

# Great Falls CONNECTION

Great Falls community spirit on display:  
The drive-by 4th of July Hometown Parade  
2020. <https://celebrategreatfalls.org/>

## NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE

2020-2021

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# NEWCOMERS GUIDE 2020

## Welcome

We're lucky to call Fairfax County home.

BY CHAIRMAN JEFF MCKAY

**W**elcome to Fairfax County. You are moving here under unusual and unprecedented times. These last few months however, have reminded me why I'm proud to lead Fairfax County as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and why I have been proud and so fortunate to be able to call it home for all of my life.

In Fairfax County, we take COVID-19 seriously. The impacts of the virus have been far reaching. It has caused difficulty and anxiety for so many, including for my family and me. Our response to this virus has been data driven and responsive as we have learned more about COVID-19. Our low community transmission rates and stable percent positivity rates reflect that.

From the beginning, my Northern Virginia regional colleagues and I worked together with our state partners to implement a slower reopening. It was a difficult decision, but we weren't comfortable with how our data looked. Because of the work we did then and our residents' compliance with COVID-19 mitigation strategies now, we have avoided the surges in cases that have been observed around the country and in other parts of Virginia.



Jeff McKay, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, lives in Lee District with his wife Crystal and his daughter Leann and his son Aidan.

Despite all the uncertainty around us, we are lucky to live in Fairfax County. We have 23,000 acres of parkland, which includes 427 public parks and 325 miles of trails, to enjoy when you want to be outside safely. One of my favorite escapes has been Huntley Meadows Park in my neighborhood. It

makes me thankful for our continued investment in our greenspaces and efforts to protect the environment.

In addition, the community rose to help and continues to inspire me. There are so many people in Fairfax vulnerable to this virus who still cannot leave their homes. So

simple acts mean a lot, even if it is just picking up your neighbor's groceries or talking to a friend when they need support. Fairfax County's Neighbor to Neighbor program is one project in that spirit. The program joins neighbors together as volunteer groups and connects them with their older neighbors who need a hand. It is truly a grassroots initiative with volunteers involved across the County.

Navigating this pandemic has not been a straight path forward. We have had to pivot to save lives. And our work won't stop when there's a vaccine. Over time, in Fairfax County we have made significant investments in our infrastructure that have well positioned us to respond. Our sophisticated Health Department, first responders, and County frontline workers are all dedicated to our community. Their work has been exceptional and remind us why a responsive, well run government is essential in times like these. As we navigate a world beyond COVID-19, we will continue to fight for what's important: investing in people, programs, education, and creating a Fairfax that works for everyone, just as we have always done. Our community will make it through this together. Fairfax County is a great place to live and work and I hope that you quickly feel at home.

## About the Connection in 2020

**T**his year, 2020 in the time of the pandemic, has been brutal for so many.

More than 21,000 residents of Fairfax County have tested positive for COVID-19, and more than 600 people here have died.

Life is vastly different than it was pre-pandemic. Most students have not been face-to-face with their teachers or classmates since March. Lucky families are merely juggling homeschooling and home child care with telecommuting and meetings via Zoom.

Less fortunate parents have jobs that cannot be accomplished remotely, and they must find a way to have their children cared for at home while they go to work, risking infection. Even less fortunate people have lost their jobs.

Families of all stripes are facing food insecurity and demand at food pantries has skyrocketed.

Thousands of families could be facing eviction.

Small businesses and their employees hope that Congress will deliver more help. The Paycheck Protection Program was designed at the beginning of the crisis to pay employees for two months. Employees face unemployment; businesses face closure and/or bankruptcy. Customers are unlikely to return to retail businesses, restaurants and other public places in sufficient numbers for revenues to rebound until after the pandemic is under control.

Local newspapers, including the Connection newspapers, are facing an existential threat from the combination of nationwide downturn in newspaper advertising that has been worsening over several years, compounded by the economic crisis of coronavirus.

In the midst of this, we at the Connection hear the call to continue to serve our communities. We still seek to fulfill our mission by continuing to publish, even with reduced resources. It's still our mission to provide information about where to get help and how to help; to disseminate information about the virus and efforts to stem its spread; to tell the stories of those who are helping, of those who are hungry; of those who have gotten sick with the virus, of those who are caring for the sick; and those who are performing essential jobs, from grocery clerk to firefighter to nurses and doctors. It's still our mission to tell the stories of those working for social and racial justice, and battling income inequality in the time of COVID.

Perhaps most of all, it is still our mission to deliver the local news you need, to help make sense of what is happening in your community, to advocate for community good, to provide a forum for dialogue on local concerns, and to record achievements, milestones and events in the community and people's lives. It is still our mission to cover the normal news of the local communities.

We want to know if someone in your family or your community published a book, started a business, became an Eagle Scout, raised money for a good cause, accomplished some feat like running a marathon, supporting a cause or having art included in an art show. We publish photos and notes about personal milestones and community events, including births, engagements, weddings, anniversaries, awards and obituaries.

Tell us: how are you surviving in the pandemic?

We also publish notes about news and events from local businesses. Notes about openings, new employees and anniversaries are welcome.

For many months, there were no calendar listings in our papers. Everything was cancelled. Now there is a return of some outdoor events, and many virtual events. If you are planning an event, we appreciate getting notice at least two weeks ahead of the event, and we encourage photos.

Your community Connection newspaper is published by the independent, locally owned Local Media Connection LLC, serving the suburbs of Metropolitan Washington in Northern Virginia and Potomac, Md. Our flagship paper, the Alexandria Gazette Packet, is one of the oldest continuously publishing papers in the country, beginning publication in 1784.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

GREAT FALLS CONNECTION



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# NEWCOMERS GUIDE 2020

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



Supervisor Foust, Fairfax County Park Authority representatives, and community members celebrated the opening of the Outdoor Education Classroom/Picnic Shelter at Riverbend Park



Aerial view of Clemjontri Park with parking addition. Photo provided by the Fairfax County Park Authority.

