

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

FEBRUARY 11, 2021

Mount Vernon's Virtual Town Hall Meeting Hits All Levels

Pandemic in the area was looked at, along with other issues.

By Mike Salmon
The Connection

The common thread for all the speakers at Supervisor Dan Storck's (D-Mount Vernon) town hall meeting was the need to defeat the coronavirus, and rebuild the economy as the virus impact is lessened in Virginia. These town hall meetings are an annual event for Storck's office and have included an exhibit hall in the past.

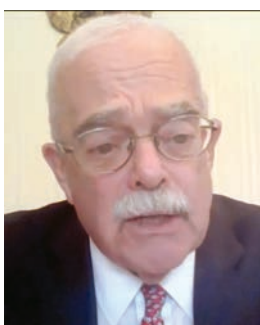
"We have the resources to tackle this, we need the members of the community to stand with us," said Chairman Jeff McKay (D), and mentioned more federal relief funds that may be coming in the near future. "The Route One corridor needs it more than anyone right now," McKay said. The covid vaccines are working their way into the population, but McKay said "we are not getting enough vaccines to support the demand." He also noted his contact with Richmond to get more vaccines. McKay invited communications with anyone from the community.

"Our door is always open," he said.

Supervisor Storck introduced County Executive Bryan Hill. Hill touted the county's response to the pandemic, and talked about the support the non-profits have gotten, particularly New Hope and Good Shepherd, both in Mount Vernon.



U.S. Rep.
Don Beyer



U.S. Rep.
Gerry Connolly



Karen Corbett Sanders



Chairman
Jeff McKay



Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck convened the Town Meeting.

"We have really stepped up our networks," Hill said, referring to the food relief events that have taken place in those areas.

Hill also mentioned the search

his office is involved with for the new police chief as Chief Edwin C. Roessler steps down. "We have over 40 candidates that we're getting down to 10," Hill said.

The "One Fairfax," plan was mentioned a number of times, and that is a joint social and racial equity policy of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and School Board. It commits the county and schools to intentionally consider equity when making policies or delivering programs and services. It's a declaration that all residents deserve an equitable opportunity to succeed — regardless of their race, color, sex, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, disability, income or where they live, the coun-

ty website said.

On Richmond Highway, the assortment of businesses, housing and transportation is varied like nowhere else in Fairfax County, so the One Fairfax concept could be felt there immensely. There is a One Fairfax task force, McKay said.

Other speakers at the town hall meeting included Mount Vernon District School Board Member Karen Corbett Sanders, Health Department Director Dr. Gloria Ado-Ayensu, Fort Belvoir Garrison Commander Col. Joshua SeGraves and special guests U.S. Reps. Gerry Connolly and Don Beyer.

When the time came for the viewers to ask questions, they wanted to know about zoning changes, COVID-19 vaccines, the safety of students returning to classrooms and whether real estate taxes would go up this year.

As the grand finale, Supervisor Storck took the audience on a virtual tour of the District, highlighting changes across the District ranging from the urban development in the Huntington area to the upcoming groundbreaking for the South County Police Station and Animal Shelter, in Lorton.

The town hall usually has an exhibit hall to kick off the event, and this year, Storck's office didn't want folks to go away empty handed, so they put together "our ever popular 'Goodie Bags' that will be filled with much of the information typically found in the Exhibit Hall." Bags can be picked up outside the Mount Vernon office by the front door starting Monday, Feb. 8, in the Mount Vernon Governmental Center at 2511 Parkers Lane.

The meeting will be on Facebook, and available to watch on Channel 16 on Sunday, Feb. 14 at 8 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 20 at 8 p.m. and Thursday, Feb. 25 at 8 p.m.

SCREENSHOTS

2020 Major District Accomplishments

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- COVID-19 outreach to all residents, non-profits and businesses
- Lorton Visioning 2040
- Formal LatinX outreach
- Connected with 1,000s of you, virtually or in-person

FY 2021 BUDGET

- Balanced budget with no tax rate increase and funded schools
- Supported resident, small businesses and non-profits impacted by COVID-19
- Increased investments in social services, health services and environment

TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE

- Richmond Highway undergrounding funding advocacy
- BRT planning and Richmond Highway widening project funding
- Urban Design Guidelines for Richmond Highway
- North Gateway Transportation Study

HEALTH, HOUSING & HUMAN SERVICES

- COVID-19 education and support
- Lorton Community Center & Library groundbreaking
- The Arden & Residences at North Hill groundbreakings

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Reduced crime rate another 1%
- New Gunston fire boat launched

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Richmond Highway Corridor EDA market analysis
- Original MVHS revitalization architectural design
- Fort Belvoir partnership/liaison
- New Richmond Highway Economic Development Program

ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

- County and community response to climate change accelerated
- Adaptation and resiliency planning funded
- Joint County/schools environmental recommendations
- My Fairfax Green Initiatives #2 adopted
- Laurel Hill Central Green Park opened
- Mount Vernon RECenter renovation bonding and approval
- Airplane noise advocacy

HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

- Cultural Corridor and Cultural Arts District strategic plan
- National Army Museum & Lucy Burns Museum opened
- Turning Point Suffragist Memorial funded
- 100th anniversary of women's right to vote celebration
- Fairfax Peak interim agreement

Mount Vernon District 2020 Accomplishments.



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#WeAreAlexandria



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Mary Ellen Rotondo 703.472.5454

www.finelivingre.com



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Old Town | \$2,100,000

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VIRTUAL OPEN SAT 2/13, 11AM

Del Ray | \$1,400,000

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OPEN SAT 2/13, 1-3PM

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Alexandria

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Absentee Minded

Lawmakers consider bill to assign absentee ballots to precincts where voters live.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

On election night, Democrats were shocked by how well Donald Trump was performing in Alexandria. As returns were posted online, concerns were rising among supporters of Joe Biden as the incumbent was outperforming expectations at precinct after precinct. Trump was within striking distance of winning George Mason and Lyles Crouch. Ladrey Senior Building was tied. The Republican vote share at City Hall broke a new record of 59 percent. Trump got a higher percentage of the vote in 2020 at City Hall than Ronald Reagan did in 1980 or 1984.

“As the precinct totals started coming in, I was just getting these panicked texts from people. And I said, ‘People, chill out. Calm down,’” said Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson. “All these months we’ve been saying that election night totals would be different from the overall totals because of absentee voting, and sure enough here we are. People are freaking out and there’s still two thirds of the vote that we don’t know yet.”

