

Fly Safe

Page 8

Letters (seen in the lower left-hand corner) kept the “connection and spark alive” between author Vicki Cody and her husband, Dick, career U.S. Army Apache Attack Helicopter pilot and commander of the 1-101st Aviation Regiment

State of the Pandemic

News, Page 3

Can Our Yards Save the Planet?

Native Plants, Page 6

HOMELIFESTYLE

PAGE 2

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495 Express Lanes Northern Extension (495 NEXT)

I-495 (Capital Beltway) from the Dulles Toll Road interchange to the George Washington Memorial Parkway interchange in the vicinity of the American Legion Bridge
Fairfax County

Virtual Public Information Meeting
Wednesday, September 29, 2021, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
www.495NorthernExtension.org

Find out about the latest updates and information related to the Virginia Department of Transportation's plans to extend the 495 Express Lanes by approximately three miles from the Dulles Toll Road interchange to the George Washington Memorial Parkway interchange in the vicinity of the American Legion Bridge. The 495 NEXT project is advancing to the design and construction phase, following more than three years of environmental study and traffic analysis, and the receipt of "Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)" from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the National Park Service on its Environmental Assessment, and an approval from FHWA on its Interchange Justification Report.

Also, learn about the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration's (MDOT SHA) New American Legion Bridge I-270 to I-70 Traffic Relief Plan. MDOT SHA representatives will provide information on proposed project improvements in Virginia near the George Washington Memorial Parkway and across the American Legion Bridge into Maryland. Information about these proposed project improvements can be found at www.495-270-p3.com.

Hear about ongoing collaboration and coordination between Virginia and Maryland project teams to improve travel and bring relief and multimodal solutions to I-495 and the Capital Beltway area. Information on transit planning and commitments will also be provided.

The meeting will be held as a **virtual/online meeting**. Information for accessing and participating in the virtual meeting is available at www.495NorthernExtension.org. The project team will make a presentation beginning at 6:30 p.m., followed by an opportunity for questions and answers.

Find meeting details by visiting the project website at 495NorthernExtension.org, emailing 495NorthernExtension@vdot.virginia.gov, or calling 703-259-3378 or TTY/TDD 711 to be connected with appropriate personnel.

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HOME LIFESTYLE

Mud Room Design that Keep Chaos at Bay

Style and function
combine to create
an organized space.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

A mud room is a small space with a big job. It needs to be hearty enough to stand up to items ranging from muddy soccer cleats to overflowing backpacks is no small feat. Local designers share ideas that marry style and function.

"Mudrooms continue to be a popular request when renovating as young families search for ways to organize backpacks, school books, sports equipment, team uniforms, cleats and sneakers," said Stephen Gordon, president of InSite Builders & Remodeling, based in Bethesda, Md. "Traditionally, mud rooms were attached to or an extension of the garage; however, I'm seeing a trend towards placing mud rooms in a wider variety of locations throughout a home — off a kitchen or eating area, at a basement entrance, and even as an addition on the front of a house."

When creating a mud room, assessing your needs is the first step. "A mud room is a great landing zone for everyone's shoes, jackets and backpacks," said Jessica Parker Wachtel, GTM Architects. "A few must-haves include a locker or cubbie for each family member, a dog washing station, and a closet for additional out-of-season jackets. Each member of the family can have their own hooks and baskets for extra storage. Additional elements to consider include durable flooring and lots of baskets."

The purpose of a home's mud room will vary, but organization is the end goal. "For families, mud rooms serve as a great drop zone for everyday items [such as] car keys, purse, wallet, shoes, coats, jackets, dog leashes, kids' sports equipment and backpacks," said Danielle Steele, Lead Designer, Marks-Woods Construction Services, based in Alexandria. "Having a dedicated mud room prevents clutter from happening in other areas of



PHOTO BY JENN VERRIER

Mud rooms serve as a great drop zone for everyday items — car keys, purse, wallet, shoes, coats, jackets, dog leashes, kids' sports equipment and backpacks, advises Danielle Steele, designer for Marks-Woods Construction Services.

**"Having a dedicated
mud room prevents
clutter from happening in
other areas of the home."**

— Danielle Steele,
Marks-Woods Construction Services

the home."

Function might be the impetus for including a mud room in the design of a home, but elements of style can be just as important.

"[They] are the perfect place for a surprise, whether it's crazy wallpaper, a colorful floor, brightly painted cubbies, or a whimsical light fixture," said Annie Elliott, Annie Elliott Design. "Because mud rooms are separate from the main living area, they don't have to match anything else in the house, and they don't have to stay tidy. They're chaotic spaces by nature so why not have a little fun?"



PHOTOS BY STACY ZARIN GOLDBERG

Mud rooms are the perfect place for a surprise, whether it's crazy wallpaper, a colorful floor, brightly painted cubbies, or a whimsical light fixture says Annie Elliott of Annie Elliott Design.



Mud rooms continue to be popular as young families search for ways to organize backpacks, school books, sports equipment, team uniforms, cleats and sneakers, says Stephen Gordon, InSite Builders & Remodeling.

Pandemic Evolution — Not Ending as Hoped

Local health leaders forecast endemic management.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

People in Fairfax County will need to learn how to navigate COVID-19 as individuals and in their communities because we probably cannot eradicate the virus. Hope for herd immunity is fading for multiple reasons, even though many people are vaccinated.

The pandemic is expected to become endemic, something we learn to live with and manage as it circulates, mutates, and lands on every doorstep across the globe.

High rates of COVID vaccination along with common-sense mitigation measures should mean COVID-19 can be controlled, say local experts, including Benjamin Schwartz, M.D., Medical Epidemiologist for Fairfax County Health Department, and Thomas Taghon, D.O., MHA, Chief Medical Officer at HCA Healthcare Reston Hospital Center.

The highly contagious Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 may not be the last or the worst variant people in Fairfax County see, given that so much of the world is not vaccinated.

In separate interviews, Schwartz and Taghon indicated that we are unlikely to attain COVID zero. They each shared how best to manage the contagious virus and navigate the disruption to everyday lives.

Schwartz oversees health concerns for the county's population of 1,171,848 residents. Taghon oversees the 209-bed Reston Hospital Center.

Dr. Benjamin Schwartz,
Fairfax County Health
Department Director
of Epidemiology and
Population Health

Schwartz said that in Fairfax County, since the middle of June, they have seen an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases. "Our community transmission level increased from being low at that time to now where it currently is defined as high transmission," he said. Schwartz noted that in no way has the level been at rates seen in Florida or Louisiana or the other states that have lower vaccination rates. Increasing case numbers reflect the Delta variant, but higher vaccination rates here have led to lower hospitalizations and deaths.

