

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

JANUARY 27, 2022



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

With golden shovels in hand, officials break ground on the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway Trail project.

Breaking Ground to Upgrade Mount Vernon Trail Segment

Upgrades to the trail and a new bridge are highlights of this improvement.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

On one of the colder days in late January, county officials gathered on the bank of Dogue Creek to break ground on the \$6.5 million Mount Vernon Memorial Highway Trail project, a section of pedestrian and bicycle trail that links the Jeff Todd Way trail to the Mount Vernon Plantation and the rest of the Mount Vernon trail that follows the Potomac River north.

Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon) lives in the area and knows what it's like to ride along the road that highway with cars whizzing by. "For me, 30 years of going down this trail, risking my life," is one of his biking memories, he said.

Chairman Jeff McKay (D) grew up around the corner, and noted the complexities with the trail. It connects to Jeff Todd Way on the western side of Route 1, passing through an area with historic and environmental issues, on federally owned land. "There's a lot of complications," McKay said. "Our residents in Fairfax County know how important it is to have excellent



MAP BY FAIRFAX COUNTY

This map shows the part of the Mount Vernon Bike Trail that is getting some attention this year, including a new bridge over Dogue Creek.

infrastructure," he added.

Currently, bicyclists and pedestrians have to go on the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway to cross the creek, but with the new pedestrian bridge, that will be avoided. The new steel girder bridge with concrete parapets will be 218-feet long and 14-feet wide, crossing the creek on the north side of the road. It is one of the missing segments of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail.

Currently this segment of trail crosses over the highway in a couple of spots, and follows a narrow, wooded path just off the road. The trail will follow the current path but will be improved. Some of this stretch of trail has been repaved already, and the rest will be done throughout 2022. This improved

SEE BREAKING, PAGE 5



The new bridge will run parallel to the existing roadway bridge but will be separate.

Legislators Outline Session at Weekend Townhalls

With Senators George Barker, Adam Ebbin, Jennifer McClellan, and Scott Surovell, and Delegates Wendy Gooditis, Paul Krizek, Irene Shin, Mark Sickles, and Kathy Tran.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

A little more than a week into the 2022 General Assembly session, legislators in the Fairfax County delegation moved from pre-session town halls to holding in-session meetings, to keep citizens apprised of what's happening in Richmond. In virtual meeting formats, drawing 50-75 participants per town hall session, legislators tackle questions on a wide variety of topics. Since Northern Virginia district seats are all held by Democrats, topics raised by the audiences tend toward their supporters' interests and concerns.



Sen. Scott Surovell



Sen. George Barker

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME
to overhaul the role of the State's diversity, equity, and inclusion officer, naming a critical race theory critic to the position, who the Governor said will also serve as "ambassador to the unborn."

Surovell and other Democrats took issue with the action of new Attorney General Jason Miyares, firing 30 members of that office's staff, including 17 members who were not political appointees; Miyares declaring "There's a new sheriff in town." Miyares also fired University of Virginia and George Mason attorneys. Surovell called the actions "disturbing."

Town Hall for Mount Vernon area

Introducing the Mount Vernon town hall on Saturday, Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36), lamented that although newly sworn Republican Governor Glen Youngkin called for unity during his inaugural address, his actions through 11 executive orders were worrisome, far from striking a bipartisan tone. Surovell cited Youngkin's action

Given the Democrat majority in the senate, Senators George Barker, Adam Ebbin, Jennifer McClellan, and Surovell reassured participants concerned about roll-backs from favored Democrat gains of the past two year, including reproductive rights, gun control, local collective bargaining, and minimum wage increases, for example. Any bill must be passed by the House, Senate, and signed by the Governor to become a new
SEE LEGISLATORS, PAGE 9

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If it walks like a duck, and talks like a duck ...



The art instructor coaches the students on their still-life techniques.

Drinking Wine and Painting Ducks in Belle View

Team building is part of the process at Wine & Design.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

To burn off some pandemic stress and tighten workplace bonds, staff members from Bryant High School in Mount Vernon were learning how to paint a duck. It was part of the strategy at Wine & Design, a shop in the Belle View Shopping Center, to use art as therapy. If the inspiration doesn't flow naturally, that's where the wine helps.

"This is art therapy," said Tony Epps, a staffer at the school that came up with the idea. "It's teacher work day so it's a good day to bond as a team," she added.

"We have smiles on our faces," said one of the teachers.

There are plans for the duck painting too. "We'll hang it in the school lobby," another teacher said.

The wine list features a few varieties but the Bry-

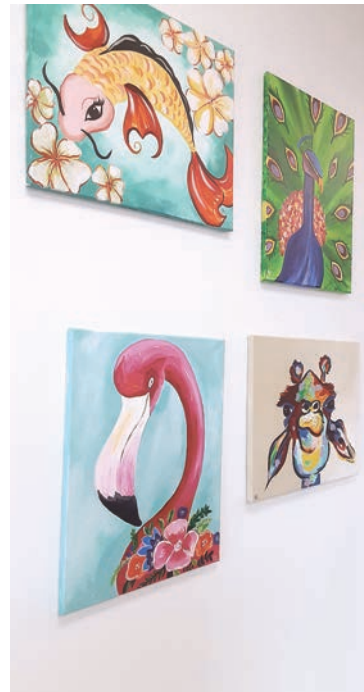
ant group were more focused on the duck than the drinks. There were some pizzas on the table though. They all agreed the pizza was a must with the art. "Life is better with pizza," said Deborah White. In addition to teachers' work days, Wine and Design has birthday parties, bachelorette parties, baby showers, date nights, and girls night out events.

Wine & Design is a franchise founded in 2011 based in Raleigh, N.C. and has grown to more than 80 locations across 22 states. Like some other newcomers, Wine & Design got a big boost in 2017 when it was featured on the popular TV show "Shark Tank."

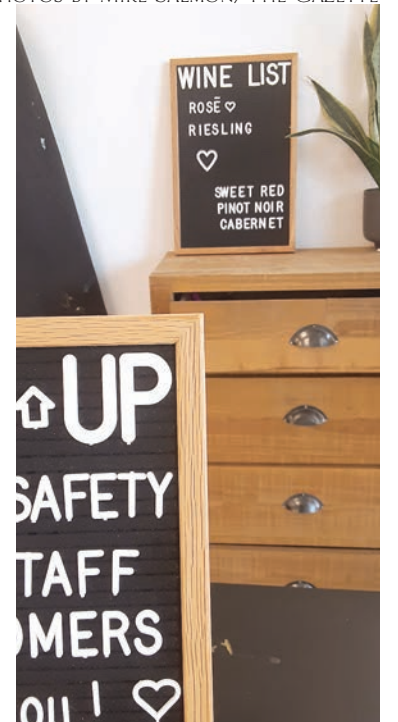
In addition to the location in Belle View Shopping Center, there are studios in Stafford, Fredericksburg, Richmond, Culpeper, and Christiansburg. There are two locations in Maryland and 23 in North Carolina. They are now offering virtual classes as well.

The Wine & Design is a few doors down from the Unwined wine store at Belle View, but the two are not connected. Neen LeMaster is an assistant manager at Unwined but she's more of a cheese expert than a wine/art expert. She does see the connection though, and pictures an Italian picture and a bottle of wine, "with olive trees and things like that," she said.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE



Color seems to be a big part of the painting process at Wine & Design.



What's a wine place without a wine list?