Meanwhile, 250 miles away in Roanoke, Sen. David Suetterlein (R-19) was having similar conversations with his constituents who were thrilled at the unexpectedly strong performance of the Republican candidate. Trump was winning precincts that were usually Democratic strongholds across his southwest Senate district. He warned his supporters that the numbers would shift when the absentee precincts reported, and then he says they were perplexed when it happened. That’s why he introduced a bill that would require election officials to record absentee ballots in the precincts where voters live instead of separately in an absentee precinct.

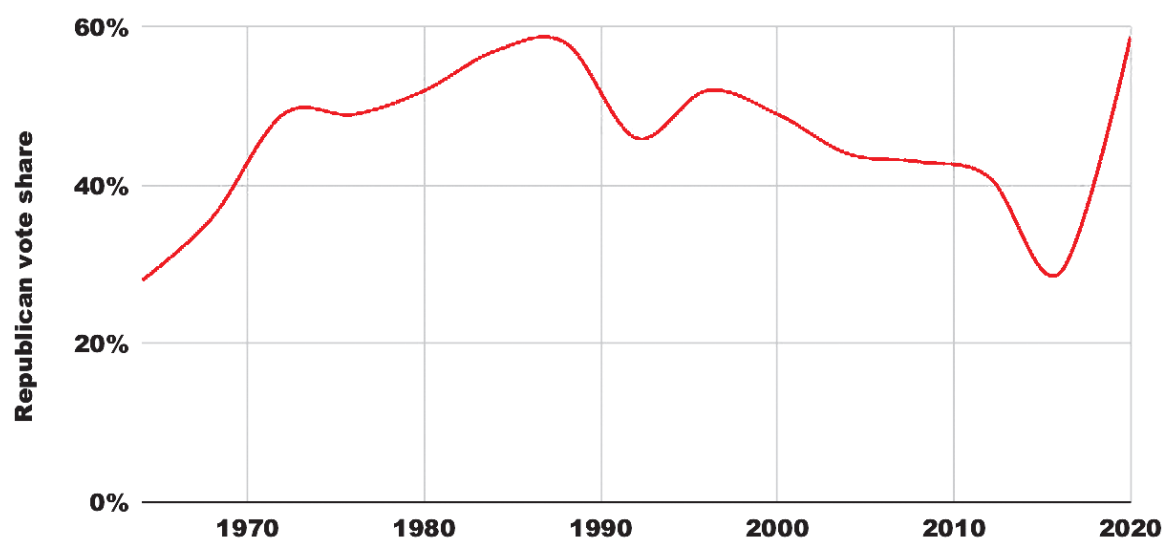
“There’s lots of things that we can do to restore confidence in elections,” said Suetterlein. “But this, more than anything else, we can do so folks can clearly see the election results reflect the reality of the votes being cast in their community and in other communities across the commonwealth.”

AS ABSENTEE VOTING has gained popularity in recent years, the value of precinct returns has declined. That trend took a dramatic scale this year as 80 percent



Eight out of ten voters in Alexandria cast an absentee ballot in the election last year. None of those votes were recorded in the precinct where those voters live.

Republican Vote Share at City Hall Precinct



source: presidential election returns from the Alexandria registrar

of Alexandria voters cast an absentee ballot. That means the vast majority of votes were not recorded in the home precincts of voters where they live, rendering the precinct

happen would require her office to have 30 different ballots available at her office for each precinct at her office for the 45 day period voters can cast an early ballot.

“It could potentially slow down the process because we’d have to check you in as a City Hall voter and then go to the City Hall pile and get your ballot,” said Turner. “There’s also print-on-demand technology that

would alleviate the need to make projections based on how many voters we think are coming from each of our 30 precincts to vote absentee, however those machines come at a cost and it’s not a cheap cost.”

Only one senator voted against the bill: Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-30).

He says he supports the concept in theory. But, he says, he’s concerned about voters waiting in line while election officials print ballots, which might smear when they print. “We heard about the goal of the bill, but we didn’t hear about the implementation of how it gets done to my satisfaction,” said Ebbin. “If it can be done I’m all for it. But Fairfax County expressed some hesitation.”

AS THE LARGEST jurisdiction in Virginia, Fairfax County presents a complex challenge for election officials. If Suetterlein’s bill is approved by the House and signed by the governor, the Fairfax registrar would need to figure out a way to present in-person absentee voters with 240 different ballot styles this fall. When the bill was considered in the Senate Privileges and Elections Committee, Fairfax legisla-

tive director James Heo asked lawmakers to oppose the bill because it would substantially increase the workload for election officials and present thorny logistical challenges.

“If Albemarle County can do it, why can’t Fairfax County do it?” asked Sen. Creigh Deeds (D-25), chairman of the Senate Privileges and Elections Committee.

“It’s simply about the size of the county and the number of precincts and the number of split precincts that exist in Fairfax County,” said Heo. “Because you can’t estimate how many voters are going to come from each precinct who are going to request absentee ballots, you have to over-print the number of ballots needed in order to assure that no voter has to wait.”

Fairfax County is the home of the Speaker of the House and the largest delegation of House members. So Suetterlein’s bill is likely to get a grilling in the House Privileges and Elections Committee, where lawmakers are signaling they are not sure how the new mandate would work. One of the complicating factors for implementing the new requirement this year is the confusion that could be created by the once-in-a-decade redistricting process, which will create new political boundaries for the House of Delegates and state Senate seats.

“I fear catastrophe in order to get us a little more information,” said Del. Mark Levine (D-45). “We had a really seamless and well-run election. I would hate to ruin that in the hope of getting some more information.”

DATA ABOUT ELECTIONS is vital to elected officials, and even lawmakers who are critical of Suetterlein’s timeline say they support implementing the requirement eventually. They share the goal of reporting absentee votes in a way that reveals a more complete picture of political geography. And they say posting election night returns in a way that does not dramatically shift when at-large precincts are included will avoid confusion and frustration.

“Data breeds confidence, and so as voters see and understand how trends happen it helps build confidence in the system,” said Wilson, who has long been an advocate of including absentee votes in precinct returns. “When you get to a point where a locality as big as Fairfax County’s election returns become a complete black box and it’s just one super precinct, it does raise some concerns about transparency.”

