

CONNECTION

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Step into Nature For Improved Health

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Blue Bells along Blue Bell Trail in Bull Run Park. It is one of the treasures of Northern Virginia. Spending time in forests can lower cortisol levels, reduce anxiety, lower blood pressure, and increase cognitive functions.

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PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

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Step into Nature for Improved Health

Spending time in forests can lower cortisol levels, reduce anxiety, lower blood pressure, and increase cognitive functions.

BY PAUL GILBERT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NOVA PARKS

New research into the health benefits of being in nature prompted the Wall Street Journal reporter Betsy Morris to do a story titled, “For Better Health During the Pandemic, Is Two hours Outdoors the New 10,000 Steps?”

As good as getting your steps in, where you exercise also counts. Spending time in forests can lower cortisol levels, reduce anxiety, lower blood pressure, and increase cognitive functions.

In one study out of Stanford University, two groups took 45-minute walks. One group walked in a natural environment, and the second walked on a tree-lined thoroughfare in the city. According to Professor of Environmental Science Gretchen Daily, those that walked in the more natural environment scored better on mood, creativity, and memory than the city walkers.

In a study published in Nature’s Scientific Report in 2019 with 20,000 participants, those that spent two hours a week in nature reported better health and well-being.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Blue Bells along Blue Bell Trail in Bull Run Park: It is one of the treasures of Northern Virginia.

An easy way to find some near-by nature is to look on Google maps, locate a park near you, and see if it has a trail through the woods. If you would like a more in-depth nature experience, here are two suggestions:

Bull Run/Occoquan Trail – this 18-mile trail starts at Bull Run Regional Park and ends at Fountainhead Park. It is one of the great treasures of Northern Virginia. Bull Run Marina and the end of Yates Ford Road

by Hemlock Park are also entry points to this trail. This hike is beautiful, paralleling the Bull Run and Occoquan Rivers.

Ira Gabrielson Trail – Starting at Algonkian Regional Park and going 12 miles to Riverbend Park, this beautiful wooded trail parallels the Potomac River.

With many of us feeling stressed and having cabin fever, this spring is the perfect time to take some water and snacks and explore one of the great nature trails of Northern Virginia. The physical and mental benefits of such a hike will be beneficial for days. And you will have new experiences to share with others.

Long before science connected health with time in nature, some intuitively knew that time in nature was vital. Ira Gabrielson, the founding Director of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, hiked most of the Potomac shoreline and published books on the area’s flora and fauna. In 1959 he helped found the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks), the original conservation organization of our area.

Under Gabrielson’s leadership as Chairman, NOVA Parks acquired significant areas along the Potomac, Bull Run, and Occoquan Rivers (and reservoir).

As you improve your health this spring with a renewing hike in the woods, remember the conservation leaders like Ira Gabrielson that made that hike possible.

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Conversation Started to Rename Lee District

Supervisor Lusk opened the floor to constituents who had a few suggestions.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

Seemingly, everyone in Lee District knows the district is named after Robert E. Lee, the head of the confederacy in the Civil War that ultimately ended the practice of slavery when the southern states lost and the Union won the war. Or maybe it's Fitzhugh Lee, another Fairfax County confederate that lived over near Burke, or another less-known Lee that lived here back in that time.

These historical figures were all brought up in the first meeting Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D-Lee) held last week to change the district's name. This renaming is a move that's consistent with similar actions around the country to get away from historical people with links to slavery. Lee High School was recently renamed John R. Lewis High School, a prominent civil rights leader and author, and this followed the removal of many statues across the nation that started last year with the death of George Floyd, and the Black Lives Matter movement.

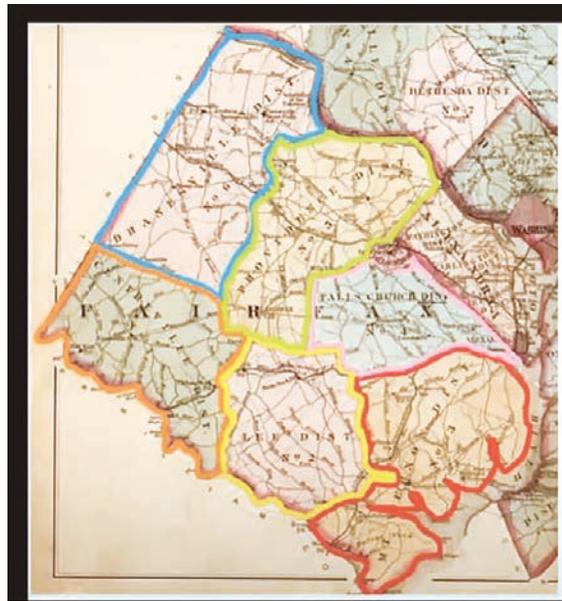
Lusk's meeting was held over Zoom, like all the other meetings throughout the year due to the pandemic, and it was a productive way to hear various opinions about this issue. "This is an opportunity to begin the dialogue," Lusk said, before going into the possible channels it would take to rename a district in Fairfax County. It's been done before without much fanfare, and Lusk laid out a timeline for the continued dialogue he's planning. In the end, a new district name could be in place by December 2021 "if the community is so inclined," he said.

The history of Fairfax County is a good basis for a historical discussion like this, and Lusk brought in Chris Barbuschak, an expert from the Virginia Room at the main county library who explored the county's history just after the Civil War. Barbuschak mentioned that he did not find any documentation that Lee District was directly named for Robert E. Lee. In 1870, the county was divided into townships, and one was Lee Township, and Lee was still alive at that time, but no one at the meetings mentioned Robert E. Lee. "No surviving records documenting this," Barbuschak said.

At that time, one of the townships was named "Stonewall," presumably after confederate general Stonewall Jackson, but that was changed. "I wish I had more to tell you," Barbuschak said.