Schwartz said that the variants were named [by World Health Organization] using letters of the Greek alphabet, i.e., Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, easier to pronounce. For example, the B.1.1.7 variant, first identified in the United Kingdom, is known as Alpha.

Schwartz said that the County dashboard



Fairfax County Health Department Director of Epidemiology and Population Health
Dr. Benjamin Schwartz.

reported on Sept. 3 that in Fairfax County, among all residents 18 years and above, the vaccination rate with at least one dose was at 78.8 percent, and 71.7 percent were fully vaccinated.

Schwartz said he thought that COVID was going to be a "part of our viral ecosystem."

"We won't be able to eliminate it, but with high rates of vaccination and high levels of immunity in the population, it will be controlled," he said.

Schwartz said that there are endemic diseases with seasonal outbreaks, such as influenza.

"Each fall and winter respiratory syncytial virus or RSV is part of our viral ecosystem and every year causes disease outbreaks," said Schwartz. "So, I think seeing occasional peaks of the viruses is again just part of the viruses that we have in our community is one likely future for Coronavirus as well."

There are two ways to develop immunity to COVID-19, by being vaccinated or by getting the disease.

"If people develop immunity, what we are going to see are lower levels of infection, and the infections that do occur are not going to have the severe consequences."

At some point, Schwartz said children would get authorization to receive the vaccine and that will be very significant. "We will have the ability to achieve high levels of immunity across our populations, and I think the rates of disease ... and the number of outbreaks are going to go down substantially."

Schwartz reinforced the use of the well-promoted mitigation measures, especially masks. "But I don't think we need to envision a future where these measures are necessarily part of our daily lives. The ability to achieve population-wide immunity is just

really the most important thing that we can do," he said.

Thomas Taghon, D.O.,
MHA Chief Medical
Officer at HCA
Healthcare Reston
Hospital Center

Taghon said what they have seen at Reston Hospital since early to mid-July is a sustained increase in the number of COVID patients, from the single digits up to the teens, both coming through the emergency room and admitted to the hospital.

"The patients who are being admitted to the hospital, are for the vast majority not vaccinated, and as a percentage, the number that is requiring a higher level of service, including in the intensive care unit, is higher than we have seen previously," said Taghon. "While the number of patients was not as high as earlier in the pandemic, the percentage that is requiring ICU care has increased."

"So, patients are sicker. I am cautiously optimistic that it has leveled off. But some of the models suggest that we may see a continued increased number of patients here throughout September and October." He added that most patients have the Delta variant because that is the data they see from across Virginia.

Asked his thoughts if we could ever attain a "COVID zero," Taghon said, he thought it difficult to imagine any time soon. The reasons are probably include vaccine hesitancy and low vaccination rates in parts of the

U.S. We could continue to see different variants emerge from around the world because we're such a globally connected society, Taghon said.

"Things don't stay local. They spread," Taghon said. "I think we are going to have to learn how to deal with it, keep ourselves safe and treat these patients."

Asked if we were transitioning from a pandemic to endemic, a continuous COVID activity level we live with, Taghon said he thought that we were "starting to see that play out now." The virus continues to evolve with new variants detected, some more infectious than others and vaccination rates variable. "From that perspective, I do think there's going to be sort of this level of infection that's in the community or endemic ... going forward."

Learning how best to navigate life with COVID-19 is still an evolving situation, but we are learning all the time, Taghon said. "What I would say is the following. One, I would continue to encourage everybody to become vaccinated. I think that's the best defense that we have right now."

"Stay connected to the news," Taghon said. "Talk with your health care providers so that when those recommendations come out, you are aware of them, and you can decide with your doctor when and if you should get a booster. That's the second part," he said.

"And the third part is to continue to be smart when you wear a mask... Masking is still advisable whether or not it is required by the government," Taghon said. "And other things like good hygiene... If nothing

else that protects you against the spread of a host of other viral and bacterial infectious diseases that can compound the problem."

Global Vaccine Shortfall

The world's poorest countries are facing the Delta variant with too few vaccines and too late to halt the pandemic.

As of Sept. 3, 40.2 percent of the world population had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, but only 1.8 percent of people in low-income countries had received at least one dose, according to Our World Data, an International COVID-19 vaccination dataset.

"Vaccine injustice is a shame on all humanity, and if we don't tackle it together, we will prolong the acute stage of this pandemic for years when it could be over in a matter of months," said World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus at a media briefing on Aug. 18.

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Thomas Taghon, DO MHA,
Chief Medical Officer at
Reston Hospital Center.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

When Odds Are Stacked Against the Many ...

BY ANDRES JIMENEZ

Out of many, one. It's a phrase carved into marble facades across Washington and the United States and woven into the founding fabric of our country. Whenever a moment arises where the odds are stacked against the many, unification is usually the only path forward -- unite or die.

This principle has been at the foundation of the three great passions of my professional life. First, I've spent decades fighting for our environment. I've seen that when it comes to tackling problems on a global scale, we need unified voices to carry a loud message to those that need to hear it.

Second, I fight every day to diversify organizations. I know that when a group of people don't have a seat at the table that it's time to get a bigger table.

And last but not least, I've always stood shoulder-to-shoulder with my brothers and sisters in the labor movement. Their fight is the fight of all working families everywhere and they know that there's always strength in numbers.

For generations union members have organized, vocalized, and realized better outcomes for not only

We need our local leaders to set an example for the type of world class workers' rights that will attract and keep working families, budding professionals, and hungry entrepreneurs here.

themselves and their co-workers, but the betterment of all in our society. The core mission of a labor union is to take the key components that make up a company (its employees) and unify them to provide equal and solid footing for the fair and equitable treatment of its workforce and serve as an example to all others. In essence, it is the most American, democratic, and equitable thing I can think of. It is no wonder that the United States is a global leader on workers' rights -- it's in our society's DNA to fight for what's right.

Yet, it's not enough to simply know this. You have to understand it, appreciate it, and build upon it. That's why I'm hopeful that not only will the Commonwealth of Virginia continue to welcome this new era of labor organizing with open arms, but that my home locality of Fairfax County will usher it in by leading the way on thoughtful, respectful, and forward-thinking

collective bargaining.