“Data breeds confidence, and so as voters see and understand how trends happen it helps build confidence in the system.”

— Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson

returns almost meaningless.

The bill introduced by Suetterlein to require election officials count absentee ballots in the precincts where voters live passed the Senate last week with an overwhelming bipartisan majority.

Alexandria Registrar Angela Maniglia Turner says making that

Progress on Many Fronts at Crossover

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL

The Fifth Week of the General Assembly Session brought Crossover and the conclusion of some of our most contentious bills.

First, Virginia rocketed up to the top ten in vaccine distribution in America. While the system is still adjusting to vaccine supply, many constituents have reported to me that they have been able to get vaccinated. The coming single shot Johnson and Johnson vaccine and Astra Zeneca will allow Virginia to ramp up from the current rate of 128,000 shots per week.

Although infection rates are dropping, the English and South African variants have arrived in Virginia and we must remain vigilant – even after people are vaccinated. No state is doing better than Virginia that has a larger population, and we have the 8th lowest per capita death rate. Group 1a should be done by the end of this week.

Ten of my twelve bills “crossed over” to the House of Delegates.

Capital Punishment Abolished

My legislation to abolish capital punishment in Virginia passed the Senate after a two-hour floor debate. Virginia has executed 1,389

people since 1608 and the second largest number of people since capital punishment was reauthorized by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1976. Studies estimate that one-in-ten given the death penalty are innocent; over 174 have been exonerated including Earl Washington Jr. here in Virginia. The inequities of those sentenced to death are indisputable and Virginia spends over \$50 million per decade to preserve a sentencing option that no Virginia jury has imposed since 2012. The House also passed an identical bill and Governor Northam has indicated that he will sign it.

❖ We passed Senator Adam Ebbin’s legislation to remove Virginia ban on same sex marriage from the Constitution of Virginia and a separate bill to remove Virginia’s Jim Crow Era language prohibiting felons from voting until their voting rights are restored by the Governor. The language is set to be replaced with a right to vote once released from prison.

❖ My legislation to comprehensively reform Virginia’s punitive restrictions of criminal record expungement passed the Senate as well. Longstanding criminal histo-



Surovell

ries create barriers to housing and employment for hundreds of thousands of Virginians and limit available workforce. Forty-one other states allow the sealing of misdemeanor convictions and thirty-six allow the same for felonies. My legis-

lation will create a petition-based process for expunging crimes with some automatic sealing for minor crimes. The House of Delegates has passed similar legislation which will need to be reconciled.

❖ I also carried legislation requested by the Fairfax County School Board that would allow a locality to ask about a bidder’s arbitration practices during procure-

ment. Many businesses use mandatory pre-dispute arbitration contract clauses that prohibit employees with sexual harassment, civil rights or wage theft claims from using the courts to resolve their disputes which keeps these problems from being seen by the media or the public.

❖ My legislation to allow class action lawsuits in Virginia also passed the Senate. Virginia is one of only two states that prohibit consumers from aggregating their

claims and allow individuals to aggregate their bargaining leverage to obtain relief from businesses.

❖ My legislation to provide Fairfax County greater flexibility in raising funds to pay for underground utilities on U.S. 1 passed the Senate 33-6. I am hopeful that this will give the County the additional resources it needs so it can commit to underground utilities in the \$900 million bus rapid transit and road widening from Huntington to Fort Belvoir similar to what Prince William County has committed to complete along its 14-mile stretch of U.S. 1.

❖ I passed two bills to help our immigrant community. My bill harmonizing state and federal laws on Special Immigrant Juvenile Status passed along with legislation creating a framework for immigrant human trafficking and crime victims to obtain U or T Visas from the Federal Government.

Each chamber’s competing budget proposals will be announced this week and we will start work on legislation from each other’s chamber.

Keep responding to my constituent survey at www.scottssurovell.org/survey and please email me at scott@scottssurovell.org if you have any questions or problems getting your vaccine.

Budget Recommendations on Transportation and Public Safety

Report By Delegate Paul Krizek, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Public Safety, to the Full Appropriations Committee, that will be given on Wednesday, Feb. 10, with the introduction of the House Budget:

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Transportation and Public Safety Subcommittee, I am pleased to present to you our budget recommendations. One of the primary responsibilities of this subcommittee is ensuring the agencies under its purview have the resources needed to adequately address their responsibilities, and to meet the challenges they all face.

To this end, for the Department of Emergency Management, the subcommittee report includes an additional \$31.7 million from the general fund over the biennium as well as a newly received reimbursement of \$47 million from FEMA for the Department’s ongoing pandemic response and recovery activities. This includes support

for the purchase and distribution of personal protective equipment, increased staffing in the Emergency Operations Center, as well as funding to support the Commonwealth’s efforts to ensure equity in its pandemic response. For the Department of Corrections, the subcommittee report supports providing \$14.3 million in additional appropriations for the Department to continue meeting the challenges of providing adequate and appropriate health care to those incarcerated in its facilities. And to support the safety of our State Troopers and the communities they serve, the subcommittee report includes \$7.5 million in additional funding for the State Police to purchase newer, safer, and more reliable vehicles for their troopers.

I am pleased the amendment package also helps support an ambitious criminal justice reform agenda. To implement an automatic expungement process, pursuant to Leader Herring’s legislation, the subcommittee report includes



Krizek

for the automatic expungement of civil and criminal records.

The subcommittee report also supports the Commonwealth’s efforts to join a growing list of states that have legalized the adult use of cannabis. To this end, the report includes a \$10.0 million line of credit for the establishment of the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority, and a \$5.0 million contingency appropriation to ensure adequate support exists for the many agencies involved in ensuring Virginia has a safe, functioning, and appropriately regulated, legal cannabis marketplace by Jan. 1, 2024.

Other criminal justice reform priorities reflected in the subcommittee report include the elimination of the death penalty in the Commonwealth, which allows the

\$14.6 million to allow the Office of the Executive Secretary and the Department of State Police to make the systems improvements necessary for Virginia to become one of just a handful of states who have implemented a process

savings from no longer providing criminal defense in capital cases to be reinvested to meet other operational needs within the Indigent Defense Commission. The subcommittee report also includes \$6 million toward the costs of eliminating mandatory minimums for more than 18 offenses, and allowing individuals currently incarcerated under mandatory minimum sen-

SEE BUDGET, PAGE 5

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A Connection Newspaper



Send Pet Photos

The Pet Gazette, a twice-yearly special edition, will publish the last week of July, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by Friday, July 20.