PHOTO BY SHAWN NEWMAN

Safety patrol member Cora Newman and other kids at the bus stop headed for Keene Mill Elementary School were wearing masks or had them at the ready on Jan. 25. Federal rules require masks to be worn on all public transportation, including school buses.

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Kids Mask Up for School

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE GAZETTE

Parents faced contradicting messages regarding mask requirements for area schools after Gov. Glen Youngkin's executive order number two was designed to give parents the ability to decide whether their children should wear masks at school. Virginia law also requires masking into March. Guidance from the Center of Disease Control continues to recommend mask wearing and Fairfax County Public Schools have not changed their mask requirements.

Virginia's constitution gives local school boards control of local schools.

Parents were certain that masking was still required and many felt it was the right decision.

On Monday, Jan. 24, seven school boards,

including five in northern Virginia: Fairfax County, Falls Church City, Alexandria City, Arlington County, and Prince William County, as well as the cities of Richmond and Hampton, jointly filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of Gov. Glenn Youngkin's (R) Executive Order that would allow parents to send children to school without wearing masks.

According to the order, "Parents of any child enrolled in a(n) elementary or secondary school or a school based early childcare and educational program may elect for their children not to be subject to any mask mandate in effect at the child's school or educational program."

Parent Dr. Erica Reynolds Clayton of Burke said, "Fairfax County Public Schools superintendent Dr. Brabrand has been excellent about communicating what is going on

with the parents by way of thorough, regular emails. I support Dr. Brabrand's decision [to mandate masks] and was grateful that he included pediatric medical experts during his Town Hall," held the evening of Jan. 24.

Parent Patty Helms, of Burke, indicated, "Our family is fully vaccinated and we plan to have our kids continue wearing their masks at school. We always emphasize that wearing a mask protects them, and the people around them. My kids get it."

Mother of two, Sara Helfer of Burke, said, "It was a no brainer to continue to wear masks at school. Even though we are all vaccinated we want to provide the fullest protection for ourselves and others, and we also want to help ensure COVID numbers stay low so schools can stay open."

MERCIA HOBSON CONTRIBUTED TO THIS STORY.

MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE ♦ JANUARY 27 - FEBRUARY 2, 2022 ♦ 3

Prosecuting Bike Fatalities

FABB's discussion with Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney for Community Justice and Policy.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling (FABB) and Pia J. Miller, Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney for Community Justice and Policy in Fairfax County, discussed vehicle-bicycle collisions on Jan. 19. Miller talked about how vehicle-bicycle collisions are handled in the county's criminal justice system.



Pia J. Miller,
Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney for Community Justice and Policy in Fairfax County.

er a prosecution should be pursued or whether a plea bargain should be reached is determined in light of these considerations.

"What can you tell me about any mitigating factors or anything that you are possibly thinking? For me, we talk about whether or not a plea would be appropriate. So, once I have done my diligence as a prosecutor, and I know what evidence I do or will not have, and

whether or not I can even meet my burden of proof, that's when I start talking about, we need to either move this case out, or we don't," said Miller.

Fairfax County's Three Fatal Vehicle-Bicycle Collisions in 2021

According to police:

Matthew Jaeger, 33 of McLean, was killed on Dec. 29, 2021, after entering the intersection of Ingle-side Avenue with Dolley Madison Boulevard. He was struck in the road by a driver traveling in the southbound lane.

Fatima Del Carmen Alvarez Romero, 24, of Alexandria, was killed in a June 3 crash. Riding her bicycle, Alvarez Romero entered the crosswalk to cross Telegraph Road on the south side of the Franconia Road intersection. She proceeded east through the intersection and was struck by the driver of a 2020 GMC Savanna, traveling north on Telegraph Road. The drive had a green traffic signal according to police.

Ray Buza, 64, of Chantilly, was killed May 21 after riding east on Hidden Canyon Road. A driver turned left in front of him at Blueridge View Drive, resulting in the fatal crash. The motorist was charged with a "failure to yield" traffic infraction and a \$167 fine.

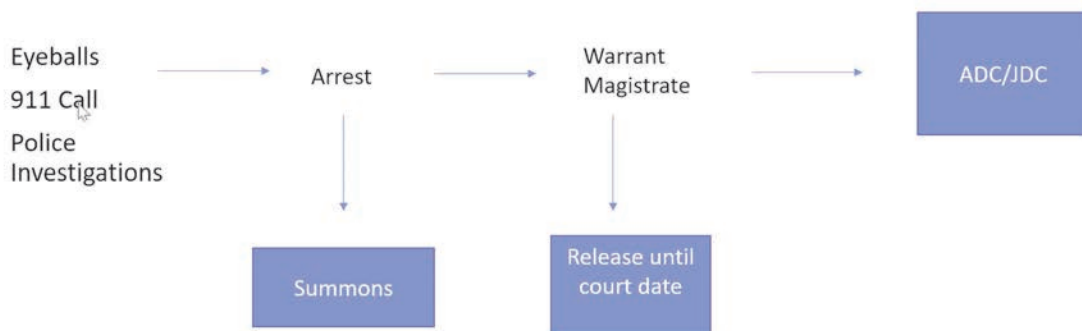
A question and answer period followed. Statements are lightly edited for clarity.

Q: Where does a cyclist start if there is a collision?

A: Call the police.

Q: Are you familiar with the Virginia vulnerable road user law, (an Act to amend and re-enact §46.2-841 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section

Overview of Virginia Criminal Justice System



Overview of VA Criminal Justice System- Police investigate, not the Commonwealth's Attorney office.



Fatima Del Carmen Alvarez Romero, 24, of Alexandria, was one of three bicyclists killed in Fairfax County in 2021. She was struck when she crossed Telegraph Road on the south side of the Franconia Road intersection. She was in a crosswalk, and the driver had a green light, according to police.

numbered 46.2-816.1, relating to bicyclists and other vulnerable road users; penalty. [S 437] Approved April 22, 2020)? It hasn't held up in the first few cases that used it. Do you know why and what is needed to strengthen it?

A: I'm familiar with the law. I don't know why it's not more used or more successful. That is not a question that I can answer.

Q: With the Virginia Vulnerable Road User Law and other laws like hit and run, how do you factor in for pleas and seek deterrence if the purpose of the vulnerable road user law is to send a message about the need

to respect the rights of vulnerable road users?

A: The things that we are supposed to be considering are what is the defendant's criminal history; what were the circumstances around the incidences; do we have people who are willing to testify or not? There are a lot of little things ... Whether or not we're trying to set an overall example by deterrence is not necessarily at the forefront because we don't want to start doing it if somebody is truly a first-time offender.

For somebody who has a perfect driving history, our office policy is such that we're not trying to use that person as an example. That makes sense.

Q: What about hit and run? Is there some incentive to prosecute those cases to the fullest, to send a message that you stay when you get involved in a collision?

A: The difficulty with hit and run is that normally there is a parallel civil case. Insurance companies don't wait. Once the victim is made whole on the civil side, the criminal side dries up, and that's not on us.

The defense counsel and the police have resolved it. So, it's not as though we're shying away from making an example out of everyone. But that's also not the point of what our office does is as it relates to prosecution.

Q: Are written transcripts available on how things play out in court or plea deals?

A: Most of the time in district court, you will not have a court reporter because it's not a court of record; Circuit Court is a court of record.

Q: Are hearings open to the public?

A: As long as they are adults, yes.

