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Great Falls CONNECTION

Eighty years after eight local women met for their first official Garden Club meeting in 1941, the seeds of their commitment to beautification, outreach, and education can be seen all over Great Falls.

Great Falls Garden Club Celebrates 80 Years

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Republican Sweep

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

Virginia has a long tradition of offering a counterpoint to presidential elections starting after the election of Democrat Jimmy Carter for president in 1976. Virginia responded by electing Republican John Dalton. Ever since then, it's been a pretty predictable pattern. After the Reagan Revolution in 1980, Virginia elected Democrat Chuck Robb governor. The election of Democrat Bill Clinton brought on the election of Republican George Allen, and the answer to Republican George W. Bush was Democrat Mark Warner.

Only one candidate for governor has been able to break the spell — Terry McAuliffe, who bucked the trend in 2013 by defeating Republican Ken Cuccinelli on the heels of Barack Obama's reelection. Democrats were hopeful that McAuliffe could pull it off again. But his campaign attempting to tie Republican Glenn Youngkin to former President Donald Trump failed as a wave of voters raised objections to anti-racism curriculum in schools and transgender students using the bathroom of the gender their choice.

"Unfortunately, Virginia's long-standing trend of electing a governor from the opposite party of the president continues," said Noam Lee, executive director of the Democratic Governors Association. "Sidestepping the issues that mattered to voters, the GOP lied and schemed to hide their candidate's extreme positions, and their far-right agenda won out."

Youngkin declared victory at a raucous victory party in Chantilly, thanking his family and outlining his agenda for the next four years. At the top of the list was education reform. He made no mention of critical race theory, the law-school concept that he has vowed to ban from public school classrooms. But he did promise the largest education budget in history, and he said he would expand charter schools. He also said he would deliver the largest tax refund ever, and he vowed to eliminate the grocery tax.

"This is our moment," said Youngkin. "Together, we will change the trajectory of this commonwealth."

The blame game has already started



PHOTO JAMAL NELSON/TWITTER

Republican gubernatorial candidate Glenn Youngkin addresses a crowd Oct. 30 at Market Square in Old Town Alexandria. Youngkin upset Democratic nominee Terry McAuliffe in the Nov. 2 general election.

"Together, we will change the trajectory of this commonwealth."

— Governor-elect
Glenn Youngkin

among Democrats, who are critical of the McAuliffe campaign for focusing too much attention on Trump and for not fighting back harder against allegations that critical race theory is taught in Virginia classrooms. As Democrats saw power slipping from their grasp Tuesday night, they were particularly angry that Republicans were able to seize on the issue of education — a campaign issue Democrats have long considered their own personal realm.

"You cannot lose education," said Brian Moran, a former Democratic caucus chairman in the House who now works in the Northam administration. "It's bread and butter: Health care, education and safety. That's what Democrats talk about, and that's what we care about. We cannot forfeit those issues."

Since Democrats seized control of the General Assembly two years ago, they've been able to achieve drastic change.

They've legalized marijuana, abolished the death penalty, restricted predatory lending, implemented gun violence prevention measures and overturned restrictions to

abortion. For many voters, that may have been too much too soon. The election of Youngkin and the Republican ticket is certain to be viewed as a repudiation of the agenda that Democrats pushed during their brief era of legislative power.

"It's official: Virginians have completely rejected the failed policies of the liberals running Richmond and voted for a brighter future full of supported small businesses, empowered parents and safer streets," said Dee Duncan, president of the Republican State Leadership Committee. "We supported the right candidates, developed the right messages, and executed the right strategies to overcome a two-to-one spending disadvantage driven by national liberals like Barack Obama, Eric Holder, Nancy Pelosi and Stacey Abrams."

Youngkin launched his campaign initially aiming squarely at economic issues, promising tax cuts as part of a very traditional Republican playbook. But then events caught up with the campaign. A high-profile prosecution in Loudoun gave opponents of transgender students using the bathroom of their choice an opportunity to question safety. And a national movement against so-called critical race theory erupted at local school board meetings across Virginia. Then McAuliffe stuck his foot in his mouth in the

Democrats lose statewide
for the first time since 2009.

