

# Great Falls CONNECTION

The Little Patriots  
Parade at the Village  
Centre Green.

## NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE

2021-2022

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

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## NEWCOMERS GUIDE

### Great Falls Citizens Association

Newcomers to Great Falls, Va. soon realize that they have settled in a vibrant and growing community with a wonderful environment to raise a family, or to enjoy the peace and tranquility amid the surrounding hustle and bustle of suburban Washington.

Once referred to as Forestville, reflecting the area's dense tree growth punctuated only by farms of its early settlers, the community was renamed Great Falls in 1955, a name that aptly reminds us of the nearby falls and rapids of the Potomac running along its northern border.

Though Great Falls' early history has been replaced by a community largely residential in nature, some visible evidence of its past remains. Travelling along the nationally recognized historic Georgetown Pike, Great Falls' main thoroughfare, visitors will see traces of that era. For example, the Turner Farm at Georgetown Pike and Springvale Road is now operated by the Fairfax County Park Authority. A large dairy barn and other buildings, including the Turner Family home, still stand. Turner Farm Park is now home to an equestrian facility, the County's only Astronomical observatory, and the Turner Farmhouse Resident Curatorship.

Approaching Great Falls from Route 7, the fully restored 200-year-old Colvin Run Mill with its functioning water wheel powering an operational mill is open for visitors to

tour and attend special programs. Beautifully wooded and landscaped grounds, including a general store, offer opportunities for picnicking, shopping, and hiking nearby trails. Other historic sites in the community include the Great Falls Grange and the Forestville Schoolhouse located in the village, both fully restored and available for special events and private celebrations.

Numerous athletic and recreational facilities dot the community, along with two major parks —Riverbend and Great Falls. The community, like most in Northern Virginia, also enjoys a top rated primary and secondary school system.

But it is ultimately the residents that make the community special — passionate about what they value and working together to support local organizations, institutions, businesses, people, and events that offer the opportunity to interact. Celebrate Great Falls Foundation, the Rotary, the Garden Club, and numerous others, including Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA), make Great Falls what it is and what it will become.

Great Falls Citizens Association, GFCA, organized in 1968, is a community organization engaged in keeping residents apprised of developing issues as they arise, offering a forum to express their views, and advocating on their behalf.



Remembering Great Falls' Heritage



Recognizing Community Leadership



Celebrating our "Small Town" character

## Welcome Great Falls Residents!

On behalf of its Executive Board, you are cordially invited to join the **Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA)** and lend your voice to your community's forum.

Participate with more than 1,000 members and have your opinions heard by County and State Officials and learn about a broad spectrum of issues that are important to you and your neighbors on matters involving:  
Environment, Recreation, Parks, Transportation, Schools,  
Planning, Zoning, and Land Use

**For more information, visit:**

[www.GFCA.org](http://www.GFCA.org)



**Great Falls**  
Citizens Association



Renewing Our Natural Resources



Keeping Our Dark Skies Dark



Sponsoring Community Debates



## Good Vibes in Great Falls The favorite places and events in 2021

MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

In 2021, the longing to return to the favorite places and events in our communities has never been stronger. Most of us spent much of 2020 homing within our four walls, protecting ourselves and loved ones from COVID. Perhaps we ventured out in nature with our "Covid-pod" and found new sites, but at the same time, we craved our former haunts.

Vaccination rates are rising, and people are returning to those favorite places, the feel-good spaces that are easily accessible and evoke emotion. A good place draws us in through all our senses and what is or is not happening there. Its colors, spatial dimensions, sounds, and tactile appeal make a difference. Even the smells matter. They jolt the memory slides of our past, hitting us, for instance, when we open the door to our favorite bakery and experience the sweet scent of baking bread or we walk beside a creek and smell organic matter decomposing.

Whether manufactured or natural, social or secluded, these spots are places of importance to us, and we are drawn to share them with those important in our lives. The number of minutes spent there are immaterial, moments walking through the woods and at the coffee shop chatting with friends, but they feel safe and comfortable and rejuvenate.



The Great Falls Grange Park and Playground

In an informal survey, we asked people to name a few places in their communities that mattered to them in 2021, those that made them feel good, proud, and alive, and where

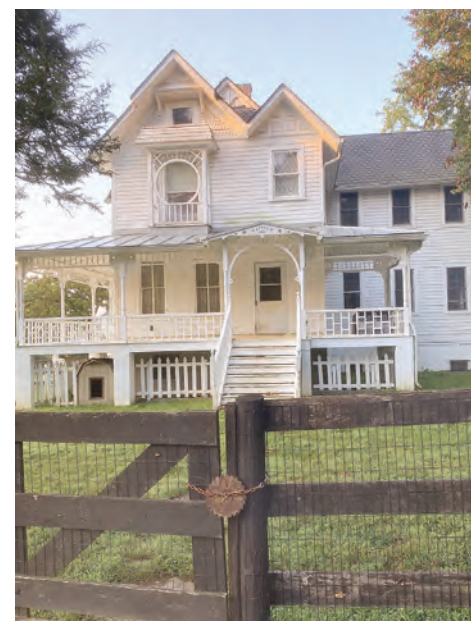
stress melted away. They may not make the iconic sites global travelers have on their bucket lists, but they are the most rewarding to people living in Great Falls.



Celebrate Great Falls presents an evening of its 2021 Concerts on the Green at the Great Falls Village Centre.



The historic Colvin Run Mill built circa 1811 a surviving operational 19th-century water-powered mill.



As of 2021, a special exception permits applicant Turner Farmhouse Foundation to operate a public benefit association facility, a bereavement retreat center on the 4.95-acre of the Turner Farm Park property.



The Grange at Great Falls is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is available for rent for up to 200 people through Fairfax County Historic Property Service.



The Old Forestville Schoolhouse. This site, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, dates back to 1889 was originally a one-room schoolhouse, but in 1911 doubled in size when the Floris Elementary Schoolhouse was moved from Frying Pan Park and attached to the building. It too is available for rent through Fairfax County Historic Property Service.



The Little Patriots Parade at the Village Centre Green and the Main Parade, 2021.



The Colvin Run Dance Hall, a historical building since 1931, remains closed as of Sept. 26, 2021. Welcoming all, the Colvin Run Citizens Association Board of Directors states on its website: "As the situation with the COVID Delta variant improves, we will reschedule the date for our grand reopening [previously scheduled for Sept. 18, 2021]."





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



PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY.

Aerial view of Clemyjontri Park with parking addition.

# Special in the Dranesville District

BY SUPERVISOR JOHN W. FOUST

**T**he Dranesville District includes McLean, Great Falls, Herndon and some areas of Vienna and Falls Church and has about 125,000 residents. It runs from the Arlington County border to the Loudoun County border along the beautiful Potomac River. Herndon is a quintessential small American town with a rich heritage and strong sense of community. It also has a vibrant transit area developing around a new Metro station that will open soon. McLean is an active community with some of the most beautiful neighborhoods in the Metropolitan region. Only a few miles from Tysons and the Dulles Corridor, Great Falls is a semi-rural community where residents actively participate in preserving its history and protecting its environment.