Q: Do you have any advice for us as advocates to ensure that cyclists are safe and drivers more responsible for their actions that harm cyclists?

A: While I hate to put the onus on the bicyclists, anything you can do to help yourself is the best you can get at this point. GoPros are easy to obtain. Call the police; make sure they take the information from you because if you haven't given it to the police, then we have evidentiary chain of custody issues that we might have to deal with as the prosecutors. So, give it to them. Keep your copy; provide them with a copy.

News

New Year Brings New Tax on Plastic Bags BYOB now means 'bring your own bag.'

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

On Jan. 1, 2022, Fairfax County joined many jurisdictions including Arlington and City of Alexandria with a disposable plastic bag tax of five cents per bag, charged at the point of sale to consumers at grocery stores, convenience stores and drugstores. To avoid the tax, consumers may bring reusable shopping bags. Paper bags are not subject to the five-cent tax, although certain retailers may have their own fees for paper bags, including Wegman's at the Hilltop Shopping Center in southern Alexandria.

The purpose of the tax is to curb the collective use of disposable plastic bags, reduce the amount of plastic waste in local waterways, roadways, and open spaces and the damage it causes. Plastic pollution is a problem for ecological and health reasons, the county said, and it is not biodegrade like wood or other natural materials. Instead, plastic materials photodegrade,

breaking down into smaller and smaller pieces but never fully disappearing. Pieces of plastic both large and very, very small can find their way into the food and water supply for humans and wildlife.

Several neighboring jurisdictions have also enacted a disposable plastic bag tax. Arlington County and the City of Alexandria also have a bag tax effective Jan. 1, 2022, while the City of Falls Church's tax will take effect April 1, 2022.

Revenue from this tax will be collected by the Virginia Department of Taxation and will be disbursed to each locality monthly. The bag revenue will go to:

- ❖ Environmental cleanup programs
- ❖ Pollution and litter mitigation programs
- ❖ Educational programs on environmental waste reduction
- ❖ Provision of reusable bags to recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) benefits.

Viewpoints

PHOTOS AND QUESTIONS BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION AT THE BELLE VIEW SHOPPING CENTER

What do you think of the bag fee that is charged at stores now?



"I'm for it, I try to bring my own"
- Diane Morano, visiting friends in Mount Vernon



"I'm from California, I'm used to it, I have reusable bags for this purpose"
- Amber Larue, on a temporary assignment in Northern Virginia



"I don't know what the money is going to be used for"
- Chris Ames, Alexandria resident



"It's unnecessary, I understand we should save more of these bags but it's awful"
- Jaqueline Martinez, Belle View resident

Breaking Ground to Upgrade Trail

FROM PAGE 1

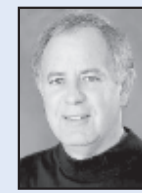
transportation element will "help our community reach its full potential," Storck said.

There are five challenging crossings in this area:

- ❖ Grist Mill Woods Way to Fort Belvoir Walker's Gate Entrance
- ❖ Fort Belvoir Walker's Gate Entrance to Grist Mill Road
- ❖ Grist Mill Road to Old Mill Road

- ❖ Old Mill Road to Grist Mill Park Entrance
- ❖ Peartree Landing to Southwood Drive

The Fairfax County Department of Transportation has coordinated efforts with Fort Belvoir to plan this and is implementing an environmental protection plan when working around the creek. Sam Lim, the Fairfax County engineer on this project, mentioned the presence of snakehead fish in the creek.



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Alex/Riverside Estates \$731,150
3102 Battersea Lane

Make this Christmas special by visiting this incredible 3 level Colonial in popular Riverside Estates. This home has been updated & meticulously maintained: baths remodeled, interior painted, hwd floors refinished all in 2021. Basement remodeled in 2020-New chimney liners & DBL pane windows in 2019-Electric panel upgraded & HWH, siding & gutters replaced in 2018-Firrnace 2012-Roof 2008-A/C 2004-MBA & Kitchen in 2012-Kitchen has granite counters, maple cabinets, SS appliances. Main level includes living rm, w/FPL, dining rm, kitchen & family rm w/access to carport & storage shed plus beautiful sliding glass doors to patio & gorgeous bkyd. Upper level has 4BRs, (2nd BR almost the same size as the spacious MBR), a MBA & 2nd half bath-the lower level has a 2nd FPL in the rec rm, a den/office area & rear door for access to the bkyd. Additional storage available in a 17x11 rm w/built-in shelving & 2 large cedar closets. Finally, a 13x12 utility rm complete w/built-in table for folding clothes. Fabulous location.



Alex/Riverside Estates \$699,500
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Alex/ Mt. Zephyr \$679,900
8521 Richmond Avenue

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The Pace in Richmond Quickens

BY SEN. ADAM P. EBBIN

With the excitement of move-in and the inauguration out of the way, the pace of the General Assembly is rapidly ramping up. New staffers from Governor Glenn Youngkin's administration are circulating the halls with updated policy and agency contact sheets and committees are just beginning to receive "administration input" on legislation. With a new Speaker and new committee chairs, the House of Delegates took some time to begin hearing legislation, while the Senate began right away. After months of anticipation, the Republican agenda is becoming clear in Richmond.

In the first meeting of the Privileges and Elections Committee, where I serve as Vice-Chair, we headed off and defeated early efforts aimed at limiting access to the ballot box on party line votes. One was a proposal from Sen. Mark Peake (R-Lynchburg) to end same-day voter registration, something that has yet to even go into effect. Another bill introduced by Sen. Mark Obenshain (R-Rockingham) would have reinstated the unnecessary and sometimes onerous voter ID law. Just last November, due to changes made over the last several years, we held a safe and free gubernatorial election where more Virginians voted than ever. According to the Virginia Depart-

ment of Elections Post Election Report this "proved, once again, that elections can be administered in a way that guarantees access to the ballot, all while maintaining secure processes that ensure safe, secure, fair, and free elections."

In the Commerce and Labor Committee we heard another bill from Sen. Peake (R-Lynchburg) that would have canceled a scheduled increase in the Virginia minimum wage to \$12.00 an hour on Jan. 1, 2023. The minimum wage in 2020 was just \$7.50 an hour, the same as the federal minimum wage. Thanks to legislation passed two years ago, it is now \$11 an hour. Especially in Northern Virginia, the minimum wage has been too low for too long, forcing hard working neighbors into poverty, extended credit, and reducing access to the freedoms that home and vehicle ownership provide. I was glad to make the motion and vote to defeat this misguided piece of legislation.

While there are legitimate policy debates to be had about the above proposals, we have also seen some truly off the wall bills. Senator Amanda Chase (R-Chesterfield) offered a slew of anti-mask, anti-vaccine, anti-public health proposals. These bills, drawn from the darkest corners of the internet, would



Sen. Adam Ebbin

fine small business owners \$10,000 if they required their employees to get the safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine or wear a facemask to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. In a time of spiking infections especially among healthcare workers,

children, and the unvaccinated, I was glad to vote down these proposals. I asked Sen. Chase directly, "If I'm a parent of an immunocompromised child, and I don't want them to come into contact with COVID, would this allow another child who's COVID-positive to possibly come into school and sneeze on them without a mask?" Sen. Chase responded with a hemming non-answer, but the text of the bill was clear — it absolutely would.