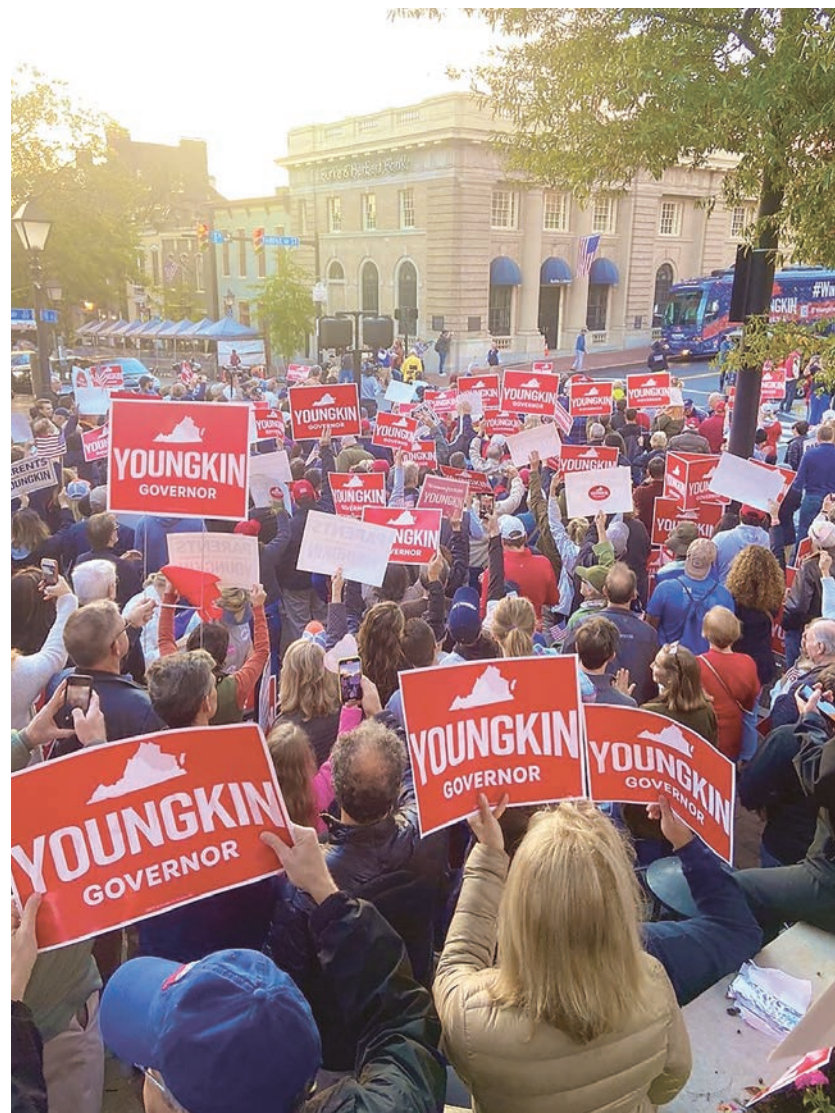


PHOTO ALISCIA ANDREWS/TWITTER

Hundreds turned out in Old Town Alexandria Oct. 30 for a rally for Republican gubernatorial candidate Glenn Youngkin.

second debate saying he didn't think parents should be telling schools what they should teach.

"I think Terry made an unfortunate remark, and that started it," said Del. Kaye Kory (D-38). "Before that, there really was not any talk about this on this scale."

After the debate in Alexandria at the Schlesinger Center, Republicans recalibrated their campaign to be aimed right at the issue of parental rights. That gave them an opportunity to ride the wave of concern over anti-racism curriculum in the classroom, which they call critical race theory even though that's not taught in Virginia classrooms. And every new detail in the Loudoun prosecution was amplified on right-wing media. McAuliffe's own words were endlessly repeated in Republican television ads, and the McAuliffe campaign was late in walking the statement back.

"We are grateful to Virginians who place their trust in us," said Republican House Leader Todd Gilbert after Republicans won enough seats to take control of the House of Delegates. "We look forward to immediately going to work with Governor-elect Youngkin and his administration to restore fiscal order, give parents the voice they deserve in education and keep our commonwealth safe. Our work begins now."



First Lady Dr. Jill Biden talks with a Franklin Sherman Elementary School student in McLean.

First Lady Dr. Jill Biden Comes to Franklin Sherman

Kicking off the national COVID-19 pediatric vaccine distribution at Franklin Sherman in McLean, where vaccines have a history.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

On Monday, Nov. 8, First Lady Dr. Jill Biden and U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy visited Fairfax County Public Schools, Franklin Sherman Elementary in McLean, to promote the pediatric COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 to 11 years old.

The choice of Franklin Sherman ES allowed Biden

and Murthy to kick off the national COVID-19 pediatric vaccination campaign at the same school where the first polio vaccine was administered 67 years earlier. On April 26, 1954, Franklin Sherman Elementary students became “Polio Pioneers,” the first children to receive the Salk vaccine, which started the United States on the path to eradicating polio.

“This vaccine is the best way to protect your children against COVID-19,” Biden told parents and their newly vaccinated children. “It’s been thoroughly reviewed and rigorously tested; it’s free, and it’s available for every child aged five and up.”

School Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand said that

SEE FIRST LADY, PAGE 8



Parents and caretakers accompany their children 5 to 11 years old for their first COVID-19 pediatric vaccine at the national rollout for the vaccination held at Franklin Sherman Elementary in McLean.

Unofficial Results from Virginia Board of Elections

	Votes	Percent
Governor		
Glenn A. Youngkin - R	1,663,755	50.68
Terry R. McAuliffe - D	1,593,741	48.55
D Princess L. Blanding - LP	22,625	0.69
Leutenant Governor		
Winsome E. Sears - R	1,659,942	50.82
Hala S. Ayala - D	1,603,076	49.08
Attorney General		
Jason S. Miyares - R	1,649,034	50.48
Mark R. Herring - D	1,614,724	49.43
Fairfax County PUBLIC SCHOOL BONDS		
Yes	174,236	67.82
No	82,676	32.18
Delegate District 34		
Gary G. Pan - R	17,109	43.15
Kathleen J. Murphy - D	22,496	56.74
Delegate 35th District		
Kevin E. McGrath - R	11,132	31.6
Mark L. Keam - D	24,044	68.26
Delegates 36th District		
Matthew J. Lang - R	10,220	28.4
Kenneth R. “Ken” Plum - D	25,701	71.41
Delegate 37th District		
Kenny W. Meteiver - R	9,491	33.36
David L. Bulova - D	18,914	66.47
Delegates 38th District		
Tom L. Pafford - R	7,468	31.12
L. Kaye Kory - D	16,451	68.55
Delegates 39th District		
Maureen T. Brody - R	9,950	33.32
Vivian E. Watts - D	19,850	66.46
Delegates 40th District		
Harold Y. Pyon - R	17,021	45.91
Dan I. Helmer	20,025	54.01
Delegates 41st District		
John M. Wolfe - R	12,361	34.88
Eileen Filler-Corn - D	23,016	64.94
Delegates 42nd District		
Edward F. McGovern - R	14,097	40.09
Kathy K. “KL” Tran - D	21,012	59.76
Delegate 43rd District		
Brenton H. Hammond - R	9,341	29.92
Mark D. Sickles - D	21,838	69.95
Delegates 44th District		
Richard T. Hayden - R	8,568	32.45
Paul E. Krizek - D	17,795	67.41
Delegates 45th District		
Justin D. “J.D.” Maddox - R	10,924	26.15
Elizabeth B. Bennett-Parker - D	30,733	73.57
Delegate 46th District		
Charniele L. Herring - D	20,024	92.1
Delegate 47th District		
Laura A. Hall - R	8,473	21.61
Patrick A. Hope - D	30,616	78.1
Delegates 48th District		
Edward William Monroe, Jr. - R	10,709	27.71
Richard C. “Rip” Sullivan, Jr. - D	27,847	72.05
Delegates 53rd District		
Sarah White - R	8,749	28.14
Marcus B. Simon - D	22,292	71.69
Delegates 67th District		
Bob L. Frizzelle - R	13,958	39.42
Karrie K. Delaney - D	21,407	60.46
Delegates 86th District		
Julie Anna Perry - R	10,113	34.65
Irene Shin - D	18,988	65.05

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS



On Nov. 8, nearly thirty members of the Great Falls Garden Club gather at the Library during the organization's library garden and meadow revitalization projects for a presentation by the Great Falls Citizens Association in observance of the club's 80th anniversary.



