not broken any laws and did not meet the criteria for an emergency custody order.

Stolen Vehicle -- 300 Block Ayr Hill Avenue, NE Aug. 24 between 2 a.m. and 2:12 p.m. A resident reported that someone stole his vehicle from his driveway. The resident advised the vehicle was unlocked and that he had left the keys inside the vehicle.

Alarm Business -- Westwood Country Club 800 Maple Avenue, East Aug. 25, 12:37 a.m. Officers responded to the address for an alarm and located an open door. Officers searched the business and did not find anything suspicious. Officers were able to secure the door.

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Fairfax County**

Virtual Location & Design Public Hearing
Monday, October 5, 2020, 7 - 9:30 p.m.
495NorthernExtension.org for details

In-person by Appointment Location & Design Public Hearing
Thursday, October 8, 2020, 4 - 8 p.m.
McLean Community Center
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Learn about and provide input on the Virginia Department of Transportation's environmental assessment and draft design plans to extend the 495 Express Lanes by approximately three miles from the Dulles Toll Road interchange to the George Washington Memorial Parkway in the vicinity of the American Legion Bridge to reduce congestion, improve safety and travel reliability, and provide additional travel choices. This project will involve a change in limited access control.

The virtual public hearing will be held Monday, October 5, 2020, with a presentation beginning at 7 p.m. followed by a formal comment session. Afterwards, a 30-minute question and answer period will be offered if time allows. Visit the project webpage (**495NorthernExtension.org**) or call 703-691-6715 for information on how to access and participate in the virtual public hearing and provide formal comments. Due to COVID-19 health concerns and safety requirements, the public is encouraged to participate in this virtual hearing.

For people who are unable to participate in the virtual public hearing, VDOT is planning a by-appointment-only, in-person hearing on Thursday, October 8, 2020, from 4-8 p.m. at the above address. A video presentation, display boards, and project staff will be available to answer questions and receive public comments. CDC-recommended health measures, including mask requirements and social distancing will be in place. Reservations are required to attend, please call 703-691-6715 or sign up at **495NorthernExtension.org** to make a reservation.

In compliance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR Part 771, an environmental study in the form of an Environmental Assessment (EA), which includes a Preliminary Noise Analysis, was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for public review and comment. Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 and 36 CFR 800, information concerning the potential effects of the proposed improvements on historic properties is also included in the EA.

Review information on the project website (**495northernextension.org**), during the virtual or in-person meeting, or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office at 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-691-6715 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions.

Give your written comments at the meeting or submit them by October 23, 2020 to Abi Lerner, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030, or email **495NorthernExtension@VDOT.virginia.gov**. Please reference "495 Express Lanes Northern Extension Study" in the subject line.

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WELLBEING

Impact of Extended Social Isolation on Teens and Tweens

Psychiatrists and psychologists say that missing opportunities to connect with peers can cause long-term damage.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

After a summer of postponed vacations, closed pools and limited summer camps, all a byproduct of COVID-19, parents are concerned about the wellbeing of their children. "My kids have heightened anxiety now and they're awkward when they do see people," said a Bethesda mother of three.

"He's so bored and misses his friends," said a McLean mother about her 12-year-old son. "My husband and I work, so he's spent a lot of time alone this summer."

Mother and child psychologist Amanda Dounis adds, "My 12-year-old son emphasizes how terrible it's been," and "He claims many of his friends are depressed."

As a new school year begins under a cloud of uncertainty that could prolong the disconnection from peers, child psychologists and psychiatrists are expressing concern about the current, and possibly long-term, effect these restrictions will have on children, particularly teens and tweens. Some are wondering if the benefits of social connection are important to balance against degrees of safety measures for COVID-19.

"For middle and high school students, socialization teaches them lessons as important as math or English," said psychiatrist Dr. Carole Lieberman M.D. "During these years at school, they learn how to face the challenges of making new friends, becoming popular, trying on social values, [and] developing leadership skills. Social isolation, however, robs them of these opportunities and sets them back on their psychosocial phases of development."

