

River Farm is Still Part of the Mount Vernon Family

The property is no longer for sale; will reopen to the public.

By MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

The possible future of River Farm has gone back and forth for the last 18 months. The latest news, the resignation at the American Horticultural Society of half of the members of the board, sheds a different light on the situation. Where before the AHS announced it needed to sell the property for the money, now it seems the community of Mount Vernon will still have this riverside treasure for future weddings and breathtaking views. The property will not face development as feared.

In a statement put out by the five remaining members - Skipp Calvert, Tim Conlon, Laura Dowling, Holly Shimizu and Marcia Zech - the property is not being sold. Referring to themselves as "the stewards of River Farm," they say they "will ensure the preservation of this priceless property in perpetuity."

AHS is rebuilding and moving forward, "as we rededicate ourselves to the preservation and



The future of River Farm has dominated the discussion for the past year in Mount Vernon.

stewardship of River Farm as a vital part of our national mission." Selling the property does not appear to be part of that.

Among the names of those former board members who resigned were AHS Board Chair Terry Hayes, interim director J. Robert

Brackman, and three other board members.

The Save River Farm' committee did release their point of view earlier, and this grassroots organization was upbeat.

"Today's news of the resignation of the American Horticultural So-

ciety's Executive Director, Board Chair, and several additional board members is an important step towards our collective goal of protecting River Farm for all time. Over the past few months, the divisions that existed on AHS' board had prevented them from moving

forward as an organization, and hopefully that changes now. We are excited to work together with the new leadership of AHS to support them and to ensure that River Farm remains an incredible community asset that honors the cultural, historical, and natural legacy it represents," said the statement from Alan Rowsome, Save River Farm committee chair and NVCT executive director.

A few days before, the 10-member board of directors had voted to decline offers made by the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, which included Nova Parks, to purchase or co-own the 27-acre River Farm property.

They also said they were not considering an alternative offer by a possible developer to consolidate nearby properties to build a enormous resort and conference center, which stoked the flames over possible development.

River Farm was previously listed by the Goodhart Group, in Old Town, Alexandria, but as of Tuesday, it was not found on their website.

"AHS has decided they are not selling," said Sue Goodhart.

Mount Vernon Awards Local as History Teacher of the Year

Sean Miller uses conversation and student creativity to hone his teachings.

By MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

There's a sound studio of sorts in Sean Miller's history class to capture the student's creativity, whether it be a song, poem or other forms of expression his student's use to learn the lessons in history. It's this type of interactive teaching that earned Miller the 2021 History Teacher of the Year from George Washington's Mount Vernon.

"I like to pull the student's diverse creativity," Miller said, "I play off their day-to-day conversation," he added.

Miller helped design and teaches the new African American History elective at South County, and was part of the team that developed the course through the FCPS African American History and Culture for Educators professional de-



Sean Miller

velopment course. FCPS Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Specialist Deborah March has worked alongside Miller for three years and commends his empowering and welcoming approach to learners of all ages. He stressed that it was a team that developed this.

"I'm part of a team that tailored our Fairfax County Public School's curriculum," he said.

Being in Northern Virginia helps. There is George Washington's



Sean Miller receives the 2021 History Teacher of the Year Award from George Washington's Mount Vernon on Sept. 22.

Mount Vernon, all the historic sites in Fairfax, Washington, D.C. and Laurel Grove School in Franconia which he hadn't known about in the past. "I drove past that building so many times," he said.

With the students learning history while using their artistic capabilities, it makes it almost seem like more fun than 'hitting the books,' as they say. "They get a touch of the rich history that's literally in

our backyards here in Northern Virginia," he added.

The Mount Vernon History Teacher of the Year Award is presented annually to a Washington, D.C. Metro area History or Social Studies teacher who brings creativity and passion to his or her classroom; instills a love of learning in students; and deepens student understanding and appreciation of history, according to Mount Vernon.

The Mount Vernon History Teacher of the Year receives a cash award of \$5,000 and a fully funded field trip to Mount Vernon for their students.

The award review panel was made up of teachers from around the country who serve as Teacher Facilitators for George Washington Teacher Institute, programming that supports Mount Vernon's mis-

SEE MOUNT VERNON, ON PAGE 5

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Fairfax Defers Decision on Collective Bargaining

FCPS employees are not part of the ordinance.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
GAZETTE PACKET

Following testimony with 64 speakers at the Oct. 5 Public Hearing on a collective bargaining ordinance draft for the members of county employee groups, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors deferred the decision on the matter. In a letter to the Fairfax County Community late that evening, Jeff McKay, chairman of the Board, wrote that members did so to consider “the significant and thorough testimony provided at the meeting.”

The new law reversed a 1977 Supreme Court of Virginia ruling. According to Code § 40.1-57.2, Collective Bargaining, effective May 1, 2021, counties, cities, and towns can but are not mandated to adopt ordinances recognizing labor unions and enter into collective bargaining agreements with them.

While verbiage in code read: “County, city, or town” includes any local school board, and “public officers or employees” includes employees of a local school board,” the Fairfax County collective bargaining ordinance under consideration did not include Fairfax County Public School employees.

“In fact, absolutely nothing about this proposed ordinance directly impacts FCPS in any way. If schools enter into an agreement,



Rallying for Collective Bargaining in front of the Fairfax County Government Center.



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

that is an action the FCPS School Board would take, not our Board of Supervisors,” added McKay in the letter.

AN HOUR BEFORE the scheduled start of the Public Hearing on Oct. 5, hundreds of essential Fairfax County workers rallied for collective bargaining in front of the Fairfax County Government Center. Community members and partner organizations included Fairfax County Professional Firefighters &

Paramedics - IAFF Local 2068, Fairfax Branch of NAACP, 32BJ SEIU, New Virginia Majority, Catholic Labor Network, Network NOVA, and NOVA Labor Council, as well as the Fairfax Education Association, Inc. (FEA), a union for employees in Fairfax County Public Schools and the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers (FCFT).

David Broder, SEIU Virginia 512 president and Fairfax County resident, spoke first at the rally.

“We are here to pass meaningful, collective bargaining rights and to make Fairfax the best community in the Commonwealth for working families. ... We know that collec-

tive bargaining raises standards for all people while closing racial and gender pay gaps.”

Tilly Blanding is a union member and a retired Fairfax County employee. “We are here to have a seat at the table,” she said.

Tammie Wondong Ware, SEIU Virginia 512 Fairfax Chapter president, has worked for Fairfax County for 32 years. She thanked the community partners who attended the rally, saying that their support continued to prove that collective bargaining benefits the common good. “When workers thrive, the community thrives. After months of hard work and negotiation with

the county, we have a draft ordinance.”