Fairfax County has a rich tradition of tackling new, complex problems head on. It's that spirit that's transformed this area into one of the country's most diverse, beautiful, and prosperous economic engines. However, it's not enough to attract world class businesses to our community. We already offer incredible schools, safety, and transportation. Now we need our local leaders to set an example for the type of world class workers' rights that will attract and keep working families, budding professionals, and hungry entrepreneurs here. The Board of Supervisors can do that by passing a meaningful collective bargaining ordinance.

If we're going to live out the values we preach; if we're going to stand up in front of working families year after year and tell them we're here to fight with them; if we're going to truly live up to the One Fairfax policy, then we need

to admit that out of the many that make up Fairfax County, we can never be one until we recognize that its most significant constituency is that of its dedicated workforce across every industry.

Whether you're a fellow civil servant, advocate, worker, or simply a citizen that appreciates a 40-hour workweek, a newfound ability to work from home, or the sacrifices so many made to keep our community afloat through this pandemic, I encourage you to reflect on the many benefits we've all reaped from generations of labor organizing, learn more about how pivotal a tool collective bargaining truly is, and call on the County to pass collective bargaining today.

Andres Jimenez is an at-large Planning Commissioner in Fairfax County and sits on the Commonwealth's Attorneys Advisory Council on Criminal Justice Reform, among other community service positions.

Visit to a Sausage Factory Redistricting, now in public.

BY DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM

The quotation, "Laws are like sausages, better not to see them being made," has been attributed to several different writers and scholars over the years. Regardless of who said it first, that person had obviously observed law making and sausage making up close. Because of its messiness, there has been a tendency on the part of legislators to do the work behind closed doors without the public being able to see the trade-offs, the bloodletting, and the deal-making that is so much a part of the legislative compromise inherent in passing complex legislation.

At no time has the reference to legislative sausage making been more relevant than in the constitutionally-mandated requirement that a census be conducted every decade and that the results of the counting of all the people be used to draw legislative districts that adhere to the Baker v Carr Supreme Court ruling of one person, one vote. Although the case was not decided until 1962, the abuses that occurred with the malapportionment of legislative bodies are

as old as the republic.

In his definitive book on the subject, *Gerrymanders: How Redistricting Has Protected Slavery, White Supremacy, and Partisan Minorities in Virginia*, (University of Virginia Press, 2019), historian Brent Tarter focuses on Virginia's long history of gerrymandering. Tarter exposes practices going back to nineteenth century and colonial times and explains how they protected landowners' and slave owners' interests. The consequences of redistricting and reapportionment in modern Virginia clearly thwarted the will of the majority and held the state back in many regards.

I was in the House of Delegates in the majority party in some instances and in the minority in others for the redistricting of 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, before the redistricting that is currently taking place. In all those redistricting processes prior to the one underway, the decision making took place behind closed doors without public involvement. During those stressful events in which the future control of the legislature for the next decade was decided by the majority party, there were deliberate decisions to put

legislators of the minority party in the same district to make them run against each other or to have one retire. There was much gnashing of teeth and figuratively bloody struggles as power was divided up. The absolute assertion of power of one group of politicians over another in rooms outside public view was at times horrifying. Both Democrats and Republicans were equally guilty. In almost every instance the action was appealed to the courts that often overturned the work of the legislature for its lack of equal protection of everyone.

The voters took charge of the process with the approval last year of an amendment to establish a commission to do the work of drawing legislative boundary lines. The major difference between the past way of doing redistricting is that the process, as complex and messy as it may be, is open to public view in every instance. There will be complaints as there always are that there are winners and losers as there always are. What will

be missing are the domination of one party over another and strict partisanship as the guiding principle for the work that is being done. The result I believe when the grinding and stuffing carried out by the commission is done will be a better "sausage" with which to govern the Commonwealth.

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NEWS

McLean Project for the Arts Seeks Youth Art Entries for Fall Festival

Submissions for MPAartfest Virtual Children's Art Walk accepted Sept. 18 and 25

The McLean Project for the Arts (MPA) currently seeks submissions for the 15th Annual MPAartfest Children's Art Walk. A perennial favorite at MPAartfest, the Children's Art Walk is an open-air gallery of student art sponsored by the New Dominion Women's Club

of McLean. This much-loved community tradition will return to McLean Central Park during MPAartfest 2021, Oct. 3, 2021 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The show will be juried and open to students in the Langley and McLean Fairfax County Public School pyramid, as well as students at private and parochial schools. Student artwork submissions are welcome Saturday, Sept.

18 and 25, 2021. Submissions may be dropped off at McLean Project for the Arts (1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean, VA 22101) from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Limit one submission per student. Artwork may be any size 11x14 or smaller. Following MPAartfest, submissions may be picked up from MPA on Oct. 9 and 16 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

McLean Project for the Arts (MPA) provides high-quality art exhibitions showcasing the work of established and emerging artists, educational programs, art classes, MPAartfest, summer art camps, and ArtReach, an award-winning program serving students in grades K - 12, seniors, and individuals with special needs. For more information, visit www.mpaart.org.

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Unusual Increases For Car Tax

About 12% of Fairfax County residents will see an increase in their car tax bills because of the pandemic.

The average increase is \$25 compared to last year for vehicles valued at \$20,000 or less, say Fairfax County tax officials. The county wants to notify taxpayers now as personal property tax bills begin to go out in the mail.

What's driving the rise in tax bills for some vehicle owners? The low supply and high demand for used and new cars are pushing prices to record levels. Automakers have been hit by a global computer chip shortage due to the pandemic that's hampering their ability to build new cars. As such, many car buyers have turned to used vehicles instead, driving prices higher.

While a car's value normally decreases every year it ages, the price tag for used vehicles has been climbing steadily since last year. Low interest rates and stimulus payments are also helping to fuel car purchases, pushing prices higher.

Fairfax County bases car taxes on a vehicle's value on the J.D. Power Used Car Guide. For most vehicles, the value is based on the "Clean Trade-in Value" as of Jan. 1 of the tax year.

Car owners can file an appeal of their taxes if they believe their vehicle has been overassessed. <https://www.fairfax-county.gov/taxes/vehicles/appealing-your-vehicle-assessment> A vehicle's value can be appealed based on body damage, rusting or high mileage.

Car owners still must pay their tax bill by the due date.