The mental health damage can be overlooked, says child & adolescent psychiatrist Dr. Marilou Jimenez, M.D. chair of the Addiction and Mental Health Center at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center. "The potential impact that prolonged social isolation will have on these kids is profound," she said. "We're seeing that Generation Z is uniquely impacted by this pandemic. COVID-19 has caused prolonged social isolation, missing important milestones, an increase in social media usage and screen time, and prevalence of extreme stress among adolescents."

Those with preexisting mental health conditions like anxiety and depression can be affected most significantly, says Jimenez. "It can wreak havoc on their mental state," she said. "Social distancing can greatly impact and exacerbate mental health issues. We have seen, and are going to continue to see, a dramatic rise in depression and anxiety among these kids that will carry over long after enforced isolation and the pandemic are over."

Attending classes in person could offer a layer of protection for students who might be experiencing mental health concerns, particularly for those who have limited family support. "When children are in school, detection occurs because educators and other adults may be the first to notice," said psychiatrist Dr. Gail Saltz M.D., associate professor of psychiatry at the NY Presbyterian Hospital Weill-Cornell School.

However, not every child misses attending school. "There are some kids who find it less stressful because



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Parents should encourage their children to have in person social interactions using proper precautions, advises therapist Darby Fox.

they don't have to deal with bullying or peer pressure," said Saltz.

While Zoom and other social media platforms have filled some of the social voids, this form of communication cannot replace the benefit of in-person contact. "From the first few days of life we begin to bond based on social cues, and it is very difficult to read tones on a screen," said Darby Fox, Child & Adolescent Family Therapist who sees patients in Fairfax, Great Falls and Arlington. "Social media is very staged and relies on external cues. To build a solid sense of self we need to teach our adolescents to develop their internal strength. This cannot be done if they are constantly worried about external judgment and acceptance."

Not only are electronics and social media unable to replace in-person contact, they can be detrimental, says Lieberman. "Texts are known for easily being misinterpreted," she said. "Social media is where kids get bullied or become jealous of other kids who can make their life seem fantastic when they can make it up with photo-shopped pictures and tall tales."

Pandemic safety precautions like the cancellation of sports can also stunt a child's emotional growth, says Darby. "The physical benefits are undisputed, but mental toll of missing sports is underestimated," she said. "Kids count on the sports [not only] for exercise, but for socialization, discipline and even college recruitment. Many of these kids' entire sense of identity is built around who they are as athletes, so there's a great sense of loss for them."

The time void left by a lack of options for sports or other activities can lead to precarious behaviors, warns Jimenez. "Kids are left with a lot of extra time on their hands and some may turn to more unproductive means or unhealthy habits to fill those gaps," she said.

Balancing the physical health risks of COVID-19 with the cost of mental health perils is an important part of mitigating damage, advises Darby. "Parents need to still insist their kids have live social interactions," she said. "The restrictions have relaxed enough that most people are able to connect with others while following appropriate protocols. There is no substitute for asking a date out live or meeting their parents."

Spending time outdoors on sunny days has proven to be therapeutic for Dounis and her son. "We eat breakfast there and absorb Vitamin D from the sunlight, she said. "My son also became the master barbecue chef. We wheel the grill to the front and connect loud music and let him cook."

Route 7 BLM Protests Continue Tuesdays

A group of around ten protestors has stood in silent protest along Leesburg Pike every week since June.

BY LAURA GERSONY
THE CONNECTION

On Aug. 25, for the twelfth Tuesday in a row, a handful of protestors stood in silence next to Leesburg Pike. Their signs displayed the three-word phrase now echoing across the country: “BLACK LIVES MATTER.”

The group spells out different messages every week using illuminated white cardboard letters that they string together. On Tuesday, Aug. 18th, it was “BLACK VOTES MATTER.” On the 25th, “SAVE USPS,” and “JACOB”—a reference to Jacob Blake, the Black man who police officers shot in the back in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

They demonstrated on Route 7 for the first time in June, after the killing of George Floyd.