Two of my 25 bills have already passed out of the Senate. SB278 preserves electric vehicle charging stations for electric vehicles to ensure and expand access to charging infrastructure. SB286, which I introduced at the request of Alexandria City, allows localities to require homes purchased in local historic districts to have their properties surveyed to ensure homeowners know their exact property lines and reduce disputes with neighbors or the local government when additions or alterations are made to properties.

With divided control among the two houses of the legislature, major policy actions will be more challenging to advance. However, an area where I look forward to making real wins for the 30th Senate District is through the budget. With a surplus of \$2.6 billion — the largest in Virginia's history, and \$800 million in American

Rescue Plan Dollars still to be allocated, there are rare opportunities for historic investments. I have proposed amendments to former Governor Ralph Northam's introduced budget to alleviate economic strain on businesses and workers, preserve and maintain historic resources, and invest in outdated government infrastructure.

I am working to include a tranche of federal relief dollars to create a hospitality and tourism industry COVID-relief program which would especially be of benefit to the hotels and restaurants which make up a large portion of the economic and social engine of the 30th District. I have also requested an additional forty million dollars for the Virginia Housing Trust Fund which supports the development and preservation of affordable housing. It is my hope that with these additional dollars we can invest more in the development of deeply affordable housing for the poorest and most at risk Virginians. Additionally, I requested \$500,000 in state dollars to restore and preserve Douglass Memorial Cemetery in Alexandria — a historic African American cemetery in need of major restoration. I have also proposed funding to update ten Department of Corrections facilities across the state to install air conditioning. In this era of extreme weather events 5,600 inmates are currently without air conditioning.

While there is a notable air of contention on many legislative proposals in the Capitol, I am hopeful that with a carefully cultivated budget surplus, there will still be a plethora of opportunities for bipartisan wins for Virginians.

It is my continued honor to serve the 30th District,

Update from Session Week 2

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL



Surovell

In the second week of this year's General Assembly, Governor Youngkin gave his State of the Commonwealth speech to a joint session of the House of Delegates and Senate, and we began serious work on over 2,000 bills.

While I was pleased that Governor Youngkin said he wants all Virginians to get vaccinated for COVID-19, supports a Chesapeake Bay cleanup and ending raw sewage discharges into the James River, he also advocated for many policies that many people of the 36th Senate District do not support, policies like charter schools and funding cuts to schools and our transportation.

Senate committees advanced several of my bills recently.

The Transportation Committee approved my legislation to require police officers to advise drivers why they have stopped the driver's vehicle before requesting the driver's license and registration. When police stop a car, drivers can often become anxious and upset and believe they were not violating any law. This happened to one of my constituents recently and her incident escalated into an arrest for driving while intoxicated. She submitted to a breath test which showed she had no alcohol on her breath and the Commonwealth's Attorney asked for the charges to be dropped. The entire episode would have been avoided if the officer had told her the basis for her stop. The full Senate will debate this bill this week.

SEE UPDATE FROM, PAGE 8

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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Mark C. Lowham
+1 703 966 6949
Daniel Heider
+1 202 938 3685



GREAT FALLS

119 Clarks Run Road
Great Falls, VA

\$3,990,000

Michael Rankin
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THE ORONOCO

601 N Fairfax Street #511
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UNDER CONTRACT
\$1,850,000

Heather Corey
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ABINGDON ROW

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Alexandria, VA

UNDER CONTRACT
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Heather Corey
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Sharon Wildberger
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Matt McCormick
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Potomac, MD

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Jonathan Taylor
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\$8,295,000

Cynthia Steele Vance
+1 703 408 1810

CAPTAINS ROW

117 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA

\$2,575,000

Heather Corey
+1 703 989 1183



RIVER VIEW ESTATES

10913 Mariner Drive
Fort Washington, MD

\$1,995,000

Sharon Wildberger
+1 703 597 0374



THE ORONOCO

601 N Fairfax Street #214
Alexandria, VA

UNDER CONTRACT
\$1,495,000

Heather Corey
+1 703 989 1183



WESLEY HEIGHTS

4400 Garfield Street NW
Washington, DC

\$9,495,000

Russell Firestone
+1 202 271 1701



PENTHOUSE CONDOMINIUM

4201 Cathedral Avenue NW #PH1215E
Washington, DC

\$5,999,999

Greg Gaddy
+1 202 421 4734
Carroll Dey
+1 202 320 0441



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Session Update: Charitable Gaming Reform

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

Perhaps one of the “heaviest lifts” — as we say in the General Assembly — on my legislative agenda this session is my effort to reform the Charitable Gaming system here in the Commonwealth. In fact, a third of my legislation this year is dedicated to this reform effort.

This is not just bipartisan, but a bicameral endeavor with my colleagues Sen. Bryce Reeves (Spotsylvania), Sen. Adam Ebbin, and Sen. John Bell (Loudoun).

If you are not familiar with Charitable Gaming, you may have heard of churches or fraternal organizations such as the Moose Lodge or Elk Lodge holding bingo games, raffles, or, more recently, Texas Hold ‘Em poker tournaments to raise money for charitable causes in the community. Not only are these games fun to participate in, but they raise money for good

causes, and they’re run by volunteers. At least, that is the intention.

Unfortunately, over the past year that I have served as the Chair of the Joint Subcommittee on Charitable Gaming, my colleagues and I learned that the Charitable Gaming system

we currently have in the Commonwealth is broken. The current leadership of the Charitable Gaming Board has vested interests in charitable gaming in Virginia and makes a profit off of this gaming. As we held numerous hearings over the summer, we heard from various stakeholders around Virginia on the issues and worked with our legislative team to create solutions with the goal of reforming Charitable Gaming in Virginia into a transparent and fair system, free from conflicts of interests, with clear definitions, penalties, a



Krizek

powerful enforcement arm, and with the goal of raising funds for charity as first and foremost in mind.

Our legislative agenda includes the six pieces of legislation that I introduced on the House side to achieve these goals. You can view all of these and follow their journey this session at lis.virginia.gov:

❖HB 763: This bill would restrict electronic gaming to inside the social quarters of social organizations, and within their home locality.

❖HB 764: This bill requires the registration of landlords that lease premises to a qualified charitable organization. The bill also prohibits an organization from conducting any Texas Hold’em poker game where the game has no predetermined end time and the players wage actual money or poker chips that have cash value.

❖HB 765: This bill changes the Charitable Gaming Board from a policy board to an advisory board.

❖HB 766: Establishes the Charitable Gaming Fund as the receiver of all fees and penalties collected by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in its administration of charitable gaming laws. This bill also charges the Illegal Gaming Enforcement Coordinator with enforcement of charitable gaming laws and establishes a tip line for members of the public to report concerns about illegal gaming.

A small percentage of funds collected by the Department is given to the problem gambling fund.

❖HB 767: Provides for a civil penalty of not less than \$25,000 and not more than \$50,000 for any person or organization that conducts charitable gaming without a permit, conducts games after suspension of a permit, or violates any other charitable gaming laws.

❖HJ 36 - Charitable Gaming

JLARC study on whether a stand-alone gaming oversight agency would allow for more focused oversight of all types of legal gaming in the Commonwealth and alleviate potential conflicts of interest.

I, along with my Senate colleagues, held a joint press conference on Monday morning announcing our intentions with this year’s legislation and highlighted our concerns with the Charitable Gaming system.