Dranesville includes some of the best County and National parks in the region including Riverbend Park, Great Falls Park and Scotts Run Nature Preserve. The District is also home to numerous excellent public schools including the high achieving and highly regarded Langley, McLean, and Herndon High Schools. Throughout the District, there are excellent libraries and active arts communities. All three communities have outdoor summer concert series and old-fashioned farmers' markets.

The introduction of Metro's Silver Line has provided an alternative to the automobile for Dranesville residents. Expansion of the Silver Line to Dulles Airport and into Loudoun, scheduled to open in 2022, will make traveling that much easier.

The excellent schools, parks and libraries, lovely neighborhoods, active youth sports and arts programs, and its active, interesting, and friendly residents make Dranesville an excellent place to live, raise a family, and do business.

Fairfax County, and especially Tysons and the Dulles Corridor, continue to grow and provide excellent business and employment

opportunities for Dranesville residents. Our challenge in the coming years is to ensure that the growth is balanced with expanded public facilities and public services so that future generations will be able to enjoy living in Dranesville as much as the past and current residents have enjoyed making their homes here.

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

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

Welcome to the Dranesville District. It has been my honor to represent Dranesville residents on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for the past 13 years. I look forward to continuing to serve you in the future.

## Places I Would Take a Newcomer in Dranesville District

We are fortunate to have many wonderful parks, historical features, and community events in the Dranesville District. The following are some of my favorites.

### CLEMYJONTRI PARK:

Since opening in 2006, more than 200,000 visitors have enjoyed this unique playground where children of all abilities can play side-by-side. Equipment allows children who have physical, sensory, or developmental disabilities to have a parallel playground experience of fun and exploration. The park also includes a carousel, picnic pavilion, and a trackless train.

6317 Georgetown Pike, McLean

### RIVERBEND PARK:

This park offers over 400 acres of forests, meadows, and ponds. Trails include a 2.5-mile portion of the Potomac Heritage Trail that links national and regional parkland. Kayaking, canoeing, and fishing are all available on the Potomac River. The Outdoor Education Classroom/Picnic Shelter is a great place to have a party.

8700 Potomac Hills, Great Falls

### COLVIN RUN MILL HISTORIC SITE:

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

10017 Colvin Run, Great Falls

### TURNER FARM:

Originally the site of a dairy farm, the 52-acre park offers a unique mix of educational and recreational facilities. Observatory Park offers the public a chance to see the night sky from one of Fairfax County's darkest spots through permanently mounted telescopes. The Analemma Society partners with the Park Authority to provide astronomy programs at the observatory. Equestrians can enjoy a cross country course and a large multi-purpose arena with stadium jumps and dressage makers. Small children can enjoy a tot lot. Under the Park Authority's Resident Curator Program, the historic Turner Farmhouse has been restored and is now occupied by the Turner Farmhouse Foundation, under the direction of Sarah Kirk.

925 Springvale Road, Great Falls

### RUNNYMEDE PARK:

The Town of Herndon owns and maintains this 58-acre park. It is the site for many community nature-related events such as the annual NatureFest, the Spring Native Plant Sale, and the Fall Native Plant Sale. Situated near the Sugarland Run Stream, the park attracts over 100 species of bird, deer, fox, and other wildlife. Guided walks are offered to highlight the wildlife on the trails. Two park shelters are available for rent.

196 Herndon Parkway, Herndon

### MPAARTFEST:

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

McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean

### MCLEAN DAY:

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

Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean

### HERNDON FESTIVAL:

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

200 Spring Street, Herndon

### GREAT FALLS FREEDOM MEMORIAL:

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

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

### HERNDON FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE!:

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

Herndon Town Green, 777 Lynn Street, Herndon



## NEWCOMERS AND COMMUNITY GUIDE

# Improvements and Developments in Great Falls, 2021

Effects on travel, housing, and dark skies.

MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

In 2021, multiple noteworthy projects impact Great Falls. The Virginia Department of Transportation continues construction on the main gateway to the village with its Route 7 Corridor Improvements.

The construction of The Residence at Colvin Run, a new senior-living community designed to maintain the character and protect the area's look, feel, and environment, progresses. It is scheduled for a summer 2022 opening. Reportedly 34 percent of the Great Falls population is over 55 years of age. The County's Demographic Reports 2020 cite 14 percent of the total population in Fairfax County is 65 and older.

New single-family developments continue to rise in Great Falls. Among them are the Arden development, a community of 102 homes, Marmota Farm with 11 homes, and Hayden at Great Falls with 11 homes.

While the Fairfax County Zoning office is developing a Dark Sky Ordinance that could include a one-half mile radius around the Turner Farm Observatory Park, the Fairfax Park Authority is drafting a nomination for an International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) Urban Night Sky Place.



Rendering as seen in an image at the Senior Living Community, The Residence at Colvin Run- The community is planned for completion in the summer of 2022.



Crews continue work on the retaining walls at Colvin Run- August 2021.



Crews realign the Utterback Store Road at Route 7.

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Construction continues at the new Senior Living Community, The Residence at Colvin Run.



Route 7 West at Baron Cameron, part of VDOT's Route 7 Corridor Improvements- August 2021



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Park Authority's Turner Farm Observatory, run by the Analemma Society relies on dark skies to see into space. An Observation Room includes three telescopes, and during clear Friday nights, Observatory Park is open during the evening to view the stars.

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## Lucky To Call Fairfax County Home

BY JEFF MCKAY  
CHAIRMAN, FAIRFAX COUNTY  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



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

In Fairfax County, we take COVID-19 and vaccinating our population seriously. As of Sept. 24, 2021, we are proud to have 81.2% of people over the age of 18 vaccinated with at least one dose and 83.6% of adolescents 12-17 vaccinated similarly with at least one dose. While we have made great strides in slowing the spread of COVID-19, Fairfax County is experiencing a high transmission of COVID-19 cases due to the infectious Delta variant. Unfortunately, there are many (particularly young students) who are not eligible to be vaccinated. We need everyone to do their part and get vaccinated to help protect those who are not able. This is especially important to keeping our students in school. Schedule your appointment at <http://vaccine.gov/>

As we navigated (and continue to navigate)

the pandemic, Fairfax County has been on the frontlines of providing the support our residents and businesses need. Thanks to federal dollars, our Board of Supervisors has invested millions to help get people back on their feet through emergency rental and food assistance. We have awarded \$87 million in grants for small businesses and non-profits who have been impacted. We deliberately targeted

businesses that historically don't have access to these types of funding opportunities, including veteran- women- and minority-owned organizations.

Now, it's time to look to recovery. We will continue to target our efforts to make sure families have the access to assistance they need. This is particularly important in the portions of the County most hit by COVID.

We have exciting projects down the pipeline for our businesses including the Fairfax Founders Fund which will provide capital to entrepreneurs in the County who are focused on emerging technologies and will be targeted towards those who have less access to capital.

In addition, in line with the One Fairfax policy I co-authored in 2017, which puts equity at the center to every decision we make, I convened a Task Force on Equity and Opportunity. It was clear from the inequities of the pandemic

coupled with the movement fighting for racial justice that it was time to take the next step. My Task Force looked at systemic obstacles standing in the way of equity and recently provided its recommendations to the Board.