We invite you to send stories about your pets, photos of you and your family with your cats, dogs, llamas, alpacas, ponies, hamsters, snakes, lizards, frogs, rabbits, or whatever other creatures share your life with you.

Tell us the story of a special bond between a child and a dog, the story of how you came to adopt your pet, or examples of amazing feats of your creatures.

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Budget Recommendations on Transportation

FROM PAGE 4

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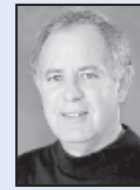
In the area of Transportation, the subcommittee's first priority was to conduct a thorough review of the proposals in the introduced budget to invest \$55 million in general funds to support two high priority transportation projects, providing \$50 million to enhance the current rail service from DC to Roanoke and start the expansion of passenger rail to the New River Valley, and \$5 million for development and construction of additional multi-use trails in the Commonwealth. I am pleased to announce the Subcommittee recommenda-

tions include going forward with these two projects. It is important to note that in addition to recommending the \$50 million in funding to support the rail expansion, the subcommittee and full committee reported House Bill 1893 patroned by Delegate Hurst to establish the New River Valley Passenger Rail Station Authority to provide additional support to enable rail expansion into the New River Valley.

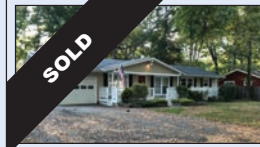
The Subcommittee feels strongly that support for public transit is vital to our Commonwealth's future because it reduces congestion on our roads and helps mitigate the impact motor vehicle emissions

have on our environment. Given this importance, the subcommittee recommendations also include \$500,000 from the general fund to support the transit equity and modernization study authorized in House Joint Resolution 542 patroned by Delegate McQuinn. We feel this study will provide important information as we continue to expand our investments in public transit in the years to come.

With that, Mr. Chairman, the report of the Subcommittee is now before you and the members of the Committee. I hope it will be the Committee's pleasure to adopt the Subcommittee's report.



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Alex/Hybla Valley Farm \$615,000
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Alex/Riverside Estates \$584,000
8402 Bound Brook

Come check out this beautiful "Virginia" model, offering a 5BR, 3BA Split w/large 2 car garage & a lovely deck off the kitchen overlooking a private & fully fenced bkyd. Many updates including roof 2020, vinyl siding, & double pane replacement windows in '04, furnace & A/C replaced in '19, HWH in '12. Beautiful refinished hwd floors on the main level which offers 4 spacious BRs, & 2 full BAs. The lower level offers a 5th BR, 3rd full bath & spacious family room w/a cozy gas FPL & walkout to the bkyd, all perfect for an in-law suite. This wonderful community is a short walk to Mt. Vernon Estate, 5 min drive (S) to Ft. Belvoir, 15 mins (N) to Old Town, 25 mins (N) to Reagan National Airport, 30-35 mins to D.C. and the Pentagon.



Alex/Riverside Estates \$736,000
8503 Cherry Valley

Riverside Estates' largest split foyer model (Concord) w/2 car garage & lots of updates, i.e., roof 2001, HVAC 2012, baths 2010, furnace 2001, updated double pane windows 2019. Kitchen was opened to the dining & living rooms & is absolutely stunning: granite & quartz counters, large island w/seating capacity & beautiful hwd floors. Oversized MBR & MBA share a lovely gas FPL to add charm to the master suite. A large lower level offers a family rm which also has a gas FPL, a 4th BR & 3rd full bath. Plenty of storage behind the 2-car garage. Large lovely fenced bkyd, perfect for entertaining. 5-minute drive to Ft. Belvoir (S), 15 minutes to Alexandria, (N), 25 mins to National Airport (N) and 33 mins to the Pentagon (N).



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Special Edition: PET Connection

Publishes:
February 24, 2021

Ads submitted by:
February 18, 2021

The Pet Connection will publish on February 24 and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by February 18.

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Romance and Reproduction Are Underway



Two bald eagles calling. For such large birds, some observers consider their call to be weak.

Our area is awash in bald eagles preparing for offspring.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

In the grip of mid-winter's cold and covid isolation, romance may be but a fleeting fantasy for humans, but among area bald eagles, romance and reproduction are well underway.

On Jan. 18, while clipping English ivy off Dyke Marsh's trees, volunteers were transfixed by a bald eagle pair mating. On Feb. 3, Ed Eder watched a male take a fish to the female who was incubating eggs. In December and January, locals saw eagles carrying sticks to nests.

Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) mate for life and typically return to their previous year's site and add to their nests. The nests, usually near water, are five to six feet in diameter and two to four feet tall, some of the largest nests in the world weighing up to 4,000 pounds.

Females incubate two to three eggs for five to six weeks. Between May and July, chicks fledge, when anadromous fish swim up the Potomac to spawn.

Mature bald eagles have a snow-white head and tail, a yellow hooked bill, yellow talons and a chocolate-brown body. Those under five years old are mottled brown. Adults can weigh from 10 to 14 pounds and have an eight-foot wingspan.

They are powerful flyers and often perch, monitor their surroundings, swoop down and grasp their prey in their talons. They eat mostly fish, but also gulls, small mammals, snakes and waterfowl.

"Our" Eagles

Local fans have not yet located all active nests this year, but in 2020, there were three active bald eagle nests in Dyke Marsh and one in Fort Hunt Park. Mason Neck had at least 25 active nests in recent years, approximately 50 year-round resident bald eagles and up to 100 in the winter. Fort Belvoir typically has six or seven active nests. To ornithologists, "active" means that pairs are tending to a nest or eaglets.

The Rebound

In the 1700s, there were around 100,000 nesting bald eagles in the lower 48 states. By 1963, the numbers had plunged to 417 known nesting pairs. Scientists determined that DDT and other compounds in pesticides moved up the food chain and thinned eggshells so severely that the shells broke and chicks failed to hatch. In 1967, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) listed the bald eagle as endangered. Congress banned DDT in 1972 and numbers began to inch up. In 2007, FWS announced the bald eagle's recovery and removed it from the endangered species list, but it is still protected under other laws. In the 1970s, Virginia had a breeding population of around 30. Today's estimate is over 1,300 pairs.

