

CONNECTION

Reston ♦ Oak Hill Herndon ♦ Chantilly ♦ CENTRE VIEW

Three members of the Town of Herndon Police Motorcycle Squad lead the Jimmy's Tavern Memorial Day motorcycle convoy down Spring Street, turning onto Elden Street where Town Mayor Sheila Olem waves her red, white, and blue scarf, and Joshua Jay waves a large United States flag bidding them a safe journey to Washington D.C. for the Rolling to Remember ride 2021.

Rolling To Remember

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON / THE CONNECTION



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‘We’re Looking Forward to Building Something Nice’

New church, private school proposed for Chantilly.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Our Lady of Lavang Parish wants to build a place of worship in Chantilly. And attorney Lynne Strobel presented details of its plan during a joint online meeting of the Sully District Council and West Fairfax County Citizens Assn. (WFCCA).

The mostly wooded site is about 33 acres at the intersection of Pleasant Valley Road and Herndon Avenue in Chantilly. It’s zoned Residential Conservation, which allows churches and other places of worship to build there with a special permit granted by Fairfax County.

“The [Catholic] Diocese has been looking for quite some time for a suitable location to serve its parishioners who live in this part of the county,” said Strobel. “It’s across from Cub Run Road, and that’s where the entry point is.”

She said childcare – for before and after school – would be available for the children enrolled in the church’s nursery and private school. And the site improvements would be accomplished in phases.

“First, they’d build a worship center with 400 seats, plus supporting activities,” said



The site plan shows the proposed church, rectory, worship center, fellowship hall and school.

Strobel. “Then they’d build a place of worship [the church, itself] and repurpose the worship center. There would also be a rectory on the property so, all totaled, the improvements would comprise about 120,500 square feet. The school will be built in a later phase.”

The property would have 65 percent open space, of which 50 percent would remain

undisturbed. And although the parcel has a public sewer, the church would provide stormwater management – which the site currently doesn’t have.

The 860-seat sanctuary would be implemented in two phases, and the private school would serve 540 students in kindergarten through eighth grade. The nursery school would be built for 60 children, and

the entire property would contain 367 parking spaces.

“The church would be centrally located, with the school at the bottom of our diagram,” said Strobel, referring to a drawing of the proposed site plan. “Parents would pick up and drop off their children in front of the school and exit onto Herndon Avenue. And the county is installing a traffic signal at Herndon Avenue and Pleasant Valley Road. The Diocese wants to have a church here because its members in this area of Fairfax County continue to grow.”

The matter is slated to go before the county’s Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) on June 9, and BZA Vice-Chairman Jim Hart said, “There’s a lot of traffic backed up on Herndon Avenue in the morning, and it’s very congested now. So I’m assuming you’re looking at that issue.”

Strobel replied that the new traffic signal will help alleviate the situation. And, she added, “Our site’s entrance is quite a distance from that intersection.”

Hart also asked if there are any environmental issues associated with that location, and Strobel said no. “This is a nice piece of property for the Diocese,” she said. “And we’re looking forward to building something quite nice.”

The joint land-use committee members then voted and determined they have no objection to this plan moving forward.



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Democrats Decide

Voters to determine direction of party in June 8 primary.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/THE CONNECTION

Voters will be selecting Democratic nominees for governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general in the June 8 primary.

The June 8 primary will determine the direction of the Democratic Party in Virginia at a critical time, when the commonwealth is emerging from the pandemic and trying to recast itself as something other than a party in opposition to former President Donald Trump. Opposition to the former president helped Democrats claim the trifecta — all three statewide offices, the House of Delegates and the state Senate. Now they'll be facing a Republican ticket that has racial diversity, gender diversity and geographic diversity.

"We have the momentum, energy, and grassroots organization to send good, solid Republicans to Richmond," said Rich Anderson, chairman of the Republican Party of Virginia. "And we're going to fight harder than ever to ensure we do just that."

Democrats head into Election Day likely to nominate white males from Northern Virginia as governor and attorney general, while the election for lieutenant governor remains wide open. Voters could end up selecting a Democratic ticket that is three white males from Northern Virginia. That's one of the reasons why Gov. Ralph Northam attempted to tip the scales by endorsing Del. Hala Ayala (D-51) for Lieutenant Governor, a Democrat from Prince William County who identifies as an Afro-Latina-Lebanese-Irish woman. Campaign finance records show she's struggled to raise as much money as Del. Sam Rasoul (D-11) or Del. Mark Levine (D-45).

"Establishment Democrats clearly think that Hala Ayala is going to be the better candidate in the general election," said Quentin Kidd, a political science professor at Christopher Newport University. "But that doesn't mean that she would be, and that doesn't mean that she'll win the Democratic primary."

AT THE TOP of the ticket is the race for governor. Former Gov. Terry McAuliffe has an outsized lead in the polls and the fundraising, although it's extremely rare for a former governor to decide to seek a non-consecutive term. It hasn't been done since 1973, when former Gov. Mills Godwin was elected to a second non-consecutive term after a four-year absence from the Executive Mansion. In his first term, Godwin was a Democrat. But eight years later, he switched parties and became a Republican during a time when both parties were experiencing an identity crisis.

"I was moved to run [again] because I love this state," Godwin said in 1973 during a campaign speech in Southwest Virginia. "And I don't want the liberal left to take over



Terry McAuliffe



Jennifer McClellan



Jennifer Carroll Foy



Lee Carter



Justin Fairfax

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Hala Ayala
Sam Rasoul
Andria McClellan
Sean Perryman
Mark Levine
Xavier Warren

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Jay Jones
Mark Herring

the state and lead us down the path of ruin, and I don't think you do either."

Now, almost half a century later, the Virginia Democrats are facing a different kind of identity crisis. Do they want to return McAuliffe to power at a time when Democrats control the General Assembly, or give the nomination to a new generation? Supporters of Sen. Jennifer McClellan (D-9) point to her long record of service in the House and Senate, noting that she's been in Virginia politics much longer than any other candidate including McAuliffe. Her campaign issued a fact-check after Del. Jennifer Carroll Foy (D-2), who served one full term in the House before resigning to run for governor, repeatedly called herself "one of the most effective legislators in Virginia history."

"Jenn McClellan is the most experienced and effective candidate for governor. Full

On the Ballot

GOVERNOR

More Election Coverage

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2021/may/20/convention-done-primary-ahead/>
<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2021/apr/15/running-second-command/>

stop," said Del. Kathy Tran (D-42). "As a delegate, I've seen the difference between legislators who lead when the going gets tough and those who don't. Jenn McClellan is a leader who lifts up all Virginians."

THE RACE FOR lieutenant governor is the race that will determine the missing third of the statewide Democratic ticket. Sam Rasoul has raised and spent more money than any other candidate, a notable achievement considering he refuses to take money from special interest PACs or lobbyists. During a televised debate on WJLA last week, anchor Dave Lucas asked if Rasoul believed he could represent Virginians of all faiths. The televised question caused a firestorm because Rasoul is Muslim, and the question employed anti-Muslim tropes.

"Sadly, this isn't what Virginians are wanting to hear about," said Rasoul. "They're wanting to hear about how we're going to improve access to their health care, about broadband issues, how we are going to safely get kids back in school."

WJLA eventually apologized, calling the

question "inappropriate and disrespectful." Meanwhile, Rasoul picked up new endorsements and gained a ton of free publicity. But he wasn't the only candidate to seize on a moment from the WJLA debate. When the candidates were asked if critical race theory should be taught in Virginia classrooms, former Fairfax NAACP president Sean Perryman seized the moment to explain that the law-school concept wasn't being taught in K-12 classrooms.