Despite all the uncertainty around us, we are lucky to live in Fairfax County. We have a caring and diverse population and great resources. For example, we have 23,000 acres of parkland, which includes 427 public parks and 325 miles of trails to enjoy when you want to be outside safely. One of my favorite escapes has been Huntley Meadows Park in my neighborhood. It makes me thankful for our continued investment in our greenspaces and efforts to protect the environment.

Navigating this pandemic has not been a straight path forward. We have had to pivot to save lives. Over time we have made significant investments in our infrastructure that have well positioned us to respond. Our sophisticated Health Department, first responders, and County frontline workers are all dedicated to our community. Their work has been exceptional and remind us why a responsive, well-run government is essential in times like these.

As we navigate a world beyond COVID-19, we will continue to fight for what's important: investing in people, programs, education, and creating a Fairfax that works for everyone, just as we have always done. Our community will make it through this together. Fairfax County is a great place to live and work and I hope that you quickly feel at home.

## FCPS: Opportunities to Shine in Every Area

BY DR. SCOTT BRABRAND  
SUPERINTENDENT, FCPS

**W**elcome to Fairfax County Public Schools! We are so glad you are here. No matter where you are coming from, or what your children's interests may be, we are confident we can meet your family's needs.

FCPS is home to students from 204 countries, who speak more than 200 languages. Our more than 180,000 students come to us from a variety of backgrounds: 15 percent receive special education services, 19 percent participate in English for Speakers of Other Languages classes and 31 percent are economically disadvantaged.

While here, there are opportunities for students to shine in every area: These past few months alone, we were home to a student who placed 21st in the Scripps National Spelling Bee, multiple National Science Bee winners, a Time for Kids student journalist finalist and an International Society of Bassists solo performance competition winner.

Our students are also having a positive impact on our communities: Some have succeeded in getting historical markers erected to honor Black Virginians, digging into history to find and nominate people worthy of recognition by the state. Stu-

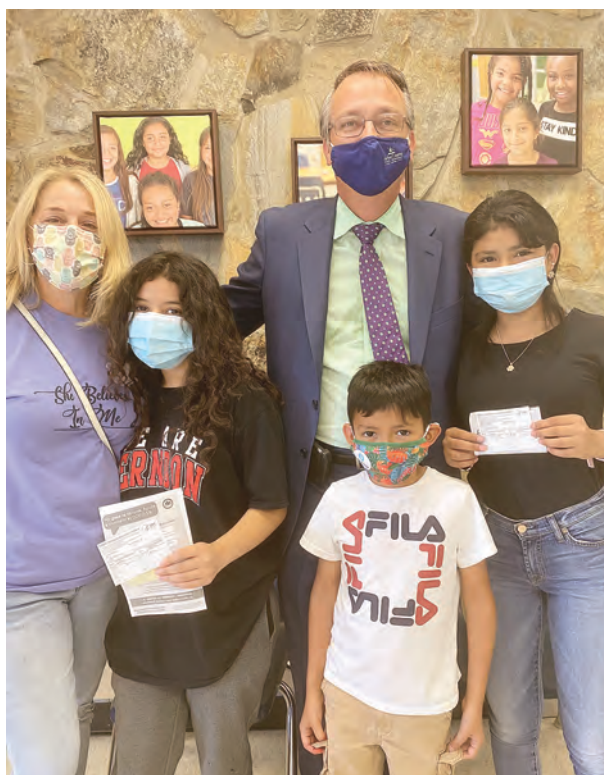


PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON

**From left, Renee Gorman; Kimberlin Jiminez, 13; Scott Brabrand, superintendent, Fairfax County Public Schools; Hansel Molina; and Jeimmy Molina take a congratulatory photo after Kimberlin and Jeimmy receive their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine in August.**

dents in elementary and high schools alike spent the past year growing produce on school grounds to help supply local food banks amid food security issues exacerbated by the pandemic. This month alone, some have created a guide to help Afghan refugee students acclimate and assist our staff in meeting their needs.

They conclude their time in our district with impressive accomplishments too. FCPS students last year took almost 16,000 advanced placement exams that can result in college credit. They outperformed their Virginia and national peers this year with an average SAT score of 1201; and 214 students from 16 high schools were named National Merit Semifinalists. Those enrolled in our Career and Technical Education program helped build a new home in Springfield that sold for more than \$1 million, staffed emergency rescue teams and repaired vehicles.

We still cheer for our students after they graduate too. This summer we had the pleasure of rooting for FCPS grads in the Tokyo Olympics: our Olympian alums competed in swimming, track and rifle shooting.

I truly believe there is a place for everyone within FCPS.

We look forward to your children joining our community and helping them reach their potential and find their passion.

Great Falls  
**CONNECTION**

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**NEWS DEPARTMENT:**  
[greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Kemal Kurspahic**  
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414  
[kemal@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:kemal@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Mercia Hobson**  
Community Reporter  
[mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Ken Moore**  
Contributing Writer  
[kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com)

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[dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Classified & Employment Advertising**  
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**Editor & Publisher**  
Mary Kimm  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
[@MaryKimm](https://twitter.com/MaryKimm)

**Executive Vice President**  
Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
[jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Managing Editor**  
Kemal Kurspahic  
**Art/Design:**  
Laurence Foong, John Heinly, Ali Khaligh  
**Production Manager:**  
Geovani Flores

**CIRCULATION**  
[circulation@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:circulation@connectionnewspapers.com)





# NEWCOMERS GUIDE

## Governing at the County Level

The Fairfax County Government Center at 12000 Government Center Parkway is home to the Board of Supervisors, the governing body for Great Falls. The community is not a city or a town, a separate jurisdiction. The Board of Supervisors establishes county government policy and passes resolutions and ordinances within the limits of its authority established by the Virginia General Assembly.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/  
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# Cross County Trail Connects Pathways, History, and People



Friends J.J. Dickinson, Susan Lesley, and Kim McCleskey, meet regularly to walk the cross county trail for exercise and friendship. (Aug. 2020)



Friends, Nora deGroot and Kaitlyn Meriowsky, volunteer together to have fun while keeping the cross county trail beautiful and building their community service hours (Oct. 2020).