National Symbol

While the bald eagle has been America's national emblem since 1782, the bird has had detractors, the most famous being Benjamin Franklin who wrote, "He is a Bird of bad moral Character. He does not get his Living honestly. You may have seen him perched on some dead Tree near the River, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the Labour of the Fishing Hawk; and when that diligent Bird has at length taken a Fish and is bearing it to his Nest for the Sup-

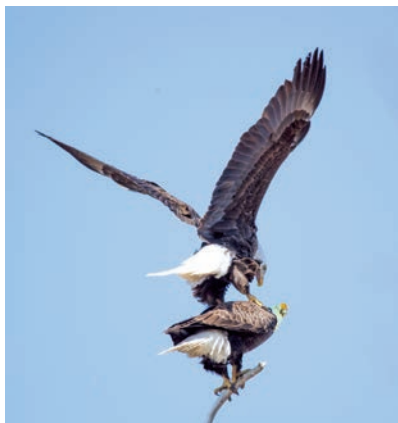


Bald eagle bringing grass to nest. Both sexes help build the massive nests, which they line with grasses and other finer materials.



Three bald eagle chicks in a nest, not yet fledged. Bald eagles are mottled brown until their fifth year. Chicks fledge between May and July.

Bald eagle up close. Bald eagles have a yellow, hooked beak they use to tear apart their prey.



Bald eagles mating

PHOTOS BY
RANDY
STREUFERT

Bald eagles playing. Bald eagles can be aggressive birds.



Bald eagle with catfish. Fish are a major component of bald eagles' diets. They take fish to the nest and tear them into small pieces to feed eaglets.



port of his Mate and young Ones, the Bald Eagle pursues him and takes it from him. ... Besides he is a rank Coward: The little King Bird not bigger than a Sparrow attacks him boldly and drives him out of the District."

Cautious Optimism

While bald eagle numbers have risen, some threats remain, especially habitat loss. "The most destructive human activity is the development of waterfront property. Because eagles depend on shoreline habitats and aquatic food sources, human development in these coveted areas poses the greatest threat to the bald eagle's survival," says the American Eagle Foundation.

Bald eagles that ingest lead bullets or fragments after feeding on animals can be poisoned. They can collide with vehicles, wind turbines and power lines. In August, someone shot two Highland County bald eagles.

They may be adversely affected by pollution from mercury, fire retardants and prescription drugs taken by humans that end up in the waterways. A few years ago, the Virginia Wildlife Center was unable to save an eagle with a stomach full of plastic, a balloon and a thumbtack. Then there's climate change. The National Audubon Society projects that by 2080 only 26 percent of the bald eagle's current summer range will remain. Most bald eagle mortality is at-

tributed to humans.

Fortunately, this majestic, "cowardly" bird is thriving along many Virginia waterways and still deserves protection.

To See Bald Eagles

Post-covid, several groups will resume bird walks: Friends of Dyke Marsh, www.fodm.org; Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, www.audubonva.org; Northern Virginia Bird Club, www.nvabc.org; Friends of Mason Neck State Park, www.masonneckstateparkfriends.org.

Nest cameras, <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/viewing.html>

Virginia nest locator, <https://ccbbirds.org/what-we-do/research/species-of-concern/virginia-eagles/nest-locator/>

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BULLETIN

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

FARMERS MARKET VENDORS STILL DELIVERING

The McCutcheon/Mt. Vernon Farmers Market won't reopen until April 21, but in the meantime some of the market's vendors are taking orders online and delivering them to the Sherwood Hall Library parking lot on Wednesdays. Note that you must order in advance and that not all the vendors deliver every week. The vendors making deliveries are: Arnest Seafood – crab cakes, scallops, shrimp, rockfish, oysters and more; Honey Brook Farms - meats and vegetables raised with no chemicals, gluten-free baked goods; Misty Meadow Farm Creamery - milk, ice cream, cheese, eggs and meats; Twin Springs Orchard - fruits, vegetables, cheese and more; Valentine's Bakery & Meats - meats and baked goods. The Fairfax County Park Authority, which operates the Mt. Vernon Farmers Market, has no connection to the deliveries. The market, with a full array of vendors, will resume on April 21 and take place every Wednesday from 8 a.m. to noon at the Sherwood Hall Regional Library through December 22.

TUESDAY/MARCH 16

Mount Vernon Genealogical Meeting. 1-3 p.m. Via Zoom. The internet has changed the way we do genealogy. Does this make books, CDs and microfiche, obsolete? Join the MV Genealogical Society's March meeting and let Chuck Mason, Jr., host of Channel 10's Tracing Your Family Roots, walk you through the benefits of using all of these sources. Nonmembers are welcome to one event each year free of charge. Register by March 12 by emailing contact-us@mvgenealogy.org.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia is accepting applications for college scholarships for the 2021 – 2022 school year. Eligible students include high school seniors, undergraduates, and graduate students in Northern Virginia. Community Foundation manages 12 scholarships and administers the funds for 18 other scholarships that support Northern Virginia students pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees. The applications for scholarships are due by 5 p.m. on April 2, 2021. To learn more about each scholarship opportunity and to apply visit: cfnova.org/grants-and-scholarships.

COVID UPDATES

Quick Facts for Older Adults about COVID-19 Vaccine Appointments. Vaccine eligibility is occurring in phases per the CDC and Virginia Department of Health. More information about vaccine rollout in Fairfax can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19. As more vaccine becomes available, there will be more options where to access it. In the future, you will likely be able to access vaccine via your doctor, a health clinic or pharmacy.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9

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NEWS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Former NFL player and Mount Vernon High School graduate David Knight will be the guest speaker at the Feb. 17 Alexandria Sportsman's Club meeting.

From MVHS to the NFL ASC to host David Knight Feb. 17.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

David Knight, a 1969 graduate of Mount Vernon High School who went on to play wide receiver for the New York Jets in the National Football League, will be the featured speaker via Zoom at the Feb. 17 meeting of the Alexandria Sportsman's Club.

Knight began his football career at MVHS, where the team went undefeated during his senior year at 10-0 before losing to powerhouse Annandale 14-7 in the Northern Virginia Regional Championship game.