## Dranesville Welcomes You An excellent place to live, raise a family, and do business.

BY SUPERVISOR JOHN W. FOUST  
(D-Dranesville District)

The Dranesville District includes McLean, Great Falls, Herndon and some areas of Vienna and Falls Church and has about 125,000 residents. It runs from the Arlington County border to the Loudoun County border along the beautiful Potomac River. Herndon is a quintessential small American town with a rich heritage and strong sense of community. It also has a vibrant transit area developing around a new Metro station that will open soon. McLean is an active community with some of the most beautiful neighborhoods in the Metropoli-



tan region. Only a few miles from Tysons and the Dulles Corridor, Great Falls is a semi-rural community where residents actively participate in preserving its history and protecting its environment.

Dranesville includes some of the best County and National parks in the region including Riverbend Park, Great Falls Park, and Scotts Run Nature Preserve. The

District is also home to numerous excellent public schools including the high achieving and highly regarded Langley, McLean, and Herndon High Schools. Throughout the District, there are excellent libraries and active arts communities. All three communities have outdoor summer concert series and old-fashioned farmers' markets.

The introduction of Metro's Silver Line has provided an alternative to the automobile for Dranesville residents. Expansion of the Silver Line to Dulles Airport and into Loudoun, scheduled to open in 2020, will make traveling that much easier. The excellent schools, parks and libraries, lovely neighborhoods, active youth sports and arts programs, and its active, interesting, and friendly residents make Dranesville an excellent place to live, raise a family, and do business.

Fairfax County, and especially Tysons and the Dulles Corridor, continue to grow and provide excellent business and employment opportunities for Dranesville residents. Our challenge in the coming years is to ensure that the growth is balanced with expanded public facilities and public services so that future generations will be able to enjoy living in Dranesville as much as the past and

current residents have enjoyed making their homes here.

If you are looking to get involved in the community, there are many civic and community organizations always in need of new people. Take a look at the McLean Citizens Association [www.mcleancitizens.org](http://www.mcleancitizens.org) and the Great Falls Citizens Association [www.gfca.org](http://www.gfca.org). Volunteer opportunities can be found at <https://www.volunteerfairfax.org>

I hope you will sign up for my community notices and updates, which provide information on important goings on in Dranesville and the County. Visit my website at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dranesville/> and subscribe to our newsletter.

Welcome to the Dranesville District. It has been my honor to represent Dranesville residents on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for the past 12 years. I look forward to continuing to serve you in the future.

## A Must-See in District

We are fortunate to have many wonderful parks, historical features, and community events in the Dranesville District. The following are some of my favorites. While some of the events listed below have been postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the parks are open, and I hope that these special community events will be able to resume in 2021.

**Clemjontri Park:** Since opening in 2006, more than 200,000 visitors have enjoyed this unique playground where children of all abilities can play side-by-side. Equipment allows children who have physical, sensory, or developmental disabilities to have a parallel playground

experience of fun and exploration. The park also includes a carousel, picnic pavilion, and new trackless train. The parking lot has recently been expanded so more visitors can enjoy the park.

6317 Georgetown Pike, McLean

**Riverbend Park:** This park offers over 400 acres of forests, meadows, and ponds. Trails include a 2.5-mile portion of the Potomac Heritage Trail that links national and regional parkland. Kayaking, canoeing, and fishing are all available on the Potomac River. Another reason to visit Riverbend Park is to take advantage of the recently completed Outdoor Education Classroom/Picnic Shelter that opened this spring.

8700 Potomac Hills, Great Falls

## Foust: Places I would take a newcomer in Dranesville District.

**Colvin Run Mill Historic Site:** Colvin Run Mill offers visitors a chance to step back in time. There are tours of the restored mill, which was built around 1811. A general store offers stone ground cornmeal, wheat flour, grits, "penny candy," snacks, and drinks. Trails are available for quiet walks. Live music, craft demonstrations, ice cream making, and seasonal activities are offered from February through December.

10017 Colvin Run, Great Falls

**Turner Farm:** Originally the site of a dairy farm, the 52-acre park offers a unique mix of educational and recreational facilities. Observatory Park offers the public a chance to see the night sky from one of Fairfax County's darkest spots through permanent-

ly mounted telescopes. The Analemma Society partners with the Park Authority to provide astronomy programs at the observatory. Equestrians can enjoy a cross country course and a large multi-purpose arena with stadium jumps and dressage makers. Small children can enjoy a tot lot. Under the Park Authority's Resident Curator Program, the historic Turner Farmhouse has been restored and is now occupied by the Turner Farmhouse Foundation, under the direction of Sarah Kirk.

925 Springvale Road, Great Falls

**Runnymede Park:** The Town of Herndon owns and maintains this 58-acre park. It

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# NEWCOMERS GUIDE 2020



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Summer Concerts on the Green, Celebrate Great Falls Foundation- <https://celebrategreatfalls.org/>

## Great Falls, Great Place

BY EILEEN CURTIS

**Y**ou are on the hunt for a place to reside and you've made your list. Nice home, friendly people, good schools, incredible nature, dynamic culture, a sense of community with a touch of history. And don't forget good restaurants and shops. Then throw in some bonuses, like easy access to a major city and Metro, several large shopping malls and two nearby major airports. Is there such a place? Yes! Its name is Great Falls.

Great Falls, located in Fairfax County and adjacent to Loudoun County, is 66 square miles full of trees and winding pathways. It sits along the Potomac River and is home to fifteen thousand people of diverse backgrounds. Their educational values are reflected in the excellent schools that surround. Three public elementary schools—Colvin Run, Forestville, and Great Falls—feed into Cooper Middle School and Langley High School, ranked second in the state. It sits just behind our alternative high—Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, always ranked in the top five nationally. Nearby private schools include Village Green Day School for the younger set, and Potomac, Little Langley, and Madeira, a girls' boarding school. A full spectrum of children's sports is on display on the ballfields, the courts, and in the pools.

**GEORGETOWN PIKE** is our front door, a historic byway first traveled by the local Indian tribes. Today, history is kept alive at Colvin Run Mill, a 19th century, water-powered mill with costumed docents to welcome you. Great Falls cherishes its history with buildings like the Old Schoolhouse and the

communal Grange and with its own Historical Society. One of the first things you notice as you veer off the historic Georgetown Pike into the neighborhoods are the beautiful homes set amid manicured lawns and canopies of green. What you might not guess are the tremendous lifestyle opportunities that accompany them.