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

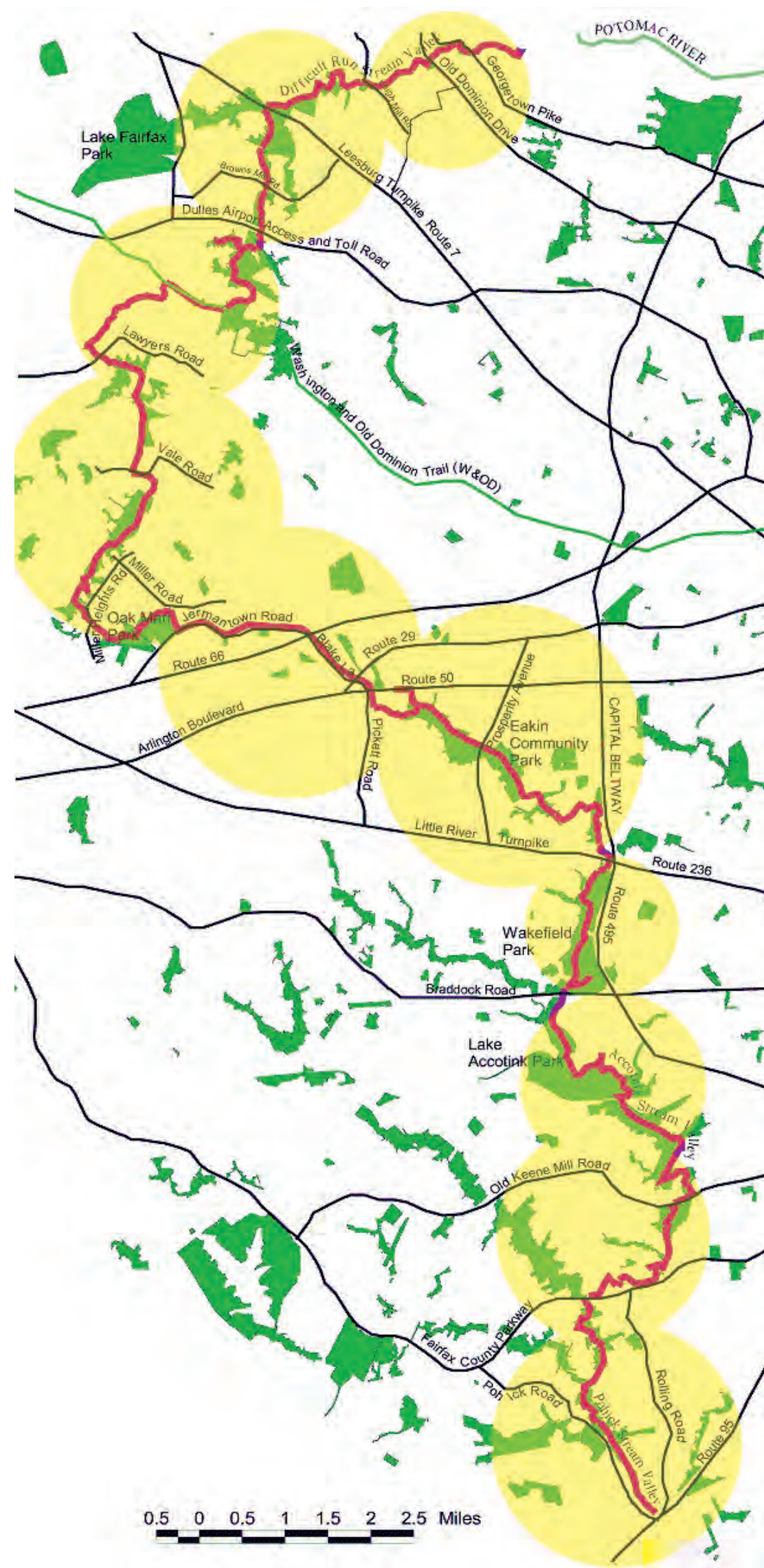
Stretching in a long, meandering ribbon of green, the Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail runs north and south for the length of Fairfax County from the Potomac River to the Occoquan River, linking parks, stream valleys, nature trails. The trail was conceptualized by citizen activists and supported by then Board of Supervisors Chairman Gerry Connolly, for whom the trail is named. In 2000, the Board allocated \$900,000 to link what had

been green islands of parkland and trails. Today the trail system, over 40 miles long, provides a meandering green oasis within a county undergoing rapid urbanization. The trail helps protect streams and wetlands as it passes along water, meadows, and through development, often linking people as well as parkland.

Most of the Cross County Trail runs through stream valley parkland, including some of the county's best and wildest parks, Great Falls, Wakefield and Laurel Hill. Walking provides a good opportunity to see the trail's history. SEE CROSS COUNTRY, PAGE 12



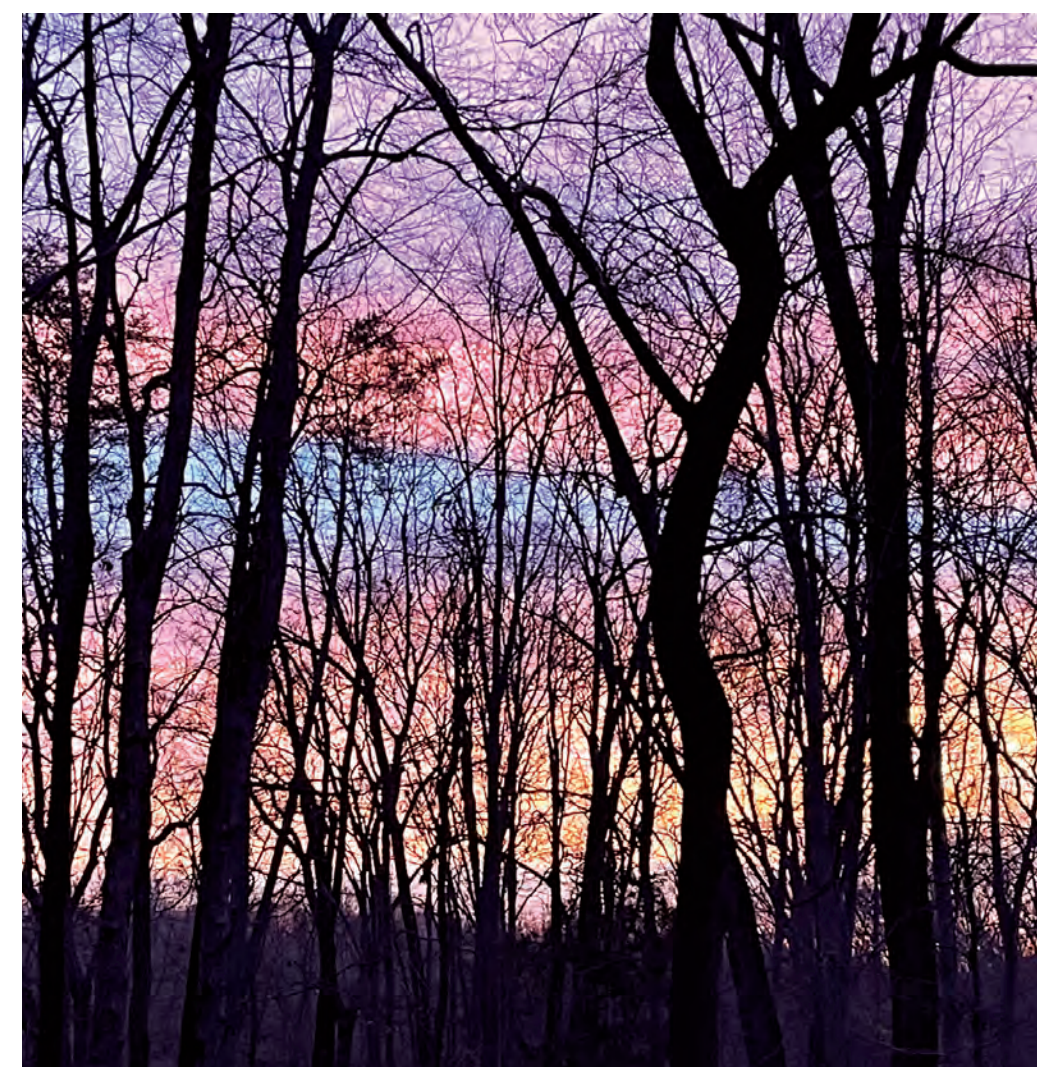
Geologist Cynde Sears points out metagraywacke formed in the Potomac Gorge. (March 2020)



The Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail links green space and parks along Fairfax County stream valleys. More detailed maps are available online. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/trails/cross-county-trail/maps>



The historic Barrel Bridge, built by inmates, now serves cross county trail users where once a rail line moved materials across the Occoquan Workhouse/Lorton Prison grounds (March 2020).