Knight went on to play at the College of William and Mary under Coach Lou Holtz. In his sophomore year he caught the winning touchdown against Richmond in the Southern Conference Championship game to send his team to the Tangerine Bowl.

Drafted in the 11th round by the New York Jets, Knight made his

professional debut in 1973 during a Monday Night Football game against the Green Bay Packers. Despite the 23-7 loss, Knight scored the lone touchdown for the Joe Namath-led Jets.

Following his retirement from the NFL in 1977, Knight returned to Alexandria and received a master's degree in Library and Information Science from Catholic University in 1981. He went to work in the U.S. Department of Justice legal library system, eventually becoming Director of Information Technology for the Environment and Natural Resources Division.

Knight will talk about his experiences in the NFL as well as his post-NFL career and there will be time for Q&A.

The ASC webinar meeting will be held via Zoom Feb. 17 at 7 p.m. Participation in the meeting is free and open to the public but pre-registration is required. For more information, visit www.alexandriavasports.org.

CVS to Offer COVID-19 Vaccine

Limited locations to begin Feb. 11.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Beginning Feb. 11, Virginians will be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at select CVS locations across the state. The Commonwealth is among an initial 11-state rollout to expand COVID-19 vaccines at CVS pharmacies across the country.

Thirty-six CVS locations will offer the vaccine through appointment only to individuals meeting

state criteria, which will be confirmed by the state in advance of the rollout.

Presently, Virginia is in Phase 1B of the vaccine rollout. This includes individuals 65 and older as well as those 16-64 with pre-existing medical conditions.

Register in advance at CVS.com, through the CVS Pharmacy app, or by calling 800-746-7287. Walk-in vaccinations without an appointment

SEE CVS TO OFFER, PAGE 9
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

2021 GOALS

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

COVID-19 vaccines will be available at select CVS pharmacies in Virginia beginning Feb. 11.

CVS to Offer COVID-19 Vaccine

FROM PAGE 8

ment will not be provided.

Participating CVS Pharmacies are located throughout the state, including Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax and Leesburg.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

It takes two doses. Follow the directions of your vaccine provider to schedule your second dose. One caregiver can attend a vaccine appointment with their loved one. Vaccine-eligible people can register for appointments online or over the phone (no need to do both). Online: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19. Click on "Vaccination" at the top of the page and you will see registration information. After your registration is accepted, a scheduling link will be sent to you as vaccine becomes available. Call: 703-324-7404 to register for a vaccine via phone. Vaccine Appointment Tips After you receive your first vaccine, you should take a picture of your vaccination card that you will receive. That way you won't have to worry about misplacing it. Wear a mask to the appointment. Download and use v-Safe, an app that helps you report any reactions you are having to the vaccine. Learn more: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html

ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES

The Literacy Council of Northern Virginia (LCNV) is hosting beginning-level adult English language classes from February to May. Due to the continued situation of COVID-19, classes for the spring semester will be held on virtual platforms only, which require students to have a computer, tablet, or smartphone and internet access to participate. Registration runs through February 5, with options to register via text message, phone calls, or in-person at certain locations and times.

Classes offered this spring include:

- ❖ Beginning English Class: provides adult English language learners the fundamental skills to understand and communicate in English, helping them to better engage in the community and advance their careers.

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

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Obituary

Diane Williams Watts



Of Alexandria, Virginia, daughter of Herbert Williams and Joan Herring, passed away peacefully at home, with her children present, on Saturday, January 30, 2021. She was 92 years young. Anyone who knew would agree. She was born on January 5, 1929 in London, England, graduated high school from Hollywood High School, and held a BA from UC Berkeley. In 1952, she married Joseph Charles Watts Jr., who preceded her in death in 2001. Diane had many friends with common interests such as the Yacht Haven Garden Club, AAUW, League of Women Voters, and the Mt. Vernon Ladies Auxiliary, to name a few. She was a true friend to all who knew her. Diane is survived by her two children, Kimberley Watts Sherrett of Longwood, Florida, and Christopher James Watts of Alexandria, Virginia, two grandchildren and seven great grandchildren. She will be laid to rest with her husband in Arlington National Cemetery privately. In lieu of flowers the family asks that donations be made in Diane's name to a charity of your choice. Additional information may be found at www.demainefuneralhomes.com.

Obituary

Charles F. Hill (Charlie), a life-long resident of Alexandria, VA, passed quietly on December 15, 2020 at Inova Alexandria Hospital. Charlie was born on December 30, 1947, to the late George and Goldie Hill. He graduated from George Washington High School in 1965, and soon thereafter followed in his father's footsteps making a life-long career in the automobile business.



Charlie was a devoted husband and father, and loved to be surrounded by his family and friends. He enjoyed watching his favorite sports teams, drawing, playing poker, and relaxing with a cigar and a beer. Charlie is survived by his wife Betty; son Charles Jr. (Chip) and his wife Kelly and grandson Bennett; and sister Norma. Due to current gathering restrictions, no funeral services have been scheduled at this time. A Celebration of Life will be scheduled at a later date. Charlie will reside at Mount Comfort Cemetery in the columbarium.

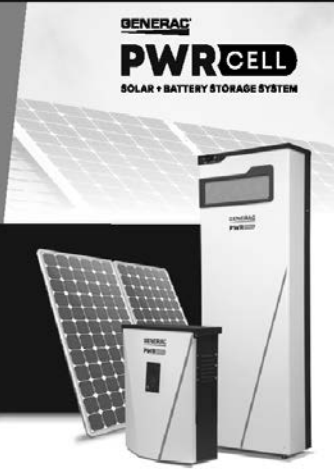
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An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg

Obituary

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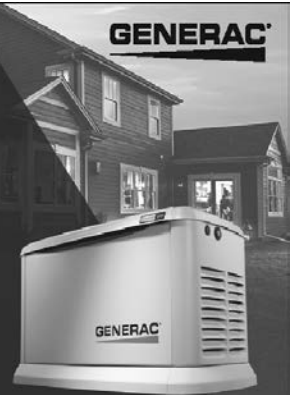
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"Clinical Correlation Suggested"

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Means what exactly? That was the suggestion written by the pathologist after "non small cell lung cancer" was written in the "diagnosis" section of the pathology report completed after my original surgical biopsy was performed at Holy Cross Hospital in early 2009. I had never seen this document until this past week, finally retrieving it after nearly 12 years, represents a kind of symmetry. Though 2009 is when my life as an officially-diagnosed-lung-cancer patient began, I am not at all prepared to say that my current life as a lung cancer patient is over. It's just called something else.