Speaking Up

Then came input from the outside in the form of prewritten questions and 100 people that dialed into the meeting. One of the questions was about not re-



This historic map of the districts, called "Hopkins Map," from the Virginia Room shows that district names have been changed through the years.



Lee District Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D)



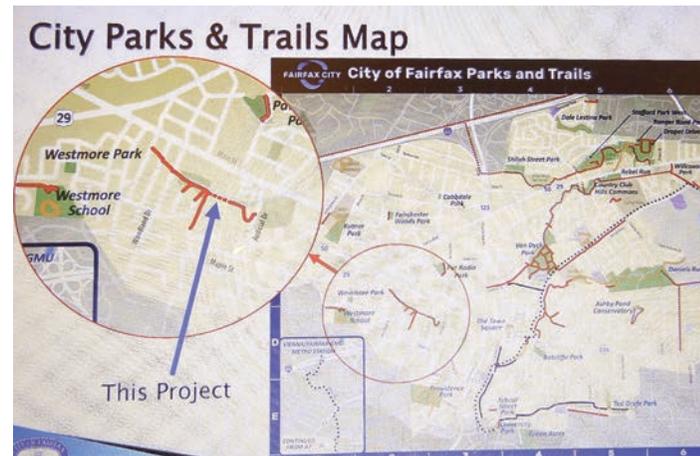
The Lee District name may have to go.

naming it at all. "It is possible the name will stay the same," said Lusk. Another mentioned the time and money spent with renaming it while other things need attention. "Of course we're going to have to be cognizant of the cost," Lusk said. "My office is not spending countless hours on this," he said in response to a similar question, and then he pointed out the amount of energy his office has devoted to helping small businesses that are barely surviving in the face of the pandemic. To Lusk, that seemed like a more pressing issue at this time.

When it came to the participants on the call, there was a lot of support for changing the name. The Lee name brings up a "painful history," said George Alber, a member of the Fairfax NAACP chapter. "It goes against the goal of a just, unified country," he said. A mother of Lee High School students spoke up. "I hated the fact that my kids went to Lee High School," said Karen Rhem.

There were several suggestions including a few ideas of what the new name could be, including a Native American option, said Thomas Sachs, or "Telegraph," after historic Telegraph Road, said Esther Farington. Several people recommended staying away from a person's formal name, noting that it might present problems in the years to come.

"Stay tuned for additional conversations," said Lusk.



Map of the Judicial Drive trail-connection area in Fairfax City.

Judicial Drive Trail Connection Moves Ahead

Complete trail construction anticipated in spring 2023.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

As things stand now, people wishing to walk or bike between Hallman Street and Judicial Drive in Fairfax City are unable to do so without having to leave the existing trail and get back on elsewhere. That's because approximately 500 feet of trail between these two points hasn't been completed.

However, the City has a right-of-way that allows for the construction of an 8- to 10-foot-wide trail there. So it will be able to provide the missing link via its Judicial Drive Trail Connection Project.

On the western end, the trail will connect to the already finished portion at Presbyterian Way. On the eastern end, it will join with the already built portion on the Jaguar/Yorktown parcels.

In addition, this connection will give people an ADA accessible trail on public right-of-way and will no longer force trail users to exit onto the Presbyterian church parking lot and then use the current switchback trail - which is not ADA accessible. As a result, the missing section going from Presbyterian Way to the trailhead that dead ends at the Fairfax Nursing Home property line will finally be constructed.

This project is federally funded through the Transportation

Alternative Program (TAP) with a 20-percent match from the City. The total cost is \$436,000, which includes \$348,800 in TAP money, plus the City's portion of \$87,200.

Nick Soucie, an engineer with Timmons Group, presented updated details during a recent Fairfax City Council meeting. "The trail would be constructed fully within the City's easement," he said. "It would be an 8-foot-wide, stone-dust trail. Final plans will be developed this spring, with ad-

"It'll be a wonderful addition to the City when it's completed."

— Councilmember Tom Ross

vertisement for construction happening in spring 2022. We anticipate complete trail construction in spring 2023."

Although it was a public hearing, no one called in to the online meeting to comment, either way. And Councilmember Janice Miller noted that the City had already adopted this project in its FY 19 budget.

"I'm supportive of this project," said Councilmember Tom Ross. "It'll be a wonderful addition to the City when it's completed."

What is 'Fair'?

BY RICSHAWN ADKINS ROANE

If Black people had a dollar for every individual, organization, and company that publicly professed a commitment to anti-racism and racial equity while holding up progress in the name of "fairness," we could have closed the racial wealth gap ten times over. These performative professions have been decried as "feel-good gestures that cost nothing and shift no power."

When people talk about fairness in this context, they usually are not motivated by a desire to ensure groups have equal resources, but by an immoral mandate to prevent certain groups from getting resources they don't "deserve." It's particularly shocking when people of faith champion fairness in this way since grace - unmerited and unearned favor - is a foundational principle of many spiritual traditions.

Since before inception, our nation has preached a false moral narrative of fairness while enshrining discrimination in our founding documents and utilizing the forced removal and genocide of Indigenous peoples and the forced enslavement and brutalization of African peoples as building blocks. Fairness is what folks cry when they want to profess racial justice but not practice it, when they want to perform equity and not pay for it.

We need to get over this collective preoccu-

About the Author

Ricshawn Adkins Roane is an African-American daughter, sister, wife, and mother living in Great Falls. Ms. Roane works at the intersection of philanthropy, policy, and advocacy for economic, racial, and gender justice. She writes, tells stories, and leads philanthropic grantmaking at a national education-focused foundation based in Northern Virginia.

pation with fairness which, at best, is a national myth, and at worse, prompts calls for inaction or gradualism when swift and unprecedented action is needed.