"Critical race theory is not even being taught in our schools," said Perryman. "It's a Republican dog whistle where anything they disagree with is critical race theory."

ATTORNEY GENERAL Mark Herring is the only statewide incumbent seeking reelection. He's being challenged by Del. Jay Jones (D-89). Herring was the town attorney in Lovettsville and served on the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors before being elected to the state Senate in a 2006 special election after Attorney General Bob McDonnell appointed Sen. Bill Mims (R-33) chief deputy attorney general.

Herring was elected attorney general in 2013, and he's now seeking a third term in office. During his time as attorney general, he created a new Office of Civil Rights as well as a new conviction integrity unit and a new worker protection unit while also reorganizing the consumer protection section. He opposed Virginia's ban on gay marriage, fought against Trump's Muslim ban, and overtured Republican gerrymandering in the United States Supreme Court.

"I've transformed the job into a progressive powerhouse," said Herring. "I have proven that I can win even the biggest fights."

Jones was first elected in 2017, part of the first Democratic wave that began the transformation of the House of Delegates. Since that time, he's been seen as a rising star in the party. Jones says it's time to hand the office to the next generation, and as an African-American man he says he would be able to bring his lived experience into conversations about criminal justice reform and equity. During a televised debate, he avoided answering questions about a bill he introduced that would have allowed predatory lenders to charge 350 percent interest — a point of distinction that provides contrast with Herring, who worked with lawmakers to pass the Fairness in Lending Act. Jones never withdrew his bill which died in committee, although he ended up voting for the bill that Herring supported.

"The attorney general knows that he and I supported the exact same bill," said Jones. "I was happy to work with Delegate Bagby, the chair of the Legislative Black Caucus, who has endorsed my campaign."

Principle Above Partisanship

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



COMMENTARY

Virginia lost two of its finest citizens last week: former United States Senator John Warner who died at age 94 and former member of the Virginia House of Delegates Dick Hobson who died at 89 years old. Both were heavily engaged in partisan politics—Warner as a Republican and Hobson as a Democrat. Both may have been best known, however, for the times they rose above their party labels to assert principles over partisanship.

Senator John Warner had the dignified look and the resounding voice of a person in power. He had a very admirable career in the U.S. military in both the Navy and the Marines and served later in civilian life as Secretary of the Navy. For more than 30 years he served in the United States Senate where he was a recognized expert in military affairs. He was elected to represent the Commonwealth at a time when Southern Democrats dominated politics

in the state. Some attribute his first election to his second wife, Elizabeth Taylor, but he continued to be elected after their divorce based on his unassailable performance in office.

My dealings with Senator Warner were never very direct, but as a member of the Northern Virginia delegation I recognized, as did the Democratic majority in the General Assembly and Democratic governors, that Senator Warner was the go-to person on Capitol Hill if the state needed federal assistance.

Mark Warner took on John Warner in an election of "Mark not John" but was unsuccessful. Mark had to wait for John's retirement before winning the seat with Senator Warner's endorsement. Senator Warner, the Republican, was known in his retirement days for endorsing Democrats for president including Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden. He loved the Senate and his country, and he never let partisanship get ahead of that loyalty.

Delegate Richard "Dick" Hobson served in

the Virginia House of Delegates for two terms retiring in 1979. He was in his second and final term when I first came to the House of Delegates in 1978. I felt a particular kinship to him because both of us coming from Northern Virginia as progressive Democrats felt ourselves at odds with many of the politics and priorities of the more conservative Democrats who dominated the House. A key element of the then-declining "Byrd Machine" that dominated Virginia politics for decades was the role of circuit court judges in keeping the machine in power. As a progressive freshman in the House, I planned to change that political abuse that was a violation of the separation of powers. Dick Hobson was the only other delegate who was willing to sign as a copatron on my bill to provide for the merit selection of judges. He went with me to provide moral support for my first appearance before the powerful Rules Committee that defeated my bill within minutes as not having merit.

Like John Warner, Dick Hobson put principles of democracy and good government ahead of partisanship, and Virginia is better for the leadership of both of them!

Fighting Both anti-Semitism and Oppression

BY LEAH HARRIS

TAKING EXCEPTION

On the May 13 Eid holiday, Abrar Omeish, at-large member of the Fairfax County School Board, Tweeted: "Hurts my heart to celebrate while Israel kills Palestinians & desecrates the Holy Land right now," she wrote. "Apartheid & colonization were wrong yesterday and will be today, here and there. May justice + truth prevail."

There has been a disturbing community backlash in response. A spokesperson for the Fairfax GOP smeared her as "deeply anti-Semitic." And on May 19 the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of Greater Washington rescinded its plans to honor Ms. Omeish due to the content of her Tweet. JCRC's announcement shames and punishes Ms. Omeish for her views, saying that she "disenfranchised the thousands of Jewish families in her district."

As the Jewish parent of a child in FCPS, JCRC does not speak for me. By conflating the state of Israel with all Jewish people everywhere, groups like JCRC and the Fairfax GOP are en-

gaging in a well-worn tactic: to paint any critique of Israeli state violence as an expression of anti-Semitism. Such allegations are designed to "cancel" anyone who speaks out for Palestinian human rights, and to deflect from the actual substance of their criticism.

For example, Ms. Omeish's use of the word "apartheid" in her Tweet is completely aligned with the assessment of the Israeli human rights group B'tselem, which wrote in a recent report: "The Israeli regime enacts in all the territory it controls (Israeli sovereign territory, East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip) an apartheid regime. One organizing principle lies at the base of a wide array of Israeli policies: advancing and perpetuating the supremacy of one group – Jews – over another – Palestinians." Human Rights Watch also agrees that Israel's policies amount to apartheid. And Israel is currently under a U.N. inquiry for possible war crimes following its latest offensive on Gaza, which left 67 Palestinian children dead.

Ms. Omeish's detractors allege that by criticizing Israel, she cannot represent all students. I strongly reject this destructive reasoning, as well as simplistic "you're either with us or against us" arguments. As she herself reiterated in her speech at the May 20 meeting of the Fairfax County School Board, it is possible to "fight both anti-Semitism and oppression against the Palestinians ... at the same time."

I am deeply concerned by the insinuation of some community members and groups that School Board members should remain silent on matters of social injustice. In the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who led the resistance to apartheid in South Africa: "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor."

My family couldn't be prouder to have Ms. Omeish representing us on the School Board. She has continued to express a good-faith commitment to work with all faith leaders to improve the well-being of all students in Fairfax County. I can't say the same for those trying to discredit her and suppress healthy discussion.

Meeting on Striping Changes in Hunter Mill, Providence and Dranesville Districts

The Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) will host a virtual meeting on additional striping changes proposed for the Hunter Mill, Providence and Dranesville Districts as part of the 2021 Paving and Restriping Program. The meeting will be held in coordination with the Virginia Department of Transportation on Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 6.30 p.m.

Join the Online Meeting or Call in By Phone

To attend the meeting, Thursday, June

8, 6:30 pm, you may join online or call in by phone.

Join the meeting online

Join by phone: 1-844-621-3956; Access Code: 173 502 1483

First time WebEx user? See our Virtual Meeting Instructions

The meeting will feature a formal presentation followed by time for questions, feedback and comments. For residents who cannot attend the meetings in person, a video recording of the event along with the meeting presen-

tation will be available on the paving and restriping webpage, and feedback may be submitted online. Comments will be due on June 22, 2021.

Overall, the paving and restriping program improves hundreds of roads in Fairfax County each year through maintenance and repaving. At the same time, state and county agencies coordinate restriping efforts to address safety issues for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians through the creation of bike lanes, parking lanes, crosswalks and more.