We sent a letter to Speaker Gilbert requesting that he relieve the members of the Charitable Gaming Board who serve at his pleasure, and we plan to send similar letters to the Senate Rules Committee and Governor Youngkin. Ultimately, our goal is to create a Charitable Gaming system that emphasizes charity and not gaming and helps the legitimate charitable gaming organizations, because what they do for the community is important and beneficial.

Update from Session Week 2

FROM PAGE 6

Another bill would allow child accident victims to invest proceeds from injury settlements and use the funds for college, trade school or registered apprenticeship programs in what is called Virginia’s 529 Program.

Under current law, settlements are either invested in certificates of deposit or restrictive annuities approved by a judge.

Another bill I introduced would create a new Circuit Court judgeship in Prince William County. Prince William is now the second largest jurisdiction in Virginia and it takes 18 months to get a hearing date for civil cases like family law matters, business disputes or personal injury. All other jurisdictions in Northern Virginia address these cases in fewer than 12 months.

The Judiciary Committee approved my legislation that extends the Supreme Court of Virginia’s judicial review program to retired judges who continue to hear cases and allows the legislature to decertify any judges who have problems. Today, retired judges can continue to hear cases and there is no formal program to obtain objective feedback on their performance or initiate their removal.

I also introduced several budget amendments of local interest. I am proposing to repurpose the \$2 million that Sen. Adam Ebbin, Del. Paul Krizek and Del. Mark Sickles secured for River Farm last year to purchase River Farm and use it as a grant program to improve public access to the property. I have requested \$5 million to connect Pohick Bay Regional Park to public water and another \$5.4 million to fund water and sewer lines for permanent outdoor restrooms at all Fairfax County Public School stadiums. One of the wealthiest counties in America should have permanent restrooms at these community facilities.

The Transportation Committee approved my legislation to require police officers to advise drivers why they have stopped the driver’s vehicle before requesting the driver’s license and registration.

I have suggested that we use funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARPA) to eliminate our \$250 million state park maintenance backlog at parks like Mason Neck and general funds to complete the Phase II and Phase III buildout at Wide-water State Park in Stafford County. I have also requested \$200,000 to continue Good Shepherd Housing’s services to families receiving government aid that was started this year.

Over 70 constituents attended our Mount Vernon-Lee Town Hall on Saturday and I have town hall meetings scheduled with other delegates and senators for Lorton, Occoquan/Woodbridge and Dumfries/Montclair. Please see www.scottsurovell.org and my Facebook and Twitter pages for more details. I look forward to discussing your concerns and answering your questions.

Please send me any feedback at scott@scottsurovell.org. It is an honor to serve you in the Virginia Senate.

POLICE REPORTS

MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT STATION

COMMERCIAL ROBBERY: 6138 North Kings Highway (7-Eleven), 1/19/22, 10:12 p.m. Two men entered the business, displayed a firearm, and took property. No injuries were reported.

UPDATE: MALICIOUS WOUNDING: 7614 Richmond Highway (McDonalds), 1/10/22, 4:25 p.m. Two groups got into an altercation with each other inside the restaurant.

The altercation became physical and resulted in two men being taken to the hospital with injuries that were deemed non-life threatening. One of the men remains hospitalized. On Jan.19, officers arrested and charged a 21-year-old Alexandria man with aggravated malicious wounding.

MCLEAN DISTRICT STATION ABDUCTION: 2900 block of Caribbean Court, 1/18/22, 7:51 p.m. A man approached the victim, displayed a firearm, and demanded to be driven to a residence in D.C. After dropping the man off, the victim reported the incident to police. No injuries were reported.

MASON DISTRICT STATION STOLEN AUTO RECOVERY: 6000 block of Leesburg Pike, 1/19/22, 8:44 p.m. An officer saw a 2010 Toyota Corolla that was reported stolen from a nearby jurisdiction. As the officer was coordinating a traffic stop on the vehicle, the driver, a 26-year-old man from Fredericksburg, parked the vehicle and attempted to walk away. The man was arrested and charged with grand larceny.

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY: 5618 Columbia Pike (Smoke and Vape), 1/20/22,

1:26 a.m. Two men forced entry into the business and took property.

RESTON DISTRICT STATION COMMERCIAL ROBBERY: 13470 Coppermine Road (Sunoco Gas), 1/19/22, 9:34 p.m. A man entered the business, displayed a firearm, and demanded property. No injuries were reported.

FRANCONIA DISTRICT STATION ASSAULT/ ASSAULT ON LAW ENFORCEMENT: Fairfax County Parkway at Richmond Highway, 1/17/22, 11:31 a.m. The operator of a ride share vehicle called police after a female passenger assaulted him.

As officers were investigating, the female assaulted one of the officers. The 29-year-old woman of Fredericksburg was arrested and charged with assault on a law enforcement officer. No injuries were reported.

ROBBERY: 7000 block of Manchester Lake Boulevard, 1/18/22, 11:23 a.m. A man approached the victim, implied he had a weapon, and took property. The man left in a Honda sedan. No injuries were reported.

LARCENY/ DRUNK IN PUBLIC/ ASSAULT ON LAW ENFORCEMENT: 8900 block of Lorton Station Boulevard, 1/19/22, 6:35 p.m. Officers were called for an intoxicated woman who was being disorderly and stole property. The 26-year-old woman of Washington, D.C. was arrested and during the arrest she assaulted the officer twice. She was charged with drunk in public, petit larceny, credit card theft, and assault on law enforcement officer. No injuries were reported.

Two Arrested in Death of Ahmed Hasheem Ebrahim

Two people have been charged for crimes related to the death of Ahmed Hasheem Ebrahim, 20, of Alexandria, who was reported missing by a family member on Jan. 17. Ebrahim was last seen on Jan. 15 leaving his home for a friend's house. Officers spoke to the family member and entered Ebrahim as a missing person in the National Crime Information Center database. The case was assigned to a detective from the Missing Persons Squad. Detectives learned Ebrahim's vehicle was towed on Jan. 18 from an address in the City of Alexandria. When detectives arrived at the tow lot, they immediately noticed blood in the vehicle. Detectives upgraded Ebrahim to a critical missing person based on the condition of the vehicle and evidence found inside.

Detectives learned on Jan. 20 that Joel Antonio Sarabia, 20, of Fairfax was driving Ebrahim's vehicle after his reported disappearance. Detectives obtained a warrant for unauthorized use of a vehicle and driving without an operator's license based on the evidence recovered from the towed vehicle. Detectives from our Fugitive Track and Apprehension Unit on Jan. 24 took Sarabia into custody.

Detectives determined through interviews that Sarabia and the victim were known to each other. Sarabia and a 17-year-old associate planned to rob Ebrahim on Jan. 16. Detectives say that Sarabia shot Ebrahim in the upper body while Ebrahim was in his vehicle in a parking lot near the 6200 block of Lachine Lane in Lincolnia. Sarabia and his associate then drove the victim in Ebrahim's vehicle until they

disposed of his body later on Jan. 17 in a dumpster in the 3700 block of North Rosser Street.

Sarabia has since been charged with first degree murder, robbery resulting in death, concealment of a dead body and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony. He remains held at the Adult Detention Center without bond. The 17-year-old was arrested on Jan. 25 and charged with robbery resulting in death and concealment of a dead body. He was taken to the Juvenile Detention Center where he remains held.

Detectives identified the dumpster where Ebrahim's body was dumped. They have since been in contact with the disposal services company to determine the potential location where Ebrahim's body may have been taken. Detectives have coordinated several searches with our Search and Rescue Team to locate Ebrahim.