The Swim & Tennis Club and River Bend Golf and Country Club offer lessons and leisure. Boat rentals await on the Potomac, with kayakers choosing the calm waters to the north or the daredevil maneuvers at the falls for which our village is named. Great Falls National Park stretches like a necklace into River Bend and Algonkian Parks along the river, full of hiking trails and park ranger events such as the autumn Indian festival and birdwatching guided tours. Equestrians love it here, with horse trails in the parks, a riding center, and Lift Me Up!, a group devoted to therapeutic riding.

Perhaps our most visible organization is Celebrate Great Falls Foundation, charged with delighting us with a holiday tree lighting, 4th of July parade and fireworks, summer concerts

on the Green and the Halloween Spooktacular. Monthly military appreciation dinners are held at the Old Brogue. The Rotary and neighboring breweries and wineries stoke Oktoberfest celebrations. Cars and Coffee shows off close to 200 vintage autos each Saturday morning. Coffee clutches fill the tables at Katie's and Starbucks. The Great Falls Friends and Neighbors invites women to a multitude of events ranging from book clubs to lunches to bunco. The Garden Club stays busy. Our library offers programs for young and old readers and even some for-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Eileen Curtis

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**VIRTUAL** Spooky Family Fun Bingo

**VIRTUAL** Family Fun Trivia Nights

**VIRTUAL** McLean 5k

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Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Center programs and events are not being offered this year or have been adjusted to virtual online or in-person, socially distanced formats. Please check the Center's website for up-to-date information.

1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean, VA 22101  
703-790-0123, TTY: 711  
[www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org)

 McLean Community Center  
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# NEWCOMERS GUIDE 2020

Members of Great Falls Citizens Association take part in the annual 4th of July parade- <https://gfca.org/>



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## Bringing Community Together

### Local leaders on some of the Great Falls citizens groups.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**W**hat is Great Falls? Great Falls is a census-designated place, not a town or a city. It is within the Dranesville District of Fairfax County, represented by Supervisor John Foust. While Great Falls residents do not elect a mayor or councilmembers like a town or city, organizations within the community are active and supportive, according to Bill Canis, President of Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA).

Canis said Great Falls is bifurcated by two groups. “GFCA deals with public policy issues and Celebrate Great Falls Foundation manages the 4th of July parade, all of our cultural events and concerts.”

Erin Lobato is the Director of Celebrate Great Falls Foundation. She said, “In this challenging time, we are proceeding cautiously in trying to host events for the community that are within current guidelines. We are looking at ways to adapt to the current environment and will be making announcements as soon as we can.”

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Individuals can rent rowboats, canoes and kayaks at Riverbend Park.

Great Falls Friends & Neighbors is a social club, prominent in the community. Member Kristin Dailey said, “We develop friendships, have a sense of community among our members and accomplish this through social, cultural, civic and philanthropic activities.” Among GFFN’s philanthropy charities are Shelter House, Artemis House, Great Falls Friends & Neighbors Scholarship Fund, Inc. and Friends of Riverbend Park.



Colvin Run Mill (1811) and National Historic Preservation site: Colvin Run Mill is operated by Fairfax County Park Authority-10017 Colvin Run Rd, Great Falls



Great Falls Community Farmers Market-778 Walker Rd, Great Falls, VA 22066

### VIEWPOINTS

## New Residents Embrace Character, Natural Setting of Great Falls

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Connection asked Great Falls residents what the greatest things about living in the area were. Here’s what they said while shopping at the Great Falls Farmers Market, 778 Walker Rd, Great Falls.

The Great Falls Community Farmers Market fulfills residents’ wishes as expressed in the Great Falls 2020 Vision Survey, to have a local farmers market as part of building a vibrant semi-ru-

ral center. Launched in 2007, it is one of the few markets in Fairfax County that is not county-sponsored. The “producer-only” market exists to build a sense of community in Great Falls, a place where all are welcome. Live musicians perform, shoppers peruse aisles of fresh fruit, veggies and produce, check out chocolates and bespoke confections, and see what’s new at the Great Falls Historical Society booth. It is not surprising to see artists with their easels, paintbrushes in hand, capturing moments in time.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

(Left) Reva Levine, resident of Great Falls one and a half months, with Athena, the poodle. “The beauty of the park, nature, and people are so friendly. The Great Falls Farmers Market. Open space, excellent schools and its proximity to D.C. We will be going to the Celebrate Great Falls Summer Concerts on the Green.”



(Right) Zia Echezabal, 13, resident of Great Falls one and a half months: “I like that everyone is very connected and very close. In a small town (like community), you can get so many things. The people are very nice. I moved from Florida and have met more people here than I ever met there. We hike the trails at Riverbend Park. I’m on a soccer team and go to Cooper Middle School, virtually (because of the pandemic).”

(Left) Pam Appelbaum, resident of Great Falls one month with Jeff, a very sweet dog - “We know the area, the vibe and the people. We just opened Trio Boutique, located at 9843 Georgetown Pike. It’s a local business, woman and family-owned.”

(Right) Juliana Bryan, resident of Great Falls one month - “I’m looking forward to Celebrate Great Falls events, and today, I plan on getting some Greek food at Our Mom Eugenia Great Falls Greek (at the market).”





## NEWCOMERS GUIDE 2020

# Great Falls, Great Place

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eign language get-togethers. Pilates, cycling, yoga, personalized gyms, spas, and Tai Chi classes invite one to tone up or calm down. Beauty centers abound. Colvin Run Dance Hall serves up lessons and dances in an historic, beamed building. Great Falls Seniors has a huge following and excellent monthly speakers. An active bridge group holds lessons several days a week. And stargazers can view the heavens at the observatory silo maintained by the Analemma Society.

**ARTISTS** love Great Falls. The visual arts, represented by well over 100 practicing artists, stages a tour each October of several studios and personal collections. The Amadeus Concerts provide classical music listening, as do the nearby Reston and Encore Chorales. Ballet classes for every age run full schedules. The Great Falls Writers Group provides a creative space for scribes to develop their craft. And in summer, nearby Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts offers international headliners on its stages.

Culinary talent is splendidly represented by L'Auberge Chez Francois, regularly ranked as one of the DC area's best restaurants. It keeps company with a bounty of restaurants celebrating 16 different cuisines and complemented by an ice cream Cream-



ery and two boutique wine shops.