For more information, visit the Fairfax County 2021 Paving and Restriping Program: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/2021-paving-and-restriping>.

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I Became a Better Mother When I Stopped Trying To Do It All Myself

BY MEGAN MANCILLAS

Across the board, children have better outcomes when their parents have a shared parenting schedule, even in high-conflict cases.

Nearly five years ago, when my ex-husband and I separated, I felt the same way I suspect a lot of mothers do. I thought our children should live with me full-time, not only because I gave birth to them, but also because I had been their primary caretaker for most of their lives.

After staying home with them for over 12 years, it felt like an insult for my ex to then ask for them half of the time — after all, I felt I had made sacrifices to stay home so they wouldn't be in the care of strangers. I came up with all of the usual excuses: Who will do their hair? He's working full-time, how will he get them to and from school on time? My youngest is only four, she shouldn't be away from her mother for so long!

Still, in an effort to avoid the adversarial and expensive court route, I sat down and looked at his proposed schedule on paper, followed by reading every article or study I could get my hands on regarding shared parenting. The evidence was overwhelming.

Across the board, children have better

outcomes when their parents have a shared parenting schedule, even in high-conflict cases.

My “come to Jesus” moment happened when I admitted to myself that all of my objections to shared parenting were based on my own fears. It wasn't that they didn't love their dad or that he wasn't a good father — he was. It was more that I had been a stay at home mother for twelve years, and it had almost become my identity.

I was afraid of the loss of control, particularly in the middle of a divorce, when you feel as though nothing is controllable. I was afraid of who I would become if my children were gone half the time — it felt like a lot of responsibility to suddenly be forced to figure out what to do with my time when they weren't there. I was afraid of other peoples' expectations of me.

I was afraid to go back to school and re-enter the workforce. And even though my plan was always to go back to school once my youngest was in kindergarten, I now felt immense pressure to provide.

Despite knowing that there was all this scientific evidence that pointed to shared parenting being best for children, agreeing to it still didn't feel easy. It was a choice to release all of my fears and expectations and take the first step without seeing the whole staircase. I was not confident, but it was what I had to do, and little did I know, that one choice would set the tone for all of my other life choices moving forward.

As an added bonus, the very thing that was proven to be best for my kids also ended up being personally liberating for me.

I went back to school. I started volunteering. I had a social life. I found a job I en-

joyed. I became a better mother, because I wasn't trying to do it all myself. The time I spent with my kids became even more precious; I was less stressed, less tired, more attentive, and more in tune with their needs.

Although my divorce was contentious, it was a first step toward re-building trust, toward working together as a team, and toward giving our children all the benefits of living with both parents. It was a quicker path to less animosity, less discord, and less resentment; not just because of the circumstances surrounding the divorce, but because we were now both sharing the responsibility of raising our children.

Nearly five years later, my children are thriving. They got through our divorce relatively unscathed, which is something I know we're both really proud of. And guess what? My ex-husband learned how to do their hair.

Megan Mancillas is a Court Appointed Special Advocate and a member of the Executive Committee of the Virginia Affiliate of the National Parents Organization. She is from Centreville.

Reston Association--All Virtual?

BY JOHN LOVAAS
COMMUNITY ACTIVIST AND
FOUNDER OF RESTON
FARMERS MARKET



INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE

Now that the country is emerging from the depths of the Covid-19 pandemic, most organizations seem to be returning to an actual, more normal way of operating. Many people are returning to work in their offices and are reachable at least by phone. I'm seeing it with some Fairfax County elements, and hope to see it soon with our Reston Association (RA) as well.

It's doubtful however that some difficulties with RA responsiveness are attributable to the virus. Critical IT functions at RA, for example, are of special concern. The organization's website, on which the community depends for information about numerous RA activities and services, has been less than stellar for years, but for over a year it's been “under construction” and barely functioning at all.

Furthermore, last summer RA's IT experienced at least two significant data breaches. The breaches were kept secret from the community for many months, until a fed-up member of the Board of Directors revealed them in heated remarks at the VIRTUAL February 2021 Board meeting. The President and Board majority at the time quickly called for adjourning into Executive Session to discuss the matter out of Zoom's

public view. When the Board returned -- an hour or so later -- to the open meeting, it was impossible to ignore the fed-up one's disclosure.

At-Large member Sarah Selvaraj D'Souza promptly made a motion for action that could not be ignored. Her motion, seconded by Director Ven Iyer, called for transparency for RA members on issues affecting their financial and personal data as well the security of IT systems to protect them, and directed RA staff to prepare a comprehensive report for the membership “on all IT incidents [i.e., breaches] in the past two years resulting in loss of data, money or website capacity, when & why the incidents occurred,” corrective action taken, costs associated with each incident, etc. The written report was to be delivered to the Board a week before the next monthly meeting (March) AND RELEASED TO THE MEMBERSHIP (my caps). Her motion passed unanimously. To date no report has been delivered to the Board, much less to the membership! Nor has there been any public explanation for the three-month delay.

Speaking of unresponsiveness... At the beginning of every monthly meeting of the RA Board, Association members are granted 2-3 minutes to address the august Board of

Directors before they get into the evening's agenda. It is an opportunity to bring a problem or a proposed solution to a problem directly to the Board. The source of major frustration for members who take the time to speak is that the Board politely listens to the member's remarks, then goes on to the next speaker without responding to the remarks. Furthermore, rarely do members ever get a response to the issue or proposal they present. From time to time, members as well as Board Directors express frustration about lack of responses to the CEO and staff, apparently to no avail.

At the May 27 meeting, South Lakes Director Jennifer Jushchuk made a formal motion which was adopted for action by the Board. Her motion directed RA staff to reinstitute a process for tracking member comments and assuring that members concerns are addressed and members informed of resulting actions. This is to be in operation “by a date certain of June 15, 2021.” Perhaps the June 24 Board meeting will be real, not virtual, and we'll see if this directive is in fact implemented.

Elsewhere in RA Land, several pools will not be opening on Memorial Day. Four of them may never see the light of day again, as RA staff apparently have them targeted for “repurposing”, which likely means closing. Among them are Tall Oaks, Shadowood, and Autumnwood.

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.

JUNE 2-31

Behold! The Beauty Art Exhibit. At Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. A free art exhibit by Ava and Richard Neff. About 40 pieces of fabric creations and oil paintings are free for the viewing. Come and share the joy of art.

SATURDAY/JUNE 5

Hobby Exchange. 1-3:30 p.m. At Town Hall Square, 730 Elden Street, Herndon. Bring your hobby items and receive tickets to come back and shop. No reservations needed. All items must be in useable good condition with all parts/pieces. Free. Visit the website: herndon-va.gov/events

SATURDAY/JUNE 5

Lake Anne Brew House Events. 2-6 p.m. At 11424 Washington Plaza West, Reston. Virtual Event streaming live from the Brew House. Join in an amazing line up and interactive fun.

JUNE 5 AND 19

Reston Pride Festival. At Lake Anne Plaza, Reston. While Reston Pride operates year-round to fulfill its mission, it is the host of the annual Reston Pride Festival, a single day community event traditionally held at Washington Plaza at Lake Anne in Reston. To accommodate this mission, Reston Pride is planning to hold a hybrid festival event offering both in-person activities as well as an online program to reach an even

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

Fairfax Dems Clash with Supervisors

Demand firing of FCPD Chief Kevin Davis.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Democratic Committee (FCDC) called on the Board of Supervisors (“Board”) on May 25 to terminate Kevin Davis’s employment as Chief of the Fairfax County Police Department. In its three-point Resolution, FCDC called on the ten-member Board, nine of whom are Democrats, to reopen the search for a new chief and implement a transparent hiring process. FCDC advocated that the Board use a “racial equity decision-making framework and a community screening committee comparable to the one used in Fairfax County’s 2013 police chief search.”