“We wanted to let Black people know we see their pain, and we also would like other

white people to see that you can stand up and say something about it,” protestor Dona Dickinson said. “Those of us with the power are the ones that have to change it.”

According to Dickinson, the group of ten or so members has been protesting together for over two years. They met through the Herndon/Reston chapter of “Indivisible,” a grassroots progressive activism group, and then grew closer after joining the Kremlin Annex protest in front of the White House in 2018.

They had been protesting on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Kremlin Annex before the pandemic hit—“but that’s not safe for us anymore, ‘cause we’re all old,” Dickinson said with a laugh.

Dickinson, a resident of Great Falls who teaches yoga in her retirement, has been politically active for many years, having participated in the Million Mom March in 2000 following the Columbine shooting. But President Trump’s 2016 election galvanized her



PHOTO BY LAURA GERSONY/THE CONNECTION
Great Falls resident Dona Dickinson holds the first of three signs forming the phrase ‘BLACK LIVES MATTER.’ “We wanted to let Black people know we see their pain,” Dickinson said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DONA DICKINSON

Protestor Diane Dresdner holds up a sign bearing the name of Breonna Taylor, a Black woman killed by Louisville, Ky. police officers in March. “Because of white privilege, we have to speak up,” Dresdner said.

political participation: she now volunteers for local campaigns, writes postcards for progressive campaigns, and regularly protests at the President’s golf course in Sterling.

All protestors in attendance on Tuesday, Aug. 25 were white. Diane Dresdner, a retired human resources officer from Chantilly, said that this identity is part of what moves her to protest. She, like Dickinson, is a seasoned protestor, having been arrested protesting the family separation policies of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)—a blow she could absorb, she said, due to her citizenship status, race, and financial situation.

“Sometimes people get really nasty, and yell and scream things at us, and pull over. And we’re older and white. Can you imagine

the danger other people might be in if they were out here?” she said, cut off by a car honking its support. “I can do it; I’m retired, I don’t have to worry about a job, I’m a citizen, I’m white...Because of white privilege, we have to speak up, because we can.”

Dickinson said that she intends to continue the weekly protests until police reform takes place, such as a national ban on chokeholds and reform of qualified immunity. “We’re not going to go away until we see some change,” she said.

You are invited to our Virtual Community Meeting

Hear from experts about the future of the overhead 230 kV transmission line connecting Dominion Energy’s Tysons and future Spring Hill substations.

Join us live online on Wednesday, September 9 at 6:30 p.m.
Find event details at [DominionEnergy.com/springhill](https://www.dominionenergy.com/springhill)



NEWS

Live Music Arriving to Meadowlark Gardens

Virginia Chamber Orchestra and Meadowlark Gardens Park partner for musical joy.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Through a unique partnership, live music will be heard within the surrounding beauty of the stunning public park, Meadowlark Botanical Gardens. With the combined forces of the Virginia Chamber Orchestra and NOVA Parks a series of live concerts will be performed in a socially distancing environment in recognition of COVID-19 health and safety requirements and Commonwealth of Virginia guidelines.

Ending its current pause of live performance, The Virginia Chamber Orchestra (VCO) will have a three concert series in September with both its own principal players and special guests to beguile patrons. The concerts will be about

one-hour in length. Each will be performed at the Korean Bell Pavilion in the NOVA Meadowlark Botanical Gardens.

“Our objective is to get as much enchanting music in the air for as many people as we safely can, in an entirely delightful setting,” said Doug Lovejoy, VCO President. The musicians perform widely throughout Northern Virginia and the D.C. metropolitan area and beyond, said Lovejoy.

For the opening concert on Sept. 6, Music of Beethoven, Bartok, Puccini, Piazzolla, and Arlen will be spotlighted. In a special duo, Jennifer Rickard, who has served both as VCO Assistant Concertmaster and as Principal Second Violin, will be joined by her husband, flutist and saxophonist Andrew Axelrad. He recently retired from the Airmen of Note.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIRGINIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Korean Bell Pavilion, Meadowlark Botanical Gardens.