Ware cautioned that three changes are necessary: “One, allow bargaining over the full range of wages, benefits, and working conditions so that we improve our jobs and recruit the best and brightest of Fairfax County. Two, include G status, temporary part-time and probationary employees, to ensure they do have a seat at the negotiations table. Three, ensure that we have access to talk to our co-workers at work so that we can talk about our union and our union contracts.”

SEE FAIRFAX DEFERS, PAGE 7



Tammy Wondong Ware SEIU Virginia 512 Fairfax Chapter president.



David Broder, SEIU Virginia 512 president.



Adriana Granado and her “protest pooch”



Join Mount Vernon District Supervisor
Dan Storck for a community bike ride on

Saturday, October 23, 2021
8:30 a.m.

Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House

Register online

<https://tinyurl.com/MTVernonBike>

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NEWS

Sherwood Regional Library is Turning 50

Library staff and Friends of Sherwood Library invite the Mount Vernon community to join us on Saturday, Oct. 16, 2021, from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. We will have events inside the library during that time and outside in the library parking lot.

Inside the library we invite people to participate in a scavenger hunt, learn about the history of the library, participate in papermaking or a children's craft (while supplies last) and explore our STEM-focused Tech Lab.

Outside the library we will be hosting a children's performer, Groovy Nate at 11 a.m., our very own Mount Vernon High School Varsity Singers Choir at 1 p.m. and a Mariachi Band (Mariachi Aguila DC) at 2 p.m.

Additional parking will be available adjacent to the library and in the Whitman Middle School parking lot.

Please plan to bring your friends and family to help celebrate this great milestone in the Mount Vernon community.

Home and Garden Club

Mount Vernon Home and Garden Club is hosting their first garden club meeting at 9:30 am to 11:30 am at the Huntington Community Center, 5751 Liberty Dr., Alexandria, VA 22303 in room two. The guest

speakers will be two Green Spring Master Gardeners speaking about Native Plants. You do not want to miss this. We also have a fantastic garden tour set for SAT OCT 16th that you can sign up for at the meeting.

Fatal Crash

62-year-old woman died Oct. 4 following a crash that occurred around 1:56 p.m. at the intersection of Franconia Road and Guilford Drive in the Alexandria area of Fairfax County. Detectives from the crash reconstruction unit preliminarily determined Jeanette Shifflet, of Alexandria, was the driver and lone occupant of a 2015 Buick Encore traveling east on Franconia Road when the vehicle left the roadway and struck two utility poles. Shifflet was taken to an area hospital, where she succumbed to her injuries.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation. Preliminarily, detectives do not believe speed or alcohol were factors in the crash.

Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact our Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone - 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477), by text - Type "FCCS" plus tip to 847411.

This is the twelfth non-pedestrian related fatality in the County to date in 2021, more than the eight such crashes by this time last year.

CAN the Bird 5K Nov. 25 in Kingstowne

CAN the Bird 5K Turkey Trot will be Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 25, beginning at 8 a.m. The race will begin and end in the Walmart parking lot, 5885 Kingstowne Boulevard, Alexandria, VA 22315. All ages can enjoy a run around Kingstowne Center and the scenic Kingstowne Lake. Medals will be awarded for first, second and third places for overall men and women runners,

plus best runner with a dog, and best runner with a stroller. First, second and third place medals will also be awarded for these categories: 12 years and under; 13-18 years; and master runners 50 years and older. Donations of canned goods will be accepted for local food banks. Bring the family for a fun Thanksgiving Day morning run. Register for early bird prices at www.MountVernonLeeChamber.org

BULLETIN BOARD

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

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 Well-

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WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

News

Mount Vernon Awards Local

FROM PAGE 1
sion and vision in schools across the country. Fairfax County Public Schools is happy about this year's awardee.

"FCPS is thrilled to have one of our amazing teachers recognized as History Teacher of the Year by George Washington's Mount Vernon," according to FCPS. "Mr. Miller's work developing curriculum and professional learning projects increases access to meaningful and consistent learning experiences about Black history. The mission of Fairfax County Public Schools Social Studies is to empower learners to take informed action in their communities, nation, and world. Mr. Miller embodies this mission, and his work in our school division has ensured that those words do not merely live on the page, but in our classrooms and schools," said an FCPS spokesperson.

This year marks the 13th anniversary of the Mount Vernon History Teacher of the Year award, provided through support from the Robertson Foundation. In 2020, the award was not given out due to COVID, but in 2019, Mount Vernon named Antoinette Dempsey-Waters, a history teacher at Wakefield High School in Arlington, as its 2019 History Teacher of the Year.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 4

ness 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. Call Will Schermerhorn at (703) 338-1776 or contact him via email 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 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.

SATURDAY/OCT. 9

Stuff the Bus. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Fastran buses will be accepting food donations at the following location: Lee | Benefitting United Community, Island Creek Elementary School, 7855 Morning View Lane, Alexandria.

Thanksgiving Day Family Run



November 25
8:00 am
Kingstowne

Bring canned goods
for local food banks

Register at MountVernonLeeChamber.org



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Domestic Violence Awareness Month

By DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK

October is upon us once again, and the calendar is packed full of fun fall activities and many campaign events around our community. Whether you and your family plan to carve pumpkins together, go apple picking, or rake up leaves as they fall, I hope you can make the most of this pleasant time of year.

However, we must remember that not every family experiences peace at home. Every October here in the Commonwealth, we recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Indeed, October was designated as such by the General Assembly in 1989 and serves as an annual reminder of how important it is for us to continue to work to prevent domestic abuse and to treat and support survivors all across the Commonwealth. Domestic violence is characterized as a pattern of coercive behaviors used by an individual to gain or maintain power and control over another individual in the context of an intimate, dating, or familial relationship.

As I noted in my column last October, the scourge of family violence has only become more acute with the many hardships and stressors brought on by the



The free laminated, wallet-sized Hope card is a new tool for enforcement of protection orders and a new resource for survivors of family abuse.

COVID-19 pandemic. Sadly, there have been five incidents in Fairfax County alone since May of this year where a child has killed a parent or sibling. Domestic violence prevention organizations and shelters have experienced upticks in calls for assistance. While dangerous incidents like this are occurring more often, many organizations working to assist individuals and families affected by family violence have become more strapped for resources during the pandemic.

To honor Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Fairfax County Police Department in partnership with the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office, the Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, and other community part-

ners have joined more than five dozen other jurisdictions in Virginia in offering the "Hope card" to victims of domestic violence who have obtained longer-term protective orders.