“The mission of the Fairfax County Democratic Committee, with over 1,000 members and an even larger network of volunteers is to advance and maintain the election of Democrats to public office here,” said FCDC Chair Bryan Graham at a Press Conference the day after the Resolution’s release.

“We have worked hard to elect the nine Democrats to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors... But it is also our responsibility as the party to promote Democratic values,” Graham said.

THE BOARD appointed Davis on April 23, and he assumed the position on May 3. According to FCDC’s Resolution, Davis was afforded the opportunity to address concerns about policing incidents in his career on May 6, [at the County’s Community Input Session]. He did not. Instead, Davis “diverted” in his explanations.

Graham said, “In the survey conducted in hiring the new police chief, Fairfax County residents raised community trust as the most important issue. To hire a candidate with any racially-charged use of force incident in their past is not starting from a foundation on which trust can be built.” The Resolution cited four incidents regarding Chief Davis’s professional policing history.

Two occurred in the 1990s, one in 1993 and the other in 1999. Each ended with court judgments against Davis [Prince George’s County Police Department]. The other two incidents occurred during Davis’s last two years in a police position [Commissioner-Baltimore Police Department]. In 2016, Davis authorized secret drone surveillance of the people of the City of Baltimore. In 2017, Davis imposed a six-day lockdown of a neighborhood after an African American Baltimore detective was killed by a bullet from his service weapon the day before he was to testify to a federal grand jury regarding corruption in the Baltimore police force.

Graham said, “A year and a day after the murder of George Floyd, we should not need to remind our elected officials that as Democrats, we believe we need to overhaul the criminal justice system from top to bottom. Police brutality is a stain on the soul of our nation.”

“Therefore, in the context of the events of the last year and this moment, the Fair-



Kelly Hebron is Chair of the Fairfax Democratic Black Caucus within FCDC.



Fairfax County Democratic Committee Chair Bryan Graham calls on the Board of Supervisors on Wednesday, May 26, to terminate Chief Davis’s employment.



Leaders in the Fairfax County Democratic Committee stand behind FCDC Chair Bryan Graham and call for the County Board of Supervisors to terminate the police chief’s employment.

“A year and a day after the murder of George Floyd, we should not need to remind our elected officials that as Democrats, we believe we need to overhaul the criminal justice system from top to bottom. Police brutality is a stain on the soul of our nation.”

— FCDC Chair Bryan Graham

fax County Democratic Committee does not trust that Chief Davis is the right person to lead our police force,” said Graham.

Kelly Hebron is Chair of the Fairfax Democratic Black Caucus within FCDC. She said at the Press Conference that the caucus was driven to act and hold the elected Supervisors accountable “to ensure the reduction and prevention of racially motivated violence against its diverse residents during po-

lice encounters.”

“Transparency is the first step toward fairness and trust...We can do better in Fairfax County,” said Hebron.

Rev. Dr. Vernon C. Walton, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, Vienna, stood with Rev. Dr. Denise Wilson, President, Baptist Ministers Conference of Northern Virginia, and Rev. Dr. Augustus Henderson, Northern Virginia Baptist Association Moderator. Walton

said he was pleased to stand in solidarity with the FCDC Caucus to support its Resolution.

“I believe it providential that the committee would take such a bold, progressive vote on the anniversary of the death of George Floyd...Many of our elected officials, those of whom supported this candidate [Davis]... held signs...kneeled in solidarity...pledged their commitment to police reform,” said Walton.

According to Walton, he heard County Supervisors say, “If only I had known... I’ve heard them say that you matter, Black and Brown constituency matters. What you haven’t said publicly is he [Davis] is the wrong choice. While many of you have said it privately, you have not said it publicly... Despite all that you knew and despite all of you are aware of, you forged ahead. And now you asked a community of people who have been profiled for years to give him an opportunity.”

“I asked you today, Supervisors, how costly will the mistake have to be, or you’re willing to admit that this was not the best decision,” said Walton.

CANDIDATE for Virginia H-34, Jennifer Adeli stood in solidarity with those assembled at the May 26 Press Conference. Afterward, she said, “I was proud to vote in favor of this Resolution...and stand with FCDC and members of the FCDC Black caucus today. Every elected leader, or candidate asking the community to trust them to lead, should have an opinion on this vital issue. We need a Chief who reflects our values and the community and starts off their tenure with a clean slate. Davis does not meet those basic requirements.”

A spokesperson for the office of Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay (D-At Large) Fairfax County Board of Supervisors said, “We have no comment.”

Instead, she attached the May 20 open letter from the nine Democratic members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors -- Jeff McKay-Chairman of the Board of Supervisors; Rodney Lusk-Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, Lee District Supervisor; Penny Gross-Chairman of the Personnel Committee, Mason District Supervisor; James Walkinshaw-Braddock District Supervisor; John Foust-Dranesville District Supervisor; Walter Alcorn-Hunter Mill District Supervisor; Dan Stork-Mount Vernon District Supervisor; Dalia Palchik-Providence District Supervisor; and Kathy Smith-Sully District Supervisor -- sent to the members of the Fairfax County Democratic Committee.

The letter from the Democratic Supervisors to the members of FCDC read in part, “The police chief is hired by the Board of Supervisors, serves at our pleasure, and as such, his performance will be evaluated regularly. He is well aware of our expectation that he deliver smart and meaningful reforms that benefit all in our community... Chief Davis has already been talking and most importantly, listening, to members of our community. He has his line of communication open to any community member who wishes to speak with him.”

Main Big Deal: Cantonese Dishes, and Much More

Restaurant Review: Taste@Hong Kong

BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY
THE CONNECTION

With the pandemic diminishing, Americans are hopping back on the road again, heading east, west, north, and south. And many are now heading to the airport, as reported that about 2.5 million were boarding planes now. How many are traveling abroad is not clear, but if folks are craving some Asian eats, don't bother to fly abroad. Just head to Chantilly and grab a seat at Taste @ Hong Kong.

Located in Metrotech Center, this eatery features classic Cantonese food with a few Szechuanese and Hunanese offerings amplifying the menu choices. But the main big deal here are the huge—and really lengthy—Cantonese dishes, rang-

ing from roast duck and Hong Kong-style soup to Hong Kong-style Barbecue, Clay Pot rice, and the most classic Cantonese dish of all, congee.

For those not in the know, congee is a popular breakfast dish in Hong Kong, with congee stands often in marketplaces and street corners. It is simply a boiled rice porridge that is eaten plain or topped with meats and/or seasonings.

Thanks to the extensive menu, plus lunchtime specials, Chinese food aficionados can eat their way through so many special offerings. Besides the chef's recommended dishes that include curry beef brisket (Cantonese) lamb casserole, other top entrées include Peking Duck (a bit pricey but worth it), Orange chicken and General Tso's chicken (both Hong Kong classics), and roasted pig. For a real eye-opener, look at the glass-enclosed case behind the cash register, where roasted meats hang. And if you are up for it, though probably few Westerners are, con-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Taste @ Hong Kong is located at 13912 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy., Chantilly.

sider ordering sautéed intestines with sour cabbage.

True, the lunch menu is abbreviated, but come with friends and share some appetizers. Good picks are the fried shrimp toast and the fried vegetable spring rolls. But for those into exotic eats cold jellyfish and curry squid are also meal openers. Lunch entrées include both Hunan shrimp and Szechuan shrimp plus Kung Pao chicken (not really spicy), sweet-and-sour pork, and for tofu fans, Ma Po Tofu that comes like a soup/stew with chunks of tofu floating in a broth.