During the arrest of Sarabia, detectives recovered a firearm and are coordinating additional searches for a second firearm which is believed to be in the City of Alexandria.

Detectives are asking anyone with additional information about this crime to contact them at 703-691-2131, or call 911. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone – 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

Victim specialists from the Major Crimes Bureau's Victim Services Division have been assigned to ensure that the victims' family is receiving appropriate resources and assistance.

This is the second homicide of the year in Fairfax County. Year to date, there were no homicides at this point in 2021.

Legislators Outline Session

FROM PAGE 1

law or replace an old one, so the Senate has the ability to block those actions. The senators were less confident about any new bills passing that could not attain bipartisan support.

Nomination of former coal industry lobbyist and Trump administration director of the Environmental Protection Agency, Andrew Wheeler, to be the State's secretary of natural resources was also on the mind of participants, drawing several questions. Speakers expressed concern about Wheeler's actions to rescind Obama-era environmental regulations. Wheeler's appointment, which must be approved by the General Assembly, will be considered by the Senate agriculture committee, and voted on by the Senate on Friday.

During town halls, Senators highlighted bills they filed related to problems including: methane reduction; safety of multi-family condo buildings; leave for organ donors; standards for skilled nursing home staff; more transit with low or no fares; unfreezing school support staff positions; preventing establishment of charter schools; better financing of public schools;

assuring easy voter registration, early voting, and secure elections; and restricting sale of noxious invasive plant species by nurseries and retail stores with bills sponsored by Delegates Paul Krizek (D-44) and David Bulova (D-37), to list a few. Del. Mark Sickles (D-43), a member of the important House appropriations committee, highlighted work on the Commonwealth's two year budget plan, with items for health care, Medicare waivers, nursing home staff salaries, rebuilding the Lorton food bank, and promoting education.

Legislators shared that the Senate was ahead of the House in proceedings to date, with Senate floor votes on several bills accomplished last week; House floor voting began this week, on Jan. 24.

Clifton Women Hear from Legislators

Speaking at an event hosted by Democratic Women of Clifton and Northern Virginia on Sunday, Jan. 23, Sen. Barker (D-39) shared his optimism about continued progress on bipartisan areas and confidence in a unified position within the Democratic caucus. Sen. McClellan (D-9) described this year's

Democratic action on issues such as voting rights, clean environment, climate change, reproductive health and access to abortion as "defensive," but with proactive work on some areas related to education where common ground could be found, such as funding for construction, renovation, and salaries and for support positions. Disagreements over mask and vaccine mandates, and charter schools will likely continue, said McClellan. Del. Tran (D-42nd) added that position differences regarding masks are clear in Richmond; visible in the party division in the House between Democrats wearing, and Republicans not wearing, masks.

Freshman delegate Irene Shin (D-86th), who attended her swearing in wearing a traditional Korean dress to represent her Korean-American heritage, (represented by a staff member at the meeting), is sponsoring a bill prohibiting discrimination on the basis of religion, as one of six bills she is sponsoring for her first session. Shin can expect a bit of traditional good-natured harassment by other members when her first bill of the six is considered on the House floor.

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Publishing Since 1784

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CONNECTION**
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Mount Vernon Gazette
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CENTRE VIEW

Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspapers mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers.

All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk.

The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

Each local newspapers mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

Visit [connectionnewspapers.com](https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing) or

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing>

Connection Newspapers.... Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette, Centre View, Potomac Almanac
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NEWS

Black History Month Events

From a self-taught mathematician who mapped out the nation's capital to abolitionist sisters who partnered with Frederick Douglass to the first Black player in the NBA, African Americans have shaped the history of Alexandria.

Explore more ways to celebrate Black history and culture throughout February and year-round on Visit Alexandria's Black History and Culture page. <https://www.visitalexandriava.com/things-to-do/historic-attractions-and-museums/african-american/>

Black History Month Events & Experiences

Manumission Tour Company Virtual Tour of Local Black History: Freedom's Fight in Alexandria
February 3, 2022,
from 5 to 7 p.m.

Admission: Free (Registration required) Virtual alexlibraryva.org

Join Manumission Tour Company to (virtually) travel the streets of historic Old Town Alexandria and hear the little-known stories of Africans and African Americans, both enslaved and freemen, at a time when Alexandria was one of American's main centers for the international and domestic slave trade. This program will give participants insight into Alexandria's pre-civil war history of urban slavery, and highlight runaway enslaved individuals, like stepbrothers Oscar and George Ball, free African Americans like Moses Hepburn and early abolitionists, such as pharmacist Edward Stabler, who pushed back against the "Peculiar Institution" of slavery.

Manumission Tour Company curates guided cultural heritage tours designed to highlight Alexandria's extensive African American History. Learn more here. <https://www.manumissiontours.com/>

10% Discount on Manumission Tour Company Bookings Throughout February

Throughout February 2022

Admission: \$15 per adult; \$12 per child (pre-discount)

Tour locations vary within Old Town, Alexandria, VA 22314
[manumissiontours.com](https://www.manumissiontours.com)

Manumission Tour Company curates guided cultural heritage tours designed to highlight Alexandria's extensive African American History. Owned by a fourth generation Alexandrian, Manumission Tour Company offers weekend guided walking and bus tours February through December. Tour routes include "Freedom's Fight in Alexandria," "Duke Street Black History" and "Still's Underground Railroad." Personalized group tours and step-on services are available by request.

An Afternoon Lecture with the Equal Justice Initiative
February 8, 2022,
from 4 to 5 p.m.

Admission: Free (Registration required) Virtual alexandriava.gov/historic

Attend an afternoon with Trey Walk, project manager with the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI). Join the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project (ACRP) to learn more about EJI and the ACRP's work with them to educate Alexandria citizens about Alexandria's two lynchings that occurred in 1897 and 1899.

The Life and Times of Charles Young: Presented by the National Park Service
February 10, 2022,
from 7 to 8 p.m.

Admission: Free (Registration required) Virtual alexlibraryva.org

Join Park Ranger Roger Osorio, from the Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National Monument, to learn the story behind Colonial Young's life and the legacy he created. Charles Young, born to enslaved parents, persevered through racism and prejudice to become one of the first African American graduates from West Point Military Academy and went on to serve in many capacities and missions throughout the United States and the world at a time when opportunities for Black Americans were severely restricted. Please contact mzimmerman@alexlibraryva.org with questions or for more information.

Storytime with the Alexandria Black History Museum
February 12, 2022, at 10 a.m.

Admission: Free Virtual alexlibraryva.org

Educate kids during story time with the Alexandria Black History Museum, a collaboration with the Alexandria Library. Join Mrs. Lillian Patterson for story time and hear about African American history. The event is great for children ages 4 to 8, but all are welcome. Recurring story times occur on the second Saturday of each month.

A White Historian Explores "Race Riots"

February 12, 2022, at 11 a.m.