The free laminated, wallet-sized Hope card is a new tool for enforcement of protection orders and a new resource for survivors of family abuse. While it is not a substitute for a protective order, Hope cards are a more durable means for victims of domestic violence to provide information about their existing order to law enforcement. The Hope Card can reduce the time on the scene for officers responding to incidents of protection order violations, allow officers to verify if there is a valid protective order in place, and can provide a sense of security to survivors. The cards also assist in officer safety by informing law enforcement about weapons involved in the incident resulting in a protective order. The Hope Card is intended as a more convenient way for people who have permanent 12-month or longer protective orders to always keep relevant information about their orders with them.

For more information on the Hope Card, you can contact the Fairfax County Police Department's

Victim Services Division main line at 703-246-2141, the Fairfax County Domestic Violence Action Center at 703-236-4573, or contact the statewide Hope Card Program Coordinator, Jaime Clemmer, at jclemmer@vacourts.gov.

In addition, Commonwealth's Attorney for Fairfax County, Steve Descano has announced this summer that a new dedicated investigative unit will be created to focus solely on domestic violence cases. These specialized attorneys will be trained to address trauma and will be better equipped to protect vulnerable residents.

Sexual and domestic violence programs remain open to provide crisis services, emergency shelter, and resource-based support. The Virginia Statewide Hotline is ready to help (24 hours a day, 365 days a year), and sexual and domestic violence programs all over the state. If you or someone you know needs help, please call: 1-800-838-8238, text: 804-793-9999, or chat: <https://www.vadata.org/chat/>. To report a crime, call the Fairfax County Police Department at 703-691-2131 or, for emergencies, please call 911. To support charitable efforts to combat domestic violence please consider donating to the Family and Children's Trust Fund <http://www.fact.virginia.gov/donate-2/>, the only organization in Virginia devoted to treating and preventing family violence across the lifespan.

Invest in Early Childhood Education

By DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM

Although it may seem that we just ended deliberations on the state budget, we will nonetheless in another month or so begin serious discussions on the biennial budget for Virginia for 2022-2024. State agency heads and the Governor's staff are already hard at work to prepare an executive budget that will be presented to the House of Delegates and the State Senate in December. With the federal funds that have been coming into the state along with an amazingly strong state economy there should be funding available to meet some state needs that have not been met in the past.

Virginia's rainy-day fund is at capacity and available for downturns in the economy. Governor Northam wisely recommended to the General Assembly to not spend all the federal monies available for

COVID relief but rather hold some monies in reserve should the economy slow down. Virginia budget revenue projections are not set politically but rather are the work of recognized economists and persons who are knowledgeable of economic matters using available data even though they likely do not live in Virginia.

If revenue can be predicted with good data and economic models, the expenditure side of the budget is often decided in a pull-tug match among established programs, political favorites, special interests and advocacy groups in a political setting. Too often established programs continue their funding with a small inflation bounce but without the scrutiny needed to determine their effectiveness. Much of the budget is taken up with the continuation of existing programs. New programs with a price tag find it difficult to break into the regular

budget cycle. Sometimes new programs or initiatives are funded as pilot programs to see how they will perform before being added to the baseline budget.

One program for which there is an abundance of evidence of its cost effectiveness that only recently is starting to break into consideration for serious long-term funding is preschool or early education. The evidence has become overwhelming that spending on preschool education should be considered an investment because of its high rate of return. There are numerous studies conducted by business groups that might otherwise be skeptical of new government programs showing that early education/preschool programs pay for themselves over the long run in avoided costs that are nec-

essary when preschool education is not available. A decades-long

SEE INVEST IN EARLY, PAGE 11

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A Connection Newspaper



Fairfax Defers Decision On Collective Bargaining

FROM PAGE 3

Ware said that if they don't get it right, the ordinance they had worked so hard to pass would be nothing but an empty gesture on a piece of paper.

DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING, County staff said that months of work went into the draft collective bargaining ordinance. The Board created a collective bargaining workgroup, led by Supervisors Penelope Gross and James Walkinshaw. The workgroup included employee group representatives from the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) and General County Government, elected officials from FCPS, County Executive Bryan Hill, FCPS Superintendent Scott Brabrand, and other senior staff members.

The workgroup met twice in February 2021 and once in April 2021. They sought to amend Chapter 3 of the Code of the County of Fairfax, Virginia, County Employees, by adding Article 10, Collective Bargaining, Sections 3-10-1 through 3-10-18. Staff detailed two town halls with employees, a combined attendance of 1,000 employees, published four packets of questions and answers from the Board of Supervisors, and created many frequently asked questions that are on the public website.

Speaker Patrick Booth said he was born in Fairfax County and lived here with his family. "I was not bussed in from out of state or from Richmond this morning, I have the honor of representing working staff for Fairfax County as president of the only internal, not-for-profit union, the Fairfax Workers Coalition," Booth said. He supported collective bargaining, but he said it must include equality for all staff, especially lower staff members. Their pay grade should not dictate the deciding factor of individuals' rights and voices. "Putting these same employees in the same bargaining unit with senior staff is absurd," Booth said.

Sean Corcoran, president of the Fairfax Coalition of Police, said that power dynamics of higher-ranking officers could come into play during collective bargaining. He asked how long lower-ranking officers could push back on contract issues against a person that could potentially fire them.

Rafael Gil-Figueroa said the county has no more time to waste. He encouraged the Board to adopt the changes recommended by the unions and pass meaningful collective bargaining rights for county employees. "We must let



Rafael Gil-Figueroa



Patrick Booth, president of the Fairfax Workers Coalition.



Sean Corcoran, Fairfax Coalition of Police president.

employees bargain over working conditions, health, safety, staffing, scheduling, and discipline. We must let employees communicate, talk and meet their union freely in the workplace without fear of retaliation. We cannot divide the workers. All county employees, including temporary workers, should have the right to bargain as a combined unit," he said.

According to the staff report, the FY 2022 Adopted Budget Plan includes \$1.0 million and 6.0 FTE positions to support collective bargaining for public employees. This consists of adding \$0.5 million and 5.0 FTE positions in the Department of Human Resources and \$0.1 million and 1.0 FTE position in the Office of the County Attorney. In addition, \$0.3 million in Fringe Benefits funding is included in Agency 89, Employee Benefits. These positions are necessary to address the new workload associated with labor relations, including legal support, policy administration, contract compliance, and system administration.