Other lunch offerings include the clay pot rice dishes with eggplant

and minced garlic; chicken and Chinese sausage; roasted pig; roasted duck; and pumpkin and Chinese yams plus others. Patrons can also choose curry beef brisket; beef with egg; roasted pig; or shrimp with egg plus other options served over rice.

Besides the authenticity of the cooking, a big draw here is the very, very extensive menu. You could come here probably almost every day for one year and still not sample every dish on offer.

Taste @ Hong Kong, 13912 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy., Chantilly. Phone: 703-378-7680/7681. Hours: Lunch and dinner daily. www.tasteathongkong.com.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

broader audience than they have been able to reach in the past. To be held virtually on Saturday, June 5, 2021; and in-person - Saturday, June 19, 2021.

SATURDAY/JUNE 19

Family Yard Sale. 8:30-12 p.m. At Reston Association, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. Eighty families will be selling a variety of items, so this event is a great opportunity to find things for a new home or a college dorm. Sign up to have a booth or stop by to browse for great bargains. Booth space is two parking spaces. Tables are not provided. Space is limited. All sales are final. No refunds unless canceled due to rain. Register for booth space through your Webtrac account or contact Ashleigh@reston.org or call 703-435-6577 for more information. Cost is \$45/RA members, booth space, \$55/Non-members. Visit the website: <https://www.reston.org/>

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Oak Hill Elementary School, 3210 Kinross Circle, Herndon. Children who are age 5 by September 30, 2021 are eligible to enter kindergar-

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9

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(From left) John Murphy, Jimmy Cirrito, Maureen Cirrito, Town of Herndon Mayor Sheila Olem, Joe Livingwood of Reston, Guy Smoot of Chantilly, and Ben Abddaim of Herndon.



John Murphy, co-convoy leader unfurls the POW-MIA flag attached to his motorcycle parked in formation behind Jimmy's Old Town Tavern.



Joe Livingwood of Reston prepares to participate in the Jimmy's Old Town Tavern Memorial Day event held Sunday, May 30. He would later lead all in prayer.

Rolling to Remember Convoys Out of Herndon

Iconic town tavern holds Memorial Day event.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

On May 30, Jimmy's Old Town Tavern in Historic Herndon held its annual Memorial Day Weekend event. Jimmy Cirrito is the owner and operator of the cozy, vintage tavern located at the corner of Elden and Spring streets. Since he opened the tavern 24 years ago this weekend, his heart overflows with a fierce love for his family, employees, friends, the Buffalo Bills, and those who honorably serve or served in the U.S. Armed Forces. But deep in his heart is a place for the extraordinary men and women who served in the U.S. military and died in the performance of their duties.

Motorcyclists gathered at 9 a.m. at Jimmy's for complementary breakfast and to join in convoy to Rolling to Remember 2021 Washington D.C. Amvets organized the event for its third year replacing longtime Rolling Thunder. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, no formal ceremony or gathering

was held on the Mall. As the bikers finished eating, Cirrito and others shared who they thought about and honored this Memorial Day. Cirrito took several moments considering his answer, tears welling. "In my eyes, every day is Memorial Day. Thank you to those who sacrificed all and their families. God, bless America."

MURPHY said that he was an Army brat. "I'll be thinking about my dad, who served in Vietnam. While he is not on the Wall [Vietnam Memorial], many of his comrades are. Dad died in 1985. I ride in his honor." Murphy then walked over to his motorcycle and held out a small POW-MIA flag attached behind the saddle. The Rolling to Remember 2021 Washington D.C. motorcycle demonstration is "to raise awareness of the critical issues facing our nation's veterans and demand action for the 82,000 service members missing, as well as raise awareness of the 22 veterans who die by suicide each day," according to rollingtoremember.com.

Motorcyclist Joe Livingood of Reston, who

would later lead all in prayer before the convoy left, said that his father served in the Coast Guard and his brother in the Navy. "I thank all those who served and are serving our country and honor them for that service. I have family members named on the Wall."

During remarks, Herndon's mayor Sheila Olem welcomed everyone to the town and Jimmy's. She said that the reason people were gathering there that morning was to remember the United States military men and women who served and died serving. Olem said her parents grew up as teens during World War II. When the bombs hit, they lost many friends, so Memorial Day had always been something close to their hearts and hers.

"I want to let everyone know...my heart goes out to the friends, family, and comrades of all those individuals who sacrificed to keep us free and to continue to make America the place that people want to come to. God, bless America. God, bless everyone who ever served [and] their family members," said Olem.

MOMENTS LATER, rubber hit the road.

Sgt. Furman, SPO Eicke, and Cpl. Passmore of the Town of Herndon Police Department escorted the motorcycle convoy leaving Jimmy's down Spring Street and onto Elden. They passed by Josh Jay waving a giant U.S. flag and Mayor Olem waving her red, white, and blue scarf. Ride leaders John Murphy and Doug Thompson took over the convoy lead at the town limits. They guided the staggered formation to George Washington Parkway through Great Falls and rolled to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C.

When the bikers returned to Jimmy's later that afternoon, live music and food awaited. The sale of special edition t-shirts and paraphernalia benefited Operation Homefront. The nonprofit provides programs that address short-term and critical financial assistance - food, utilities, home repairs, rent/mortgage payments; long-term stability - mortgage-free homes and a veteran caregiver support program; and recurring family support-baby showers to welcome veterans' newest family members, holiday programs to provide meals and toys, and backpacks filled with school supplies for military kids, according to organization's website.

Area Middle Schoolers Tackle Carbon Emissions

The CQuestrators, a team of two middle schoolers; Veda Murthy (from Rachel Carson Middle School) and Varsha Gunda (Nysmith School), competed in eCybermission, which is an army-based competition geared towards promoting self-discovery and the real life applications of STEM. The CQuestrators team won 1st place in the state of Virginia, advanced to regionals, and stood 1st in the North-East regionals in their category.

The problem that the team tackled was the excess carbon emissions in urban environments. In 2019, about 36.8 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide was produced



The CQuestrators: Veda Murthy and Varsha Gunda

globally. Urban cities accounted for more than 70 percent of global CO2 emissions. Climate change can lead to many extreme weather

events and health impacts, including increases in asthma and other health disorders. As we all know, climate change has impacted our society and community tremendously, and this team found a solution to this prominent problem.

The CQuestrators have developed a solution by harnessing a major carbon sink; the soil. The Soil absorbs more than 5 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide annually. Through their innovative solution, they have enhanced the carbon capturing capacity of the soil. They conducted several experiments and developed an eco-friendly solution called the Carbon Sink Pellets. Carbon Sink Pellets are effective carbon dioxide absorb-

ing materials, and when added to the soil it not only helps with carbon dioxide absorption, but also enriches the nutrient properties in the soil.

Next steps: The CQuestrators have received the STEM-in-action grant from eCybermission to implement their solution in schools and county gardens, which will increase the amount of carbon sinks in urban environments. The team is excited to implement their solution during this year and are passionate to solve the problem of carbon emissions in their community. The CQuestrators have advanced to the National level of eCybermission, which will be held in June.

If you see a mail thief at work, or if you believe your mail was stolen, call police immediately, then call Postal Inspectors at 877-876-2455.



To report a mail theft, call the local police and then postal inspectors at 877-876-2455

‘Never Place Cash or Checks in Mailbox’

Postal inspector advises residents about mail fraud.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

According to MPO Sabrina Ruck of the Sully District Police Station, “We get a lot of cases of mail theft in Sully.” So to advise residents how to avoid becoming victims of this crime, Postal Inspector Steve Donaghey addressed a recent meeting of that station’s Citizens Advisory Committee.