Great Falls Garden Club Celebrates 80 Years of Service

Members celebrate with a garden revitalization project.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Eighty years after eight local women met for their first official Garden Club meeting in 1941, the seeds of their commitment to beautification, outreach, and education can be seen all over Great Falls.

On Monday morning, Nov. 8, Bill Canis, president of the Great Falls Citizens Association, prepared to award the Great Falls Garden Club a Certificate of Appreciation on the occasion of the organization's 80th anniversary and recognize its service to the community.

Outside the Great Falls Library, Canis observed nearly 30 club volunteers weeding and clearing overgrowth in the Library Meadow, a 10,000 square-foot stormwater retention area in front of the library that also serves as a Monarch Butterfly Way Station and the Library Perennial Garden.

"I know some people say it takes a village, but I say it takes a garden club," Canis said.

During the presentation ceremony, attended by Garden Club members and Fairfax County Librarian Melissa L. Casolini, Canis spoke of the Garden Club's visionaries who, in 1940, helped the Fairfax County branch of the American Red Cross produce wartime dressings. Following repeated requests "not to talk so much," the women formed a garden club where they would not be scolded, and they could pursue their botanical and



With Bill Canis, president of the Great Falls Citizens Association beside her, Jennifer Murphy, president of the Great Falls Garden Club, shows club members the award and \$250 check from GFCA.

horticultural interests.

Canis recounted key moments in the club's history, such as how members worked on a "back-breaking" trail project in what now is Great Falls Park. The 880-acre property owned by Pepco was designated as a national park due in part to the event's publicity.

Other projects included the Village Green Center's Blue Star Memorial Garden and bi-annual flower shows and plant sales to benefit local organizations. Each winter, club members make centerpieces for local first responders and shelters. The group also enjoys making themed floats for the annual July 4



The many hands of the Great Falls Garden Club make light work dividing perennials, removing invasives, and replanting as needed.



"I know some people say it takes a village, but I say it takes a garden club."

— Bill Canis

parade. Its 2021 cicada float proved a hit.

According to Canis, GFCA and Garden Club members have collaborated on commercial properties undergoing rezoning, such as TD Bank and BrightView Great Falls-Senior Living and Memory Care, in addition to providing horticultural support to Turner Farmhouse and the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Station #12, Great Falls Volunteer Fire Station. As GFCA was involved in the overall rezoning issues, Garden Club members reviewed landscaping plans and made comments and suggestions for native plant use. Canis said, "The fact that you are here with your presence and keeping this going after 80 years is truly remarkable."

As he prepared to hand the framed Award Certificate to Jennifer Murphy, president of

the Great Falls Garden Club, Canis said the club was the first recipient of GFCA's new award series. Canis said, "GFCA recognizes the Garden Club's outstanding service and dedication to the community on their 80th anniversary of its founding and in recognition of its exemplary and everlasting contributions to the Great Falls community." He also handed over a \$250 donation check to the organization.

Murphy said the club "very much believed" in being part of the community. In terms of plans, the club wants to start a youth grant program to fund pollinator gardens in families' yards, and they are looking into a Great Falls Garden Tour. They will also have a children's activity tent at the May Plant Sale, held annually on the Saturday before Mother's Day.

The Club is a Federated Garden Club and is a member of National Garden Clubs, Inc., the Central Atlantic Region, National Capital Area Garden Clubs, Inc., and District III.

From September to June, members meet at the Great Falls Library at 1 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Visit the club's website, Welcome - Great Falls Garden Club, <https://gfgardenclub.org/>

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

COMMUNITY

Military Appreciation Monday at Old Brogue

A Military Appreciation Monday dinner will take place on Monday, Nov. 15 at the Old Brogue in support of Stop Soldier Suicide <https://stopsoldiersuicide.org/>. According to the Stop Soldier Suicide website, veterans are at 50% higher risk of suicide than their peers who have not served. Concerns about suicide have increased since the withdrawal from Afghanistan. In addition, a recent report by the Department of Defense indicates that young, enlisted service members are of the highest risk of suicide. Five hundred and eighty service members died by suicide in 2020, the Pentagon announced Sept. 30, when the Defense Department released its

annual suicide report. CY-2020-Annual-Suicide-Report.pdf

Those 580 deaths mark the most the DOD has recorded in at least five years, according to Air Force Magazine. Service members at higher suicide risk are primarily enlisted, male, and under 30 years of age, according to the report.

To join the dinner, call the Old Brogue at (703) 759-3309 and make a reservation for either the 5:30 or 7:30 seating.

If unable to attend but would like to make a donation, send checks made out to Stop Soldier Suicide to: Bob Nelson, 44592 Stepney Dr., Ashburn, Va. 20147

AAUW McLean Branch Program for November 2021

Discussion on Criminal Justice and Inequities in Women and Minorities by Steve T. Descano, Fairfax County Commonwealth's Attorney

Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021, 7 p.m., via Zoom

Steve T. Descano, Commonwealth's Attorney for Fairfax City and Fairfax County, is a veteran and former federal prosecutor. He served as a federal prosecutor under the Obama Administration for six years specializing in complex financial crimes of both national and international scopes.