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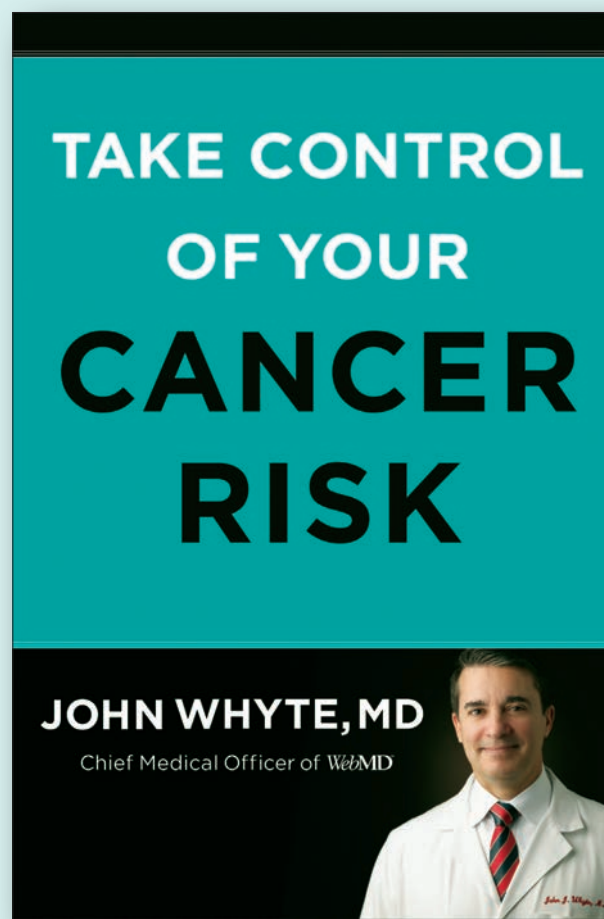
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Why I'm Walking to End Alzheimer's

Walker Name: Noelle Salucci
Hometown: Alexandria, VA
Team Name: Danny's Dynasty

Participating in the DC Walk on Oct. 9

In Noelle Salucci's own words:

I've been involved with the walk for 3 years, and I've also been part of The Longest Day for the past 2 years.

I will always fundraise for the Alzheimer's Association. The disease is so crippling and tragic for everyone involved. The walk is wonderful because it motivates me to set a goal and recruit a team of loved ones to help raise money for this important cause. It helps raise awareness about the disease, and coming together for the walk is such an emotional experience. I really love seeing the flowers everyone plants in the flower garden, and the colors each flower represents. It's such a powerful morning. I think that when you have a loved one with Alzheimer's, or when you have lost someone to Alzheimer's, a lot of people don't know how to support you. Having a walk team allows my friends to show up and support me, and I think that's something that we all appreciate. I have also found that posting statistics about Alzheimer's on social media really helps with fundraising, and that also helps increase awareness of the disease.

My Dad always made me feel so loved and so important, my whole life. He had a very busy, important job, but I never felt like his job was more important than his family. My Dad always made time for me. During the summer, he would come eat lunch with us at the local pool, and he would let me sit on his lap in my wet bathing suit before returning to work with wet pants! He would play basketball with me, and help me work on my hook shots. He was at all of my soccer and basketball games, piano recitals, and dance recitals. He knew all of my friends — they loved coming over to our house to hear him share stories about his work. He drove me to school when I didn't want to wake up early enough to ride the bus in middle school. He taught me how to drive and how to ride my bike. He drove us home from away games in high school so I could sleep in the warm car instead of riding home on the cold school bus. He was always there with the biggest, warmest hugs and the best back scratches. I always knew I was his little sweetie, and he was mine. He was such a gentle, loving soul, and everyone who was blessed to know him was so lucky to have his presence in their life. I miss him every day.

I was honestly apprehensive of how I would feel the first time I attended the walk. My Dad had lost his battle with Alzheimer's 5 months prior to the walk, and I feared I would be a sobbing mess at the walk. I was surprised by how inspired I felt when I left the walk that day.

Alzheimer's has always left me feeling so hopeless, frustrated, and defeated. My heart breaks every time someone tells me that their loved one has Alzheimer's, because there is no cure. Nothing to slow it down. Nothing to ease the transition into the Hell



of Alzheimer's.

There were so many times when my Dad was sick when I felt so alone, and like nobody could relate to what we were going through. Coming together with so many other people who are passionate about finding a cure really inspired me. While we all may feel alone and desperate while on this rollercoaster ride, it gave me hope to see that so many other people are working for a cure with me. Alzheimer's doesn't care whose life it destroys. You see people from all walks of life at the walk.

I am determined that together, we WILL see a future without Alzheimer's. I think that going to a walk would leave anyone feeling encouraged, motivated, and supported, and it will help them realize that they are not alone on this journey.

My dear friend is writing a children's book about Alzheimer's that I helped her with, and it should be published in 2022. It's called The Memory Keepers, and she is featuring stories and memories from my family as well as hers (her mom has early onset Alzheimer's and is on hospice). She is participating in the Houston Walk to End Alzheimer's, and I'm flying out there to do that walk with her as well. It will be her first time walking. I'm SO excited about this book, and think it will really help families explain the complexities of the disease with their children.

Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's

Held annually in more than 600 communities nationwide, the Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's is the world's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research. Since 1989, the Alzheimer's Association mobilized millions of Americans in the Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk; now the Alzheimer's Association is continuing to lead the way with Walk



to End Alzheimer's. Together, we can end Alzheimer's.

Walk to End Alzheimer's - Washington, D.C.

https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2021/DC-NationalCapitalArea?fr_id=14365&pg=entry
Saturday, Oct. 9
National Mall
Registration opens at 8 a.m.
Ceremony starts at 9:30 a.m.
For more information, contact Faith Anderson at 703.766.9035 or fanderson@alz.org

Walk to End Alzheimer's - Northern Virginia

https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2021/DC-NationalCapitalArea?fr_id=14363&pg=entry
Sunday, Oct. 24
Reston Town Center
Registration opens at 8 a.m.
Ceremony starts at 9:30 a.m.
For more information, contact Shiri Rozenberg at 803-371-9793 or shrozenberg@alz.org

Registration information

Sign up as an individual, team member or Team Captain. While there is no fee to register for Walk, all participants are encouraged to raise critical funds that allow the Alzheimer's Association to provide 24/7 care and support and advance research toward methods of prevention, treatment and, ultimately, a cure. Learn more and register at alz.org/walk.

The Promise Garden

The poignant Promise Garden ceremony is a mission-focused experience that signifies the solidarity of the Walk participants in the fight against the disease. The colors of the Promise Garden flowers represent people's personal connection to Alzheimer's.

Blue: Someone living with Alzheimer's or another

dementia.

Purple: An individual who has lost someone to the disease.

Yellow: A person who is currently supporting or caring for someone living with Alzheimer's.

Orange: A participant who supports the cause and the Association's vision of a world without Alzheimer's and other dementia.

Safety information

Walk to End Alzheimer's is happening — and you can join us at your local event or Walk From Home in your neighborhood. With the health and safety of participants, staff and volunteers as top priorities, the Walk will implement safety protocols including physical distancing, masks (where required), contactless registration, hand sanitizing stations and more. Per CDC guidelines around crowded outdoor settings, we ask that all Walk attendees be vaccinated against COVID-19 or wear a mask when in an overcrowded area. Masks will be available on-site.