Admission: Free (Registration required) Virtual alexandriava.gov/historic

Violent clashes between large crowds of different races have disturbed the social order in the United States since long before the Civil War, and the phrase "race riot" has been used to describe such disparate events such as the Tulsa massacre of 1921, the 1968 uprisings following the assassination of Martin Luther King and the anti-Chinese riots of the 1870s. Susan Strasser investigates the term and a history of racially-charged violence that has framed American discussions of race. Register here to receive the Zoom link. https://zoom.us/join/register/WN_VJNkJWGDQOCANEIVjDN4Og

Virtual Film Screening and Discussion of "Odessa's Reign"

February 16, 2022,
from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Admission: Free (Registration required) Virtual alexandriava.gov/historic

Tune into a film screening and discussion of "Odessa's Reign" with producer Robin Hamilton. Crowned "Queen of the Underworld," a Black female gangster runs the most lucrative gambling ring in D.C. in the 1950s and manages to keep the D.C. police in her back pocket. Runtime is 25 minutes. Robin Hamilton is an Emmy-award winning television host, producer and moderator for town halls and forums. She is the founder and principal of the Around Robin Production Company, where she creates videos for nonprofits to help with fundraising, marketing and messaging.

Washington Revels Jubilee Voices in Concert
February 19, 2022,
from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Admission: Free (Registration required)

Virtual alexandriava.gov/historic
The Alexandria Black History Museum presents the Washington Revels Jubilee Voices in concert. Join the Rebels as their members explore the rich history of African American music.

Left Behind: Stories from the Underground Railroad
February 22, 2022,
from 7 to 8 p.m.

Admission: Free (Registration required) SEE BLACK HISTORY, PAGE 11

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

NEWS

Local Bird Expert Focuses on Waterfowl Identification

Bill Young, an Arlington resident and well-known expert on birds, will present an online workshop on local waterfowl identification on Jan. 28 from 7-9 p.m. Young is the author of "The Fascination of Birds: From the Albatross to the Yellowthroat." His travels have taken him to birding hotspots around the world and provided the background for his many presentations around the area with upcoming sessions sponsored by the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, Alexandria Library and Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy.

This includes an upcoming three-part Birds and Words workshop on Feb. 15, 17 and 22. It focuses on such questions as how bird words have infiltrated the

English language and the basis for the common and scientific names of birds. Young is also the co-creator of MPNature.com website which is a comprehensive source of information for those who visit Monticello Park in Alexandria.

Questions on the upcoming presentation contact: info@loudounwildlife.org. Registration is required for his workshops.

— SHIRLEY RUHE

FILE PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE CONNECTION

William Young



Black History Month Events

FROM PAGE 10

required)

Virtual alexlibraryva.org
Master Storyteller Sheila Arnold looks at what formerly enslaved people left behind when they escaped to freedom. Freedom — it's what we all desire, but if you had to leave something or someone behind, could you do it for the hope of a word called "freedom?" Through story, song and audience interaction, Master Storyteller Sheila Arnold, looks at the fugitive slaves from the Underground Railroad and shares what they left behind — family, clothes, name and even life. There are surprises that were left behind as well, and this presentation brings humor along with thought-provoking moments. The program is historical storytelling at its best. A one-hour program that begins with the audience's thoughts and leads to stories that will stay in your mind long after the presentation has ended. Appropriate for all ages.

CALENDAR

NOW THRU JAN. 29

Little Monsters Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. At Del Ray Artisans gallery features artists' interpretation of their own little monsters — from scary to funny. Check out related workshops. Gallery hours are Thursday 12-6 p.m., Friday 12-9 p.m., Saturday 12-6 p.m., and Sunday 12-6 p.m. Details at: <https://DelRayArtisans.org/event/little-monsters>

NOW THRU JAN. 30

Alexandria Restaurant Week.

At neighborhoods throughout Alexandria, including Old Town, Del Ray, Carlyle and Eisenhower, and the West End. For 10 days and two weekends, nearly 70 restaurants in Alexandria will offer a \$35 prix fixe dinner for one or two people. Special menus are available in-person at all participating restaurants, many with heated outdoor dining available. Fifty restaurants will also offer to-go options in addition to in-person meals. The online menu book makes it easy to browse delicious selections from dozens of Alexandria eateries and enjoy special menus at some of Alexandria's

winterized dining destinations or from the comfort of your own home. Visit AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com.

NOW THRU JAN. 30

Annual Fooduary Event. At National Harbor, Md. Restaurants will offer pre fixe menus including Succotash, Bond 45, Fiorella Italian Kitchen & Pizzeria, Rosa Mexicano, Grace's Mandarin, and Mason's Famous Lobster Roll. MGM National Harbor's restaurants Voltaggio brothers, Diablo Cantina and TAP Sports Bar. Visitors are invited to enjoy options via dine-in, carryout or delivery. Visit www.nationalharbor.com/fooduary/.

FRIDAY/JAN. 28

Snowy Trees in Watercolor Workshop. 6-8 p.m. Via Zoom. Learn to use many watercolor techniques such as wet in wet, salt texture, lifting, splattering and more, as you paint a very colorful snowy tree scene. For details and to register: <https://delrayartisans.org/event/snowy-trees>. Cost: \$50 Del Ray Artisans member / \$55 Non-members. Website: <https://delrayartisans.org/event/snowy-trees/>

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 13

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ENTERTAINMENT



George Washington Birthday Parade is Feb. 21, 1 to 3 p.m.



George Washington Birthday Parade is Feb. 21, 1 to 3 p.m.

PHOTOS BY STEVE MUTH

Alexandria Celebrates George Washington's Birthday With Events Throughout February

Alexandria the adopted hometown of George Washington, celebrates his birthday each year with events throughout February. The highlight will occur on Feb. 21, 2022, when Alexandria residents and visitors will line the streets of Old Town Alexandria to cheer on the oldest and largest George Washington Birthday parade in the country. The parade features drum corps, color guards, bands, community and fraternal organizations, youth groups, local merchants, city dignitaries, and, of course, General Washington and Martha Washington.

This year, the Celebration will honor Alexandria's health care workers and first responders, who will march as Parade Grand Marshals. All events are subject to change. See washingtonbirthday.com George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee (GWBCC).



George Washington Interpreter Dan Shippey. Celebrate with free admission to George Washington's Mount Vernon Feb. 21, 2022, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Feb. 22, 2022, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

brating Washington's Birthday at the U.S.-Mexico Border, will be available for advance purchase at Gadsby's and the Alexandria History Museum. Cost is \$6 per person. Tickets are available through AlexandriaVA.gov/Shop.

"George Washington's Alexandria" Tours
Feb. 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2022, from 2 to 4 p.m.

On every Sunday in February 2022, beginning at 2 p.m., you can explore historic Old Town Alexandria as George Washington knew it. This popular two-hour guided walking tour will visit sites associated with Washington and his closest colleagues, including Christ Church, Light Horse Harry Lee's house, the Lord Fairfax home, Washington's townhouse, Gadsby's Tavern, Duvall Tavern, Wise's Tavern, the Carlyle House, Market Square, Ramsay House, the Apothecary Shop and Gentry Row. To register, visit eventbrite.com and search George Washington's Alexandria. FREE.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOUNT VERNON

The Restaurant Cherry Challenge Feb. 1 to 15, 2022

In honor of George Washington's birthday, participating Alexandria restaurants will create unique, cherry-centric dishes. Each restaurant will develop its own cherry cocktail, appetizer, entrée, and/or dessert in honor of our distinguished native son, of course. The competing restaurants and their entries will be listed on the George Washington Birthday Celebration website and Facebook page, and the winners will be announced on Parade Day.