The trail exhibits the beauty of nature to be discovered in all seasons of the year from dawn to sunset. (Jan. 2021).



## Every Year Is Election Year in Virginia

### Early voting options expand; you can vote now.

BY SUSAN LAUME AND MARY KIMM  
THE CONNECTION

Every year is an Election year in Virginia. And as one of only two states to have Gubernatorial elections the year after the presidential election, Virginia's off year turns out to have national implications.

But this Election matters to local residents for so many reasons, including bond questions and representation in the House of Delegates. In a rare occurrence, every delegate race in Fairfax County is contested by two major party candidates. The Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General have been critically important in recent years in directing policy as well. Turnout can be lower in the off year, but given how much easier it is to vote in Virginia now, it shouldn't be.

As calendar pages turn toward the Nov. 2 election day for Virginia's State-wide offices nears, voters have many voting options. Driven by COVID-19 work around considerations, Virginia's legislature has authorized new contactless voting options, including in person early voting, voting by mail and voting by dropping your completed ballot in

a secure drop box. Early voting in person begins Sept. 17 at three locations.

County voters should begin thinking about their candidate selections, and how they will place their votes.

On the ballot: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, your member of the House of Delegates, and a School Bond Question for Fairfax County Public Schools.

Sample ballots are posted <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/sample-ballots>.

**DROP BOXES** will be available at Fairfax County early voting locations, and on election day, at all polling places, during voting hours. Voters may return their completed, sealed "mail in" ballots to a secure drop box, without involving the U.S. Postal Service. The drop boxes, located either outside of regular voting rooms or near building entrances, provide a quick, contact-free way to assure one's ballot is received, and without need to affix postage to return it. The Fairfax County Government building also has a secure drop box installed outside, permitting voters to drop off their ballots there 24/7; providing a return option when early voting sites are not open. Drop boxes are available for use on election day at all polling places from 6 am - 7 pm.

Those wishing to vote early, by mail, can request a ballot starting now. Ballots are

### School Bond Question

Shall Fairfax County, Virginia, contract a debt, borrow money, and issue capital improvement bonds in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$360,000,000 for the purposes of providing funds, in addition to funds from school bonds previously authorized, to finance, including reimbursement to the County for temporary financing for, the costs of school improvements, including acquiring, building, expanding, and renovating properties, including new sites, new buildings or additions, renovations and improvements to existing buildings, and furnishings and equipment, for the Fairfax County public school system?

sent to requestors as received, beginning 45 days before the election; that's beginning mid-September. Once marked and sealed, ballots may be returned by mail, or to the special secure drop boxes at the early voting locations outside of the mail stream.

Details on voting by mail are available here: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/absentee-voting-mail>

**EARLY IN-PERSON** voting locations are open Sept. 17 - Oct. 30 at three government center sites: Fairfax County, Mount Vernon, and North County.

Any registered Fairfax County voter may vote early at any Fairfax County early voting location.

Early in-person absentee voting is available for the November 2021 General & Special Elections at the following three locations from now through Oct. 30.

- ❖ Fairfax County Government Center  
12000 Government Center Pkwy, Conference Rooms 2/3, Fairfax 22035
- ❖ Mt. Vernon Governmental Center  
2511 Parkers Ln, Alexandria 22306
- ❖ North County Governmental Center  
1801 Cameron Glen Dr, Reston 20190

**Thirteen additional early in-person voting sites are open Oct. 21 - Oct. 30.**

- ❖ Burke Centre Library  
5935 Freds Oak Rd, Burke
- ❖ Centreville Regional Library  
14200 St. Germain Dr, Centreville
- ❖ Franconia Governmental Center  
6121 Franconia Rd, 22310
- ❖ Gerry Hyland Government Center  
8350 Richmond Hwy, 22309

- ❖ Great Falls Library  
9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls
- ❖ Herndon Fortnightly Library  
768 Center St, Herndon
- ❖ Mason Governmental Center  
6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale
- ❖ McLean Governmental Center  
1437 Balls Hill Rd, McLean
- ❖ Providence Community Center  
3001 Vaden Dr, Fairfax
- ❖ Sully Governmental Center  
4900 Stonecroft Blvd, Chantilly
- ❖ Thomas Jefferson Library  
7415 Arlington Blvd, Falls Church
- ❖ Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library  
7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church
- ❖ West Springfield Governmental Center  
6140 Rolling Rd, Springfield

### HOURS OF OPERATION

Weekdays:

Fairfax County Government Center 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

All other locations 12 p.m. - 7 p.m. (check beginning dates)

Saturday (Oct. 23, and Oct. 30)

All locations 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday (Oct. 24)

All locations 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

The list of early voting sites, their addresses, and days/hours of operation and more can be found on the Board of Elections website at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections).

Another early option, in-person curbside voting is available at every early voting location for people 65 or older or with a physical disability. But the elections website warns: curbside voting doesn't put you at the front of the line, and voters should expect to wait. Voters are encouraged to go to the Fairfax County Government Center which has 20 curbside spaces set aside. Curbside voting also is available on election day, Nov. 2. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/disability-services>

On Election Day polls are open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. If you are in line by 7 p.m., you will be able to vote.

Questions about early voting, including voter registration, voting options, damaged ballots, and ballot tracking may be addressed to the Board of Elections at [voting@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:voting@fairfaxcounty.gov), or by calling 703 222.0776, Monday- Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### New Executive Director for Celebrate Great Falls

Celebrate Great Falls Foundation has a new executive director, Piper Ryan, effective Oct. 15th. Prior to settling in Great Falls four years ago, Piper and her family enjoyed time in California, Florida and Ohio where she balanced a career in product/project management with extensive volunteer work focused on building community. Piper enjoys attending Celebrate Great Falls events — especially the Sunday Concerts on the Green. Celebrate Great Falls says she is great addition to the leadership team, bringing new perspective to the organization. In the meantime, departing Director Erin Lobato will be working with Piper through the end of the year to

ensure a successful transition.

You can reach Piper with any questions or to find out more about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities by emailing her at [Piper@CelebrateGreatFalls.org](mailto:Piper@CelebrateGreatFalls.org)

Started over 20 years ago, the Celebrate Great Falls Foundation sustains long-time community traditions such as the July 4th parade, Summer Concerts on the Green and the annual tree lighting in December. Through the years, Celebrate Great Falls has donated well over \$500,000 to local schools and community projects such as the Freedom Memorial and Turner Farm Park. See <https://celebrategreatfalls.org/> for events and to get involved.

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# NEWCOMERS GUIDE

## About the Connection in 2020

This year, 2021 in the time of the pandemic, has been brutal for so many.

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

Life is vastly different than it was pre-pandemic.

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

Thousands of families could be facing eviction.

Many small businesses are still in economic crisis, and some employees facing unemployment.

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

We turned to GoFundMe at a critical point, and our readers answered, raising nearly \$50,000 to get us through a terrible time until we received some PPP funding. We thank all who gave, as well as all who wished us well.