Other information you might want to know. We have two centers that house a full-service grocery store plus two drug stores, an Urgent Care, and unique shops such as the Saddlery and Adeler's, an international jeweler. Service organizations include Rotary, Optimists and Lions. The Great Falls Citizens Association monitors issues ranging from environment and land use to transportation and utilities. Great Falls is home to seven churches, a senior living center, and is only minutes away from HCA Reston Hospital.

All this delivers a village full of friendly people, rich in amenities, wrapped in nature, high-scoring schools, and easy access to the great beyond. Great Falls, great place!

*Eileen Curtis is an author and memoirist who has lived in Great Falls for 35 years.*



### For Students: Fine Art Classes and Workshops

- Adult and Children's Art Classes
- Winter, Spring, & Fall Sessions
- Summer Art Camps for Kids

View schedule online each session at [www.greatfallsart.org/school-of-art](http://www.greatfallsart.org/school-of-art)

### For Artists

- Studio Space to Rent in Great Falls Village Centre
- Open Studio Fridays: Draw and Paint from a model
- Annual Plein Air Competition



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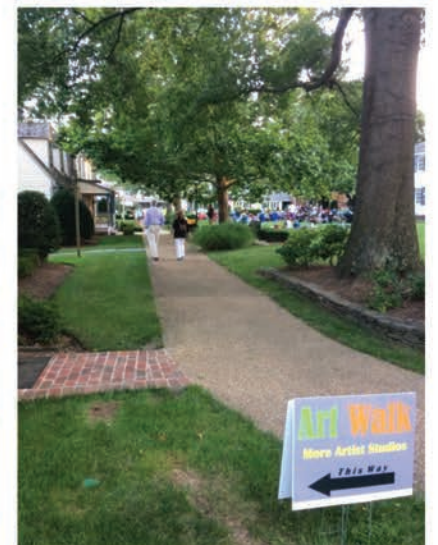
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### For the Community: FREE Art Events

- Art Walks in the Village:  
First Fridays Monthly
- Art Lectures
- Art Shows & Sales



Look for  
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[www.GreatFallsArt.org](http://www.GreatFallsArt.org)  
or call 703-232-1575



A Community supported, non-profit art foundation providing an Art School, Gallery, Working Artists' Studios and Art Events & Activities in the always artful Great Falls.



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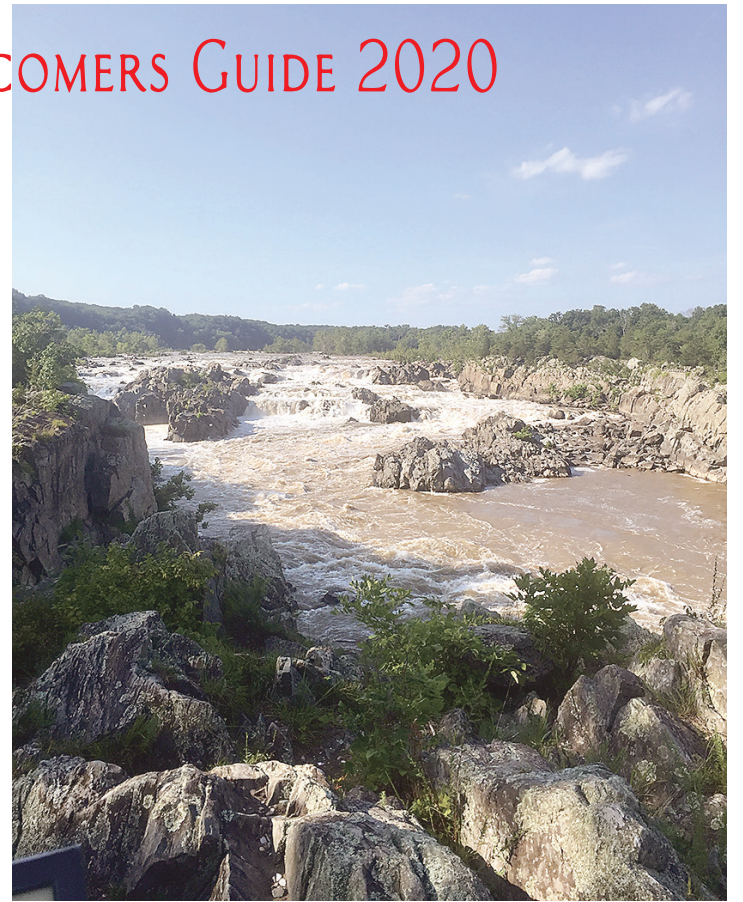



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[www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar)



## NEWCOMERS GUIDE 2020

Breathtaking and iconic, the water-fall that gives our town its name is a must-visit for new neighbors. Great Falls National Park boasts miles of hiking trails, a picnic area, and scenic overlooks along the river that lend themselves to either a quick hike or an extended visit to the park.



## Great Falls: Postcards from Hometown



More than 200 years old, the Colvin Run Mill is the sole 19th-century water-powered mill in the DC area that remains operational. The park also includes historical exhibits across its campus, regularly hosts educational activities, and is surrounded by wooded parkland. It is a great spot for a picnic lunch or an afternoon spent learning about Northern Virginia history.

**K**nown for its scenic beauty, spaciousness, and small-town feel, Great Falls is home to many sites both historic and picturesque. Neighbors new and old will enjoy exploring these sites, told below through "Postcards from Great Falls."

— LAURA GERSONY

PHOTOS BY  
 LAURA GERSONY/  
 THE CONNECTION

Be a part of our *Wellbeing* pages, the first week of every month.

Delight in our *HomeLifeStyle* sections, the second week of every month. Peek at the top real estate sales, glimpse over-the-top remodeling projects, get practical suggestions for your home.

Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our *A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun* pages, the third week of every month.

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A few miles removed from the bustle of Great Falls National Park, Riverbend Park is an oasis of calm and total immersion in nature. In addition to its miles of forested trails, the park also offers boat rentals, educational programming, and a spacious picnic area. Be sure to drop by during bluebell season in early spring, when the forest bed is blanketed with lilac flowers.







The social and entrepreneurial center of town, the Great Falls Village Centre houses shops, offices, and restaurants around a sprawling lawn. This is the site of town-wide celebrations such as the annual Fourth of July parade, the “Halloween Spook-tacular,” “Concerts on the Green” during warmer months, and a weekly community farmers market.