A West Point graduate, Descano was a helicopter pilot and U.S. Army Officer before putting himself through law school and becoming a federal prosecutor. After his work in the Justice Department, Descano went on

to served as a board member for NARAL Pro-Choice Virginia as well as the Fairfax County NAACP's first nominee to the County's Police Civilian Review Panel. He previously worked to help families throughout the region as the outgoing Chief Operations Officer and General Counsel at Paragon Autism Services.

Since taking office in 2020, Descano has embarked on a groundbreaking reform agenda. He has implemented policies that make the community safer while addressing racial and socioeconomic inequities in the criminal justice system, stemming the tide of mass incarceration, and elevating a holistic, values-based approach to prosecution over a reflexively punitive one.

If interested in joining this program please visit <http://mclean-vaaauw.net> and request a zoom invite for the program.

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Schools Lost on Nov. 2

BY PAT HYNES

The winner of the Virginia governor's race, Glenn Youngkin, would have you believe that teachers can't be trusted to teach historic truth or inclusive literature without victimizing white children. He would have you believe that school librarians push pornography on children and that parents have no right to challenge books. He wants you to think that school principals can't support trans students and keep girls safe in the bathroom at the same time.

None of that is true. The vast majority of parents know that none of that is true. Polls show that parents overwhelmingly trust their children's teachers and school leaders to provide safe, effective learning environments for their children. And every day, in classrooms across

every part of Virginia, educators earn that trust.

Unfortunately, most media and Democratic politicians failed to effectively challenge these destructive, divisive lies. Bullying school boards, teachers, librarians, and our most vulnerable students worked for Youngkin and the GOP. They are already doubling down for the 2022 midterm elections.

It's time for public school teachers, parents, and students in Virginia to get organized and get loud. We have to assume that politicians, parties, and many in the media will do no better going forward. We must make our own voices too loud to ignore.

Here's the truth about schools in Virginia:

Teachers empower students when we teach the whole, unvarnished truth about U.S. and Virginia history, from the first slave ships at Point Comfort, through the Capital of the Con-

federacy and Massive Resistance, to the systemic inequities that remain today.

Teachers empower students to think critically and empathically by exposing them to traditionally under-represented voices and stories in literature.

Teachers create safe, joyful learning environments for all students when they respect preferred names and pronouns.

Parents and students in Virginia overwhelmingly expect teachers to do these things because it's just good teaching.

Schools lost in Virginia on Nov. 2.

It's time for educators, parents, and students to speak up and protect our most important public institution.

Pat Hynes is a former member of the Fairfax County School Board, a teacher in Arlington and a Reston resident.

The People Have Spoken

DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM

After the elections last week, the "blue" state of Virginia suddenly turned "red." Just look at a map of the Commonwealth with the cities and counties colored red if they voted Republican and blue if they voted Democratic, and the state is overwhelmingly red again. After the 2019 elections Democrats controlled the three statewide offices of governor, lieutenant governor, and attorney general and the two houses of the General Assembly. After the elections last week Republicans will control all those offices with the exception of the State Senate as soon as the winners are sworn in in January.

Under blue Democratic leadership over the last two years the state made transformational progress on issues of ending discrimination, enacting gun safety legislation, protecting a woman's right to choose, requiring a move to clean energy, ending the death penalty, easing access to the polls, and more. Will the change in political leadership in the state imperil these advances for which progressives took such pride, or will the state change direction or simply move

at a much slower pace?

The people have spoken, but what message will those assuming leadership positions have heard? Virginia had the reputation during most of the 20th century of having very restrictive laws related to registering and voting. The Commonwealth now has the most open and accessible laws on registering and voting in the country. Will there be an effort to restrict voting under the guise of preventing unknown instances of fraud? Will there be a forensic audit of the 2020 election results in which President Biden carried the state by ten percent as one of the new governor's advisers is quoted in the press as saying should happen? Does fraud in elections only occur when the other side wins?

What will happen with human rights in the new administration following one in which the rights of women, Blacks, and LGBTQ+ people have had such an emphasis with non-discrimination legislation and hate crime laws? Certainly we will not be re-erecting Confederate statues, but will we under the guise of eliminating the imagined "Critical Race Theory" rewrite history to take away references to slavery and racial discrimination in the state?

Will charges of soft on crime stop or reverse the meaningful work that has been done to reform the criminal justice system to eliminate racial discrimination and to expand programs aimed at rehabilitation? Will we continue the effort to distinguish criminal behavior from mental health episodes?

As is often the case in a democratic republic, the message from the people is not always clear nor is there agreement on how that message is to be interpreted. The message is sent following millions of dollars having been spent and endless television and digital commercials having been run to convince the public of the correctness of the side one is on. Casting the vote is one step in the process of influencing government policy and actions. As the new administration unfolds and the General Assembly convenes there will be additional opportunities for the public to be heard. We must use these opportunities to be clear on the direction we want the Commonwealth to proceed.

Thank you to all who supported me in my re-election campaign. I look forward to hearing from you and being your voice in the legislature. I am honored to represent you!

Redistricting Moves to the Supreme Court of Virginia

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL

While the Nov. 2 election has dominated recent headlines, the process to redraw state and federal legislators' districts has been moving along six months late due to delays in receiving U.S. Census data.

Ever since Elbridge Gerry signed a bill to draw several Federalists out of their seats in 1812, gerrymandering has been a problem in the United States. I have always

believed that redistricting is one of the most significant fundamental problems in American democracy, and it has become especially problematic with the power of computer-aided mapping coupled with Big Data. Voters should pick their elected officials instead of elected officials picking their voters.