Now, though, we are back to great difficulty. Revenue has not nearly rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, and we are going to need more help to keep going. We have applied for Rebuilt VA funds, but the timing is uncertain and certainly not when we needed it (in the summer). We will renew calls for contributions shortly to try to carry on. We will also likely begin a membership program soon, so watch for new links. Here is the link to the past GoFundMe which is still working. <https://www.gofundme.com/f/save-americas-old-est-newspaper>

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

Perhaps most of all, it is still our mission to deliver the local news you need, to help make sense of what is happening in your community. [www.ConnectionNewspapers.com](http://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com)

community, to advocate for community good, to provide a forum for dialogue on local concerns, and to record achievements, milestones and events in the community and people's lives. It is still our mission to cover the normal news of the local communities.

We publish photos and notes about personal milestones and community events, including births, engagements, weddings, anniversaries, awards and obituaries. Tell us: how are you surviving in the pandemic?

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

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

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

At the Connection, we suffered a tragedy recently, the unexpected death of our beloved Managing Editor Kemal Kurspahic. He died of a stroke following minor surgery.

Kemal Kurspahic was the legendary wartime editor of the daily newspaper in Sarajevo, Oslobodjenje. You can read some of the story of his life and how we came to be lucky enough to have him in our newsroom for decades in his obituary, <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2021/sep/22/courage-journalism/>.

### CONTACT

For advertising and marketing information, see [www.connectionnewspapers.com/advertising](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/advertising) email [sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-778-9431.

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— MARY KIMM

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Stefie Pratt-Green and Levi use an improvement to the fair-weather crossing on the Pohick Stream portion of Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail. (June 2021)



Dog walker Kristen Furman and Carter, are familiar faces to other regular trail users in the Laurel Hill Park section sometimes treating cross county trail friends to homemade doggie ice cream (July 2021).

## Cross County Trail Connects Pathways, History, and People

FROM PAGE XX  
nity to view a cross section of the county's topography and development, and to get a glimpse into the changes that have occurred to the land over time. Hikers near the Potomac River can see evidence of early geologic shifts that changed the course of the river and created large rock formations, seeing river rock now high on overlook ridges.

The trail is a haven for wildlife of all kinds, making it attractive for those who desire a leisurely stroll observing nature, as well as those using the trail for faster paced exercise, jogging or cycling. In the Spring, midway on the trail within Wakefield Park, Virginia Bluebells blanket the forest floor with their blue and pink flowers. Tadpoles wiggle in vernal trail pools; and one might spot a fawn stashed napping in tall grasses awaiting its mother's return.

All year, in the southern section, the history of the area comes quickly to mind as the brick watchtowers and dairy silos rise high, marking the past of the former Lorton prison and workhouse that operated from 1910 through 2001, now Laurel Hill Park. Evidence of inmate enterprise remains visible in the old buildings scattered through the park, many made from bricks manufactured from clay taken from the nearby Occoquan River.

The Cross County Trail plays a role in building community too. Regular trail users make new acquaintances and strengthen the bonds of existing ones, using the trail as a meeting place for friends exercising together. The park authority notes that users might



PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Bluebells brighten the cross county trail along Accotink Creek in April/May, (April 2018) one of many species of native wildflowers found along the trail throughout the seasons.

"walk or run, with a child or a pet, ride a bike or a horse." Many friendships have blossomed on the Cross County Trail, along with the wildflowers.

More <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/trails/cross-county-trail>

## Give Locally

### WHERE TO GIVE LOCALLY

\* Alice's Kids (@alicewillhelp) aliceskids.org P.O. Box 60, Mount Vernon, VA 22121 When a child is raised in poverty they suffer both publicly and privately. When there is no food in the refrigerator, no electricity or heat, these are hardships that they can keep hidden from their peers. But, when that same child can't afford to pay for the band field trip, a pair of glasses, a chorus outfit or a new pair of shoes, these are indignities that are evident to their classmates. Alice's Kids pays for these relatively inexpensive items in the hopes of preserving the dignity of the child. It helps children from all over the Mount Vernon area through small acts of kindness.

\* Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and educates children in need. Assistance League's philanthropic programs touch the lives of thousands of children at 11 Title I schools in Northern Virginia, serving children most in need at selected schools in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria. To learn more about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, contact [nfo@alnv.org](mailto:nfo@alnv.org) or visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org)

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

\* Britepaths Britepaths is working to assist 500 Fairfax County area families who might otherwise go without holiday meals and gifts for their children. Sponsor a family or donate to provide a family with a holiday meal and/or gifts for their children. [Britepaths.org https://britepaths.org/our-programs/holiday-program](https://britepaths.org/our-programs/holiday-program)

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

\* Closet Of The Greater Herndon Area is a nonprofit thrift shop in downtown Herndon. The Closet recently awarded over \$20,000 in grants to seven local non-profit organizations: Cornerstones, Fellowship Square, Herndon-Reston FISH, Meridians Recovery, Mobile Hope of Loudoun, South Lakes High School PTSA Food Pantry, and Herndon Woman's Club in support of Wreaths Across America. The Closet is a source of low-cost clothing and household necessities and also gives away clothing at no

cost to truly needy individuals. 845 Station Street Herndon, VA 20170 (703) 437-7652. Email [TheClosetInc@verizon.net](mailto:TheClosetInc@verizon.net) Web: [theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/](http://theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/)

\* Comfort for America's Uniformed Services (CAUSE) ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation for all that they have done. Mailing address: 4201 Wilson Blvd., #110-284, Arlington, VA 22203, CFC #33011, Phone 703-591-4965, [cause-usa.org](http://cause-usa.org)

\* Committee for Helping Others (CHO), Vienna, organized in 1969 by a group of churches and individuals in the Dunn Loring, Merrifield, Oakton, Vienna community to provide simple, loving charity to those in need. Coming up, holiday bike drive. 703-281-7614, [www.cho-va.com](http://www.cho-va.com)

\* Community Foundation of Northern Virginia [www.cfnova.org](http://www.cfnova.org) The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia works to respond to critical need and seed innovation in our region. Your gift helps us make grants in our focus areas of interest while also bringing a spotlight on the benefits of community philanthropists [www.cfnova.org/for-donors/donate-now](http://www.cfnova.org/for-donors/donate-now)

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

Nonprofit providing support and advocacy for those in need of food, shelter, affordable housing, quality childcare, and other human services. Programs and services include the Embury Rucker Community Shelter, Emergency Food Pantry, Hypothermia Prevention Program, Gifts for Kids and annual Coat Drive. [www.cornerstonesva.org](http://www.cornerstonesva.org). Contact Nate King, Donations and Drives Coordinator, at 571-323-9569.

\* Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO), 703-569-9160. Open to receive donations at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Provides food and financial assistance to those in short-term emergencies, and provides clothing and household goods to low income families. [www.echo-inc.org](http://www.echo-inc.org).

\* FACETS helps parents, their children and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty in the Fairfax area, a partner in efforts to end homelessness in Fairfax County. FACETS is always in need of donations and volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities.