Nor am I prepared to say this document gives me much clarity or satisfaction for that matter. Unfortunately, getting re-diagnosed with papillary thyroid cancer recently doesn't change the past or guarantee the future. It does however, reshape it, potentially - for the better. When it comes to cancers you'd prefer to have and the ones you wouldn't, thyroid cancer, generally speaking is way more preferable than lung cancer. The survivability gap is all you need to know. The side effects and sacrifices required to live with thyroid cancer pale in comparison to those required of lung cancer patients. In fact, if you don't already know it, lung cancer is the leading cause of death among all cancers, by far. Moreover, more people die from lung cancer as do from the next four cancers combined. Lung cancer is a killer. So being reclassified from lung cancer to thyroid cancer is huge. The fact that I've survived so long already, 12 years post diagnosis, means I may have used up some of my unexpected life expectancy however. Still, it beats the alternative.

Originally, I was told my lung cancer was incurable and given a "13 month to two year" prognosis. Presently, as it relates to my current prognosis, it's sort of indefinite. The drug I'm taking is effective for three years. After which, I'm sort of on my own as there are no new drugs in the offing to manage my cancer. In effect, I am once again incurable, as the years of treatment for lung cancer had no effect on the underlying thyroid cancer and did a kind of damage that now means I can be treated but not cured. Quite different than had I been treated for thyroid cancer all along.

Yet, seeing this paperwork from 12 years ago which clearly lists "non small cell lung cancer, primary to the lung" has sort of stopped me in my tracks. So far as I understand/recall, there was no "clinical correlation." I started chemotherapy the following week. Was something neglected? Certainly, I didn't ask for a second opinion, which is on me, but was the oncologist supposed to research further? Was the pathology report sort of damning - me, with a kind of faint praise -- uncertainty, if you can extrapolate?

Otherwise, how does the profession account for my still being alive. When we got a second opinion a few months back from a head and neck (to include thyroid) cancer specialist at The Lombardi Cancer Center at Georgetown, she said, if I had lung cancer, I wouldn't still be alive so it's logical to presume the recent surgical biopsies that indicated thyroid cancer were likely confirming a long-standing cancer, and that quite probably I never had lung cancer but rather thyroid cancer that had metastasized to the lung. But there was no further investigation in 2009. The diagnosis - without a "clinical correlation" was non small cell lung cancer/carcinoma.

At the initial meeting with my oncologist, it all sounded so serious and the doctor was so clear in his assessment of my situation, that it seemed irresponsible, foolish even, to wait. We scheduled my first chemotherapy infusion for the following week and the rest is history. Now I'm wondering if it was history that need not have been made.

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

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NEWS

Assembly Pledges Millions for River Farm

Senator Adam Ebbin (D-Alexandria) and Delegate Paul Krizek (D-Mount Vernon) today announced that both the Virginia Senate Finance and Appropriations and House Appropriations Committees have agreed to their request to contribute towards the public purchase and preservation of historic River Farm.

The House Appropriations Committee included \$2 million in funding to preserve River Farm in the its proposed budget, and the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee included \$5 million in combined funding for the preservation of both historic Chickahominy tribal lands and River Farm. The final funding amount will be resolved by the Joint Budget Conferees in the coming weeks. This funding will be allocated to Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks) and the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT) to assist in the purchase of the multi-million dollar property.

"This is a huge moment for everyone who has worked so hard to protect the amazing and unique River Farm," said Alan Rowson, Executive Director of the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust and Save River Farm Committee Member. "The leadership that Senator Ebbin and Delegate Krizek have shown in securing these critical funds give us a significant boost towards the goal of safeguarding River Farm for all time, and we look forward to working with the budget conferees in the days ahead to secure the highest possible amount for its acquisition."

"I'm pleased that our coalition secured amendments in both the House and Senate

budgets to help acquire the River Farm property. This victory is not just important to the Mount Vernon community; the preservation of the historic beauty of George Washington's River Farm for generations to come is valuable to the entire Commonwealth and nation. Thank you to our constituents for your advocacy and making your voices heard," said Krizek.

"This is another important step in ensuring Virginians will continue to enjoy River Farm for years to come. I am hopeful that, with the addition of this state funding, NOVA Parks will soon be able to move forward with the purchase of the property, and improve on its current state through regular upkeep, programming, and preservation," said Senator Adam Ebbin.

Delegate Krizek and Senator Ebbin earlier this year gathered over 1,000 petition signatures from concerned residents which they delivered to the American Horticultural Society, urging the organization to ensure that the property be preserved as public space, and serve as Partners to the Save River Farm Committee, a grassroots organization working to preserve the property.

River Farm, which comprises 25 acres of publicly accessible green space on the Potomac River, served as the headquarters for the American Horticultural Society (AHS) since 1973. In August 2020, AHS announced their intent to sell the property on the open real estate market. Following an outflow of public support, a team of local, state, and federal elected officials, along with local preservation partners, began the process of preserving the property.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 9

❖ Family Learning Programs (FLP): provides English language instruction for parents or caregivers, so that they can better communicate with their children and support their education.

Classes are \$85 with books and assessment included. Registration is required for enrollment. Please understand that no children are allowed at in-person registrations. If possible, please bring your interpreter for the process. Strict social distancing precautions will be enforced. Face masks will be provided. Registration times and dates are available at LCNV's distance learning page (<https://lcnv.org/distance-learning-session/lcnv-classes/>), or call 703-237-0866.

DRIVERS NEEDED TO HELP SENIORS

Mount Vernon At Home is a nonprofit organization serving senior citizens in the Mount Vernon and Alexandria areas of Fairfax County. They are in critical need for volunteers to assist members with driving to medical appointments and grocery shopping. Mount Vernon At Home will supply you with necessary personal protective equipment (PPE), and can provide a donation receipt for your mileage. Volunteers can sign up for driving assignments through the online system which makes it easy to see and accept assignments. Give what time you can, there is no minimum or maximum number of hours. If you have some time to give to the community and can spare several hours a month, visit info@mountvernonathome.org, or call 703-303-4060.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Assistance League of Northern Virginia, a volunteer nonprofit, invites community members to join the organization to participate in its Reading Express program. Volunteers provide one-on-one tutoring to first grade students during the school year. To learn more contact VP Membership Mary G

ronlund at gronbiz@aol.com or Program Coordinator Lynn Barron at lynnieb517@verizon.net.