Based on this principle, I have always supported nonpartisan redistricting. In the 2019 Virginia General Assembly session, several members introduced a constitu-

tional amendment requiring non-partisan redistricting, but after it emerged from rewrites in the legislative process it became bipartisan redistricting, which is very different. In 2020, legislators approved the measure a second time. I was one of two Senators who voted "no" because I do not support the involvement of elected officials or partisans in redistricting and I believe the proposal was inadequate-

SEE REDISTRICTING, PAGE 9

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Creating a Holiday-Ready Kitchen

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

As the holiday season begins in less than two weeks, a home's kitchen is the center stage for holiday parties and even casual gatherings with friends. But many people feel that their kitchen could use an overhaul. Local designers offer suggestions for making the best of your space.

"Though a remodeling project is unrealistic given the time constraints, minor tweaks can spruce up or refresh a kitchen," said Angela Morrison, designer and founder of Morrison Style in Vienna. "You don't have to redo your entire house for the holidays. You can easily do a few easy things to make it look updated for the holidays."

After giving her kitchen a quick makeover in advance of a Hanukkah party that she hosted for her children's friends and their parents three years ago, Linda Goldstein, a Bethesda based mother and interior designer, says that she developed several strategies for making a big impact on a dated kitchen in a minimal amount of time.

"I tried several design tricks, so I know that they work," she said. "I have shared these with my clients who have short lead times, but they want to have a kitchen that looks decent for the holidays. You can make mini adjustments that have a big impact and don't cost a lot of money."

Before tackling any design project, Fairfax based designer Julia Tull of Tull and Foley Designs believes in starting with the basics.

"During the holidays we are cooking a lot more food at one time, it's important to make a note of the things that are currently on your countertops and see what can be packed away to free up much needed space. Crockpots and waffle irons can be stored elsewhere."

Something as simple as a fresh coat of paint can transform a kitchen with a minimal investment in time and money. "Over even just a few years, paint can start to look dingy and dirty, and this can really bring down the look and feel of your kitchen," said Jennifer Moriarty, an interior design student who lives in Alexandria. "Instead of leaving it, take a day or two and add a fresh coat of paint to your cabinets and kitchen walls."

Updating hardware can give an outdated kitchen an updated look. "Replace the kitchen pulls and handles," said Moriarty. "It's not a bad idea to splurge on them and reuse them if you decide to remodel your kitchen in the near future."

Replacing a kitchen's window treatments can transform a room instantly, easily and inexpensively suggests private interior designer Anita Stanley of Woodbridge. "The design options are plentiful," she said. "Very few things transform the style of a room like window treatments."

Replacing outdated or worn flooring might be a long-term project, but Chris Katkish, general manager, InSite Builders & Remodeling in Bethesda suggests a quick fix.

"Consider using Peel and stick tile for flooring," he said. "Not a permanent solution but could be just enough to get through the holidays."

Replacing lighting will brighten a kitchen space and create an updated look. "Add inexpensive under-counter LED lighting," said Katkish. "Toe kick lighting is not very common, but a great way to make a space pop."

Lighting can make even the most dated cabinets look chic, said Linda Berkson of Berkson Interiors in Vienna. "Under cabinet lighting brings attention to the beautiful tile work of your backsplash and adds a festive glow to your kitchen," she said. "Under cabinet lighting kits are easy to install and can be found on Amazon."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Adding holiday accessories to a kitchen counter-top can create a festive space.

Holiday lights are for more than trimming the tree. "As the days grow shorter, lighting becomes more comforting," said Morrison. "Put mini lights on top of your cabinets. You buy different color lights and swap out the color for the particular holiday. Orange lights work for Thanksgiving, blue for Hanukkah and red and green for Christmas."

Try adding accessories in holiday colors, suggests lead designer Jen Patton of Patton and Patton Interiors. "You can swap out things like potholders, vases, dishware, and candles from everyday patterns to holiday-inspired ones," she said. "Add a few cheerful touches of red, green, and silver. Maybe you could add a garland on the wall or a small vase with pinecones, festive berries, and candles for a centerpiece."

"If you have the space, you can hang a wreath on one of your walls or drape garland on top of a cabinet," said Patton.

"Do you get a lot of cards?" asks Berkson. "Perhaps attach them to cascading grosgrain or another type of ribbon and turn a plain wall into a festive display."

Even those with Formica countertops that are reminiscent of the 1970s, can create the illusion of elegance and festivity. "If you don't like your counters and don't have the time or money to redo them, you can always cover sections with holiday placemats or nice cutting boards," said Patton.

When the counters are satisfactory, they can be versatile. "Take one section of a countertop and make it the drink center," said Tracy Morris, Tracy Morris Design, based in McLean, VA. "That way, you will not have guests making drinks where you are trying to cook. Line up the bottles, fill a decanter and show your guests a great time."

Use the space to create stations that are streamlined and inviting. "It's a quick way to update the kitchen for the holidays and keeps [guests] out of the work space, but still part of the conversation," said Allie Mann, designer and senior interiors specialist with Case Architects & Remodelers in Falls Church, VA.

Those fortunate enough to have a kitchen island can enjoy the luxury of an additional canvas on which to express holiday creativity. "Consider using it to lay out a buffet," said Nadia Subaran of Aidan Design in Bethesda. "It could also serve as a great kids' table."

As with other facets of the impending holiday festivities, practicing expectation management with kitchen design is essential for a peaceful Yuletide season. "You have to be realistic about what can and can't be done," said Berkson. "You can embellish your kitchen table and counters with simple seasonal décor, but you can't redesign it in two weeks. Try to get easy kitchen maintenance done now and make a mental note of any bigger projects you'd like to complete next year."

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From left, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, First Lady Dr. Jill Biden and Gloria Addo-Ayensu, MD, M.P.H., director of health for Fairfax County, at the national rollout for pediatric COVID-19 vaccines.



From left, Fairfax County School Board Chair Stella Pekarsky (Sully District) and Fairfax County School Superintendent Scott S. Brabrand give thumbs up at FCPS' Franklin Sherman Elementary in McLean.

First Lady Dr. Jill Biden Comes to Franklin Sherman

FROM PAGE 3

with the opportunity for widespread COVID-19 vaccination of younger children, it was hoped that students would learn in person, avoid school or division closures, and keep school staff and students safe. “We are proud to be leading the way in the vaccination rollout for children ages 5 to 11, just as we did with the polio vaccine in 1954,” Brabrand said.