The policies and practices that got us to 140 million poor and low-wealth people (including 3.5 million right here in the Commonwealth), unequal education, health, and socioeconomic outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and LatinX folks, and disproportionate impacts of covid-19 on communities of color weren't "fair," and the remedies that fix these inequalities won't be either. Justice may not be fair, it is right.

Virginia's gubernatorial candidates and state legislators will offer up a number of policies over the coming weeks and months, some of which will be designed to address these systemic inequities. The next time you feel compelled to ask if a proposal is fair, ask yourself whether the policies that led to the need for the proposal were fair. Need some practice?

Equity costs - and paying that price will not be fair, but it will be just.

Q: Is it fair to make the admission process for Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology more equitable?

A: Was it fair for "hard working, deserving children" to be deprived of a spot at TJ because their parents were unable to pay for expensive test preparation or a \$100 application fee? Was it fair that some middle schools appeared to be feeders to TJ and others never had students admitted?

Q: Is it fair to cancel federal student loan debt and reduce the racial-wealth gap?

A: Was it fair for African Americans to be excluded from traditional means of wealth accumulation that enable white borrowers to take out fewer loans at lower dollar amounts? Is it fair for African Americans to be hindered in repaying these student loans by labor market racial discrimination?

Q: Is a Marshall Plan for Moms fair?

A: Was it fair that this country built free labor into its economic model from the beginning and has never valued caregiving for the essential work that it is? Is it fair that the pandemic has disproportionately impacted women?

Q: Is it fair for "Black Women Best" to be the guidepost of our national economic reset?

A: Was it fair that for far too long, Black women have been the least, the last, and the lowest? Equity costs - and paying that price will not be fair, but it will be just.

And They Are Off!

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

COMMENTARY

Inevitably someone is going to refer to the nominating contests for candidates for the Virginia statewide offices and the House of Delegates as horse races—not because of the characteristics of any of the candidates but because of the crowded field of persons who are offering themselves for public office. Space limitations on this column will not permit me to list all the candidates for they are numerous. For whatever the reason, Virginia voters have more choices than ever. That is a good thing. Democracy has broken out in the Commonwealth.

Virginia election cycles do not parallel those of other states except for New Jersey where state elections are held in years other than those in which federal elections are held. This November Virginia will be electing a governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general and all one hundred members of the House of Delegates.

That is the schedule for the general election. Before we get there, however, candidates must be chosen by the political parties. Democrats pick their candidates in primary elections this year on June 8,

and Republicans use conventions to pick their candidates. What is amazing is the number of people who have shown up seeking the nominations. For the names of all persons who have declared themselves at the time of the writing of this column, go to <https://www.vpap.org/elections/>.

For governor, there will be five Democrats on the June 8 primary ballot from which voters can choose their candidate. Republicans will have seven candidates from which to choose in a convention-like process adapted for the pandemic to determine their candidate for governor to be on the ballot for the General Election on November 2.

At the same time and as part of the same process, the major political parties will pick their candidates for lieutenant governor and attorney general. For lieutenant governor there are five Republicans and eight Democrats seeking their party's nomination. For attorney general there are three Republicans and two Democrats seeking their party's nomination. There may be independent candidates on the ballot in November, but they must qualify through another process.

COUNTY ROUNDUPS

Honoring Women on Front Lines of Pandemic

The Fairfax County Commission For Women celebrates Women's History Month 2021. This year, the Commission is holding a Facebook Live Forum on March 15, 2021 at 7 p.m., "Honoring Women Warriors on the Front Lines of the Pandemic" for their leadership, courage, and commitment to service during this Coronavirus pandemic. Join the Fairfax County Commission For Women in honoring the highest ranking women in the county's health, police and fire departments. You may submit questions to the panelists in Facebook Live comments section before or during the Forum. Check the website for more information soon: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/boards-authorities-commissions/commission-for-women>.

For those interested in learning more about the Fairfax County Commission For Women and Women's History Month Forum, you can also check Twitter@fairfaxcfw and Facebook and Instagram as @commissionforwomen.

In the House of Delegates races there are more challenges to incumbents and to open seats than I can remember. For Democrats who have a slight majority in the House of Delegates and who have been realizing amazing success in getting their legislative agenda passed, there are fourteen challenges to incumbents with many of them being to Democratic progressives in Northern Virginia. On the Republican side there are contests for the House nominations in seven districts with a couple of the most conservative members being

challenged for their nomination.

In the past two legislative sessions the General Assembly passed and the Governor has signed many pieces of legislation to make voting easier and more accessible. There will be early voting this year with no-excuse absentee voting, curbside voting, drop-boxes for ballot delivery, longer voting times. Voter registration is for life. There is no excuse for not voting. And for this year in particular, there is no lack of choice. The candidates are off, and you get to decide who wins!

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(From left) Fairfax City Police Dispatcher Cynthia Tetterton and Lt. Michael Bartholme display their awards.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SGT. BROCK RUTTER

Fairfax City Police Members Are Honored

Fairfax City Police Lt. Michael Bartholme and Dispatcher Cynthia Tetterton were honored, last Tuesday, March 2, with the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) Silver Patrick Henry Medal. This award is presented by the local MOWW chapter to members who deserve special recognition and excel in the areas of law enforcement, firefighting and criminal justice.

“These two individuals exemplify teamwork and dedication to the City of Fairfax and beyond,” said Police Chief Erin Schaible. “We congratulate them, as well as all of our officers who work so hard every single day. This past year has been an interesting one, but their excellent police services are appreciated by the rest of the department and the community.”

Bartholme has been with the City’s police department for 16 years. “He has been a huge asset in the world of COVID-19 by giving our department the information, knowl-

edge and resources it needed to combat the virus,” said police spokesman, Sgt. Brock Rutter. “He plays a key role in making staffing decisions based on quarantines, testing and vaccinations. During this time, he has also taken over the captain duties involved with the Administrative Services Division.”