Visitors of all ages can enjoy the sports fields, picnic areas, and play-ground under the shade of majestic trees at the Great Falls Grange. The recreational area is located in the backyard of a public assembly hall built in 1929 as part of the post-Civil War Grange Movement.



Tucked away off Leigh Mill Road, Ramey Meadows offers extensive forested trails and a striking field of wildflowers. The park also includes a stretch of the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail, which runs in a 40-mile arc across Fairfax County.

Great Falls’ local branch of the countywide library system offers something for everyone. The library’s meeting rooms often host community groups and activities geared towards younger children, and the building’s hushed common space makes it a popular place to read or work. Books, internet access, digital materials, and other resources are publicly available with a free library card.



## SHOP GREAT FALLS!

### Great Falls Village Centre

[www.GreatFallsVillageCentre.com](http://www.GreatFallsVillageCentre.com)

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Artists on the Green.....	703-609-3092
Arts of Great Falls .....	703-232-1575
American Healthcare Prof.....	703-388-2813
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Dent Asset Management .....	703-286-7555
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Finn Thai Restaurant .....	703-757-0752
Georgetown Learning Center.....	703-759-3624
Great Falls Creamery.....	703-272-7609
Great Falls Family Dentistry .....	703-759-4707
Great Falls Pools.....	703-250-5585
Katie’s Coffee House.....	703-759-2759
Lauren Liess Interiors.....	571-926-7825
Loebig Chiropractic.....	703-757-5817
New Paradigm Capital Mgmt .....	703-757-4802
Old Brogue Irish Pub.....	703-759-3309
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## Springvale Road over Piney Run Bridge Replacement Fairfax County

*Virtual* Public Information Meeting

**Wednesday, October 21, 2020, 6:30-8 p.m.**  
**[www.virginiadot.org/SpringvalePineyRun](http://www.virginiadot.org/SpringvalePineyRun)**

Find out about plans to replace the Springvale Road (Route 674) one-lane bridge over Piney Run with a two-lane bridge. The bridge was built in 1965 and reconstructed in 2000. Two options are being considered for the project to improve safety: widening the bridge to two lanes with two four-foot-wide shoulders, and widening the bridge to two lanes separated by raised/splitter island medians with two two-foot-wide shoulders. The opening beneath the bridge will also be increased to better withstand flooding.

The meeting will be held as a virtual/online meeting. Information for accessing and participating in the virtual meeting will be posted on the project website ([www.virginiadot.org/SpringvalePineyRun](http://www.virginiadot.org/SpringvalePineyRun)). The VDOT project team will make a short presentation beginning at 6:30 p.m. and answer questions for about an hour after the presentation.

Review project information and meeting details on the VDOT study website or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-259-2429 or TTY/TDD 711 to make an appointment with appropriate personnel.

Give your comments after the presentation, submit your written comments by **November 2, 2020** via the study website, by mail to Ms. Dipali Patel, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or email [meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov](mailto:meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov). Please reference "Springvale Road over Piney Run Bridge Replacement" in the subject line.

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## VIEWPOINTS

### What's the Greatest Part of Living in Great Falls?

Longtime residents share their reflections and recommendations for new neighbors.

— BY LAURA GERSONY

Colleen Wright, a family physician and 24-year resident of Great Falls: "The school system is stellar, and there are so many nice events for kids in the Town Centre: Halloween, Fourth of July, other holidays. I even used to dress up Gretchen [German Shepherd dog, pictured] and go into town on Halloween."

To newcomers, Wright recommends, "Connect with your neighbors. Many of us don't live in streets with sidewalks, and porches, where people hang out. That's one of the mixed parts about living in Great Falls; the privacy can be nice, but it also means that you don't have built-in relationships with neighbors. So, definitely try to connect with them, through social media or otherwise."



PHOTO BY LAURA GERSONY/THE CONNECTION

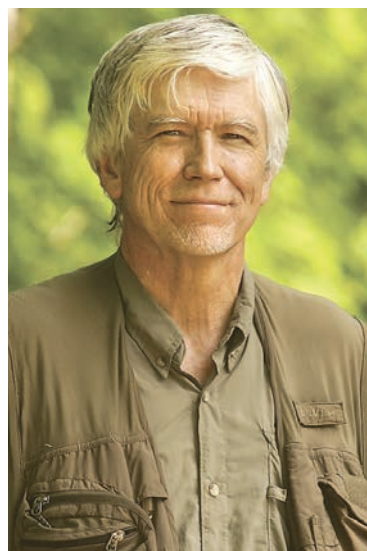


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Russell Mittermeier, the Chief Conservation Officer of Global Wildlife Conservation and a 29-year resident of Great Falls: "I've spent a lot of time in the great jungles of the world, and I'm used to wide-open spaces. After having lived in suburban Long Island, I chose this area because I wanted to have more room. I was looking for something that was a combination of suburbia and country. I also wanted to be out of the commuter radius, not within range of the metro...There's just a great freedom of movement around here."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Karen Hershey, a teacher and 24-year resident of Great Falls: "My favorite thing about living here is that I can leave my house, and in five minutes, I can be at Riverbend Park. The amount of nature and outdoor spaces is great. Growing up in New Jersey, I had never seen a bluebird before; but when I first moved here, I saw a bluebird within a week. As someone who loves the outdoors and natural spaces, what isn't there to love about Great Falls?"



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Richard Kelly, an art collector and 41-year resident of Great Falls: "I love Great Falls; it's pretty much got it all. And, at the same time, it's convenient to get to the city. If I want to go to concerts, or major national museums, I'm half an hour away. We still have all the benefits of a small town: the community gets together for events, and you run into people you know all the time. If I go to Safeway, I see somebody I know more often than not. It has a real small-town feel."



# NEWCOMERS GUIDE 2020

## Fairfax County Covid Cases

As of Saturday, Sept. 26, the Virginia Department of Health and Fairfax County Department of Health reported that 20,687 Fairfax County residents have tested positive for Covid-19 and more than 586 have died. More than 3,144 people have died in Virginia due to Covid-19 and 145,408 have tested positive for the illness.