A week before, on Tuesday, Nov. 2, CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky endorsed the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices’ recommendation that children 5 to 11 be vaccinated against COVID-19 with the Pfizer-BioNTech pediatric vaccine. The approval paves the way for the vaccine to be given to approximately 28 million children aged 5 to 11 in the United States. It was an important step forward in the fight against the virus.

Biden and Murthy’s visit to Franklin Sherman comes after the virus claimed the lives of more than 5 million people worldwide, including more than 750,000 Americans and more than 1,200 Fairfax County residents.

More than 85 percent of Fairfax County students aged 12 and older have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. FCPS has successfully implemented layered prevention strategies since the start of the pandemic in March 2020 and reports that it continues to have both an extremely low positivity rate (0.35 percent) and transmis-

sion rate (0.02 percent) in its schools.

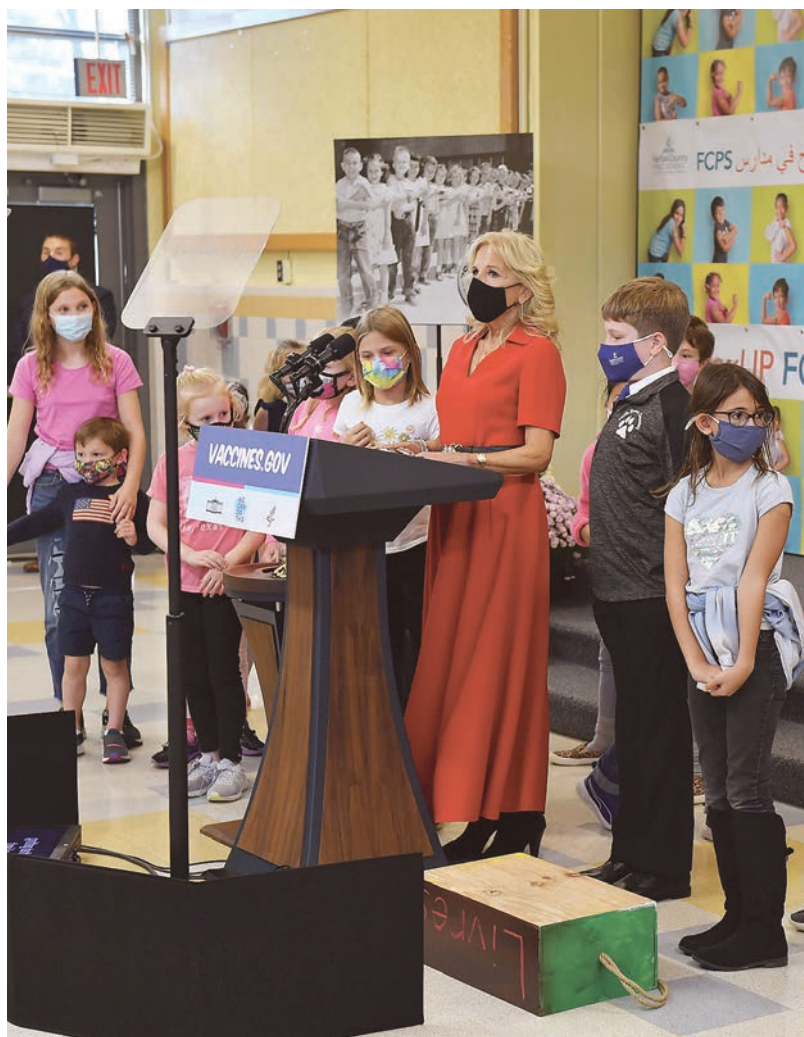
FCPS will soon host school-based vaccination clinics evenings, weekends, and during the school day. The school division partnered with a private vendor to open in-school clinics where students can be vaccinated with parent or guardian permission and with or without their presence. It is partnering with Fairfax County Health Department, hosting

several mass vaccination clinics, pop-up clinics at school sites in the evenings and/or weekends, and supporting school-based clinics during the school day.

Inova Children’s is holding weekend pediatric vaccination clinics at the Inova Center for Personalized Health and Inova Cares Clinic for underserved communities. The Virginia Chapter of the American

Academy of Pediatrics will deliver more than 3,900 vaccines per week through its pediatricians.

Fairfax County School Board Chair, Stella Pekarsky, said, “We are proud of the way the schools, the County, and our private partners have come together to ensure that everyone who wants the vaccination will be able to get it.”



First Lady Dr. Jill Biden comes to Franklin Sherman, here flanked by students and talking about the importance of vaccinating children ages 5 and up for COVID-19. Students received the first pediatric polio vaccines in 1954 at Franklin Sherman Elementary.



Redistricting

FROM PAGE 6

ly thought out. The amendment was placed on the ballot and approved by voters 65.6% to 34.31% in November 2020.

This summer, the Virginia Redistricting Commission was created and began work redrawing state Senate, House of Delegates and Virginia's Congressional districts after census data became available in late August. Four senators, four delegates and eight citizens were appointed, equally balanced between Democrats and Republicans. The Commission gridlocked on every important vote from the first day. It had two chairs, two lawyers and two map drawers. They could not agree on a committee process, on Virginia law or the requirements of the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965. They produced multiple separate maps for every district and were unable to reconcile any of them because they ostensibly disagreed on the law and would not negotiate.

Once the commission process fails, the Constitution requires the Supreme Court of Virginia to draw districts. Democrats and Republicans are required to submit three or more proposed special masters, legal representatives of the court who have no "conflicts of interest." The Supreme Court is required to

pick one person to serve as a special master from each list, people who will be charged with putting together the maps within 30 days of their appointment. No one knows how that will work given that courts typically only pick one special master in court-administered proceedings.