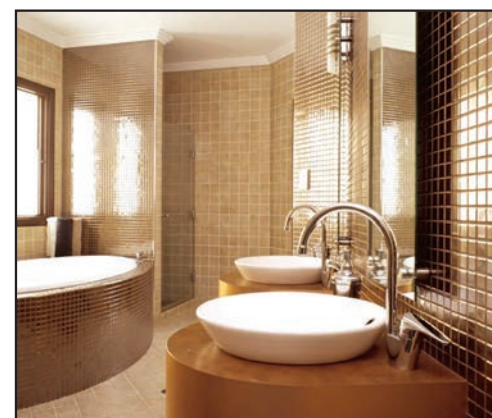
Car tax bills are due on Tuesday, Oct. 5. Paying online is quick and easy, and it's free to use an e-check. The county offers other payment options, and cash or money order payments can also be placed in the red drop-off boxes at the Fairfax County Government Center. Additional drop-off locations at select library branches will be available starting Sept. 15.

Visit the Fairfax County Department of Tax Administration at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/taxes/> or call 703-222-8234, TTY 711.

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Can Our Yards Save the Planet?

Plant native plants for pollinators, food for birds and more.

By GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE CONNECTION

When Tami Entabi moved into her Mount Vernon-area home in 2006, the backyard was a thick mass of intertwined English ivy. Today, to her delight, purple violets are spreading and the garden is abuzz with birds, bees, butterflies, moths and other insects from spring through fall.

Entabi removed most of the English ivy, an invasive plant, and wants the violets to take over. They support the great spangled fritillary butterfly and provide nectar plants for other pollinators. She's striving for blooms most of the year. She leaves the leaves and dead wood in her garden beds. Her goal is a woodland garden of native plants that supports native insects, birds and other wildlife.

Entabi and many others are trying to eliminate plants not native to the area. Non-native or invasive plants are plants introduced to an area intentionally or accidentally. Many spread rapidly and lack natural controls. They usually outcompete native plants, alter biological communities and degrade natural ecosystems. Some can cause economic harm.

Trouble Signs

The Earth is losing one to two percent of its insects every year, reported University of Connecticut entomologist David Wagner in January, a trend some call "the insect apocalypse." NatureServe scientists estimate that about one third of all U.S. species of animals and vascular plants are at risk of extinction. A 2020 World Wildlife Fund study found that of nearly 4,400 mammals, amphibians, birds, fish and reptile populations have dropped by 68 percent since 1970.

These studies are signaling that the way we are managing or failing to manage our natural resources is having serious consequences. Experts point to habitat loss and fragmentation, monocultures, invasive species, pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, climate change, light pollution and disease as contributing factors.

In suburbia, lawns and sprawling development have replaced most native biodiversity. Lawns cover 40 to 50 million acres of land in the United States, almost equivalent to all of the country's national parks, wrote Tik Root in the July 1 Wash-



Tami Entabi next to coral honeysuckle, a favorite of hummingbirds.



Tami Entabi explains that bees like the false indigo plant.

ington Post. Lawns and turfgrass are the largest "crop" grown in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. And while the perfect green lawn may be an American icon, ecologically, it has very little habitat value.

To reverse the declines in insects, birds and other wildlife and to be better stewards of the environment, many gardeners today are turning to more natural landscaping approaches and native plants.

University of Delaware entomologist Dr. Doug Tallamy offers this: "We have allowed alien plants to replace natives all over the country. Our native animals and plants cannot adapt to this gross and completely unnatural manipulation of their environment in time to negate the consequences."

With his initiative called "Home-grown National Park," Dr. Tallamy argues that our national parks are too small and spread apart to preserve species to the levels needed, that people can restore habitat and the ecological health of our communities.

Examples: Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck and volunteers converted part of the landscape around the Mount Vernon Government Center to native plants. He led an effort started in 2018 and adopted unanimously by the Board of Supervisors in 2020 to apply natural landscaping practices to county properties. Belle View Elementary School teachers created a native garden, outdoor classroom.

Pollinator Gardening

Pollinators include bees, beetles, butterflies, moths, other insects,



Violets now carpet her backyard.



Bumblebee on an obedient plant

birds and bats. When a pollinator carries pollen grains from the male anther of a flower to the female stigma of flowers of the same species and fertilizes it, pollination results and the plant can produce seeds. Around 75 percent of all flowering plants depend on pollinators for fertilization, but many pollinator species are declining. "The main threat facing wild pollinators is loss of habitats," wrote Kathy Reshetiloff for the Bay Journal.

Some pollinators are generalists and can pollinate a variety of plant species, but others are highly specialized. Many pollinators evolved to emerge when their plants are

flowering. If the plants are not available, the pollinators cannot survive.

In Entabi's backyard, coreopsis plants attract skipper and fritillary butterflies. Hummingbirds probe coral honeysuckle blossoms. Luna moths visit the pignut hickory trees. Zebra swallowtail butterflies visit the pawpaw trees. Their caterpillars feed at night and spend the day in the leaf litter. Bees love the St. Johnswort. Many insects feed on the goldenrod. Woodpeckers excavate dead wood. Skinks hide out in brush piles. Where a big tree that came down left a big hole, Entabi's making a frog pond.

"The soft bottom will be good for hibernating and the trunk will be part of pond and offer places to hide," she says.

Butterfly Gardening

Some people are planting native plants to support butterflies. "Selecting plants that will feed butterflies while also encouraging them to stick around for a while, laying eggs and creating a new generation of butterflies is your goal," advises the North American Butterfly Association's website. "To do this, you will need to choose plants that fall into two groups: nectar plants

SEE PLANT NATIVE, PAGE 7
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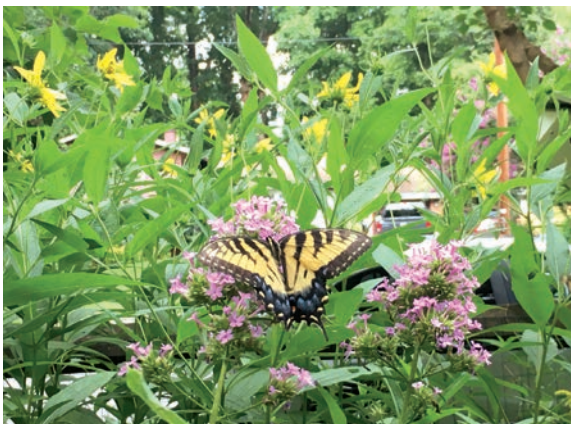
PHOTO BY TAMI ENTABI

Monarch caterpillar on milkweed.



PHOTO BY TAMI ENTABI

Wasp on gray dogwood.