Music of Mozart, Beethoven and Osman Kivrak will be spotlighted at the Sept. 13 concert. The duo of VCO Concertmaster Teri Lazar and her husband, Principal VCO Violist, Osman Kivrak, will perform Kivrak's composition for violin and viola, “Uzun Haza,” which was inspired by Turkish folk music.

Selections from Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, John Clayton and Robert Oppelt will be featured at the Sept. 20 concert. VCO Principal Flute Nicolette Oppelt and her husband bassist Robert Oppelt, will be featured in Oppelt's “Pas de Deux” for Flute and Double Bass.

For those less familiar with the Korean Bell Garden, it was created via a joint effort between NOVA Parks and the Korean American Cultural Committee (KACC).

Where and When

Virginia Chamber Orchestra presents “Music at Meadowlark Gardens” at the Korean Bell Pavilion, Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Performances: Sunday afternoons from 3 to 4 p.m. Sept. 6, 13 and 20, 2020. The concert is free. Standard entrance fees for Meadowlark Gardens apply for the free concert. Fees are \$6, ages 18-54; \$3, ages 55 and over; and \$3, ages 6-17. Note: Masks are required. Attendees may bring lawn chairs, blankets, soft drinks and snacks. Free parking is available. Admission fees to the park are not refundable, in the event of inclement weather the VCO intends to schedule a rain date for the free concert. For concert tickets contact info@vco.events.com. Information about NOVA Meadowlark Botanical Gardens can be found at <https://www.novaparks.com/parks/meadowlark-botanical-gardens>

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NEWS

Board Chair of Shepherd's Center Receives Community Champion Award

William "Bill" Farrell, Board Chair of Shepherd's Center serving Oakton-Vienna-Reston-Herndon (SC) received Hunter Mill District Community Champion Award.

As part of the annual Volunteer Service Awards, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors selects an individual to be recognized for their commitment to promoting volunteerism within their community while addressing specific needs. The award was presented to Mr. Farrell on video by Supervisor Walter L. Alcorn, Hunter Mill District during SC's Volunteer Appreciation event.

Farrell has been on the Shepherd's Center team since he signed on as a volunteer driver in 2006. Since then, he has held many roles and stepped in wherever needed. For the past five years, he has served as the SC Board Chairman. When he joined the Board of Directors in 2008, he assumed the position of Treasurer. He has been the co-chair of Development Committee and is currently on the Executive Committee (Co-Chair) and Advisory Committee.

W. Scott Schroth, SC Co-Vice Chair, Board of Directors, noted that "Bill's calm and thoughtful leadership not only drew me into service with the Shepherd's Center as a volunteer, but quickly enticed me to join the talented volunteer



PHOTO COURTESY OF SC
William "Bill" Farrell

Board of Directors. He is a pleasure to work with, collegial, and dedicated to our mission. I'm honored to call him a friend and proud of the work he does on our behalf in the local community."

Farrell's dynamic and friendly leadership style has transformed SC into a leading local charitable organization, recognized and honored both locally and regionally for outstanding community service. Farrell was also recognized and selected for a national leadership position with Shepherd's Centers of America where he served as national treasurer for six years. He provides the organization with strategic leadership, prudent financial management, and an infectious desire to help others.

Shepherd's Center is actively seeking new clients and Veteran volunteers. To donate or learn more about how you can help, visit www.scov.org. Or, contact the office at 703-281-0538, office@scov.org.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church Becomes a Reconciling in Christ Congregation

The people of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Vienna (www.elcvienna.org) voted in June 2020 to become a Reconciling in Christ congregation and publicly affirm their welcome to all who are seeking God's love and grace, regardless of race, culture, national origin, citizenship status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, relationship or socio-economic status, addictions, physical or mental health, disability, imprisonment, age, or other circumstances.