Last week, the House and Senate Democratic Caucuses submitted three names. Each were experienced academics who had been previously selected by judges to redraw districts that suffered from legal or constitutional violations. The Republican Caucuses took a different tack. They proposed three partisans who have never been appointed by any court in America to serve: (1) the Executive Director of the National Republican Redistricting Trust; (2) a Republican consultant who drew the hotly litigated 2010 Wisconsin Senate map for the Wisconsin Republicans and is now drawing maps for Texas Republicans; and (3) a data researcher who was paid \$20,000 by the Virginia Senate Republican Caucus two months ago for "consulting services."

The Senate and House Democratic Caucuses asked the Court to set deadlines for all caucuses to submit maps and for public hearings before and after the maps are proposed to give the public an op-

portunity to comment on the proposals. We also asked the Court to set up an online commenting system so that all comments can be filed and accessed electronically instead of submitted on paper and only reviewable in the Supreme Court Clerk's office in Richmond. The Republican Caucuses refused to join our request.

No one is really sure what the process will be at this point. However, the Supreme Court is accepting comments in writing at its clerk's office. Please stay tuned to my Facebook, Twitter and Blog for information about how to participate. Redistricting now will happen very fast and these districts will be in place until after the 2030 census.

Many predict that there will be major changes to state Senate and U.S. Congressional districts in Northern Virginia given their current boundaries and population changes since the last census. Major changes are possible for some House of Delegates districts. The proposals and comment process, as allowed by the Supreme Court, will take place between Thanksgiving and Christmas or maybe beyond.

Please stay tuned and contact me if you have any questions at scott@scottsuovell.org. It is an honor to serve in the Virginia Senate.

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NEWS

Great Falls Veterans Day Ceremony

Thursday, Nov. 11, 11 a.m.
 Great Falls Freedom Memorial

Honor veterans from Great Falls and all who have served in the Armed Forces this Veterans Day at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial. This year's event will feature an Air Force Color Guard, patriotic songs by the Langley Madrigals, and remarks by retired Army Major General George F. Close. Veterans are especially invited.

The Freedom Memorial is located behind the Great Falls Library at 9830 Georgetown Pike.

Parking is available in the library parking lot. In case of rain, the ceremony will move indoors to the library meeting room. Limited seating will be provided. Attendees are encouraged to bring portable chairs.

NOVA Plein Air Artists Art Exhibit at Art of Great Falls School and Gallery, "The Artist's Palette"

Founded in 2016, NOVA Plein Air Artists was initiated due to a shared desire to explore the idea of painting outdoors. Since then, NOVA Plein Air Artist has evolved into a creative, educational and social network of local artists committed to painting weekly at organized "paint-outs." Plein air locations are chosen for their diversity, varying from state and county parks to rustic farms, vineyards, and urban settings within the Northern Virginia and Greater Washington, DC area. NOVA Plein Air Artist is primarily a plein air group but members also engage in painting other subjects including still life, genre, and portraiture.

NOVA Plein Air Artists is excited to offer in person exhibits again.

Art of Great Falls School and Gallery, 756 Walker Road, Great Falls VA 22066

Exhibit runs through Nov. 30, 2021

Contact: Theresa Miller Email: theresamillerfinearts@gmail.com

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CALENDAR

NOW THRU NOV. 30 "The Artist's Palette."

At Great Falls Studios Gallery, 756 Walker Road, Great Falls. "The Artist's Palette" features the work of members of NOVA Plein Air Artists. Founded in 2016, NOVA Plein Air Artists (NPAA) was initiated due to a shared desire to explore the idea of painting outdoors. Since then, NPAA has evolved into a creative, educational and social network of local artists committed to painting weekly at organized "paint-outs." Plein air locations are chosen for their diversity, varying from state and county parks to rustic farms, vineyards, and urban settings within the Northern Virginia and Greater Washington, DC area. NPAA is primarily a plein air group but members also engage in painting other subjects including still life, genre, and portraiture.

NOVA Plein Air Artists is very excited to offer in person exhibits again. Come see what these talented artists have been creating.



The Vienna Train Station Open House will take place on Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021.

ginia Model Railroaders. See www.nvmr.org.

SATURDAY/NOV. 13

Loma's Fall Festival. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Little Oaks Montessori Academy, 13525 Dulles Technology Drive, 103, Herndon. Free pony rides, music, games, balloon art, raffles and much more. Free. Visit the website: www.lomamontessori.com

SUNDAY/NOV. 14

Traditional Celtic Music. 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. At The Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Featuring Robin Bullock. All patrons must present a vaccination certificate with at least the first series completed for a minimum of 2 weeks, or a negative covid test within 48 hours. Tickets must be purchased in advance at www.old-brogue.com - \$20 general admission.

SUNDAY/NOV. 14

Chanukah Bazaar. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Temple Rodef Shalom, 2100 Westmoreland Street, Falls Church. Chanukah Bazaar in the Grand Foyer, Temple Rodef Shalom, or online <https://sisterhood-treasures-judaica-shop.shophlightspeed.com>. Virtual store open year-round. Questions? Email sisterhoodtreasures@gmail.com.

FRIDAY/NOV. 19

Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony. 6-8 p.m. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean, in the Plaza. Tysons Corner Center will kick off the 2021 Holiday Season with its annual tree lighting ceremony. The ceremony will include a special appearance from Santa, community performances, live music complimentary s'mores, hot chocolate station, kids crafts, outdoor specialty pop-up market featuring mall retailers, holiday sips from Barrel + Bushel, giveaways, and more.

NOV. 19-20

JAM Christmas Show. 8-10 p.m. At Fredgren Studio Theatre at Ballet Nova, 3443 Carlin Springs Road, Falls Church. The metropolitan area's most exciting song and dance Christmas revue returns to the D.C. area to bring in the holidays! Created by choreographer Jeremy A. McShan, JAM 12 Days of Christmas, is a crowd-thrilling Christmas musical spectacular that mixes your favorite Christmas carols along with some of your favorite pop songs of all time. These dance-floor favorites are sure to leave audiences dancing in their seats as we count down the days 'til the arrival of good ole St. Nick! Cost is \$25. Visit the website: <https://jam12days.bpt.me/>

SATURDAY/NOV. 20

The Dancing Light. 8 p.m. At Reston Community Theater's CenterStage. Celebrating the Warmth of Winter; Akua Allrich and The Tribe. Come share an evening filled with music from around the world celebrating the wonder of the season and joy of living. Cost is \$15 Reston/\$20 Non-Reston. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com.