"While the recent Delta variant surge may impact the way we walk, it doesn't change the reason we walk," said Kate Rooper, president and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter. "More than ever, with the dollars raised, the Alzheimer's Association can continue to provide care and support to families during these difficult times while also advancing critical research toward methods of treatment and prevention."

Alzheimer's Association

The Alzheimer's Association is a worldwide voluntary health organization dedicated to Alzheimer's care, support and research. Its mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia. Visit alz.org or call 800.272.3900.

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CALENDAR

NOW THRU OCT. 30

In the "Expanding the Common Ground: Voices of the Global Majority" art exhibit, themes of people of the global majority reflecting, celebrating, and claiming power over oppression are explored, as well as finding common ground and healing divides. View exhibit at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays 12-6 p.m., and Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits.

OCT. 1-31

Ghost & Graveyard Tour. 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays additional tours at 8:30 and 9 p.m. Admission: \$15 per adult; \$14 for seniors, military and law enforcement; \$10 per child. Tour departs from Alexandria Visitor Center, 221 King St., Alexandria. Follow an 18th-century costumed guide by lantern light through the charming streets of Alexandria's historic district known as Old Town. On this entertaining tour, you'll hear ghost stories, legends and folklore. You will also hear about unsolved mysteries, tales of romance and angry ghosts looking for revenge. Appropriate for ages 9 and up. Visit alexcolonialtours.com

OCT. 8-10, 2021

Adventurous Children Wanted. 3:30-5:30 p.m. Free, virtual, three-day adventure at the Folklore Society of Greater Washington's Online Getaway! Storytelling, role play, fantasy, magic. Register to receive materials for 3 sessions on 3 consecutive days. <https://www.fsgw.org/event-4484084> Three sessions: Oct. 8, 2021, 3:30 p.m. Oct. 9, 2021, 10:30 p.m. Oct. 10, 2021, 10:30 p.m.

OCT. 8-10

Fall Wine Festival & Sunset Tour. 6 to 9 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Taste unlimited samples from Virginia wineries after hours at George Washington's estate. Bring a blanket and relax on the east lawn overlooking the Potomac River and meet General Washington. Call 703-780-2000 or visit mountvernon.org.

OCT. 8-22

Octoberfest Online Auction. Carpenter's Shelter's Octoberfest Online Auction. Join them online to bid on one-of-a-kind items like trips to wineries, theater tickets, jewelry, gift baskets, restaurant gift cards, and much more. Start your holiday shopping early while supporting children, women, and men experiencing homelessness in Alexandria. Visit <https://carpentersshelter.org/event/octoberfest2021>

FRIDAY/OCT. 8

Spirits of Carlyle House. 6 to 8:30 p.m. (Tours on the half hour). At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Carlyle House's long and diverse history is full of truths, myths and rumors that makes it one of the most visited places on Alexandria's ghost tours. Come and experience a uniquely haunting tour of the house and grounds by candlelight, perhaps encounter the departed spirits of

notable residents and neighbors and hear their tales of sadness and triumph. Reservations required due to limited space. Tours are on the half hour.

SATURDAY/OCT. 9

Discovering Alexandria Architecture Tour. 10 a.m. At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Alexandria has grown from a small town in the 18th century to a bustling small city in the 21st century. Join Carlyle House for a tour of Alexandria looking at the various architecture styles that adorn the city streets and make it one of the best places to live and work. Reservations are required as space is limited. Please wear comfortable shoes for this one-and-a-half hour guided tour. Tour is held rain or shine unless there is severe weather. Visit novaparks.com/parks/carlyle-house-historic-park

SATURDAY/OCT. 9

Friendship Firehouse Museum Special Open Hours. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At 107 South Alfred Street, Alexandria. Learn about the Friendship Fire Company's fire fighting procedures and equipment, as well as the different roles the organization played in serving the community. Families with young children will be given take-home kits, including a fire helmet and activities.

SATURDAY/OCT. 9

Legacy of the Green Family Cabinet Makers Walking Tour. 9:30 a.m. In the early 19th Century, William Green started the Green Furniture factory in Alexandria and by 1823 his son, James, would take over. James expanded his father's factory and established himself as a prominent Alexandrian through building and operating Green's Mansion House Hotel. Join us on a tour to learn about James Green and his family's life here in Alexandria. Reservations are required as space is limited. Please wear comfortable shoes for this 1.5 hour guided tour. Tour is held rain or shine unless there is severe weather.

OCT. 9-31

St. Luke's Pumpkin Patch. 12 to 5 p.m. At St. Luke's Episcopal, 8009 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Pick up pumpkin bread, soup and pumpkins, and gourds galore. Proceeds support the Navaja Nation who grow our pumpkins and youth and outreach programs. Pumpkins priced by size. Pumpkin bread and soup \$5. Great prices on decorative pumpkins and gourdes of all types. Patch open Saturdays starting Oct. 9 at 10 a.m. - 7 p.m., Sundays Noon - 7 p.m. Mon - Thurs 3 - 7 p.m., Fri 1 - 7 p.m. through Halloween or until they sell out.

SATURDAY/OCT. 9

Watercolor Workshop: Still Life. 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. (Adults) Whether you are a beginner or experienced painter, learn to paint still life in watercolor with the help of artist Dawn Flores. Gain skills in building form, developing color harmony, and painting flowers, water, shadows, and backgrounds. Bring in objects to make simple compositions or challenge yourself with crystal and silver. \$97 per person. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code A4E.O1BW.

SUNDAY/OCT. 10

Holmes-Run Storywalk Festival. 2-4 p.m. Holmes Run Park Walking Trail. Intersection of Holmes Run Parkway and Pelham Street, Alexandria. Walk the trail and join local author, Alice Y. Chen, as she reads her picture book, Centipede Dragon. This outdoor festival for all ages. Other activities include crafts, a lion dance and martial arts performance. Visit the website: <https://alexlibraryva.org/event/5638400>

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 13

Mount Vernon Home and Garden Club is hosting its first garden club meeting at 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Huntington Community Center, 5751 Liberty Dr., Alexandria. The guest speakers will be two Green Spring Master Gardeners speaking about Native Plants. They also have a garden tour set for Oct. 16th that you can sign up for at the meeting.

FRIDAY/OCT. 15

Spirits of Carlyle House. 6 to 8:30 p.m. (Tours on the half hour). At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Carlyle House's long and diverse history is full of truths, myths and rumors that makes it one of the most visited places on Alexandria's ghost tours. Come and experience a uniquely haunting tour of the house and grounds by candlelight, perhaps encounter the departed spirits of notable residents and neighbors and hear their tales of sadness and triumph. Reservations required due to

limited space. Tours are on the half hour. Visit novaparks.com/parks/carlyle-house-historic-park

THE BIRCHMERE

All shows are at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com. At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or www.Birchmere.com.