The Reconciling in Christ Program, through Reconciling-Works.org, supports Lutheran congregations, synods, colleges, seminaries, and other organizations who have made a public commitment to welcome, include and celebrate lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) people.

"In light of increasing threats to our LGBTQIA+ siblings and attempts to erode the laws protecting them, Emmanuel Lutheran Church seeks to provide a safe, affirming and welcoming place for all people. Without limitation, it is intended that all of the activities, ministries, programs, and sacraments of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, including Holy Communion, Holy Baptism, marriage, and funerals, shall be available to all individuals, couples and families regardless of their circumstances. We believe our unity is in Christ, the church announced.

More information about Emmanuel Lutheran Church and the community they serve is available at www.elcvienna.org. Online worship is available to all on Sundays at 9 a.m. Emmanuel is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (<https://elca.org/>)



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Teachers Get Ready for a 'Welcome Challenge'

FROM PAGE 3

they tended not to volunteer answers as often. She attributed this in large part to the novelty of virtual instruction, and predicts it will improve in the coming fall as students gain familiarity with remote learning technologies.

However, Hansen worries that the remote setting will pose a barrier to her ability to check in on students' emotional and social well-being during the pandemic.

"I don't know how they're responding emotionally to the current conditions, or the effect that this has had on their social lives," she said, also stressing that students' emotional well-being is necessary for cognitive learning.

Several teachers also expressed their concern about starting the new year with a new group of students. When FCPS went virtual in the spring, teachers knew the students they had been teaching prior to the pandemic; this will not be the case in the fall, Alany explained.

"Starting the school year, and not ever having met the student in person, is going to be interesting," she said. "My biggest concern is making those students feel comfortable, and then trying to get them to progress, so they get the education they deserve."

Hansen said that going into the fall, she hopes to emphasize the social aspect of learning, using "break-out rooms," in which students can talk in smaller groups, to foster small-group discussions. Hausman added that her approach to the school year will be to use student-centered learning as much as possible, "giving them as much voice as possible so that they can feel heard, and they can hear each other."

Alany, an ESOL instructor, stressed the importance of maintaining students' confidence in the classroom, especially those navigating school in a second language. She is concerned that the nonverbal signs of encouragement she usually gives students may not be conveyed in the virtual setting.

"The small nods, the pat on the back, the eye contact, the smiles -- you don't always get those small gestures that really give students confidence," she said. "The content, I can do anywhere...but what's missing is being able to make sure the students feel safe, and they connect with you, so that they will take chances with language."

Alany also said that the pandemic has affected ESOL students' English-learning.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DIANE HAUSMAN

Diane Hausman has set up a workspace in her daughter Nora's bedroom, while Nora is away at college.

"The students have more time in home language, and they're not being pushed to speak and interact in the target language that they're learning, in English," she said. "I think that the natural progression of language-learning took a hit."

DESPITE THE MANIFOLD LIMITATIONS of the pandemic, Hausman has accepted the fall as a welcome challenge.

"Despite everything, I'm really looking forward to getting back to work again," Hausman said. "I think that you don't grow if you don't have a little bit of change in your life. It's some painful growth, but I feel like I'm going to grow a lot from this experience."

Ultimately, Hansen said, teachers' job remains the same this year: to provide students with a welcoming, stimulating learning environment, "pandemic or not."

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-Werner Heisenberg

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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

FUN THINGS TO DO THIS SUMMER

SUMMER CONCERTS ON THE GREEN

The Celebrate Great Falls Foundation announces a schedule of five Summer Concerts on the Green beginning August 30, 2020. Each concert will begin at 6 p.m. on the Village Centre green (in front of the gazebo).

September 6 - Mike Terpak Blues Explosion;
September 13 - The Oxymorons;
September 20 - The Unfinished;
September 27 - Wes Tucker and the Skilletts.