BY TAMI ENTABI

Eastern tiger swallowtail butterfly on fall phlox.



PHOTO BY CLENDIA BOOTH

Bumblebee carrying pollen and feeding on milkweed blossoms.



BY TAMI ENTABI

Buckeye butterfly on hyssop



PHOTO BY CLENDIA BOOTH

Milkweed garden at the Martha Washington Library on Fort Hunt Road. Bellevue Elementary School is in the background, across the street.

Plant Native Plants for Pollinators

FROM PAGE 6

that will provide adult butterflies with energy and caterpillar food plants that will feed caterpillars. With careful selection from these two groups, your garden will provide for the entire life cycle of butterflies.

Some people are planting to specifically help monarch butterflies and support their migration to and from Mexico. These orange and black butterflies, weighing one-fifth the weight of a penny, are the only butterfly species to regularly undertake a two-way migration, for some, a 3,000-mile trip over

three generations. "This is one of the most extraordinary annual migrations on our planet," said monarch expert, the late Dr. Lincoln Brower of Sweet Briar College.

Most butterfly caterpillars feed on specific plant species, called their host plant. Monarch butterfly caterpillars feed exclusively on milkweed leaves. Host plants generally are the plants on which butterflies lay eggs and their caterpillars eat. Without milkweed, monarch butterflies cannot complete their life cycle.

The American Horticultural Society's River Farm, Fort Belvoir

and Burgundy Farm Country Day School have monarch butterfly gardens. The Martha Washington Library has a milkweed garden.

Tallamy urges people to "re-create" nature. For species in decline, he says, "Their only hope for a sustainable future is for us to intervene to right the wrongs that we have perpetrated. In order to let nature take its course, we must first re-create nature."

Tami Entabi's backyard is a good example.

"On your own property you can make a difference," Entabi says. "It's exciting."

Resources

Pollinator Gardening, www.pollinator.org; www.xerces.org/bringbackthepollinators

Butterfly Gardening, <http://nababutterfly.com/basics-of-butterfly-gardening/>

Guide to Native Plants for Northern Virginia, <https://www.plantnovanatives.org/>

Wildlife Habitat Gardens: Audubon at Home, www.audubonva.org,

<https://www.nwf.org/CertifiedWildlifeHabitat>;

Habitat at Home, <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/habitat/>

"Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard," book By Douglas W. Tallamy

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'Fly Safe'

A memoir of the 1990-91 Gulf War through multiple lenses.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

McLean author, and winner of the 2016 USA Best Book Awards for narrative nonfiction, Vicki Cody published her second book recently, "Fly Safe: Letters from the Gulf War and Reflections from Back Home." Released on Aug. 3, 2021, the timing is relevant in two ways.

"One of the things that struck me while I was working on this book, I expressed in my journals feelings and sentiments that are timely for and pertinent to what we're going through during the COVID-19 pandemic," Vicki Cody wrote in the book's epilogue. "Fear of the unknown, navigating a new normal, facing challenges, acceptance, moving forward, and clearing the next hurdle."

Vicki's story also tells of Gulf War events of 30 years ago.

Vicki said she lived and breathed the story in an interview about her book and how she wrote it. "It was all I thought about and dreamt about... It pretty much consumed me," she said.

While Vicki wrote "Fly Safe" chronologically, she tells the ordered events from three vantage points. She writes the main text of the story as a narration. Using scrapbooks and news releases, Vicki looks back to 1990-1991 through the lens of 2019-2020. Her narration is that of the commander's wife, mother of their children, and the person who ran Fort Campbell (KY) Family Support Groups with the rear detachment. She tells of ending her letters to Dick, "Fly safe," a ritual that comforted her.

Vicki's second means of telling the story is through a selection of the ninety-four letters she received from her deployed soldier husband, Dick. The words he put to paper during his nearly nine-month deployment



Author Vicki Cody.

after the invasion of Kuwait shape the book. Dick was a career U.S. Army Apache Attack Helicopter pilot and commander of the 1-101st Aviation Regiment out of Fort Campbell. The 101st fired the first shots that started

the Gulf War.

Dick writes of ordinary things, like playing ping pong and "a really nice Thanksgiving dinner." Dick tells Vicki he heard she was doing a "great job" in the role of the commander's wife, supporting the soldiers' families and wives. In other letters, Dick warns Vicki when he calls not to ask him anything about the operations. "I try to give you hints in my letters. One thing I can tell you: My pilots and I will earn our air medals and combat patches."

In his last letters, Dick writes, "The 101st launched the huge assault into Iraq on Feb. 24. In fact, we had to delay the war because the fog was so thick...It was a tough call on my part because everyone, and I mean the entire division, was locked and loaded and ready to strike." Dick ends his letters with "Love you and miss you." Sometimes it is: "Dick[smiley face]."

Beyond the text of Dick's letters, Vicki incorporates her journal entries. Like Dick's letters, they tell of simple joys and her angst, stress, and loneliness caused by the deployment. Vicki shares her struggles to maintain composure in difficult situations, especially as the commander's wife. "When much in your life is out of your control, you control what you can; oftentimes, that means your emotions. It takes a lot of energy to control them, especially for long periods of time,



Author Vicki Cody's book, "Fly Safe," is about love and commitment in even the most challenging times.

and then it's difficult to shift gears. Anytime you move forward or even take a step in a positive fashion, it beats sitting on the sidelines. ... And whether the outcome is what you wanted or a different version of that, at least you feel like you took some control."

AFTER HER MOTHER'S death three years ago, Vicki felt a void. One day, she saw in a different light the decorative hat box kept in their bedroom. Inside, she knew tucked safely away and tied with a red, white, and blue ribbon, rested Dick's letters, her 1990-91 journal, and the yellow ribbon the family tied to their tree. "So, I opened up the box and started reading the letters, all of them, from start to finish. It became very clear to me that there was this story that I was supposed to write," Vicki said.

Looking back, Vicki said that unless a per-

son lived it, they don't fully grasp army life and deployment. "I counted on our families to help me give me the love and support that I needed day to day. It was my fellow army wives that I always turned to because they were right there, next door, across the street," Vicki said.

"Fly Safe" shares with readers Vicki and Dick's love and connection even in the most challenging times and her first-hand knowledge that patriotism rang loud and clear thirty years ago during the Gulf War.



PHOTO BY AUSTIN CODY

Letters (seen in the lower left-hand corner) kept the "connection and spark alive" between author Vicki Cody and her husband, Dick, career U.S. Army Apache Attack Helicopter pilot and commander of the 1-101st Aviation Regiment.