He’s one of four people who work on the Northern Virginia Mail Theft Team. And he began his online session by detailing the five, most-common ways people’s mail may be stolen:

- ❖ **Fraudulent change of address:** When they fill out a change of address card, in person or online. “It only costs \$1,” said Donaghey. “If they’re charging more, it’s a scam, so beware.”

CHANGE OF ADDRESS fraud is also a form of identity theft. Once the scammer knows someone’s current name and address, he can use the change of address process to reroute the victim’s mail to a different address. The crook can then open this mail to obtain additional information, such as the victim’s credit card or Social Security numbers. So, said Donaghey, “If you go several days without mail or aren’t receiving all of it, contact USPS management to check on it and your address can be flagged in the system.”

- ❖ **Red flag bandits:** “Putting up the red flag on your mailbox is a beacon for people looking for personal checks,” explained Donaghey. “They’ll remove your information and put on what they want. For example, a \$120 check to Verizon with your signature ends up being payable to John Smith for \$7,000.” So, he said, “Never place cash or checks in your mailbox as outgoing mail. Instead, use the internal, wall slots at the post office.”

- ❖ **Attacks on blue USPS collection boxes:** “The targeting of collection boxes has dramatically risen,” said Donaghey. “Carriers are being robbed, bribed and attacked for their keys. The volume of mail inside the

boxes makes for a huge payday. They’re safe to use, but only during business hours. Don’t put your mail in after the last collection time – or during holidays and long weekends – because it’s then susceptible to whoever has the key.”

- ❖ **A collusive postal employee:** Such an employee deceives or gets an unlawful advantage over postal customers. “Bad apples are everywhere, but they’re few and far between,” said Donaghey. “The Office of the Inspector General [OIG] handles employee misconduct, so report problems to both the U.S. Postal Inspection Service [USPIS] and the OIG because they have federal, criminal investigators.”

- ❖ **Thefts of incoming mail after it’s been delivered:** “It’s not very common, since it happens in broad daylight and so many homes have cameras outside,” said Donaghey. “Residents should report suspicious behavior to local police or the USPIS.

“A case I’m working on now involves churches. A crew is going around to churches, stealing their mail as soon as it’s delivered and depositing [any cash or checks inside] directly to their accounts,” he continued. “People concerned about [potential] identity theft as a result of their mail being stolen should notify their bank, talk about a stop payment on their check or cancel their bank account.

“Obtain a copy of your altered check from the bank; and stay calm, because banks will typically refund your money after they go through their process. Also, pull your credit reports and consider a freeze; go to annualcreditreport.com. Most criminals are just looking for a check – easy money; but some take things further.”

TO PREVENT mail theft, Donaghey advised residents to “know when something important is being delivered to you and don’t mail cash or money orders. Ask a neighbor to collect your mail while you’re out of town and start a Neighborhood Watch program. And if you see a mail theft in progress, or you believe your mail was stolen, call the local police and then postal inspectors at 877-876-2455.”

“We’ve had an increase in mail theft over the past six months,” said police Lt. Josh Laitinen, assistant commander of the Sully District Station. “Our detectives in the Criminal Investigations Section work hand-in-hand with the postal inspectors on these cases.”



Steve Donaghey

Griffith Is Honored as Officer of the Quarter

Officer Jared Griffith has been honored as the Sully District Police Station’s Officer of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2021. He was recognized at a recent online meeting of the station’s Citizens Advisory Committee.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LT. JOSH LAITINEN

Police Sgt. Rick Lehr was the person who nominated him.

In his nominating letter, he noted that Griffith graduated from the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy in May 2019. Initially assigned to the Reston District Station upon completion of his training, Griffith later transferred to Sully District Station’s Midnight B shift, about a year ago.

“From that time, he has shown each night that he’s a tireless workhorse dedicated to traffic safety and keeping the roadways safe for everyone,” wrote Lehr. “He demonstrates his commitment by constantly finding impaired drivers on the road. Griffith made 34 DUI arrests in 2020 and, by mid-April

of this year, he’d made 12 more DUI arrests.”

Lehr said Griffith currently leads the Sully District Station in these arrests and is second in the county. “While he enjoys working in Sully, he hopes to further his passion by becoming a member of our DWI Enforcement Team at our Operations Support Bureau,” wrote Lehr. “Drunk and impaired drivers are a danger to everyone on the roads, and it’s imperative that officers focus on this safety issue.”

In addition to taking drunk drivers off the road, Griffith also focuses on general traffic safety while doing community policing. “His positive attitude, motivation and desire to keep the Sully community safe are to be commended,” wrote Lehr. “And all these elements make him deserving of the Sully Officer of the Quarter award for the first quarter of 2021.”

— BONNIE HOBBS

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FROM PAGE 7

ten for the 2021-22 school year. You will need to register your child at the school he or she will attend. To confirm Oak Hill Elementary School serves your particular address, go to the FCPS website, www.fcps.edu and click on Registration.

You will see the boundary locator where you can type in your address and confirm which FCPS school you are zoned for. Registration packets are available online. Visit the Kindergarten Registration page on the FCPS website: www.fcps.edu/registration for steps to register your student. If you’re within Oak Hill boundaries, contact Oak Hill ES registrar, Katherine Dillard, at KJDillard1@fcps.edu or by calling 703-467-3500 to schedule an appointment to register your child or if you have any questions.

NOW THRU OCT. 2

Winedown Weekends in the Tea Garden. 12-7 p.m. At Elden Street Tea Shop, 714 Pine Street, Herndon. Enjoy the new wine bar in the tea gardens with music (mostly live) every Friday and Saturday. Will have seasonal wine selections, snack items, and food trucks (coming soon). Local caterers and more available for purchase. Visit the website: <https://www.eldenstreettea.com/>

SUPPORT DULLES SOUTH FOOD PANTRY

Help Support Dulles South Food Pantry. They need potatoes, sweet potatoes, onions, garlic, cucumbers, squash, apples and oranges. Drop off items on Mondays from now to April 12, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (except for March 29) at Arcola Fire Department Annex, 24300 Stone Springs Blvd., Dulles Or give: <https://www.dsfp.org/donate-money/>

HERNDON ACCEPTING ARTS GRANT PROPOSALS

The Town of Herndon is accepting grant proposals up to \$4,500 through the Virginia Commission for the Arts (VCA) for projects to be implemented in FY 2022. For information on the Creative Communities Partnership Grant, review the FY2022 Guidelines for Funding which are available at http://www.arts.virginia.gov/grants_guidelines.html.

Nonprofit arts organizations incorporated in the Town of Herndon must meet general policy guidelines as published by the VCA. The Commission’s 2021-2022 Guidelines for Funding and other resources are on the website at www.arts.virginia.gov. Applicants should provide full documentation of projected budget, program planning, and a detailed description of the implementation of the project.

To learn more about the Town of Herndon Parks and Recreation Department, visit us at herndon.va.gov, or call 703-787-7300.