Celebrate Great Falls Foundation organizers are putting in place several new protocols to help ensure a safe, socially distant evening. After each concert, they will assess whether to proceed with the remaining concerts and implement any needed changes in our protocols. This will be announced on the Monday prior to each concert. The safety and wellness of our bands, volunteers and the Great Falls community is of paramount importance in all of our decisions.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Friends sends their hellos by waves keeping their social distance during opening night for Concerts on the Green in Great Falls, held Sunday evening Aug. 30.

and effective live, teacher-led coding classes for kids with support, including live office hours and 24/7 access to their proprietary coding platform. Their teachers take a students-first approach to teaching Python, Java, HTML/CSS, and JavaScript that guarantees students will reach their potential. Visit www.CodeWizardsHQ.com.

GIRLS WHO MATH

Girls Who Math is a student-run charity started by high schoolers at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. They provide free individual tutoring and group classes to students of all ages. Although initially created as a way to empower girls with interest in STEM, they have opened up their programs to students of all gender identities to encourage all students to keep learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The classes they offer cover a wide variety of STEM topics from computer science to biology, and are held once a week. The one-on-one tutoring is suitable for students with a wide variety of needs. In the time that they have been established, they have helped over 600 students from over 25 different countries. They also often host seminars and information sessions to inform students of competitions, career opportunities, and scholarships. To learn more about Girls Who Math and programs that are currently offered, visit their website at <https://girlswhomath.net/>

THE BIRCHMERE

The Birchmere in Alexandria is reopening with limited capacity. During the public health emergency, there will be a \$25 food and beverage minimum and a \$5 Covid fee. There will be no bar service and no gathering in the stage or bar areas. Customers will be escorted to their seats, and those without reserved seats will be seated by staff to ensure social distancing.

Schedule of Shows:

Friday, Sept. 4 -- The Johnny Artis Band
Saturday, Sept. 5 -- The Seldom Scene
Friday, Sept. 11 -- The Eric Scot Band
Saturday, Sept. 12 -- 33 Live's Killer Queen Experience
Friday, Sept. 18 -- Eaglemania
Thursday, Sept. 24 -- Kick -- The INXS Experience
Friday, Sept. 25 -- TUSK -- The Ultimate Fleetwood Mac Tribute
Saturday, Sept. 26 -- The Nighthawks
The venue is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. All shows at 7:30 p.m. in the Music Hall. Visit the Birchmere's website: <http://www.birchmere.com/>

DRIVE-THRU DRAMA

The Alden in McLean is bringing back its Drive-Thru Drama performances in September. The new show, "From the Ash Baxter Files: The Search for the Stolen Spyglass," will be performed Friday through Sunday over three weekends on Sept. 11-13, Sept. 18-20 and Sept. 25-27. Show times are from 4-7 p.m. Tickets are \$20, \$15 for MCC tax district residents. A limited number of timed tickets are available and must be purchased in advance at www.aldentheatre.org. The Alden is a division of the McLean Community Center (MCC), located at 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean.

NIGHTMARE ALLEY AT WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER

The Workhouse Arts Center announces that "Nightmare Alley" Haunted Drive-Thru is coming to Lorton for this year's Halloween season. "Nightmare Alley" is the first immersive, contactless drive-thru Halloween experience in the region. Zombies, swamp creatures, creepy clowns, and scary dolls are among 13 different scary scenes taking up residence on the Workhouse campus during the month of October. These new campus inhabitants will scare and entertain visitors experiencing the attraction from the safety of their cars. Tickets are on sale now. There will be 13 nights of fright, starting on Friday, Oct. 2 through Sat. October 31. Fridays and Saturdays will run from 7-11 p.m. each weekend in October, and the three Sundays in the middle of the month (October 11, 18, and 25) will run from 7-10 p.m. The Workhouse is holding auditions for scare actors and is accepting volunteers to assist in this year's event. (Students wishing to volunteer are eligible to receive service hours.) For sponsorship opportunities, contact: elenaromanova@workhousearts.org