See <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/coronavirus/covid-19-in-virginia-cases/>

### By Race

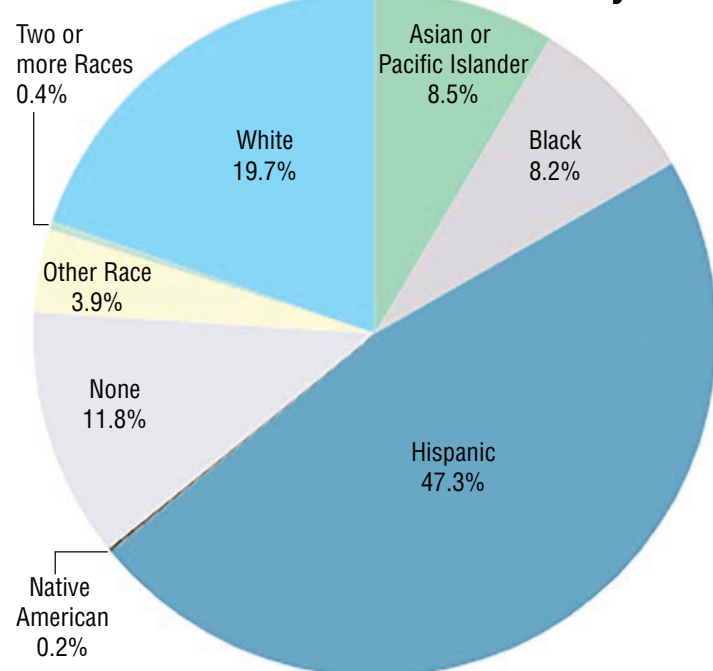
The Fairfax County Department of Health reports that 47.4 percent of Covid-19 cases have affected Latino residents even though they make up 16.2 percent of the county population. Black residents account for 9.2 percent of the population and 8.2 percent of cases reported in the county. Asian residents make up 18.8 percent of the population but only 8.6 percent of cases while white residents make up 51.6 percent of the county and account for 19.6 percent of cases.

Approximately 11.8 percent (2460 cases) of race and ethnicity data is missing, according to the Department of Health. "As a result, caution should be used when interpreting these results."

### By Age

Because different age groups are made up of different numbers of residents in Fairfax

## COVID-19 Cases in Fairfax County

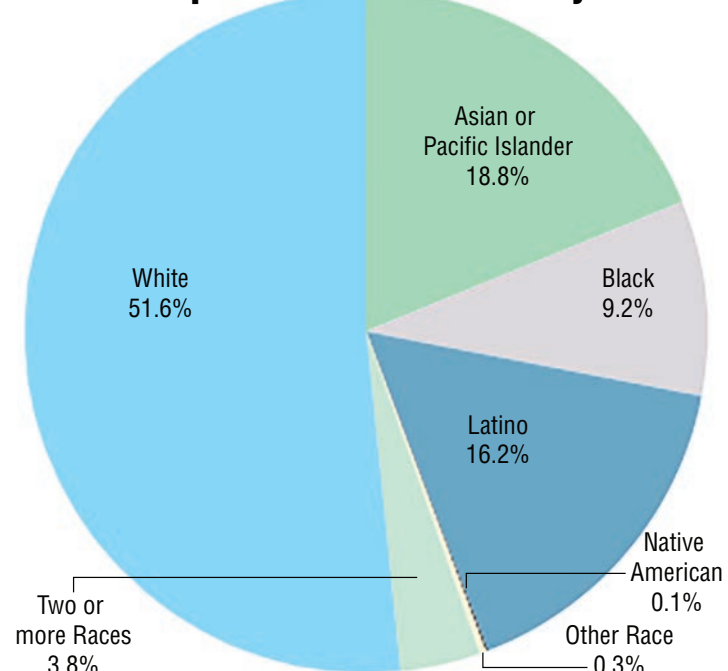


Health District, the Fairfax County Department of Health presents the total deceased case count per 100,000 residents. This number takes the total count of deceased cases in an age group, divides it by the total population in that age group and multiplies it by 100,000. By doing this, the Department of Health can compare the number of fatalities between age groups while considering the age group structure of Fairfax Health Dis-

trict. The Fairfax Health District includes the City of Fairfax and the City of Falls Church.

More than 499 people 65-and-older have died in the Fairfax County Health District, and they represent a case count of 334.1 fatalities per 100,000 people. More than 75 people 51-64 years of age have died and they represent a case count of 31.8 fatalities per 100,000, and people 18-49 account for 27 deaths and a case count of 5.2 per

## Population in Fairfax County



SOURCE: FAIRFAX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

100,000 people. No deaths have occurred in youth up to 18 as of Sept. 26, 2020.

In terms of the number of cases per 100,000 people, youth up to 18 have a case count of 722.3 per 100,000 people, people 18-49 have a case count of 2,324.4 per 100,000, people 50-64 have a case count of 1,815.7 per 100,000 people and senior citizens 65 years and older have a case count of 1,714.1 per 100,000 people.



## Welcome Newcomers!

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## Getting Involved Locally

**A**ny quest to talk about the issues in Northern Virginia right now seems to lead to talk about the pandemic, and the economic crisis that follows in its wake. Hunger, food insecurity, need for donated food has grown dramatically in the area. More families teeter on the edge of homelessness.

Here are many organizations that have worked locally to fill the gaps in the pandemic. Also included are some environmental groups, some ways to help animals and more.

Please email me if we have left something out or gotten something wrong. [mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)

### Where to Give Locally To Help with Pandemic Hunger and Beyond

❖ Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that feeds, clothes and educates children in need. As a result of closures relating to the coronavirus, Assistance League of Northern Virginia has reshaped its Weekend Food For Kids program to assist the struggling families of the students we serve. Since April, Assistance League has provided 1031 gro-

cery store gift cards, valued at more than \$20,000, for four of the Title I schools that we serve in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. To learn more about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, contact [info@alnv.org](mailto:info@alnv.org) or visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org)

❖ Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington Fairfax Area operates clubs in two of the neediest areas of the county, Culmore, Mount Vernon/ Route 1 corridor, and Chantilly, focusing on character and academic success. <https://www.bgcgw.org/club-page/fairfax-county-region-our-impact/>

❖ Britepaths' mission is to provide our Fairfax County area neighbors in need with short-term safety-net services and empower them to work toward long-term self-sufficiency. Britepaths serves more than 7,000 households in Fairfax County, households who live at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

(Brightpaths will launch the 2020 Holiday Program in October. Questions? Contact Vanessa De La Rosa at [vdelarosa@britepaths.org](mailto:vdelarosa@britepaths.org) or 703.273.8829 x888