7th Annual Paint Great Falls Plein Air Event

Sept. 8 - 12, 30 artists will converge to compete in the 7th Annual Paint Great Falls Plein Event. This year's competition is sponsored by The Arts of Great Falls with prizes by Celebrate Great Falls Foundation. This is the largest to date with 30 participating artists, to include several award-winning artists from the DMV area.

Painting en plein air, outside without the use of a photo reference, is a challenging event. There are elements such as heat, changing light, rain and insects that studio artists do not have. That's what makes this event exciting. This year, artists will find spots within Great Falls to create art on scene. The public is encouraged to engage and watch the artists at work.



Artist Debra Dartez sets up at Great Falls Park to paint for Paint Great Falls Plein Air Competition.

In addition to the daily plein air painting, there will be a Quick Draw event in the Great Falls Village Centre on Friday, Sept. 10, 6 - 8 p.m.

The Quick Draw is an excellent opportunity for the public to view artists painting in their element in changing light. In just two hours,



Pattee Hipschen paints in plein air (outdoors) at a 250 year-old farm in Great Falls.

artists will identify a composition and complete a painting that will be judged. Quick Draws are popular activities during plein air events.

The Arts of Great Falls is excited to bring this activity to Paint Great Falls.

The Judge for the Paint Great Falls event is Gavin Glakas and the judge for the Quick Paint is Marcia Klioze. All artwork will be available for viewing on our online gallery, at <https://greatfallsart.org/exhibits/> and by appointment.

The paintings will hang in The Arts of Great Falls Gallery through Sunday, Sept. 26. Artwork can be viewed at OPEN HOURS, Saturdays, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. or by appointment. All art is for sale and proceeds will benefit The Arts of Great Falls foundation.

The Arts of Great Falls is a non-profit organization bringing art and art education to the community.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

ENTERTAINMENT

WOLF TRAP PERFORMANCES

At Wolf Trap Farm Park
September 14 – Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit
with special guest Waxahatchee
September 22 – Indigo Girls with special guest
Ani DiFranco
Visit www.wolftrap.org for tickets. By phone at
877.WOLFTRAP

ALEXANDRIA OLD TOWN ART FESTIVAL

19th Annual Alexandria Old Town Art Festival
Saturday, Sept. 18, 2021, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday, Sept. 19, 2021, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Where: 300 John Carlyle St. in Alexandria, VA
Free Admission
<http://www.artfestival.com/festivals/19th-annual-alexandria-old-town-art-festival>

SEPT. 3-30

Transitions to Abstractions -- Five Painters.
Exhibition at the Great Falls Library, Large
Meeting Room, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great
Falls. A collective of local painters show their
work at the Great Falls Library. The show
features a group of experienced artists who
began working in more abstract painting after
exploring other mediums and styles. Featured
artists include two sculptors and an architect.
They are a part of the Great Falls Studios
group.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 9

Reston and Mid-Century Modern. 7-9 p.m. At
1639 Washington Plaza, Reston. All virtual
program. This presentation showcases
early Reston interiors, exploring how
mid-century modern style and archi-
tecture influenced their look and use.
Learn about Reston's early designers,
see how interiors were furnished, and
how Registration
Required. Free.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 10

Friday Night Live. 6:30 p.m. At Herndon Town
Green, Herndon. Popular free outdoor concert
series returns to regular performances. This
will be the 27th season for the concert series
which is produced by the Herndon Chamber
of Commerce.

Schedule

Sept 10 -- Keaton + 8 Track Jones;
Sept 17 -- The Reflex;
Sept 24 -- Screaming Mönkeys.

SEPT 10-19

Ken Ludwig's Sherwood: "The Adventures of
Robin Hood." At NextStop Theater Company
in Herndon. NextStop will create an open-air
theatre in the parking lot of the Northwest
Federal Credit Union headquarters in Herndon.
This production will give audiences the
chance to come together with their neighbors
for a rip-roaring romp through Sherwood Forest,
featuring all the thrills and romance you
could possibly ask for. Flying arrows, clanging
swords, and perilous feats of daring fill this
not-so-ye-olde tale of everyone's favorite hero
outlaw and his noble quest to steal from the
rich and give to the poor.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 11

Storytime Live. 10:30-12:30 p.m. At Kiddie Academy South Riding, 43060 Edgewater Street,
South Riding.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 11

Clifton Caboose 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run. 1 Mile
Fun Run/Walk starts at 6 p.m. 5K Run starts
at 6:30 p.m. Intersection of Clifton Rd, Newman Rd,
and Main St, Clifton. A 5K Run and 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk
beginning in Clifton. The scenic course winds down a
gently rolling country road, across a creek, and past a horse
or two. Early Pick-Up/Registration: Cash/Check only.
Friday, September 11, 5-7 p.m. at the Barn 7139 Main St,
Clifton. Race Day Registration and Pick up packets (cash/check
only) from 4:00-5:30 pm at the Barn, 7139 Main St., Clifton.
Cost: 5K Run - \$25, One-Mile Fun Run/Walk - \$20. Visit the website:
<https://c25k.redpodium.com/clifton-caboose-5k-run-c25k>



Parinaz Bahadori's "Peace in Pieces" is part of the Transitions to Abstractions -- Five Painters exhibition at the Great Falls Library.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 12

Concert on the Green. 6-8 p.m. At the Village Centre Green, behind the Old Brogue, Great Falls. Featuring Four Star Combo Band. Sponsored by Rossen Landscape.

MONDAY/SEPT. 13

Lawn Care Issues. 7 p.m. At Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Fairfax County Master Gardener Tony Makara will discuss with GFCA EP members lawn care issues that are best addressed in the Fall and also environmentally friendly. Tony will talk about the advantages of healthy turf, particularly as it protects the Fairfax County Watershed and ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay. Tony will suggest what to expect from lawn services and what questions to ask them regarding their use of fertilizer, herbicides, etc.

TUESDAY/SEPT. 14

Author Mary Lipsey. 7-8:30 p.m. At Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. Local author Mary Buckingham Lipsey will discuss, sell and sign her book Almost Forgotten Women: Yesterday's Headliners, which includes the stories of over 60 women between the years of 1840 and 1940 who made a difference. Visit the website: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/7885646>

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 15

Movies for Kids and Families. 12:30 p.m. in the McLean Community Center Community Hall. Bring an indoor picnic and introduce your kids to the animated movies that you love. Free.