NOW THRU JAN. 2, 2022

LuminoCity Festival. 6-9 p.m. At Roer's Zoofari, 1228 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. The LuminoCity Festival, a one-of-a-kind, immersive light display experience, will be a festive experience for guests of all ages. Be ready to enter a world straight out of your wildest imaginations as you step into an unforgettable spectacular night of lights. The festival includes African, Asian, Arid, and Ancient-themed exhibits of spectacularly lit art displays set up in the zoo's walk-through area. Visit the website: www.roerszoofari.com.

NOW THRU NOV. 28

Artworks by David Alexander. At the Jo Ann Rose Gallery, 1609-A Washington Plaza N, Reston. "In Between: Phantom Algorithms Joining Worlds" artworks by David Alexander use the totem motif to bridge the digital, physical and spiritual worlds. Nov. 1 through 28 2021. Call 703-476-4500. Visit <https://enoarts.com/press>

NOV. 11, 12, 13

Sound of Music. 7:30 p.m. at Capital Community Church, 20430 Ashburn Village Blvd., Ashburn. The Pickwick Players present Rodgers & Hammerstein's "The Sound of Music," starring local talent from the Northern Virginia area. Cost: Adults \$22, Seniors/Children \$17, Group discount available for 8 or more. Visit the website: thepickwickplayers.com

NOV. 12-14

"The Eye of the Beholder." The McLean Art Society, a local group of professional artists and art enthusiasts is sponsoring an Art Show and sale on Friday Nov. 12, 5-8 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 13, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., and Sunday Nov. 14 10 a.m.-1 p.m., hosted by Walker Chapel United Methodist Church, 4102 N Glebe Rd, Arlington. There will be all original framed paintings in many styles with a large variety of subject matter as well as less expensive matted pieces and originally designed greeting cards. Everyone is welcome in a Covid safe environment.

SATURDAY/NOV. 13

Vienna Train Station Open House. 1-5 p.m. At Vienna Train Station, 231 Dominion Road, NE, Vienna. Stop by the Historic Vienna Train Station where you can see and hear HO scale model trolleys and trains including Thomas and some of his friends on display and in operation. Great family fun and activity for the young and young-at-heart. The museum and model train layout are open for your enjoyment, hosted by the Northern Vir-

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"I Hope Nothing Bad Has Happened"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As heart-warming and sincere as this sentiment is, it's a bit of a window into my presumptive future. Similar in effect to the obituary I happened upon once in The Washington Post years ago. Randomly perusing the Obituary section, my eyes wandered up and to the right, and there it/he was: Samuel Tyson. You don't know him? Neither do I. But there it was beneath his photo, my exact date of birth including year: 9/30/54. It shook me up, I can tell you that. Seeing one's date of birth in the agate type of an Obituary section does give one pause: so that's what my date of birth is going to look like in the Obituary section. Yikes. It wasn't exactly a look into my future, but it was my birthdate.

This title was part of an email sent to our publisher inquiring about my whereabouts since the sender/reader hadn't seen my column for a few months. Again, so this is how some people might react when my column is no longer being printed, as in I'm no longer writing it, or anything else for that matter because I'll be "gishtorben," (Yiddish for dead). Again, a slice of death. It reminded me of a voice message my oncologist left me June of '20 - during the height of the pandemic. Because of an internal mechanism at my HMO, files on the computer are shrouded/darkened to indicate a patient's death. My oncologist came upon my computer file and it exhibited these patient-died clues. Shocked. My oncologist called my cell phone - hoping to talk to my wife, Dina, and when no one answered, proceeded to leave a nearly minute-long condolence message concerning my surprise death. Hearing that message was uncomfortable, sort of. Again, another slice of death moment. And not that we all don't occasionally have these near-misses in life, but when you're a cancer patient who originally received a "13 month to two year" prognosis, a "terminal" diagnosis if there ever was one; death/people dying/your proximity to any of it takes on an entirely new life - so to speak. You try not to get consumed by it, but when you've been told - quite unexpectedly, at age 54 and half that your life expectancy has just taken a 30-year hit, given your parent's age when they both died, the news tends to attach itself to you. As much as you try to be normal/you're pre-diagnosed self, after the medical facts are presented, jokes just aren't as funny, music isn't as uplifting and dancing - for me anyway, seemed particularly pointless. But since that's no way to live, I made a conscious effort to try to find humor in all of it and be as positive and upbeat as I could. Easier written than done.

That's because cancer/a serious medical condition is no laughing matter; "serious as a heart attack" to invoke an all-too-familiar refrain. But unless you find a way to navigate the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" (make that misfortune) to quote Cerphe from his old "WHFS" days, life becomes dreary and not worth living. Somehow, one must find light in the all-encompassing darkness and push back against the forces of negativity/death. There's a spiral out there and the more you're able to fight back - emotionally, and not become a victim of your own circumstances, the greater your chances of finding some kind of happiness/accommodation/assimilation in your life. Still, having a less-than-ideal medical prognosis/diagnosis is all it's cracked up to be. Nevertheless, making the best of a bad situation seemed the only logical option for me. My diagnosis was bad enough on its own, I didn't need to make it any worse by droning on about it. I had to accept it and move on, which is exactly what I did. And now I find humor in the blackest of contexts.

Unlike the popular country-music song from a few years ago that sang "Live like you were dying," I want to live like I was living. I don't want to be affected by my disease. I've found a way to live with it, not simply to die from it. Life's too short. Don't I know it.

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



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