[britepaths.org/sites/default/files/BritepathsProgramsAndServicesJan2020.pdf](http://britepaths.org/sites/default/files/BritepathsProgramsAndServicesJan2020.pdf)

❖ Centreville Immigration Forum, a safe,

organized center where residents and contractors can negotiate work arrangements with day laborers. Centreville Square Shopping Center, 5944 Centreville Crest Ln, Centreville, VA 20121. Phone: (703) 543-6272 website: [www.centrevilleimmigrationforum.org](http://www.centrevilleimmigrationforum.org) and email [contact@theCIFva.org](mailto:contact@theCIFva.org)

❖ Closet Of The Greater Herndon Area is a nonprofit thrift shop in downtown Herndon. The Closet recently awarded over \$20,000 in grants to seven local non-profit organizations: Cornerstones, Fellowship Square, Herndon-Reston FISH, Meridians Recovery, Mobile Hope of Loudoun, South Lakes High School PTSA Food Pantry, and Herndon Woman's Club in support of Wreaths Across America. The Closet is a source of low-cost clothing and household necessities and also gives away clothing at no cost to truly needy individuals. 845 Station Street Herndon, VA 20170 (703) 437-7652. Email [TheClosetInc@verizon.net](mailto:TheClosetInc@verizon.net) Web: [theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/](http://theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/)

❖ Committee for Helping Others (CHO), Vienna, organized in 1969 by a group of churches and individuals in the Dunn Loring, Merrifield, Oakton, Vienna community to provide simple, loving charity to those in need. We spent \$63,000 from April through July of this year for rent, utilities, and medi-

cal bills, most of it (over \$50,000) has been for rent. This is in addition to the \$200,000 in CARES funds that helped residents affected by the coronavirus with rent, mortgage, gas, electric bills, and food. All in addition to usual programs. 703-281-7614, [www.cho-va.com](http://www.cho-va.com)

❖ Cornerstones, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, [www.cornerstonesva.org](http://www.cornerstonesva.org).

For nearly 50 years, Cornerstones has been helping neighbors in need. The service area of Cornerstones has grown to include most of northwestern Fairfax County, helping people build more stable lives by connecting them to vital resources that solve their needs for housing, childcare, food or financial assistance. Programs and services include the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, Emergency Food Pantry, Hypothermia Prevention Program, Gifts for Kids and annual Coat Drive. [www.cornerstonesva.org](http://www.cornerstonesva.org).

Contact Nate King, Donations and Drives Coordinator, at 571-323-9569.

❖ Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter. Each year, nearly 5,000 pets, including cats, dogs, small mammals, reptiles and

SEE GIVING LOCALLY, PAGE 14

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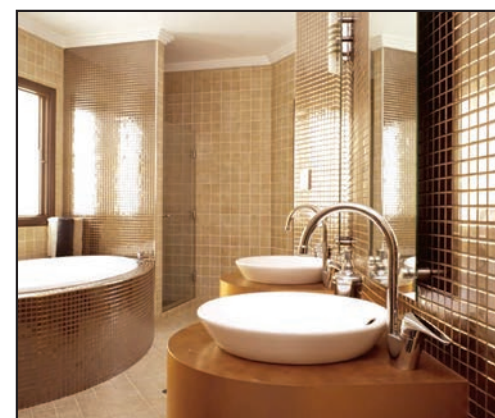
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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.  
-Werner Heisenberg

# NEWCOMERS GUIDE 2020

## Where to Give for Local impact

FROM PAGE 12

livestock, come to the Fairfax County Animal Shelter. Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter funds important needs throughout the Shelter such as behavioral training and dental or medical care beyond what the shelter's budget can provide. [generalinfo@ffcas.org](mailto:generalinfo@ffcas.org) 571-212-9858 [www.ffcas.org/](http://www.ffcas.org/)

❖ Herndon-Reston FISH (Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help), 336 Victory Drive, Herndon, 703-391-0105 [herndonrestonfish.org](http://herndonrestonfish.org) Herndon-Reston FISH has assisted local residents in short-term crises by since 1969. 703-437-0600.

❖ LINK, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more. [holiday@linkagainsthunger.org](mailto:holiday@linkagainsthunger.org). 703-437-1776 [www.linkagainsthunger.org](http://www.linkagainsthunger.org).

❖ Lost Dog & Cat Rescue Foundation helps homeless pets find their way into loving homes through rescue and adoption. We offer same-day adoptions and two-week trial periods. All pets are spayed or neutered prior to adoption. [lostdogrescue.org](http://lostdogrescue.org)

❖ National Capital Food Bank, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia, (571) 482-4770. We work with 450+ nonprofit partners across the region, partners who distribute an average of 88,000 meals daily. Together, we provide more than 30 million meals every year. [www.capitalareafoodbank.org](http://www.capitalareafoodbank.org)

❖ Northern Virginia Family Service. The organization provides the essential building blocks for financial, emotional and physical well-being, serving as leaders and innovators for the Northern Virginia community. Every year, it empowers 35,000 individuals to achieve self-sufficiency. [www.nvfs.org](http://www.nvfs.org) Northern Virginia Family Service, 10455 White Granite, Drive, Suite 100, Oakton, VA 22124. 571-748-2500

❖ Pathway Homes provides non-time-limited housing and supportive services to more than 600 adults with serious mental illness and other co-occurring disabilities in Northern Virginia. [www.pathwayhomes.org](http://www.pathwayhomes.org)

❖ PRS, Inc. is a nonprofit providing mental health, crisis intervention and suicide prevention services in Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C. Seeking to change and save lives in our community by empowering hope, safety, recovery, wellness, independence and community integration.. PRS also provides crisis counseling and connection to supports CRISISLINK When crisis calls, we answer 24/7 Call: 800-273-TALK [8255] Text: "CONNECT" to 85511



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

**Great Fall neighbors help the community during the Stuff the Bus Food Drive by Fairfax County at the Great Falls Library branch, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls.**

❖ Second Story — Second Story (formerly Alternative House) provides shelter and residential services for homeless, runaway or abused teenagers, unaccompanied youth, and young mothers and their children. Community-based programs provide after-school homework help, life skills support, and safe havens for 2nd-12th graders in vulnerable communities. 24/7 Crisis Hotline: Call 1-800-SAY-TEEN, or Text "TEEN-HELP" to 855-11 second-story.org.