As for Tetterton, an eight-year member of the department, Rutter said she received her award because of “her dedication to the City of Fairfax and its dispatching program. She handles the dispatch scheduling and is willing to work both days and nights to cover shifts whenever one needs to be covered. Tetterton is also part of the Peer Support and Community Outreach (P.O.L.I.C.E.) teams.” And besides her full-time dispatching duties, Tetterton serves her own local community by being a firefighter/EMT for the Little Fork and East Rivanna Volunteer Fire Departments.

— BONNIE HOBBS

Fairfax Water

Notice of Public Hearing

Resolution Authorizing Acquisition of Property Necessary for Public Purposes by Condemnation or Other Means
April 1, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

The Fairfax County Water Authority (“Fairfax Water”) will hold a public hearing pursuant to Va. Code Ann. § 15.2-1903(B) at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 1, 2021, to receive and consider public comments on the proposed acquisition, by condemnation or other means, of the following: a temporary construction easement on a portion of certain real property located at 8435 Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA 22031; a temporary construction easement on a portion of certain real property located at 8439 Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA 22031; a public street dedication, sight distance and temporary construction easements on a portion of certain real property located at 8501 Lee Highway; and stormwater and temporary construction easements on a portion of certain real property located at 8523A Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA 22031. The subject properties are more particularly described as Fairfax County Tax Map Parcel Nos. 049-3-((1))-0046, 049-3-((1))-0047, 049-3-((1))-0049 and 049-3-((1))-0050C (the “Properties”). Fairfax Water seeks to acquire these easements and this public street dedication on portions of the Properties for public use in order to construct a maintenance facility to serve as a base of operations for water distribution system crews and other staff responsible for water main repair, water system flushing, and other water distribution system maintenance activities.

Following the public hearing, Fairfax Water’s Board may vote on or after April 1, 2021, to adopt a Resolution approving the proposed public use and authorizing and directing the acquisition of such dedication and easements on portions of the Properties for the public use by condemnation or other means.

A proposed Resolution and other related information will be made available for public review prior to the public hearing on Fairfax Water’s website at www.fairfaxwater.org.

The public hearing will be held in Fairfax Water’s offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA 22031. The meeting will be accessible online for remote attendance. To attend remotely, visit fairfaxwater.org/meeting-schedule for more information.

Those wishing to speak at this hearing (in person or remotely) or desiring a copy of the proposed Resolution when it becomes available should call Karen Barnette at (703) 289-6029. Interested parties also may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, March 31, 2021, to be included in the record of the public hearing.

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'We Want this to be a Gateway when Finished'

Fairfax City residents updated on Old Lee Highway improvement plan.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

"Multimodal" means the variety of ways people travel in an area, such as by car, bus, bike, scooter or on foot. And the goal of Fairfax City's Old Lee Highway Multimodal Improvements Project is to provide continuous and consistent multimodal connections along Old Lee Highway from Old Town to Fairfax Circle.

It also aims to increase safety for all roadway users and repurpose excess pavement, while promoting alternative means of reaching the City's library, Van Dyck Park, Sherwood Community Center, schools, places of worship, police department and commercial businesses along that corridor. And the City Council has already committed to keeping the existing travel and turn lanes, plus adding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

When finished, Old Lee will have 5-foot-wide sidewalks; curb and gutter on both sides of the road; 10-foot-wide separated bike lanes only on the north side; consolidated crossing locations with consistent signage; reduced crossing widths on the side streets; and improved lighting and landscaping.

AN ONLINE MEETING was held, Feb. 17, to update the project's stakeholders on the latest development. Speaking were City Transportation Director Wendy Sanford; Ken Ray, deputy director of Landscape Architecture at Toole Design; and Mark Gunn, director of engineering with Rinker Design Associates.

Since two roundabout locations are under consideration, the project team visited two existing roundabouts in other areas to determine their feasibility for this venture. "The City's largest fire engine went through them and had ample room for turning inside the roundabouts," said Sanford. "It was encouraging for all of us and gave us a lot of information, going forward."

Regarding the project's overall traffic analysis, Gunn said they'd be finishing it in the next 30-45 days and giving the results to City staff. Meanwhile, Ray is heading up the Old Lee enhancements, and he discussed the aesthetic features to be added.

"We want this to be a gateway and a really nice streetscape when it's finished," he said. "Anywhere we don't have overhead wires, we can have trees for a canopy. We also plan to use native grasses and perennial flowers and have space for public art. We'll add trees and shrubs where we have space, for a soft, natural, lush landscape."

A bus stop and amenities hub are envisioned for Van Dyck Park, with a bus shelter, plus a bikeshare station with a



A conceptual rendering of what Old Lee Highway could look like with separated bike lanes.



(From left) a blue-light, emergency phone and bike-repair equipment would be part of a bikeshare station at Van Dyck Park.

bike-repair area and an emergency phone. "To bike riders, these things are lifesavers," said Ray.

Also on tap, he said, is a "textured area for walking and biking, across from the Army-Navy Golf Course at Great Oaks Drive. "This would be an area of low, native plantings because we don't want to block the sight line where the road curves," he explained.

He then showed slides illustrating larger, canopy trees, as well as "underwire trees" which could be placed beneath utility lines and would be colorful and ornamental. "Shrubs could be clustered together and mixed with grasses," said Ray. "And ground cover plantings would add color to the intersections."

He said shrubs and/or cobbles (small rocks) or bricks could be placed between the sidewalk and the bike trail. "It's a strategy to divide walkers from bikes, etc. —

[separating] people going different speeds," said Ray. He also noted that small trees and shrubs planted beside the sidewalk could serve as "water-quality and bioretention facilities," catching some of the rainwater. He described them as "tolerant of stormwater, while being lush."