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Obituary

Obituary



Janice Harvard Blondin (78) passed away on the 18th of May 2021 in her Reston VA home in the company of her family. Born on the 22nd of April 1943 in New Haven CT to Clarence and Jeanne Harvard, Jan is survived by her husband Peter, daughter Deborah, sons Michael and Jeffrey, their wives Teresa and Jenise and seven grandchildren. Jan relocated to Reston in 1976 and subsequently graduated from NOVA with a degree in photography. Jan raised a wonderful family, earned her stars as a 20 year Navy wife, traveled frequently, was an avid bridge player, a powerful team bowler as well as a master potter and photographer. She fought a 3 year running battle with cancer earning the respect of all who met her. Her spirit will live on in the lives of her family and numerous friends. A visitation and funeral at St John Neumann Church in Reston VA is scheduled on June 10th commencing at 10:30am. Jan will be interred at Arlington Cemetery later this year. Additional details are available at www.AdamsGreen.com

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CALENDAR

FREE SUMMER CONCERTS IN RESTON

Reston Community Center is pleased to announce that free summer concerts will return to venues around Reston beginning in June.

Lunchtime with the Arts at Mason – Thursdays in June, Reston Town Square Park. 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Take a Break – Thursdays, 7 p.m. – 9 p.m., Lake Anne Plaza

Summerbration Fab Fridays – 7 – 9 p.m., Reston Station

Family Fun Entertainment Series – Saturdays, 10 a.m. – 10:45 a.m., Reston Town Square Park

Sunday Art in the Park with the Shenandoah Conservatory – Sundays, 7 p.m. – 8 p.m., Reston Town Square Park

OUR SPECIAL HARBOR OPENS

The Fairfax County Park Authority's Our Special Harbor spray park is now opened. This fully accessible Chesapeake-Bay-themed spray-ground has water features such as a spraying osprey nest, Chessie the sea serpent, misting sunflowers and a lighthouse. The beach area allows for quieter play with softer bubblers and interactive water tables while the computerized water maze and dumping crab basket provide more lively activity. Located at Lee District Park at 6601 Telegraph Road, Franconia. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/recenter/lee-district/family-recreation-area>.

GOLF CAMPS

Join the nationwide resurgence of the classic, lifelong game of golf. Laurel Hill Golf Club and Twin Lakes Golf Course are offering weeklong summer camps taught by professionals from The Eisman Golf Academy. Junior golfers ages 8-14 will learn and improve on golf fundamentals in a fun environment. Class sizes are limited for personalized instruction and camp includes on-course play. Also included are swag bags, hat, games and prizes. Camps will take place at Laurel Hill June 14 -18 and July 12-16, 2021; and at Twin Lakes on June 21-25, July 19-23, and Aug. 9-13, 2021. All camps run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. To register, visit the Junior Golf Fairfax website. Laurel Hill Golf Club is located at 8701 Laurel Hill Crest Drive in Lorton. Twin Lakes Golf Course is located at 6201 Union Mill Road in Clifton.

SATURDAY/JUNE 5

Taste of Springfield. 12 to 5 p.m. At Springfield Town Center, 6500 Springfield Mall, Springfield. Enjoy local dishes that are guaranteed to delight, live music, and entertainment for the whole family. Taste of Springfield Festival showcases some of the best eateries Fairfax has to offer while bringing the community together. Local vendors include Two Smooth Dudes Food Truck, Uncle Fred's BBQ, Sit Means Sit Dog Training and many more. Tasting tickets will be on sale at the event or in advance via springfieldtowncenter.com/events.

SUNDAY/JUNE 6

U-2: Still Essential. 2-3 p.m. On Zoom. Sponsored by the Cold War Museum, 1734 Farm Station Road, Warrenton. You Need to See What's Happening in That Hot Spot. But

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Paying It Forward

Immigrant's \$20K a month awards create opportunities for individuals experiencing economic hardships.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION



Kimmy Duong

A Vietnamese refugee turned philanthropist who works in Reston knows first-hand the fear and challenges of poverty. Kimmy Duong, of McLean, understands the stress of poverty and the strength necessary to pull free from the grasp of economic hardship. But mostly, she understands the benefit of hands reaching out to help her. Their gifts provided Duong the opportunities to create her own opportunities later.

Giving back and paying it forward is Duong's mantra. It became Duong's life mission to support humanitarian efforts for people in her Vietnamese homeland and adopted United States communities.

According to Duong, she came to America as an adult in 1975. "I had nothing but \$30 in my wallet," Duong recalled the date, April 29, the day before the fall of Saigon when the Communists took over her country. When she fled Saigon, she left behind her work as an IBM programmer-analyst. People in the United States helped Duong, and she benefited from a "generous America," a country of opportunity for an immigrant.

Initially, the challenges of her new life proved "very worrisome" and difficult for Duong. "I wanted to be able to help my family back in Vietnam," she said. "I worked four jobs. IBM was my main job, and I worked as a waitress and a sales lady at a fabric store because they gave a discount. I [also] worked at a fast-food shop," Duong said.

Now Duong is expanding her charitable efforts. Known for educational scholarships and gifts support for students attending higher education, health grants, welfare programs such as support for victims of COVID-19

and others, on Wednesday, May 26, Duong spoke about her newest endeavor, umbrellaed under the Kimmy Duong Foundation. It is the Welfare Hardship Program.

Duong said the program aims to help individuals and families in the Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. areas experiencing economic hardship. The amount of aid for each household is \$500 or \$1000. The Foundation provides a maximum of 20 grants per month and operates on a rolling basis throughout the year.

Duong said that the Hardship Grant Program is open to heads of household, from a single person household to multi-member households. All must have incomes under 150 percent of the federal poverty line and experience economic hardship. Applicants must reside and work in the Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. area. There is a limit of one grant per family per month. The applicant must provide their name, address, email, phone number, a letter explaining why they require assistance, two letters of recommendation, a tax return showing income below the poverty line, and a filled Affidavit of Hardship form.

A review committee determines the approved grantees every month. The Foundation will notify approved applicants by email or phone. Approved grants are provided by the last day of the month in which the application was reviewed. "We came here with nothing, and we benefited from generous America," said Duong. "We are in a position that we can give back to more people." Visit <https://thekimmyduongfoundation.org/portfolio/welfare-hardship-program> for more information.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

the Bad Guys Know When the Satellites Are Coming Over. Who You Going to Call? It's still the U-2. Visit the website: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/still-essential-the-enduring-legacy-of-the-u-2-tickets-146513940139>

TUESDAY/JUNE 8

"Duck Harbor" Web Series. 8 p.m. Episode Two. Sponsored by 1st Stage in Tysons Corner. Duck Harbor is a web series about a long-distance love in later life. The piece is brought to audiences through a creative series of short scenes in which the actors, just like the characters, are meeting for the first time. Audiences will get to experience the magic of the theater and the excitement of new love between these two lonely hearts reaching out from charming small towns on opposite sides of the country. Every week, each of the two actors,

who live on opposite coasts, will be given only their half of the script and will experience the other side of the story with a sincere and genuine freshness, "on stage," in front of our audience. Performances will take place every Tuesday, beginning on June 1 and ending on August 17. Get your tickets today at www.1ststage.org.

JUNE 8 TO JULY 4

Paintings by Rich Moore. At the Loft Gallery, 33 Mill Street, Second Floor, Occoquan. "The skies proclaim the work of His hands." Psalm 19:1 showcases the artistry of versatile landscape oil painter, Rich Moore as he endeavors to reveal a unique glimpse into the magnificence and wonder of the "handiwork of God." Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; and Sunday, Noon-5 p.m. Online Facebook Live Artist's Reception: Friday, June 11, 2021 7:00 pm <https://www.facebook.com/loftgalleryoccoquan>.

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Nearly Nicked



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Recently, I made the mistake of clicking on an email from an unfamiliar sender. It said "Membership Renewed," as in money had been spent by yours truly. But I hadn't spent any money renewing a membership that I knew of, and there is, I imagine, the axis on which some phishing scams are turning: By peeking your instinct to know where and what one's money is doing. Maybe I forgot something? Maybe my wife, Dina, paid for something and forgot to mention it? Maybe, maybe, maybe - so I clicked. The email looked as if it had been sent by "Geek Squad" with whom I have a service contract so I called to inquire further about this 'paid membership.'