Donations will be accepted at FACETS' main office (10700 Page Avenue, Building B, Fairfax VA 22030) between 9am - 5pm. Contact Haylee Davis at [hdavis@facetscares.org](mailto:hdavis@facetscares.org). 703-865-4251 or [volunteer@facetscares.org](mailto:volunteer@facetscares.org). [www.facetscares.org](http://www.facetscares.org). 10640 Page Ave., Suite 300, Fairfax VA 22030



## Good Vibes in Great Falls Favorite places and events.



Virginia bluebells cover the ground at Riverbend Park in Great Falls during the spring of 2021.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Volunteerism is a big part of the Great Falls community- serving to give back and improve the community and neighbors' lives.



Katie's Cars and Coffee, a local community event since April 2010, paused during 2020 due to COVID but resumed again summer of 2021, much to the delight of area residents.



The physical and visual reasons why in 1959, the village known as Forestville merged with mini-postal service communities nearby bearing the names Dranesville, Colvin Run, and Springvale to form the "Great Falls" Community.

### New Park Authority Executive Director

New Fairfax County Park Authority Executive Director Jai Cole celebrated National Public Lands Day at Laurel Hill Park on Sept. 25. Cole who joined the hour work session with gloves and shovel before speaking at the brief ceremony, has pledged to visit all of Fairfax County's parks within the next year. Cole is shown here sharing a moment with volunteer Blake Cambey.



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/  
THE CONNECTION

### BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](https://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

#### SEPT. 28-DEC. 7

Volunteers Needed. St. Marks (Vienna) English as a Second Language program is looking for new students and volunteers. Classes will be on Tuesdays and Thursday evenings from Sept. 28 to Dec. 7. All classes will be conducted online using the Zoom App. There will be no in-person classes. For students: <https://bit.ly/StMarkRegistrationFall2021>. An online placement exam will be given. Visit the web page: [www.stmarkesl.org/or](http://www.stmarkesl.org/or) - Email: [stmarksesl@gmail.com](mailto:stmarksesl@gmail.com); Call: 703-980-9380, or 703-242-7449.

#### WEDNESDAY/OCT. 6

MahJongg at TRS. 1-4 p.m. At Temple Rodef Shalom, 2100 Westmoreland Street, Falls Church. Weekly Drop-In Mah Jongg at Temple Rodef Shalom. Questions? Debbie D at [wotr@templerodefshalom.org](mailto:wotr@templerodefshalom.org). \$5 per session. All skill levels welcome. Masks required.

#### THURSDAY/OCT. 7

Pathways To Wellness Annual Conference. 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Via Zoom. Recovery Program Solutions

of Virginia will sponsor the Pathways to Wellness Conference, an annual event that celebrates mental health recovery. This virtual event's theme is Still Striving, Still Thriving Through it All. The event is planned and hosted by the Wellness and Recovery Committee, a group of representatives of government and nonprofit organizations in Northern Virginia whose work and lives involve mental health recovery. Attendees include individuals with mental health concerns, their loved ones, professionals in the field, and anyone interested in wellness. Attendance is free but guests must register. To learn more, visit [www.PathwaysToWellness-Conf.com](http://www.PathwaysToWellness-Conf.com). Call Will Schermerhorn at (703) 338-1776 or contact him via email [coordinator@pathway-stowellnessconf.com](mailto:coordinator@pathway-stowellnessconf.com).

#### FRIDAY/OCT. 8

Raise the Region Fundraiser. 7 p.m. The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia hosts its 2021 Raise the Region, a virtual event

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 14



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# BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 13

that will be live-streamed and will include an online auction and opportunities to engage and connect with the community from the comfort of your home. The theme this year is Building a Community that Works for Everyone, and the event will highlight a record level of giving from the Community Foundation throughout the region. Visit [www.cfnova.org/RaiseTheRegion](http://www.cfnova.org/RaiseTheRegion).

## 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/goodshepherdva/files/revised2\\_in\\_person\\_worship\\_begins\\_june\\_13.pdf](https://faithconnector.s3.amazonaws.com/goodshepherdva/files/revised2_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 Court-house 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

## COVID-19 TEXT MESSAGES IN SPANISH

As part of its efforts to provide coronavirus-related information and assistance in multiple languages, Fairfax County now provides COVID-19 text alerts in Spanish. To sign up, text **FFXCOVIDESP** to 888777.

## FAIRFAX COUNTY CORONAVIRUS INFO CENTER

Fairfax County activated a Joint Information Center.

Fairfax County Health Department COVID-19 webpage – [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus)

Emergency Information Blog (you can subscribe by email or follow by RSS) – [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/blog)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Call Center – The community may call 703-267-3511 with questions. The call center is open from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekends.

Residents may also text **FFXCOVID** to 888777 to receive updates from Fairfax County about COVID-19. Twitter – @fairfaxcounty and @fairfaxhealth

Facebook – [www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty](http://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcounty) and [www.facebook.com/fairfaxcountyhealth](http://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcountyhealth)

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# CALENDAR

## SEPT. 25-NOV. 1

Reston Farm Garden Market Fall Festival. 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. At Reston Farm Garden Market, 10800 Baron Cameron Ave., Reston. Cost is \$28 per child and \$6 per parent, children 2 and under free. The event will feature a range of activities, including several moon bounces, a petting zoo, the Express Train for both adults and children to ride. Visit [www.reston-farm.com](http://www.reston-farm.com). Call 703-759-0000 or email [info@RestonFarm.com](mailto:info@RestonFarm.com).



The Reston Farm Garden Market Fall Festival will take place Sept. 25-Nov. 1, 2021.

## THURSDAY/SEPT. 30

Craft Happy Hour. 5-6 p.m. At The Plaza at Tysons Corner Center. Grab a friend, grab a drink and seat, and roll up your sleeves for a 'craft hour'! AR Workshop Alexandria will be on-site to show you how to craft the cutest knit pumpkins. This fun crafty celebration is complimentary for the first 50 guests who register. Visit: [www.tysonscornercenter.com/Events](http://www.tysonscornercenter.com/Events)

## FRIDAY/OCT. 1

Josh Groban Performs. 8 p.m. At Capital One Hall, 7750 Capital One Tower Road, Tysons Corner. Visit <https://www.capitalonehall.com>.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 1

Vienna Oktoberfest. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tens of thousands to flock to Vienna Oktoberfest for music, shopping, food, fun and beer. Choice food, vendors, music and entertainment, plenty of kids' activities, locally-sourced beer and wine selections. Proceeds from Oktoberfest benefit the VBA Foundation, which supports charitable organizations in the Greater Vienna area. Presented by the Vienna Business Association and Town of Vienna, on historic Church Street. All ages are welcome, and admission is free.

- ❖ Live entertainment on three stages: Main Stage, Kid's Stage, Acoustic Stage;
  - ❖ Beer/Wine/German Food Garden featuring the Caboose Brewing Company;
  - ❖ Beer and Multinational Food offerings located on Mill Street;
  - ❖ Free kids activities, games and entertainment on the Town Green;
  - ❖ Business Expo Showcase;
  - ❖ Vendor Marketplace;
- Visit [www.viennaoktoberfest.org](http://www.viennaoktoberfest.org).