SWITCHING from landscape to hardscape elements, Ray showed some retaining-wall treatments being examined, such as sandstone or flagstone with a cap on top. "We'll come back to make sure we're getting the details right," he said. "We want them to be attractive and fit into the area as a gateway."

Also being looked at are various styles of informational signs telling the paths people may take in that area. In addition, said Ray, these signs will "set the [City's] brand in an aesthetic way." As for lighting, he said they'd stick with the acorn-style lights Fair-

"This is all a work in progress... We just wanted to let you know what we're thinking and get your feedback."

— City Transportation Director
Wendy Sanford

fax already uses.

Ray said Historic Blenheim's site manager, Andrea Loewenwarter, encouraged the project team to set aside some areas for interpretive art and signs telling the area's history. "We also want plenty of places for benches and planters, like in Old Town," said Ray. "They'd provide a buffer between the uses and break up the hardscape, a bit. And as the landscape, hardscape and other elements come together, this becomes a place where people want to spend some time."

Regarding crosswalks, Gunn said there are currently nine pedestrian crosswalks along Old Lee, and they're "contemplating six [instead], about 1,000 feet between crossings. We're trying to consolidate them, where possible, and put them where people will actually use them."

"Having fewer crosswalks would make them consistent, and drivers would expect to see them," added Sanford. "But this [proposal] is in no way final."

City School Board member Toby Sorensen was concerned that "the kids would just try to cut across the street" between the Country Club Hills community and Fairfax High, but Gunn told her they've still got time to settle on the exact locations of the crosswalks.

A City Council work session, another communitywide meeting and a public hearing are slated for the upcoming months, followed by right-of-way acquisition and utility relocation. Construction is anticipated to take place between fall 2023 and spring 2025.

Sanford also reassured people that "we're trying to re-create the [Old Lee Highway] traffic conditions, pre-COVID, through the traffic model" so they'll be as accurate, as possible, when conditions return to a more normal level of use. "This is all a work in progress," she added. "We just wanted to let you know what we're thinking and get your feedback."

Adventure Awaits: Experience Magic with Arts

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Connect with deeper meaning and adventurous explorers at a special, yet temporary outdoor experience to be unveiled on March 21. It is the month-long installation of a "Shrine" in the City of Fairfax.

"Shrine" is the creation of Jessica Kallista, local artist and owner of the City of Fairfax alternative arts space Olly Olly. Kallista is known for her collage, video, sound, and performance artistic work. She is also a member of the George Mason University arts faculty

The special temporary art installation created by Kallista will be part of an DC-area wide public art installation project from The Arcanists, They are an artists collective known for producing inventive interactive experiences. Kallista's "Shrine" will be one of six artistic installations.

Kallista described her yet to be unveiled creation as "a celebration of and connection with an art-filled existence." Her installation is also about individual and community self-care. "Visitors can expect to take on the role of 'Explorers' which allows them the immersive and interactive experience of discovering the curious and wondrous space and place created by the 'Shrine.'"

Where and When. Installation of public art work, "Shrine" designed by Jessica Kallista as part of DC



Jessica Kallista

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

region-wide works by The Arcanists. To be located at The Shoppes of Main Street, 10409 Main Street, Fairfax, March 21 to April 25, 2021. Free admission. Designed for COVID safety and accessibility. Masks required for visitors. Detailed guidance and Information visit www.theatrcanists.org

BULLETIN BOARD

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

NOW THRU APRIL 13

Free Finance Classes. 7-8:15 p.m. Via Zoom. Sponsored by St. John's United Methodist Church, Springfield. Free Personal Finance Mgmt Classes, taught by accredited finance counselor. Classes deal with budgeting, credit/debt management, saving and investing, etc. These are individual classes taught once a week. Register at website www.saintjohnsumc.org to receive Zoom link from the instructor.

March 16 -- 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Take Control of Your Finances: Managing Credit/Debt

March 23 -- 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Saving and Investing

April 6 -- 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Investing for Retirement

April 13 -- 7:00 - 8:15 p.m. Tax Efficient Charitable Giving

BLANKET PROGRAM SUPPORTING FAIRFAX CITY RESTAURANTS

Fairfax City's Economic Development Authority with support from the Economic Development Office is launching Winter in Fairfax City beginning March 2, 2021. The Winter in Fairfax City campaign is a continuation of the Fairfax City Winter Preparedness Initiative (WPI) Micro-Grant program's goal of creating outdoor dining expe-

periences that attract customers to local restaurants during the cooler months. Utilizing CARES Act funds, the EDA purchased the blankets and are providing them to city restaurants at no cost to promote outdoor dining by offering patrons the option to purchase a blanket to keep warm while dining out. Blankets will be available at 20 Fairfax City restaurants and retail for \$20 each with participating restaurants retaining the proceeds. When purchased, patrons will receive a free hot beverage of either coffee, tea, or hot chocolate and when they return for another outdoor dining experience with their blanket, they will receive an additional free hot beverage. This promotion is designed to help incentivize visits to local restaurants and to provide an added benefit for return visits. Visit fairfaxcityconnected.com/winterin Fairfaxcity.

SATURDAY/MARCH 27

Unique Yard Sale. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Fairfax Salvation Army Corps, 4915 Ox Road, Fairfax. The Fairfax Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary will hold a "Unique Yard Sale" March 27. Items on sale are new items from the cancelled 2020 Silent Auction. Also donated new and lightly used items.

This special focus section will include stories focusing on enhanced lifestyle for seniors among Connection readers and their families, including spiritual, physical, mental and financial well-being. Advertising allows you to target the many mature adults exploring new opportunities by showcasing your products and services in this special section with the award-winning Connection Newspapers print and digital media.