Thu. Oct. 7: Lori McKenna "The Two Birds Tour" with Mark Erelli \$29.50

Sat. Oct. 9: The Guess Who \$69.50

Sun. Oct. 10 Phil Vassar \$45.00

Mon./Tue. Oct. 11 & 12: An Evening with Patty Griffin & Gregory Alan Isakov \$95.00

Wed/Thu. Oct. 13 & 14: An Evening with Damien Escobar \$59.50

Fri. Oct. 15: The Manhattans featuring Gerald Alston \$55.00

Sat. Oct. 16: Raven's Night 2021 \$29.50

Sun. Oct. 17: An Evening with Judy Collins \$59.50

Mon./Tue. Oct. 18&19: Boney James: Solid Tour \$79.50

Wed. Oct. 20: Iris Dement w/ Anna Egge \$39.50

Thu. Oct. 21: Tab Benoit "Whiskey Bayou Revue" \$39.50

Fri./Sat. Oct. 22&23: The Whispers \$85.00

Sun. Oct. 24: Rick Wakeman "Even Grumpier Old Rock Star Tour" \$59.50

Mon. Oct. 25: Gordon Lightfoot \$95.00

Tue. Oct. 26: Piff The Magic Dragon \$45.00

Fri. Oct. 29: Nitty Gritty Dirt Band \$59.50

Sun. Oct. 31: Tom Paxton & The DonJuans and John McCutcheon \$45.00

*All shows are at 7:30pm, unless otherwise noted.

**Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com. For more information, contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or www.Birchmere.com.

Birchmere Shows Nov-Dec 2021 & 2022!

Tue. Nov. 2: Shovels & Rope "The Bare Bones Tour" \$45.00

Wed. Nov. 3: Chicks With Hits: Terri Clark, Pam Tillis, Suzy Bogguss \$69.50

Thu. Nov. 4: Herman's Hermits starring Peter Noone \$49.50

Fri./Sat. Nov. 5&6: Stephanie Mills \$89.50

Sun. Nov. 7: Steep Canyon Rangers \$39.50

Mon. Nov. 8: Marc Broussard \$45.00

Wed. Nov. 10: Brandy Clark "Who You Thought I Was Tour" \$35.00

Fri. Nov. 12: 10,000 Maniacs \$55.00

Sun. Nov. 14: Hiroshima \$49.50

Mon./Tue. Nov. 15&16: Rosanne Cash \$69.50

Wed. Nov. 17: John Hiatt and The Jerry Douglas Band \$75.00

Thu. Nov. 18: Luna \$39.50

Fri./Sat./Sun. Nov. 19,20,21: Paula Poundstone \$55.00

Tue. Nov. 23: The Musical Box Presents: A Genesis Extravaganza Vol. 2 \$49.50

Wed. Nov. 24: Hot Tuna Acoustic & Electric with special guest David Grisman's Dawg Trio featuring Danny Barnes & Samson Grisman \$75.00

Sun. Nov. 28: Charles Esten \$59.50

Mon. Nov. 29: Steve Tyrell \$55.00

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Making Apple Butter the Old-fashioned Way

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Out behind the Pohick Church Parish House on Saturday and Sunday, they stirred and stirred and stirred some more. Brenna Berger clocked two-and-a-half miles on her step tracker while slowly moving around a 40-gallon copper kettle in her five, 15-minute, stirring shifts. “You have to put your hip into it,” she explained, watching four other volunteers stir mushy, burbly, russet-colored apple butter in the making with long wooden paddles as they circled around the kettles supported by three-legged, metal stands.

The group of 15 were making 800 pints of apple butter the old-timey way to sell at the church’s Oct. 2 country fair, an annual event first held in 1945. Production has swelled from three bushels of apples and one 20-gallon kettle to 40 bushels and four 40-gallon kettles today. One year they produced 1,200 pints.

The slurpy, thick mixtures gurgled over steadily burning oak fires surrounded by brick “chimneys” that concentrated the heat. Smoke wafted up from the kettles, its oaky aroma permeating the air, hair and clothes, as the human pageantry ensued around the kettles.

THE FIRST THING the novice should know about apple butter is that no butter is involved. Apple butter is a saucy concoction of apples cooked long and slow in cider or water until the apples’ sugar caramelizes, turning it into a thick mush with a brownish-red hue. At some point, chefs flavor it with sugar and spices like cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg. True apple butter aficionados cook it outdoors in copper kettles over a fire, never on an indoor stove, crockpot or other new-fangled device. Copper conducts heat better than cast iron or steel, explained John Pasour, one of the Pohick Apple Butter Committee’s co-chairs.

The process began on Wednesday, Sept. 22, when volunteers drove to Hollabaugh Brothers fruit farm in Biglerville, Pennsylvania, north of Gettysburg and hauled back 40 bushels of Jonagold apples. On Friday, they sterilized 800 glass Mason jars and set up the tent and supplies. On Saturday, they cut the apples in half, pulled out the stems and put them through a slicer machine. From 7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m., they cooked them into applesauce and stirred and stirred and stirred. On Sunday, at 6 a.m., they resumed cooking and stirring, and stirring and stirring some more.

To determine when it’s done, there’s no app, computer password, cookbook tip or kitchen timer trick. Apple butter veterans conduct the stainless steel test. They spoon out a glob of apple butter onto a stainless steel surface and see if water drains out. If it does, the apple butter is not thick enough. Traditionalists say that it has to stop “weeping,” meaning that water should not separate from the pulp.

Around 3 p.m., canning began. Twenty-year veteran Kathy Kirkland, who calls herself “the Canning Queen,” has chaired the Canning Committee for two years. She



Jim and Cathy Foster, of Mason Neck, the King and Queen of Apple Butter.



Kathy Kirkland, Stewart Remaly and John Pasour. Kirkland shows a diagram of the canning operation.



The poplar paddle has holes to enhance mixing.

sets up a horseshoe-shaped operation with a human conveyor-belt system of 10 people on each side who pour the precious product into jars, put on rings and lids and tighten them.

“The canning process is a sight to behold,” wrote Vern Eppey and Randy Brooks, former co-chairs. Why is Kirkland such an apple butter devotee? “It’s fun and good fellowship. It’s a nice way to start the fall, to regroup,” she commented.

Jim and Kathy Foster, now in their 66th year of marriage, helped start the tradition in 1976 and are now the church’s King and Queen of Apple Butter.