United Community (formerly UCM), 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, seeks volunteers for Food Pantry assistance, Early Learning Center teacher aides, basic needs counselors, youth tutors and mentors, office administration/data entry, and community outreach. Flexible hours and schedules. Opportunities for all ages to serve, including community service hours. More info at ucmagency.org/volunteer-opportunities or email volunteer@ucmagency.org.

Operation Paws for Homes, a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See www.ophrescue.org for information and all volunteer opportunities.

Line Dance Instructor needed for the Gum Springs Senior Program once a week on either Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Volunteer Solutions, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711.

Volunteer Fairfax makes it easy for individuals and families, youth and seniors, corporate groups and civic clubs to volunteer. Fulfill hours, give back, or pay it forward through a variety service options. Visit www.volunteer-fairfax.org or call 703-246-3460.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Presidents Day SAVINGS EVENT

Jack Taylor's
ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA

**INCREDIBLE
PRESIDENTIAL
SAVINGS
DURING THIS
EVENT!**

NEW 2021 TOYOTA COROLLA LE SDN



LEASES STARTING FROM...

\$149 /MO

MODEL# 1852. MSRP \$21,470. LEASE OFFER FOR QUALIFIED LESSEES. BASED ON 39 MONTHS, 10K MILES/YR & \$2999 DUE AT SIGNING. SECURITY DEPOSIT WAIVED. PLUS TAX, TAGS, FREIGHT AND \$789 PROCESSING FEE. OFFER ENDS 03/01/21.

NEW 2021 TOYOTA CAMRY LE SDN



LEASES STARTING FROM...

\$229 /MO

MODEL# 2532. MSRP \$25,965. LEASE OFFER FOR QUALIFIED LESSEES. BASED ON 39 MONTHS, 10K MILES/YR & \$2999 DUE AT SIGNING. SECURITY DEPOSIT WAIVED. PLUS TAX, TAGS, FREIGHT AND \$789 PROCESSING FEE. OFFER ENDS 03/01/21.

NEW 2021 TOYOTA RAV4 LE SUV



LEASES STARTING FROM...

\$239 /MO

MODEL# 4430. MSRP \$28,005. LEASE OFFER FOR QUALIFIED LESSEES. BASED ON 36 MONTHS, 10K MILES/YR & \$2999 DUE AT SIGNING. SECURITY DEPOSIT WAIVED. PLUS TAX, TAGS, FREIGHT AND \$789 PROCESSING FEE. OFFER ENDS 03/01/21.

SERVICE & PARTS HOURS: MON-FRI 6A-7P & SAT 7A-5P

BATTERY SPECIAL **FREE**

BATTERY CHECK-UP
INCLUDES: CHECK COLD CRANKING AMPS AND VISUAL INSPECTION OF BATTERY CONDITION. INCLUDES BATTERY CONDITION PRINT OUT.

TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 03/01/21.

LUBE, OIL & FILTER SPECIAL **\$39.95**

\$44.95 FOR SYNTHETIC OIL CHANGE
INCLUDES: CHANGE OIL (UP TO 5 QTS.), INSTALL GENUINE TOYOTA OIL FILTER, INSPECT & ADJUST ALL FLUID LEVELS AND COMPLIMENTARY MULTI-POINT INSPECTION WITH PRINT OUT.

NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 03/01/21.

ALIGNMENT SPECIAL **\$89.95**

4-WHEEL ALIGNMENT
INCLUDES: 4-WHEEL ALIGNMENT, INSPECT SUSPENSION, BALL JOINTS, STRUTS & SHOCKS, TIRE CONDITION AND SET TIRE PRESSURE.

TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 03/01/21.

BRAKE PAD SPECIAL **\$99.95**

BRAKE PAD REPLACEMENT
INCLUDES: INSTALL GENUINE TOYOTA FRONT BRAKE PADS, INSPECT FRONT & REAR ROTORS AND/OR DRUMS, CHECK TIRE CONDITION AND INSPECT ALL HARDWARE. TMC PADS ONLY. MACHINE ROTORS AN ADDITIONAL \$99.95

NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 03/01/21.

TOYOTACARE PLUS **\$329.00** SPECIAL

MAINTAIN PEACE OF MIND BY EXTENDING YOUR TOYOTACARE COMPLEMENTARY MAINTENANCE PLAN TO 4 YEARS/45,000 MILES!

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SERVICE VARIABLE DISCOUNT

**THE MORE YOU SPEND,
THE MORE YOU SAVE!**

\$10 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$50-\$99
\$15 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$100-\$199
\$20 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$200-\$499
\$50 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$500+

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CALL TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY: 703-684-0710



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34 years in a row!**

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64 Alexandria Homes Sold In 2020 & 19 homes sold so far in 2021!



9226 Volunteer Dr | \$650,000

When it came time to sell their family home of 50 years, they entrusted the White family to take it from start to finish.

The White Family steps to success:

- 1: Initial meeting to assess the house and strategize a game plan.
- 2: Scheduling and overseeing preparation work using their contractors at a fraction of the cost and time it would take a seller to handle on their own.
- 3: Maximizing the home's exposure with their intensive marketing program.
- 4: Had over 50 buyers visit the home the first weekend on the market and generated multiple offers at a price far above the seller's expectation.
- 5: From initial meeting - to preparing the home for market - to multiple offers. All within 3 weeks!

Hear it directly from a recent client! *"As a retired military family, this was our 10th residential real estate transaction. None come remotely close to the positive experience Chris and his family provided. His assessment of the property and market, and his advise on positioning and which improvements to focus on were spot-on. His pricing and marketing strategies and his management of the process were perfect. He was incredibly responsive, and routinely spot-checked the progress of our contractor's work (both schedule and quality) of his own accord, keeping me up to date and able to jump on problems early. This is the best realtor group we have worked with over 30 years...by far!"*



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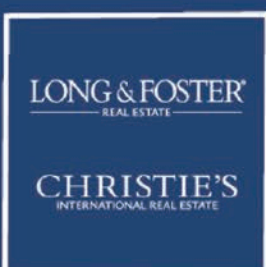


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