The conversation began innocently enough. They confirmed my membership and seemed to have my pertinent data as well so I continued. When I couldn't recall this money being spent - and they couldn't tell me the last four numbers of the account which had been debited, I grew cautious, as I had been down this road once before. Nevertheless, I persisted. Since I had "Geeks" (or whomever, unbeknownst to me) on the phone, I figured I'd ask if they could fix a computer problem (no volume) and asked if the repair was covered by my service contract. They assured me that it was. And so, I gave them access to my computer so they could address the problem remotely. After computer fits and starts, and curious delays, they confessed that they were unable to fix the problem. So, and here it is, the hook: since they were unable to fix my computer, they wanted to refund me the 'membership' fee. That was excruciatingly familiar so I knew it was time to exit stage right.

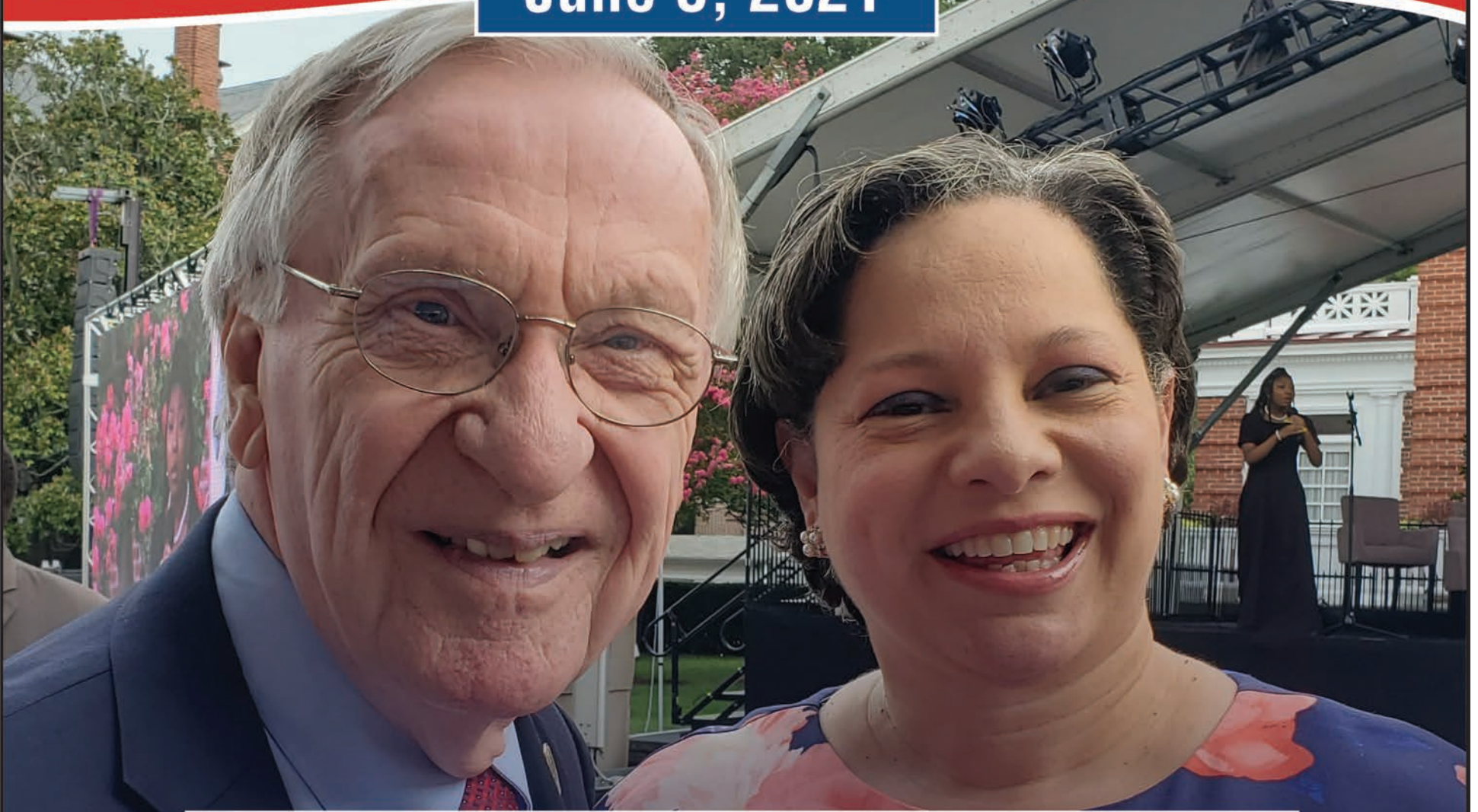
What had happened to me previously is that I didn't get out soon enough. I didn't know then what I know now so I agreed to the refund and gave them the last four of my account, and sure enough they electronically deposited the money into my checking account (or so it appeared. I later learned that no actual money had ever been transferred). However, they made a mistake, they said. They deposited \$3,000 instead of \$300. They apologized profusely at their mistake and requested that I pay them back \$3,000, which I thought was odd; why not just withdraw the money the same way they deposited it? They said they couldn't and I needed to pay them back. When I refused to follow their directions on how to pay them back (again, since they couldn't withdraw the money/stop payment, whatever), by getting cash and then going to a Western Union office and sending it back that way, I knew I was hooked. Then they threatened to disable my computer unless I paid them back exactly as I had been instructed. Then they erased all the icons on my desktop as a last attempt to coerce me to pay up. At this point, it had been nearly two hours since I made first contact, and I could see/feel where the conversation was going, so I risked it and hung up. Sure enough, my computer was wiped clean and locked. I couldn't access anything. The next day, I called Best Buy and explained the problem and how it had happened. They suggested I bring in my computer tower for an analysis. Within a day, they had identified the problem and offered a solution. They could unlock my computer, no problem, but the computer would have to be reset to the way it was when I first bought it. It wasn't a total disaster as most data was retrievable. As "The Three Stooges" would have said: "It wasn't a total loss."

This recent caller was once again leading me down the garden path. A path which would have ended at a rabbit hole into which me and money would have disappeared. The caller tried desperately to keep me on the line. I said I was at work and had to go. I told him I didn't expect the call to last so long and I promised to call him back. He had access to my computer - remotely, so I was afraid he could cause similar computer trouble as had happened before under eerily similar circumstances. He confirmed - so he thought, that I had his phone number and so I hung up, cautiously optimistic that I hadn't earned his wrath. I never called him back but for the next four hours, he called me back several times, a number from Los Angeles. I never answered, obviously. If I had I might not be pleased with myself.

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

DEMOCRATIC PARTY PRIMARY ELECTION

June 8, 2021



VOTE for the most experienced team in the Democratic Primary Election on June 8:

★ **Jennifer L McClellan for Governor**
(jennifermaclellan.com)

★ **Mark R. Herring for Attorney General**
(Herringforag.com)

★ **Kenneth R. "Ken" Plum for Delegate, 36th District**
(kenplum.com)



Thank you to all who have supported me for Delegate in the past. I ask for your vote once again. I have the enthusiasm and commitment to hard work to represent you and the values we share. I am honored to endorse Senator Jennifer McClellan for Governor. I have know Jennifer for more than 30 years, and I can tell you she has the knowledge, leadership skills and experience to be a great governor. I endorse Mark Herring for Attorney General. He is widely recognized as the best Attorney General in the country and deserves re-election. —Delegate Kenneth R. "Ken" Plum

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Authorized by Kenneth R. Plum.
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