“I’m trying to retire,” Jim jokingly insisted. Back then, he found a kettle in a Pennsylvania farm shed and has since made the paddles. The hickory handle is about 50 inches long so the person stirring is not too close to the kettle’s fire. The poplar paddle part must be as long as the kettle is deep and has holes to make sure the pulp is comprehensively mixed.

IN THE MIDDLE AGES, monasteries produced apple butter as a way to conserve part of the fruit production, reports Wikipedia. In the U.S. South, it also became a common



Four stirrers on the Parish House patio stirring and stirring.



Apple butter turns dark reddish-brown when cooking.



Wendy Remaly takes her turn at stirring.

way to avoid wasting the fall apple harvest. It is often a family event and opinions vary on the best apple to use.

Apple butter making is a Pohick Church fundraiser, but much more. “We are working together for a common cause,” said co-chair Pasour. Stewart Remaly, the other co-chair concurred: “It’s a fellowship event after a long summer. After covid, we need it.”

Pohick Church, at 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton, was the first permanent church in the Virginia colony north of the Occoquan River, established sometime before 1724. In 1732, it became the parish church of the newly-formed Truro Parish. The building



The apple butter cooks in copper kettles on metal stands over oak fires.



John Pasour did the stainless steel test. It wasn’t done.

was completed by 1774. George Washington, George Mason and George William Fairfax were vestrymen and members of the building committee.

The Pohick Church country fair is on Oct. 2. Visit www.pohick.org.

How to Eat Apple Butter

People smear apple butter on toast, cornbread, muffins or rolls, dabble it on ice cream or eat it for dessert. Some add it to peanut butter sandwiches. Others bake apple butter cakes. Graves Mountain Lodge chefs in Madison County, Virginia, make apple butter donuts. True devotees slurp it.

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OPINION

Invest in Early Childhood Education

FROM PAGE 6

longitudinal study, the Perry Pre-school Program Study, found that preschool programs provide a \$7 to \$12 return for every dollar spent on preschool programs. The returns come from the savings realized when remediation programs are not needed as children come to school prepared and ready to learn. There are longer term gains as children who attend quality preschool programs are likely to be successful in life generally, in employment, and in personal satisfaction.

Over the last few years Virginia has been ramping up its funding for preschool programs based on the research and on the observable difference by students who get an early start at learning. Preschool funding gets a great rate of return monetarily, but it saves money in other areas of the budget and in the personal lifetime satisfaction of students who are enriched by their experience of getting a head start!

NEW DATA REVEALS **MASSIVE LEARNING LOSSES** IN FCPS (SCHOOLQUALITY.VIRGINIA.GOV)

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↓ 19 POINTS

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↓ 25 POINTS

Meanwhile, Democrats are focused on pushing their divisive “woke” ideology on kids.

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SOL SCORES EXPOSE THE TRAGEDY OF A LOST YEAR
(SUN GAZETTE, 09/02/21)

Fairfax Students Back to School Amid COVID-19 Chaos, CRT Protests
(Washington Examiner, 08/23/21)

Fairfax Schools Pay New York Consultants for Critical Race Theory Curricula
(The Federalist, 05/07/21)



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44th House District

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★ OPEN SCHOOLS

I fully support parental rights and in person learning

I will fight to keep our schools open, for vouchers and for school choice. Money follows the student.

★ PUBLIC SAFETY

I will NEVER vote to defund the police

We must fully support our men and women in uniform who protect and serve. I will vote for qualified immunity and increased funding to include pay hikes. I fully support Second Amendment rights.

★ PROTECT THE MOST VULNERABLE

I will be your champion in Richmond!

I respect the sanctity of life at all stages. I believe educational opportunities for our special needs students must be expanded. I will proudly stand against extremist DEMOCRATS who support physician assisted suicide and infanticide.



haydenfordelegate.com



The Great Pumpkin Patch

Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill sale benefits local charities.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Charlie Brown and the gang would be impressed. In what has been a tradition for more than a quarter century, the legendary pumpkin patch sponsored by Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill opened for business Oct. 3 with thousands of pumpkins now ready for sale to benefit local and international charities.

"This is our first time at the pumpkin patch," said Fairfax resident Chatchaya Pansiri, who was visiting with Warawat Prachongkarn. "We have passed by many times but only this year decided to stop in ourselves. It is amazing."

Now in its 28th year, the Pumpkin Patch fundraiser features pumpkins sustainably grown on a Navajo Indian Reservation near Farmington, N.M.,

"The funds raised really make a difference to the charities that we support."

Pumpkin patch volunteer
Richard Glassco

and trucked across the country for sale in Alexandria.

The pumpkin patch offers all sizes of pumpkins, from small hand-held "spookies" to very large pumpkins for jack-o-lanterns; prices start at \$1 and go up based on size. Also for sale are gourds, home-made soups and baked goods, and autumn-Halloween-themed crafts.

All net profits from the pumpkin patch support the church's outreach activities at the community, regional and international levels.

"We are enormously grateful for the support of the community," said church member Jamie Conrad. "In the face of the pandemic, we had our best year ever last year. Clearly, people were looking for a little normality and some semblance of a seasonal event during the grim lockdown."

Last year, over 25 charities received support ranging from Alexandria charities working with homelessness and education, to regional anti-poverty programs, to international work including a children's ministry in Haiti, nurses training in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and a hospital in Gaza.

"The situation is better now than a year ago, but with the resurgence of the Delta variant, I expect people will still welcome the return of the Patch," Conrad added. "We certainly can put the proceeds to good use: we con-



Chatchaya Pansiri holds a pumpkin as Warawat Prachongkarn takes a photo Oct. 4 at the Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill Pumpkin Patch. The pumpkin patch will be open through Oct. 31 and raises funds for local charities.



Richard Glassco and Mary Ann Rehnke volunteer Oct. 4 at the Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill Pumpkin Patch.

fronted unprecedented need last year with COVID-19, and this year we're already contributing significantly to Afghan refugee resettlement."

Local charities benefitting from the sale include ALIVE!, Carpenter's Shelter, Inova Alexandria Hospital, Senior Services of Alexandria, Christ House and Community Lodgings.

The church works with Pumpkin Patch Fundraisers in North Carolina, a small company which consigns pumpkins to churches and nonprofit organizations throughout the country. In its first year of sales in 1993, Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill received a shipment of about one quarter of a truckload of

When & Where

The Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill Pumpkin Patch is located at 3606 Seminary Road and open seven days a week through Oct. 31. Hours are noon-6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on weekends and the Oct. 11 Federal holiday. Admission is free. www.immanuel-on-the-hill.org

pumpkins. In recent years, the church has received four semi-trailer truckloads.