SEPT. 16-26

"Bo-Nita." At Boro Park at The Boro Tysons, 350 Broad Street, Tysons. When: September 16 at 8:00 p.m., September 17 at 8:00 p.m., September 18 at 8:00 p.m., September 19 at 8:00 p.m., September 22 at 8:00 p.m., September 23 at 8:00 p.m., September 24 at 8:00 p.m., September 25 at 8:00 p.m., and September 26 at 8:00 p.m. Tickets: More information about tickets and event details are available at www.1ststage.org

FRIDAY/SEPT. 17

Celebrate Garba (Sharad Navratri) Workshop (Virtual). 6 p.m. At The Alden at McLean Community Center, McLean. When people in the northwestern Indian state of Gujarat want to celebrate, the ecstatic dance, traditionally known as Garba, often provides the fuel. An essential component of wedding celebrations and of the nine-day, fall Hindu festival Navratri, Garba refers to both a style of Indian folk dance as well as the event at which the dance is performed. The dance is an intoxicating, high-energy dance style marked by handclaps and twirls. Purchase tickets online at www.aldentheatre.org.

CALENDAR

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

Here's What's Happening at MCC!

The Old Firehouse



Friday Night Trip: Escape Room
Friday, Sept. 10, 4-10 p.m.
\$60/\$50 OFC Members

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Movies for Kids and Families
Wednesday, Sept. 15, 12:30 p.m.
In the MCC Community Hall
Free admission

Sponsored by The Alden



Celebrate Garba (Sharad Navratri) Workshop (Virtual)
Friday, Sept. 17, 6 p.m.
\$7/\$5 MCC district residents
(fee is per device)

The Old Firehouse



Family Bingo Night (Virtual)
Friday, Sept. 17, 7-9:30 p.m.
\$5 per person for 5 Virtual
Bingo Cards

The Old Firehouse



OFC Block Party
Saturday, Sept. 18, 1-4 p.m.
1440 Chain Bridge Rd.
Free admission

Sponsored by The Alden



Buckets N Boards Comedy Percussion Show
Saturday, Sept. 18, 5 p.m.
McLean Central Park

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The McLean Community Center
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www.aldentheatre.org

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

SATURDAY/SEPT. 11

Sept. 11 Remembrance Ceremony. 9 a.m. At Great Falls Freedom Memorial, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Great Falls lost six residents to the attacks on September 11. The ceremony will honor them and all who sacrificed on that day and in its aftermath. The event will include a color guard, patriotic songs, remarks by retired Army three-star general Robert Wood who was present at the Pentagon on 9/11, and a candle-lighting for each of the September 11 victims from Great Falls. The Freedom Memorial is located behind the Great Falls Library at 9830 Georgetown Pike. The ceremony is open to all. Ample parking is available in the library parking lot. In case of rain, the ceremony will move to the library meeting room. Limited seating will be provided. Attendees are encouraged to bring portable chairs.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 11

Fairfax County 20th Anniversary 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony. 2 p.m. At Bailey's Crossroads Volunteer Fire Department, 3601 Firehouse Lane, Falls Church. Join Fairfax County to remember those we lost and honor those who served on Sept. 11, 2001. Now, 20 years later, we come together in remembrance at Fairfax County's Fire Station 10, where many first responders deployed from to assist at the Pentagon. This ceremony is taking place in the afternoon in order to accommodate the Pentagon's 9/11 Ceremony and morning volunteer activities at the Government Center. RSVP to publicaffairs@fairfaxcounty.gov.

MONDAY/SEPT. 13

About Time Travel. 5-6 p.m. Via Zoom Meeting. Dr. Robert Ehrlich, professor emeritus and former chair of the Physics and Astronomy Department at GMU, discusses the possibility of time travel and how one might build a time machine. Free. Registration is required. Register here: <https://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/7979664>
A Zoom link will be sent the day before the event.

SEPT. 14, 28

Great Falls resident and expert on native plant gardening Meghan McGinty, Ph.D., will be offering five free clinics in September and October at Freedom Memorial in Great Falls from 11 a.m. to 12 noon. Following are the dates: September 14 and 28 October 5, 19, and 26. If interested, please register at CultivateNature@gmail.com. The clinics will be held rain or shine, except for extreme weather. They will be casual, question-driven sessions. Meghan is a botanist with a Ph.D. in Ecology and Environmental Biology from Columbia University. In 2013, she and her husband purchased a five acre property in Great Falls

where she has slowly been restoring native plants. In addition to planting native trees in a meadow to restore forest on her property, she also has removed lawn to establish a fenced native plant garden. The garden has thrived and is now home to butterflies and songbirds, skinks, toads, native insects, hawks and so much more.

Check out Meghan's Instagram account @cultivate_nature to follow the seasons of her garden and to pick up gardening tips and advice. EP members may remember Meghan's Zoom presentation in October 2020.

VIRGINIA STATE POLICE

OFFERING NEW PAYMENT OPTIONS

Beginning Sept. 7, 2021, customers doing business in-person at Virginia State Police offices within our Fairfax Division will be able to pay using a credit or bank card. Currently customers are restricted to using business and cashier's checks or cash to pay for services such as fingerprinting and background checks. The ability to use a card to pay for Virginia State Police services will be more convenient for the public and will make processing more efficient. In-person customers will be able to pay with MasterCard, Visa or Discover, in addition to business and cashier's checks or cash at the Fairfax Division Headquarters. At the same time, Fairfax Division Area Offices will transition from accepting cash and checks to only accepting MasterCard, Visa or Discover.

ONGOING

In-Person Worship Begins. 10:15 a.m. The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist), 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. In-person worship services will resume with some restrictions. Details at: https://faithconnector.s3.amazonaws.com/good-shepherdva/files/revise2_in_person_worship_begins_june_13.pdf

TEXT FOR FOOD

No Kid Hungry Virginia encourages families to text FOOD or COMIDA to 877-877 to find free summer food sites organized by school districts and community organizations. Meal sites are offering a variety of distribution models to help safely connect students with meals and promote social distancing, including "Grab and Go" service and food delivery along bus routes while passing out multiple days' worth of meals at one-time.

FRESHFARM MARKETS OPEN

Local FRESHFARM Markets are opened. Residents are encouraged to pre-order as much as possible, but grab-and-go and prepackaged options will be available for purchase at all of the markets listed below.