TYSONS CORNER DRIVE-IN MOVIES

Tyson's Corner Center is hosting Drive-In Movie Nights, in partnership with the Hyatt Regency Tyson's Corner Center, on the second weekend of each month. Located along Fashion Blvd. between Nordstrom and Bloomingdale's, will open for parking, be sure to bring your ticket. Show starts at 8:30 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 12 -- "Mrs. Doubtfire"
Reserve your spot - space is limited. Reservation and movie details are located at <https://www.tysonscornercenter.com/Events>

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Not Exactly the "Canswer" I Was Hoping For

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



If this past week's test results (EKG, blood pressure and lab work) pass muster, then I will join the ranks, full time, of the thyroid cancer community. At present, the medical plan is to pivot, completely, from any lung cancer treatment - which for the past 18 months has been immunotherapy bi-weekly, and focus instead, exclusively, on my stage IV, papillary thyroid cancer. If I can go forward, I'll be taking three pills a day, at home. No more visits to the Infusion Center and of course, no more infusions. And not that I'm paranoid about getting exposed to the coronavirus, but less exposure to whatever can be transmitted by droplets, door knobs, elevator buttons, etc., can't be a bad thing. The question remains however: Is the medication I'll be receiving likely to have a positive effect? As in, will it cure my thyroid cancer?

What little I already know is that the type of papillary thyroid cancer that I've been diagnosed with recently - after three biopsies, is unfortunately not curable. It is treatable though, just as my previous lung cancer diagnosis was described. I like curable much better. But, treatable I'll have to live with, hopefully for a long time, as I have for 11 and 1/2 years with the originally diagnosed stage IV non small cell lung cancer. My attitude then, as it will be now, is to try and stay alive until the next new drug comes along which might actually cure my thyroid cancer. The interim goal, different from the ultimate goal is stability; turning the incurable disease into a chronic disease, like diabetes, for example. And though curable is the preferred outcome, for those of us with our rear ends in those barcaloungers, stable is perfectly acceptable. In fact, for the many years I was treated for lung cancer, 'stable' became my new favorite word. Shrinkage, cure, remission and N.E.D. (no evidence of disease) was certainly the ideal. But for those of us in the trenches, our reality is often very different.

Living, even in those trenches, is the best reward, and as cancer patients, you learn that any guarantees, presumptions or even entitlements are best left outside the examining room's door. Because once inside, reality takes over (as it likewise does late at night, as you're lying in bed contemplating your predicament, when it tends to get late, early, if you know what I mean?). My friend Sean often jokes by asking me if I'm still on the clock (meaning am I still terminal-ish). I'm on the clock, alright, as I have been since February 27, 2009 when my oncologist first told Team Lourie of my "terminal" diagnosis. Cancer then, as now, is the dreaded disease. Eventually though, the conversation ends and a treatment plan is initiated.

Treatment is often predicated on a series of definite maybes/"we'll see's". Success is measured one lab result, one appointment, one scan and one surgery at a time. No promises are offered and rarely are other patient histories relevant to one's own circumstances. Patients have unique characteristics and it's never quite right to draw parallels. Being a cancer patient is the opposite of being on a "Merry Go 'Round." It's a "Not Very Merry Doesn't Go 'Round" - without the music. Moreover, there's never a brass ring to grab, only an intangible thing called hope.

However, hope is a wonderful thing. Though it doesn't necessarily get you across the finish line, it does enable you to endure the journey. You're where you are and where you're going to be so any kind of assistance - mentally or otherwise, is greatly appreciated. In my mind, the only pathway is forward. And though the challenges seem endless, a proper positive attitude that leaves open the possibilities of living life with cancer rather than succumbing to it creates a kind of karma that reflects off of others and is reabsorbed back into you. It's this positivity loop which makes the unbearable a bit more bearable. At least it does for me.

My father used to say: "Every knock is a boost." Imagine what every boost would mean to a cancer patient? It's almost like medicine, but without the negative side effects. And who doesn't need that? Those of us diagnosed with two types of cancer, that's who! Don't knock it if you haven't tried it.

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



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