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Burglaries Put Mount Vernon Business Owners on Alert

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

Smash and grab at three Hollin Hall places yields little for thieves.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

After smashing the glass front door, the burglars that hit the Hollin Hall Shopping Center last Wednesday night decided to have a beer at the River Bend Bistro bar, and owner Caroline Ross hopes that's their last call at her restaurant.

"They drank half a beer and left it on the bar with their DNA," she said.

The Bistro was one of three businesses the burglars robbed that night in a series of "smash and grab" style of break-ins that are rare in this neighborhood shopping center. The Hollin Hall Variety Store and The Pastry Shop were the other two places they hit in this Mount Vernon shopping center. "People have tried to break in back but never out front," said the owner of the Variety Store.

The Fairfax County Police Department say these burglaries at the Hollin Hall Shopping Center are related to a series of overnight commercial burglaries throughout the county. In most cases, the front glass doors of the businesses have been broken, two to four people then enter the business taking cash and property before leaving in a vehicle, said FCPD. Detectives have determined the burglars mostly target restaurants, grocery stores, and minority owned businesses, although that wasn't the case at Hollin Hall. While detectives continue to work these cases, crime prevention officers are reaching out to business owners to discuss safety tips and burglary prevention.

Cameras are one prevention measure that the Hollin Hall business owners are looking at after the burglaries. At The Variety Store, there was at least one camera, and the owner noted that he intends to install more in the future. The hardware store a couple of doors down does have a few cameras out-



Hollin Hall Shopping Center has been the scene of some "smash and grab" burglaries.

side, and the burglars bypassed the store, but the cameras were rolling nonetheless.

Ross at the Bistro saw the film after the fact, noting the car pulling up on the video and two men getting out. She was thinking of putting more cameras in, but has such good customers, one of them beat her to it. "One of our customers brought in an extra one last night," she said.

In the police report, there were three ethnic restaurants in Annandale, two Vietnamese places in Falls Church, two middle eastern places in Springfield, and five other businesses in the Mount Vernon area that ranged from a taco shop to Korean BBQ, and a sushi restaurant. There were a total of 15 businesses on the police report.

On Feb. 16, the Fairfax County Police Department hosted a virtual community meeting with Korean business owners and discussed forging new partnerships

and increasing communication to combat burglaries in the area. A Crime Prevention Officer shared tips on how to protect businesses through "CPTED," Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. Many tips were shared during the meeting such as light and security camera installation, trimming back hedges in front of doors, and removing valuables before closing for the night. Most importantly, community members were asked to contact police if they are a victim of a burglary so officers and detectives can gather evidence that could lead to an arrest.

"People coming in from out of the area," said center customer Steve Chaconas, who mentioned earlier bank robberies. The hairdressers at Hairvisions, were also concerned. "I'm scared now, they should have more cameras," one of the hair dressers said.

FCPD Detectives are asking anyone with information regarding these incidents to call the Mason District Station Criminal Investigation Section at 703-256-8035.



The once glass door at The Variety Store is temporarily covered with plywood. So is the door at River Bend Bistro.



Some of the financial institutions in the shopping center have been victimized in the past.



The Pastry Shop window was smashed.

PHOTOS BY GREG POWERS



White cabinetry and marble counter tops combine with large windows to create a light and airy kitchen by designer Tracy Morris.



A free-standing tub was part of a McLean home remodel by interior designer Tracy Morris.

McLean Family Home

Sunny, free-flowing home created by removing walls and adding windows.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

After relocating to McLean from the West Coast and purchasing a home, the family knew that major changes were needed to accommodate their family, which includes two children. The couple enlisted the help of McLean based interior designer Tracy Morris of Tracy Morris Design.

“The home had sharp angles that disrupted the flow and wasted space that could be used for storage,” said Morris.

One of the biggest priorities was to create a light-filled, family friendly kitchen. “Our main goal was to have an island to feed small children and a space where the family could eat dinner at the table,” said Morris.

“Our main goal was to have an island to feed small children and a space where the family could eat dinner at the table.”

— Tracy Morris, Tracy Morris Design

An architectural overhaul was needed to accomplish that goal. The new design includes a butler’s pantry and mudroom which allow for additional storage.

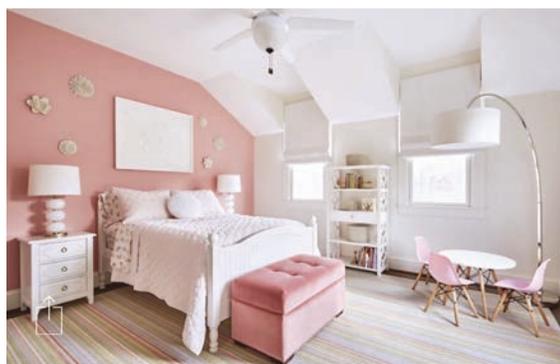
“The kitchen was bizarre and had a weird layout,” said architect Sydney Davenport Katz of BarnesVanz Architects Inc. “There was one large island with two different heights.

“We regularized the shape of some of the spaces,” she continued. “There were a lot of angled and sloping surfaces that we were able to eliminate”

Some of the kitchen cabinetry and part of a wall were removed. Floor to ceiling windows flood the room with sunlight. White cabinetry and marble countertops add to the space’s light and airy feel. Morris used a neutral color palette throughout the home, which now includes an



Some of the walls in this McLean home were removed to create free flowing spaces.



Interior designer Tracy Morris created bedrooms for each of the family’s two daughters.



A mudroom was created to provide additional storage space in this McLean home.

exercise room and playroom.

The second floor also called for a design overhaul, says Morris. “The master bathroom had a lot of chopped spaces. It was a bizarre design.”

The original master bathroom had what Morris described as excessive storage space. Some of the closets were eliminated and the drop-in tub was replaced with a free-standing tub.

The home has five full bathrooms, two powder rooms, six bedrooms, including two guest rooms. The laundry room is located on the second floor.