Saturday Markets
Arlington, 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. -- N Courthouse Rd. and 14th St N, Arlington
Oakton, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. -- 2854 Hunter Mill Rd., Oakton.
Sunday Market
Mosaic, 9 a.m - 2 p.m. -- 2910 District Ave., Fairfax

Sanctioned Event. Email: ngrifka@mac.com
Event Information for In Person Registrants:

- ❖ 5K Run - 8:00 a.m.
 - ❖ 10K Run - 8:10 a.m.
 - ❖ Kids Fun Run - 9:15 a.m. The Kids Fun Run is approximately 1 mile.
- Online Registration fees (In Person & Virtual):
- ❖ 5K: \$35 on Race Day
 - ❖ 10K: \$45 on Race Day
 - ❖ Fun Run: \$24 on Race Day

SUNDAY/SEPT. 19

Mutts Gone Nuts, A Comedy Dog Act. 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. At Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, Reston. Expect the unexpected, as canines and comedy collide in a smash hit performance that's leaving audiences everywhere howling for more. \$10 Reston/\$15 Non-Reston. Performances take place at the CenterStage, located at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com.

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Left Wondering If I'm Right

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



I admit, I watch more than my share of television. However, that being admitted, there certainly seems to be an awful lot of campaign-style, public service-type, advertising/announcements on television. From Medicare negotiating drug prices - or denying access to much-needed medication, to building back America by fixing our infrastructure, to creating millions of climate-improving, alternative energy driven "good paying jobs" to the NRA espousing their core values that everyone should carry a gun, and on and on and on. Where it stops, nobody knows.

I can appreciate how important it is for one to get their message out as often as possible, but now the message is not only often, but on multiple channels. And it's not even an election year. However, it is a legislative year and there's still a few months before Christmas recess. Will all the bills presently under consideration, amid the hyper partisan politics affecting pending legislation, allow any bills to ever see the tip of President Biden's pen? Nevertheless, there appears to be no shortage of dollars to promote any and all viewpoints. Now how much of it makes sense is beyond me. But since I don't really have a direct vote, I suppose a phone call will have to suffice. It seems too little too late though. The elected officials have their own agendas, and my voice is really only heard every two years anyway.

But with the Republican Party making it ever more difficult for us average voters (those of us not already in "the Big Tent"), perhaps all these "info-type-mercials" will fall on deaf ears, so to speak, or at least attached to heads attached to bodies finding it ever more difficult to actually vote. Granted, I may not be in the minorities that seem to be particularly targeted, but I am in a minority nonetheless: the percentage of Americans that actually casts a ballot. Often elections are won not by a majority, but by a plurality. If more people voted, perhaps some of us wouldn't be so angry about a regularly disenfranchised minority being further discriminated against. It's not fair, but apparently it's partisan: divide and conquer.

And right now, with all this pointed outreach on television, I feel, as a country, we're going backwards instead of manifesting our destiny going forward. So what if there's diversity? My grandparents were part of that diversity. It's what made all of us big and strong. Obviously it's wrong to restrict access for any segment of the population. America has always been about diversity. That's what's been right about this country ever since George Washington crossed the Delaware and forever changed the fortunes of America. You can't stop a trane (and I don't mean the HVAC company) of thought that is, or change; and certainly you can't stop free speech (except in a movie theatre). It happens naturally and frequently because it's been characteristic of America ever since the Founding Fathers took quill to parchment.

Now, after some of the legislative changes which have occurred, and some others which have been "filibustered" to near death, there's a sense that what's blown in the wind is not going to make Bob Dylan happy or guarantee my constitutional rights since I may play for the wrong team. I'm not looking to denigrate a percentage of the population, or restrict people's access to life-saving medication or censor all the news that's fit to print. Moreover, I don't want anything inhibiting my ability to find a job, raise my family, get an education or deny other groups similar opportunities. Quite frankly, I wish I could just mind my own business. Unfortunately, that seems short sighted and ill-advised. And besides, there's no "I" in my team.

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

FROM PAGE 9

FRIDAY/SEPT. 17

Family Bingo Night (Virtual). 7-9:30 p.m. Sponsored by McLean Community Center. Join in a virtual evening of fun and prizes with your family. Winners will take their pick of prizes. Preregistration is recommended. Activity No. 4701.221. Cost is \$5 per person for 5 Virtual Bingo Cards. Call OFC at 703-448-TEEN (8336).

SEPT. 18

10K/5K/Kid's Fun Run. 8-10 a.m. At St. Andrew the Apostle, 6720 Union Mill Road, Clifton. Join in the "Dash into the 80's" 10K, 5K & Fun Run located in Clifton. The race starts at the school and winds through the beautiful roads of Clifton on 10K, 5K, and Fun Run courses. All participants receive a race shirt and goodie bag. Dress up in your favorite sweatbands, legwarmers, and neon for the full "80's Dash" experience! This is a USATF

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6029 Chesterbrook Rd, McLean

***GORGEOUS* 5BR/3 full BA** home in sought-after **CHESTERBROOK** location with beautiful sunroom featuring new flooring and filled with windows and light; fabulously updated island kitchen features top of the line stainless steel appliances, breakfast bar plus inviting family room off the kitchen with fireplace; elegant living room and formal dining room; nicely-sized bedrooms; primary bedroom includes updated bathroom w/ dual vanity; spacious lower level rec room w/ frpl; circular driveway; lush landscaped .35/ac lot!

2829 Raymond Court, Falls Church

***WONDERFUL* 3BR/2.5 BA townhome** in sought-after **GREAT OAK SQUARE!** This lovely home features updated kitchen appliances including new Whirlpool fridge (2020) with water and ice, new GE microwave (2020), new Bosch dishwasher (2021), new disposal (2021) PLUS Kenmore stainless steel flat-top oven range. Renovated bathrooms; nicely sized bedrooms; private patio; 2 assigned spaces; close to East Falls Church Metro, W&OD Trail, moments to downtown Falls Church City farmer's market!

1623 Woodman Drive, McLean

***SOUGHT-AFTER* CHESTERBROOK WOODS! SPECTACULAR new home construction** by M-R Custom Homes, the premier local builder! **GORGEOUS to-be-built 6BR/6.5 BA** Thomas French designed luxury home will feature 10 ft ceilings on 1st floor, hardwood floors throughout, a three car garage and elevator ready floorplan. Gourmet chef's kitchen with large center island and breakfast bar, top-of-the-line Wolf/Sub Zero appliance package; large screened porch, outdoor gas frpl; Chesterbrook, Longellow & McLean schools!

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