## SATURDAY/OCT. 2

The Seldom Scene. 8 p.m. At Reston Community Center, Reston. What does it take for a bluegrass band to remain popular for more than four decades? For The Seldom Scene, it has taken talented musicians, a signature sound and a solid repertoire, as well as a delightful sense of fun. Cost: \$25 Reston/\$35 Non-Reston

## SATURDAY/OCT. 2

Outdoor Movie Night. 6-9 p.m. At Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Join the Fairfax Library Foundation for food trucks and a movie under the moon. Bring your chairs and blankets to Chantilly Regional Library for an outdoor sing-along screening of "Mamma Mia!" (2008). All proceeds benefit the Fairfax County Public Library.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 2

The McLean 5K Run. At McLean Square Shopping Center, 6631 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. Registration, PPU, Warmup begins at 7 a.m.; Race begins at 8 a.m. Hosted by the McLean Community Center with the support of sponsors Century 21 New Millennium and the Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce, the race features a USATF certified course through the heart of McLean and is designed to appeal to runners of all abilities. The proceeds of the run benefit the McLean Community Foundation. Visit: <https://mcleancenter.org/special-events/mclean-5k>

## SUNDAY/OCT. 3

MPAArtFest. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At McLean Central Park, McLean. A day full of art, music, food

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and fun. This year's festival features the work of 40-plus selected artists, some of D.C.'s music performers, food vendors, and a variety of children's activities. A one-day juried fine art show and sale, McLean Central Park is transformed into a lively landscape of mini art galleries showcasing and offering for sale the work of over 40 acclaimed artists from the Mid-Atlantic region. This year's performers include: Blues Alley Youth Jazz Orchestra (10 a.m.), Sheyda Do'a Band (11 a.m.), Nataly Merezuk's Hot Band (12 p.m.), Project Locrea (1 p.m.), Irene Jarenti (2 p.m.), and Josanne Francis (3 p.m.). Visit [www.mpaart.org](http://www.mpaart.org) or email [info@mpaart.org](mailto:info@mpaart.org).

## SUNDAY/OCT. 3

Ronald McDonald House Red Shoe 5k Run & Walk. 7 a.m. to 12 noon. At Bull Run Special Events Center, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. Register today for the 11th Annual Red Shoe 5k Run & Walk to support families served by Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater Washington, D.C. The Red Shoe 5k at Bull Run Special Events Center is a mixed gravel and paved course with a scenic route, free and easy parking. You can run, walk, volunteer, or just come out to enjoy our food trucks and activities. Visit [www.redshoe5k.org](http://www.redshoe5k.org) to register and volunteer, or contact [redshoe5k@rmhcdc.org](mailto:redshoe5k@rmhcdc.org).

## MONDAY/OCT. 4

LGBTQ+ Ally Week Party on the Plaza. 6 p.m. McLean Community Center, McLean. Join them for a celebration of the great LGBTQ+ people in our lives and the allies who walk with them! Music, games and all of the supplies for creating a unique LGBTQ+ ally shirt will be provided to participants. This event is for family members to participate in together to show their support for the LGBTQ+ community. Free t-shirts will be given to the first 50 people who register.

## WEDNESDAY/OCT. 6

"From the Heart: A Transgender Virginian's Story." 6:30 p.m. At McLean Community Center, McLean. Join Ann Murdoch, a member of Equality Virginia's Transgender Advocacy Speakers Bureau, for an evening of connection and learning as she shares her story as a transgender woman. Her talk will be followed by plenty of time for dialogue and questions. Moderated by the McLean High School Gay-Straight Alliance.

## OCT. 7-17

"The Book of Mamaw." At Boro Park at The Boro Tysons, 8350 Broad Street, Tysons Corner. October 7 at 7:30 PM, October 8 at 7:30 PM, October 9 at 2:00 PM and 7:30 PM, October 10 at 2:00 PM and 7:30 PM, October 14 at 7:30 PM, October 15 at 7:30 PM, October 16 at 2:00 PM and 7:30 PM, and October 17 at 2:00 PM and 7:30 PM. Visit [www.1ststage.org](http://www.1ststage.org)

## SATURDAY/OCT. 9

ParktoberFest. Noon to 5 pm. At Middlegate House, 5235 Walney Road, Centreville. Take in the performances by The Walkaways and Jay Byrd. Sample local brews. Shop arts, crafts and specialty vendors from community businesses. Activities and information booths will have something for everyone to enjoy. Call 703-631-0013.

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## Scan Hardly Believe It



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Life goes on. My warranty has been extended for another 90 days as all three scans from Sept. 23rd indicated stable and/or no new metastases. News with which I am extremely fond of saying, I can live. Though the radiologist's report that I received lists both non small cell lung cancer and papillary thyroid cancer as "the indication," my endocrinologist feels what I have is thyroid cancer and likely have always had thyroid cancer. I wish I could say that will be for the lawyers to argue. but peculiarities of law and the three-year statute of limitations in Maryland makes a final resolution unlikely. Therefore, I will continue to live with my amazing good fortune and possible misdiagnosis as part and parcel of how I roll.

And how I roll, as you regular readers know is chemotherapy, targeted therapy, immunotherapy and targeted therapy once again - in that order, and diagnostic scans every three weeks in the beginning and eventually and presently, every three months. As such, over these nearly 13 years of being a cancer patient, I figure I've probably had at least 50 CT scans and another 20-plus MRIs, plus an occasional PET scan. The point being that over the years, I've done an awful lot of waiting for scan results with my life/ immediate future hanging in the balance. And 'balance' is exactly what one needs to endure these incredibly anxious situations. Though I'm fairly experienced at this juncture, the actual moment of truth when I receive the email containing my results is oft-putting to say the least and downright heart-stopping to say the most.

However, my personality is perfectly suited for these ongoing challenges. I never presume the worst. I never woe is me. I never bemoan systemic delays in communicating the results to me. As my close friend John would most definitely say: "It is what it is, and it will be what it will be." I never put the proverbial cart before the horse. I can take it. No problem. My wife, Dina, on the other hand, cannot. For her, the results cannot arrive soon enough. Granted, immediate feedback would be much preferred. But, that's never been the process. I can accept it. Dina, not so much.

That being said, I will admit that after all these years/scans/waiting for results, I have become less able to take it all in stride. It's as if a layer of patience and understanding of the process has been worn away with time. Even though I've mostly received good news (unexpectedly given my original "13 month to two year" prognosis - in Feb., 2009), I have had my share of disappointing news. But on the whole, I've been one of the luckier cancer patients. Still, each scan I wait for results is hardly an adventure in wonderland. I am constantly wondering and worrying when the other shoe will drop (the bad news). In fact, opening up the email that contains my scan results literally takes my breath away.

Not to be negative, which I'm not, but during the Team Lourie meeting in late Feb., 2009 when I first met my oncologist and were given all the medical reports/assessments of my recent X-Rays, CT scan, PET scan and surgical biopsy from the pulmonologist, thoracic surgeon, pathologist and internist, it was clear and convincing from all these doctors that I had lung cancer. And my prognosis? Grim, and it was no fairy tale. It was surreal to hear and nearly impossible to process. I have what? When I was told the survival statistics by my oncologist of stage IV non small cell lung cancer patients (me): 2 percent survive beyond two years, my brother asked if there are exceptions. To which my oncologist replied to me: "Could you be the one? Sure." Little did I know that the doctor was being literal. One was the answer. Ever since I heard that, I felt my days were numbered. All these several years later, I'm not exactly counting days, but neither am I counting chickens. I live quarter to quarter and am grateful to do so.

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





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