“That project had such good energy,” said Morris. “I’ll always have great memories of it. There are just some projects in life that fall into place and this is one of them.”

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East Wind Restaurant LLC trading as East Wind Restaurant, 10414 Main St, Fairfax, Fairfax County, Virginia 22030-3301. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer On Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Khoa Nguyen, Owner. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

Legals

ABC LICENSE

TheCliftonGroup LLC trading as District Eat, 5720 Union Mill Rd Ste 7, Clifton, Va 20124. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine & Beer On Premises and Mixed Beverage Restaurant license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Kamal Azzouz/ Managing Member. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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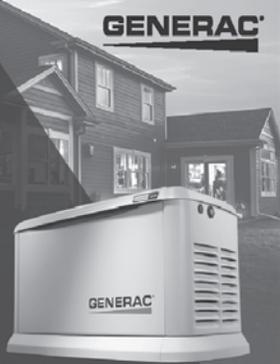
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-Werner Heisenberg

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CALENDAR

NOW THRU MARCH 26

Learning Connection. Tuesdays. The Old Firehouse Learning Connection is a supervised e-learning program supervised by staff, for students in the 5th-10th grades. The program will provide a supervised environment for students to complete their school-led virtual instruction. Staff will provide limited socially distant recreation opportunities for students during their breaks. Program waivers, participant contracts and additional information will be sent to all registered participants prior to the start of the program. Cost is \$400. To register, visit: www.oldfirehouse.org or call 703-448-8336, TTY: 711.

NOW THRU MARCH 29

"Life in Historic Virginia." At Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Part of the Park Authority's new series of "Field Trips for All" that are designed to supplement classroom and online lessons. Parks provide an experience not easily duplicated in the classroom, and these field trips offer parents a unique opportunity to provide their kids with real experiences while applying the concepts required in the Virginia Standards of Learning. This history program is designed for students in grades one through six. Life in Historic Virginia is offered on Mondays, March 15, 22 and 29, 2021. The 45-minute programs at Sully Historic Site run at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., and the cost is \$40 per family. Call 703-437-1794.

SATURDAY/MARCH 13

Family Outdoor Exploration. Investigate topics, such as Stream Life, Pond Life, Historic Ice Cream, and much more. Once you register, staff from the park will reach out to you to plan the perfect outing for your family. The program at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park runs on Saturday, March 13, and from 3 to 4 p.m. on Wednesday, March 24, 2021. The cost is \$40 per family. Call 703-631-0013.

SATURDAY/MARCH 13

The Joshua Show. 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Sponsored by The Alden, McLean. Joshua Holden is a modern-day Mr. Rogers with hipster appeal. When Mr. Nichols makes an unnerving self-discovery that causes him to spiral down a path of loneliness and hopeless despair, it's up to Joshua and his cast of characters, including Larry the Lint and the Wonderbook, to show his best friend the joy in being yourself. With live music, physical comedy and multiple styles of puppetry, this whimsical show is sure to bring out everyone's joyful side. Purchase tickets at www.aldentheatre.org.

SUNDAY/MARCH 14

Birding for Beginners. 9-10:30 a.m. At Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. During this program you will learn about birds at Lake Fairfax Park and gain some basic identification skills to help you get started on birding. The program begins with a bird identification discussion. The cost is \$12 per person. This program is designed for bird-lovers age 12 to adult, but children age 12 to 16 must be accompanied by a registered adult. Call 703-471-5414.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 17

The Unruly Theatre Project's Virtual Improv Show. 7 p.m. Sponsored by The Alden. Join the Unruly Theatre Project's virtual improv shows from the comfort of your couch! Register online and a Zoom link and password for the show will be emailed to you. Participants must register two hours in advance of showtime. Register at www.aldentheatre.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 19

The Old Firehouse 5th and 6th Grader Party. Virtual: The Glow Party. 7-9 p.m. Gather your family and dance the night away with the Old Firehouse with our virtual dance party. Request some of your favorite songs, dance along with us and the music and stay for some games and surprises along the way. To register, visit: www.oldfirehouse.org or call 703-448-8336, TTY: 711.

MARCH 20 TO APRIL 11

Fairfax County's Festival Central at the Fairfax County Visitor Center. The official Fairfax County Visitor Center in Tysons Corner Center (on 2nd level outside Nordstrom) is "Festival Central" in Fairfax County. The public is invited to stop in for free souvenirs, Festival schedules and the latest information on activities throughout the region. On March 27, the Center will host its annual National Cherry Blossom Festival Day with a special event from 1-3 p.m. with craft demonstrations, free gifts, and more. (<http://www.fxva.com/plan-your-trip/visitor-center>; 703-752-9500)

SATURDAY/MARCH 20

Maple Syrup Boil Down. 11 a.m., noon, and 1 p.m. At Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. It's sugaring time at the mill, so bundle up, brave the weather and watch and learn as sap is boiled down into a sweet syrup over an open fire. While supplies last, sample some of this delicious syrup over cornbread baked with cornmeal ground at Colvin Run. Call 703-759-2771.

SATURDAY/MARCH 20

Fairfax Genealogical Society Spring Fair - "Power Up Your Family Research with DNA". Virtual meeting. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Genealogist Karen Stanbary will present this one-day program featuring tips and tools for using DNA data to aid your family research. Registration (\$50 for non-members; \$30 for members of FxGS) at <https://fxgs2021mar.eventbrite.com> or on the FxGS web page, www.fxgs.org/2021springfair. Details of the program and other FxGS activities on the web site, www.fxgs.org or by calling 703-644-8185.

TUESDAY/MARCH 23

Spring Art Lessons. 5:15 - 6:15 p.m. Goes Virtual for Youth (8 yrs & up/teens). Instructor Carol Zeitlin drawing and watercolor. Visit www.czartlessons.com for more. Call 703-250-6930.