❖ SHARE of McLean is an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff. We are supported by donations from local religious congregations, community organizations and individuals. Our year round programs include family emergency financial assistance, food pantry, used clothing room, recycled furniture, back-to-school supplies. Share provides assistance to neighbors within the zip codes of 22101, 22102, 22066, and the Pimmit Hills section of 22043. Donors can donate money online by credit card, PayPal or by mailing a check. Share volunteers will purchase what is most needed and available. DONATE page [www.shareofmclean.org/donate](http://www.shareofmclean.org/donate). Grocery Gift Cards can be left at the McLean Giant front desk for pick up by Share.

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# NEWCOMERS GUIDE 2020

## Places to See

FROM PAGE 4

is the site for many community nature-related events such as the annual NatureFest, the Spring Native Plant Sale, and the Fall Native Plant Sale. Situated near the Sugarland Run Stream, the park attracts over 100 species of bird, deer, fox, and other wildlife. Guided walks are offered to highlight the wildlife on the trails. Two park shelters are available for rent.

196 Herndon Parkway, Herndon

**MPAartfest:** Every October, the McLean Project for the Arts converts McLean Central Park into a free, one-day festival of the arts. Thousands of area residents attend. Vendor tents display the works of numerous juried artists, which are complemented by the exhibitions of children's and seniors' artwork, an Open Studio demonstration, and performances by local musicians.

McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean

**McLean Day:** Sponsored by the McLean Community Center, McLean Day is held on the third Saturday in May. The festival features live entertainment, carnival rides, exhibitions, and delicious foods for visitors of all ages. The event also includes booths where artisans, local businesses, civic organizations, nonprofit groups, and local officials showcase their wares.

Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean

**Herndon Festival:** Held in late May, the Herndon Festival offers something for the whole family. The festival features two entertainment stages, 10K and 5K races, carnival rides, hands-on arts and activities, food vendors, fireworks, and more. Enjoy four days of fun-filled activities and entertainment.

## Connection

FROM PAGE 3

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

**It's Friday Night Live! reimagined for the pandemic; live-streamed from Arts Herndon. (Aug. 2020)**

200 Spring Street, Herndon

**Great Falls Freedom Memorial:** The Great Falls Freedom Memorial was created in 2004 to honor all who have served our country. The Freedom Memorial hosts annual ceremonies, on Memorial Day, September 11, and Veterans' Day, as well as a 5K race on July 4. It is a special place to pay respects to and remember those who have served and sacrificed for our country.

9830 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls (Behind the Great Falls Library)

**Herndon Friday Night Live!** Friday nights during the summer, Friday Night Live! concerts are held on the Herndon Town Green. Concerts are free and feature popular local and regional acts. Most featured bands play rock and roll covers from classic to modern rock, but country and original music are also included for good measure.

Herndon Town Green, 777 Lynn Street, Herndon

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## And So It Continues



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Two-plus weeks into my thyroid cancer treatment, all is as I anticipated. I'm still not in a comfort zone, routine wise, nor side-effect wise, I am feeling some predicted discomfort. I won't self-indulge and list the difficulties that I'm having. I will say that even though I'm extremely thankful not to have experienced any of the more severe side effects (blood clots, arrhythmia), I have felt something. The 'something' I've felt has been made more complicated due to the synthroid pill I take daily, since I had my thyroid surgically removed in late January, 2020. The proper dosage, prescribed to replace the function of the thyroid is not easy to determine. As such, I'm not exactly feeling myself. I'm not sure who it is I'm feeling (as Groucho said because he could never get that close), but it's not who I've come to feel.

The complication I refer to is the effect on my thyroid replacement medication (synthroid) by my thyroid cancer pills. What happens, I'm told, is that the synthroid's effectiveness is partially mitigated by the cancer medication and as a result, I need regular lab work to monitor the situation and maintain proper thyroid replacement. If my thyroid hormone is too low, I'll feel tired and unmotivated. And since a side effect of the thyroid cancer medication is among others, fatigue, I am tired for two reasons: the cancer drug itself and the effect the same cancer drug has on the synthroid pill, which has everything to do with my energy level.

Now, not only am I a two-for-the-price-of-one cancer patient (non small cell lung cancer and thyroid cancer), I am also a thyroid cancer patient being treated for cancer and for the replacement of the thyroid. As a result, in addition to juggling two cancers, I am also juggling one cancer with two semi competing side effects: feeling tired due to low thyroid hormone and feeling tired as a side effect of the thyroid cancer treatment. I imagine one or the other would be manageable but simultaneously, not so much. (I guess it's another BOGO-type situation).

Granted, it's a living and it sure beats the alternative. Still, I was hoping one set of side effects would be enough rather than having to consider a second set (side effects of the side effects, if you will). My concern is compounded by something my oncologist was wary of doing years ago: Treating the side effects, in addition to treating the cancer. Moreover, he said that often it's the side effects that become so debilitating and harmful that the actual cancer treatment itself has to be stopped. And though your quality of life might improve - with the reduction/elimination of the side effects, the cancer is now left untreated and cancer left untreated generally speaking, doesn't usually mind it's own business, if you know what I mean? In either scenario, you're unlikely to be smelling any roses.

And not 'smelling any roses' is what I'm most worried about. Stopping treatment for the thyroid cancer would be bad enough, but what about my previous pre-existing stage IV, non small cell lung cancer diagnosed Feb. 2009? I'm currently not receiving any treatment for that as we defer to the thyroid cancer. If I have to stop the thyroid cancer treatment because of the side effects, will I then re-start the lung cancer treatment for which I had very minor side effects. Is treating the back-up (so to speak) cancer better than not treating the new primary: thyroid cancer? As you can possibly tell, I am potentially between a rock and a very hard place.

Nevertheless, as my oncologist emailed me a month or so ago when we received the results of my third tumor biopsy (which was taken from a tumor inside my lung rather than outside from a lymph node), "Thyroid cancer is better than lung cancer." And though I certainly liked the sound of that when I first read it, the present complications were not yet a part of the discussion. But that's what being a cancer patient is all about: an evolving existence of good, bad and indifferent information with nary a guarantee in sight.

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





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