"I have been doing this for as long as the church has held the pumpkin patch," said Richard Glassco, one of the many volunteers who staff the patch for 10 hours each day until Halloween. "The funds raised really



Brothers Joshua, 4, and Xavier, 7, show off some of their pumpkin picks Oct. 4 at the Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill Pumpkin Patch.



Chatchaya Pansiri and Warawat Prachongkarn hold up some of the pumpkins selected Oct. 4 at the Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill Pumpkin Patch.



Ghost pops and other baked goods and homemade soups are available at the Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill Pumpkin Patch.

make a difference to the charities that we support so I hope people will come out and support us."

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News I Don't Want to Use



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

But I doubt very much I'll be able to bury the lead. The lead being the start date for the lenvima, the thyroid cancer medication I've been "pilling" once a day since Sept. 3rd, 2020, and more/most importantly, the end date. The end date being the presumptive time frame, two to three years from start to perhaps my finish. The finish being the date in the future when the medication I've been taking for a little over one year eventually stops working, according to medical opinions. And why is this medication's effective life so relevant? Because at this time, it's the best/only alternative to treat my stage IV papillary thyroid cancer. What happens after I can only guess because my oncologist rarely discusses scenarios. It's likely somewhere between a wait and see and why worry - about a set of circumstances years off and a definite maybe at that. Plus cancer research continues.

However, as much as I've benefited from lung cancer research that extended my life so long when I was taking tarceva, avastin and alimta - in that order, "miracle drugs" as my oncologist called them; the underlying reality may have been that I didn't have stage IV non small cell lung cancer at all, but rather slow growing papillary thyroid cancer. A cancer that was neither helped nor hindered during the years I was treated for lung cancer. Unfortunately, I was hindered.

Hindered in that after years of receiving heavy-duty chemotherapy - perhaps for the wrong cancer, I've suffered kidney damage which is irreparable. Specifically, my kidneys are functioning at approximately 50-percent efficiency. Though this deficiency doesn't seem to manifest itself in everyday activities/life, it does affect what cancer medications I can take and even some non-prescription drugs available. As an example, I can't take nsais (ibuprofen/advil) and when I lie down for my quarterly scans, I cannot be given "contrast," an injection given to sharpen the details of the scan. The reason being that I can't take anything that is filtered through the kidney for risk of making a bad situation worse. A situation that perhaps has occurred unnecessarily because of years of receiving lung cancer chemotherapy when I should have been receiving thyroid cancer medication. And as a result of this infusion of toxic chemotherapy into my body, it has affected the treatment of my thyroid cancer.

When my thyroid cancer first appeared as a growth above my adam's apple, subsequent biopsies confirmed that it was in fact thyroid cancer, not a "clone" of my lung cancer. These biopsies lead to a thyroidectomy which surgically removed both my thyroid and parathyroid. But since the uncontained tumor had grown under my collarbone for approximately nine months since it first appeared, the surgeon - after seven hours of trying, was unable to get all the cancer. No real problem. There was another procedure scheduled to eradicate the remaining cancer. It required that I receive an injection of nuclear isotopes and an overnight stay in the hospital.

A procedure, that is generally successful for a cancer that is called "the friendly cancer" because of its curability, was unsuccessful. Why? Because I was only given one third the required dose of the isotope because - the isotopes are filtered through the kidney and my pre-existing kidney damage from the nine-plus years of lung cancer treatment impacted the use of the proper dose. The result? I now have incurable stage IV papillary thyroid cancer and am taking a medication that likely stops working in the next year or two with at present no new options in the medical pipeline. Moreover, the combination of factors that lead to my present situation is not exactly a regular occurrence which would lead to a clinical trial of similarly-affected patients. I'm not entirely on my own, but I'm not on too many others either.

(There's nothing funny in this column because there's nothing funny about my situation.)

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

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cdc.gov/coronavirus

Is It Safe To Trick-or-Treat This Year?

Some COVID-19 mandates have been lifted, some precautions are still urged.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
GAZETTE PACKET

After Angela Morgan's father died from COVID-19 earlier this year, she was devastated, and she was moved to change her mind about safety precautions. Before her father died, she was annoyed by mask mandates and refused to get a COVID-19 vaccine. As Halloween approaches, Morgan says she has concerns about taking her daughters, ages three and seven, trick-or-treating.

"Halloween is very popular in my neighborhood," said the Bethesda mother. There are hundreds of kids and their parents out and about, almost every house is decorated and the owners give out loads of candy. It will be impossible to avoid crowds and I probably won't be able to stop my seven-year-old from running up with her friends to every house that's giving out candy. My three-year-old is frightened by Halloween costume masks, so I don't know how I'm going to handle that."

Marked by costumes, trick-or-treating and visiting with friends and neighbors, Halloween is one of the sweetest and most popular holidays of the year. With COVID-19 cases and the Delta variant spreading, navigating this time-honored holiday tradition will be complicated for some parents, especially those with children who are under 12, too young for a COVID-19 vaccination.

"Although trick-or-treating occurs outside where the risk of COVID-19 transmission is less, if kids go in groups, there is likely not to be social distancing and there will be contact with people in a lot of different households handing out candy," said Lucy H. Caldwell, director, communications, Fairfax County Health Department. "While some COVID-19 measures are no longer mandato-

ry, it's still important to take precautions to prevent COVID-19 as disease transmission is still happening in our community at a high level. Wearing a mask would be a good thing to do. The CDC has the Halloween Activity Checklist for Parents." <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/daily-life-coping/Trick-or-treating.pdf>.

Like Morgan's daughter, there are young children who are frightened by Halloween masks that can offer a layer of protection, says Glenda Hernandez Tittle, PhD. education professor at Montgomery College. "If children are afraid of Halloween, it is important to acknowledge those feelings," she said. "Consider selecting fun and interesting costumes for children. Make the connections that Halloween is about pretending and costumes allow us to do that on this day."

"Even though we all love candy, it's not worth putting yourself or others at risk."
— Kurt Larrick, Arlington County Department of Human Services

Of all the Halloween traditions, trick-or-treating is one of the riskiest because it often means large groups of children crowded around a neighbor's front door grabbing for candy.

"Even though we all love candy, it's not worth putting yourself or others at risk,"

said Kurt Larrick, Assistant Director, Arlington County Department of Human Services. "Masks, distancing, handwashing, testing, and vaccinations are all important layers of protection when it comes to COVID safety."

Though COVID might be at the forefront of conversations about Halloween safety, Larrick advises the public not to forget other safety measures. "Drive and bike slowly and take precautions at intersections," he said. "There will be many more people of all ages walking around on Halloween than your typical weekday evening, so be sure to take extra care."

"Wear reflective clothing, have a flashlight ... don't pet dogs you don't know [and] don't eat foods that are not wrapped," added Caldwell.

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