Spring Drawing Plus Color Class (5-8 yrs.) 6:15 - 7 p.m. Instructor Carol Zeitlin, drawing and watercolor. Visit www.czartlessons.com for more. Call 703-250-6930.

Women's Storytelling Festival, March 19-21

The second annual Women's Storytelling Festival will be held virtually from March 19-21. Tickets are on sale now at www.bettersaidthandone.com/womens-festival. From Friday night through Sunday evening, stories from 36 female storytellers will be presented. Performers include well-known storytellers Donna Washington, Kim Weitkamp, Mo Reynolds, Sheila Arnold and many more.

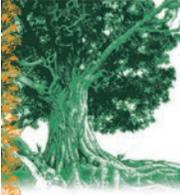
Ticket holders receive access to all programs, as well as to the recorded programs, for two weeks after the festival. Putting on this event is Better Said Than Done, which produces themed, true, personal, storytelling shows throughout Northern Virginia and beyond. The stories range in length from 7-70 minutes and are geared to be energetic, engaging and entertaining.

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"Cancerversary"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I realize I'm cancer-centric, especially in these columns, but for some reason that centrality didn't acknowledge my February 27th cancer anniversary. That date, in 2009, is when I was originally diagnosed with stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer, the "terminal" kind. I remember it well. It was a Thursday. It was the initial Team Lourie meeting with my soon-to-be new best friend: my oncologist. A week or so prior, I had received the first indication - from my primary care physician, that my life was about to change: the results from the previous surgical biopsy confirmed a malignancy. It's rather an awkward dynamic to meet someone - for the first time, who immediately becomes the person who will control, manage and in effect, be responsible for whether you live or die, and for how long. From then on, he becomes the most important person in your life; a person who is now entrusted with your most precious asset: your health.

It was not an unfamiliar experience for me meeting someone cold and attempting to build a rapport. As a long-time salesman, that was my modus operandi. Whether in person or over the telephone, I have regularly been engaged in this kind of pursuit: trying to create an environment of trust and honesty in order to reach a shared goal. Previously, it was about making a sale; now it was about understanding my options and agreeing on a course of treatment. However, the one major difference between these two pursuits, was control, or rather the lack thereof. Cancer was now in control as compared to my life as a salesman where I chose it because it allowed me to be in control: who I called, when I called, scheduling appointments, et cetera. Soon it became apparent, I was no longer in Kansas anymore. I was in the hands - figuratively speaking, of my oncologist - in Maryland: my new boss. If I wanted to live beyond the "13 month to two year" prognosis I was given, I would have to be as attentive and compliant as possible.

In spite of our shotgun-type of relationship, we have persevered together, which has enabled yours truly to acknowledge, albeit a week or so later, an amazing achievement: 12 years and still living. Not that my circumstances have become de rigueur, hardly; especially since the thyroid cancer diagnosis of late has put into question my original non-small cell lung cancer stage IV diagnosis. Apparently, after making a few inquiries, it appears unlikely that we can litigate the past any more than we can guarantee the future. It seems that cancer, whichever type, will be a part of my life and likely a part of my death as well.

I'm surprised how it's (my life) all turned out and grateful to whomever for what I'm not entirely sure. Nevertheless, somehow it's worked and here I am: alive and reasonably well. Not cancer free and never to be cured of my stage IV papillary thyroid cancer; still, it's a living and it sure beats a dying. Treatment and scans and all will continue, but so what. Originally it appeared my die was cast, but as it has happened, not nearly so fast.

All of which is nothing new, really. A cancer diagnosis is all about change, ceding control, and hanging on for dear life as you will be up and down and all-round, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Expecting a normal kind of pattern to your future life ended the moment a biopsy confirms a malignancy. Either you adjust to the vagaries of your cancer life or you will die having failed. I think I have succeeded beyond my wildest expectations. So much so that I didn't even acknowledge my "cancerversary" last week. I guess I needed the week off from worrying about it and didn't even realize it. I have to admit though, it felt good not focusing on it for a change. Almost like I was a "normal" person.

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



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<p>BATTERY SPECIAL</p> <p>FREE</p> <p>BATTERY CHECK-UP</p> <p>INCLUDES: CHECK COLD CRANKING AMPS AND VISUAL INSPECTION OF BATTERY CONDITION. INCLUDES BATTERY CONDITION PRINT OUT.</p> <p><small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 03/31/21.</small></p>	<p>LUBE, OIL & FILTER SPECIAL</p> <p>\$39.95</p> <p>\$44.95 FOR SYNTHETIC OIL CHANGE</p> <p>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.</p> <p><small>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 03/31/21.</small></p>	<p>ALIGNMENT SPECIAL</p> <p>\$89.95</p> <p>4-WHEEL ALIGNMENT</p> <p>INCLUDES: 4-WHEEL ALIGNMENT, INSPECT SUSPENSION, BALL JOINTS, STRUTS & SHOCKS, TIRE CONDITION AND SET TIRE PRESSURE.</p> <p><small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 03/31/21.</small></p>	<p>BRAKE PAD SPECIAL</p> <p>\$99.95</p> <p>BRAKE PAD REPLACEMENT</p> <p>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 \$199.95</p> <p><small>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 03/31/21.</small></p>	<p>TOYOTACARE PLUS</p> <p>\$329.00</p> <p>SPECIAL</p> <p>MAINTAIN PEACE OF MIND BY EXTENDING YOUR TOYOTACARE COMPLEMENTARY MAINTENANCE PLAN TO 4 YEARS/45,000 MILES!</p> <p><small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 03/31/21.</small></p>	<p>SERVICE VARIABLE DISCOUNT</p> <p>THE MORE YOU SPEND, THE MORE YOU SAVE!</p> <p>\$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+</p> <p><small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 03/31/21.</small></p>
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