Hunt for Washington Feb. 1 to 28, 2022

A fun and challenging game to uncover clues about Alexandria and George Washington. The hunt, which should take about 60 to 90 minutes to complete, will take individuals and families to places in Old Town Alexandria associated with the General. Start by printing

a clue sheet from washingtonbirthday.com at home and bring it with you as you traverse the heart of Old Town and then use your sleuthing skills to find answers to the clues. Submit your findings to gwbirthdayevents@gmail.com any time before the end of the day on February 28. There are prizes and mementos associated with this event. FREE.

American Legion Post 24 Run, Walk, n' Roll Feb. 1 to 28, 2022

This George Washington Birthday Commemorative event is intended to build community and enhance the physical, mental and emotional resiliency of participants—veterans and non-veterans alike. This month-long event during February 2022 encourages participants to run, walk and/or roll on their own for at least 24 miles in increments and routes they choose.

Registration is \$24 and open until February 5, 2022. Visit runsignup.com/Race/VA/Alexandria/GWB24RunWalkRoll for more information.

iViva George! Celebrating Washington in Laredo and Alexandria - Virtual Feb. 3, 2022, at 7 p.m.

Alexandria has celebrated hometown legend George Washington for hundreds of years with parades and balls. Another city in America that has also celebrated with pomp and parade? Laredo, Texas. Learn from Dr. Elaine Peña, Associate Professor of American Studies at The George Washington University, about her research on these extensive festivities along the border. Afterwards, Tyler Vanice, Chair of Alexandria's George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee, will join Dr. Peña as they explore the similarities and difference between Laredo and Alexandria. Dr. Peña book, *iViva George! Cele-*

Chocolate with General Washington Feb. 12, 2022, at 2 p.m.

Children (and accompanying adults) are invited to spend an hour with General Washington to talk about the events of the revolution, ask questions of our first citizen, and enjoy hot chocolate and delicious comestibles. Sponsored by First Home Care. Location: George Washington Masonic National Memorial. Masks will be required. FREE.

Join George Washington at Hooray for Books! Feb. 13, 2022, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Join General Washington as he engages youth with immersive books to children about General Washington, President's Day, and more at Hooray for Books! Recommended age group is 10 and younger. Location: 1555 King Street,

SEE GEORGE WASHINGTON'S, PAGE 14
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

ENTERTAINMENT

Off the Menu: Restaurant News and Notes

By HOPE NELSON
ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET

It's a rundown of openings, closures and moves this month. From coffee to bagels to piping-hot eggrolls, here's what's new, what's leaving and what's changing.

Turkish Coffee Lady Opens

The choices for caffeine in Alexandria just got wider: the Turkish Coffee Lady is in! Founded in 2009 in Washington, D.C., the new shop is open at 1001 King St. The grand opening event found the shop packed to the gills with visitors, including Mayor Justin Wilson, all eager to taste the eponymous Turkish coffee as well as delights such as baklava, sweets and tea.

Meggrolls Closes

After five years at its spot at 107 N. Fayette St., Meggrolls has closed its doors for good – though its owner, Meghan Barody, has left a glimmer of hope in her parting words via a sign posted on the shop door. “And though the time has come to pack up our wontons and go, I have a funny feeling this won't be goodbye forever. To say that my heart is overwhelm-

ingly full would be an understatement. Plain and simple – we've made it this far because of YOU, and I can't thank you enough for coming along for the ride! No matter where this next chapter may lead, the roots of this tasty little dream will always be firmly planted in my hometown of Alexandria, VA.”

Chewish Deli to Open New Location

Chewish Deli, the uber-popular bagel shop drawing crowds to its Pendleton Street home base, is soon to open a second location at 1640 King St., in the former Dunkin' Donuts location.

“In this new location you'll be able to sit down and enjoy your bagel, sandwich and coffee. With much more space in the front area than at Pendleton, we will be expanding out our traditional deli offerings. We will be offering more cold options and a few less hot items than Pendleton since there isn't the option for a grill there,” the shop said on social media.

Chewish Deli aims for the new location to be open early in 2022.

Hope Nelson is the author of “Classic Restaurants of Alexandria” and owns the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 11

SATURDAY/JAN. 29

Garden Talk: Easy Garden Makeover Tips. 10:30-11:30 a.m. (16-Adult) Do you have an area of your garden that you want to plan or rework? Are you tired of your current landscape design or lack of one? Does your landscape meet your needs? With a little bit of knowledge, plan-

ning and effort you can brighten your garden with dazzling color. Extension Master Gardener docents lead you through this “do-over” class to help you determine your needs and rethink your garden space to better match your style. \$10 per person. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code EJ0.1DVA.

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Brown v. Board of Education SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

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The Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program was established by the Virginia General Assembly in 2004 to provide educational opportunities for persons who were denied an education in Virginia between 1954 and 1964 due to the closing of the public schools during Massive Resistance. The program is now open to eligible applicants for the 2022-2023 school year. For applications and information on eligibility, visit:

BROWNSCHOLARSHIP.VIRGINIA.GOV

or contact Lily Jones, Division of
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Not Bad, Considering



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

By the time this column prints, a month or so after I wrote it, I will be approximately one month into my three-month warranty extension. That meaning, as I'm regularly able to joke – THANK GOD!, that my end of December quarterly scans indicated tumor and bone weakness as stable. Not that I have a clue how quickly my fortunes could change but, I figure I have at least until my next quarterly scans in March before there might be a metaphorical fan involved. Since my oncologist is not in the predicting business nor inclined to discuss scenarios either, my life as a stage IV papillary thyroid cancer patient will continue to be one gigantic/on-going wait and see.

Which for the past nearly 13 years – from my initial late Feb., '09 diagnosis to the present has been my m.o. And quite thankfully/amazingly, my 'operandi' continues. And since I'm not, as it concerns my cancer diagnosis/evolution from non-small cell lung cancer to papillary thyroid cancer, a particularly deep thinker, or even much of a researcher into similar case studies, I sort of roll merrily/naively along. Though I wouldn't quite characterize my 'roll' as care-free and unencumbered; nonetheless, I am rarely bogged down or depressed by most of it.

As for the least of it, as a cancer patient I am part of unfortunately a much larger group of similarly disease-impacted people. We all share a mostly unspoken bond and I'd like to think, there is strength in our numbers. Whenever I meet/have met a cancer patient, there is, as you might imagine, an immediate connection of shared experiences. Whether the cancer is the curable variety – as generally speaking, papillary thyroid cancer is supposed to be, or the terminal type – like my original stage IV non-small cell lung cancer diagnosis was "prognosed," ("13 months to two years" I was given), once cancer is added to your everyday vocabulary, life takes on a whole new meaning, dare I say, urgency.

As an example: both my parents lived into their mid-80s, and were mostly healthy, no cancer. Given that we're related by birth, I figured I'd have a similar life expectancy. Then a month or so after my widowed mother died in early Dec. '08 at age 86, I experienced a pain in my left rib cage. A few days later the pain had migrated to my right rib cage. By the weekend, I could barely bend over at the waist and had difficulty inhaling. Even I had to admit there was "something rotten in Denmark." Later that New Year's Day, I went to the Emergency Room and the rest as you regular readers know, is cancer. I was age 54 and not quite six months and about to be diagnosed with a "terminal" form of lung cancer. Age 86? I'd be lucky to reach age 56. Based on the prognosis I received from my oncologist in late February, '09, I just lost 30 years of my life.

Yet here I am, almost 13 years later, and still droning on about being an active cancer patient. Too bad for you. Perfect for me, however. Who would have thought? In talking with my oncologist over the years and living and learning - and processing all the information I've been given; I've managed somehow to survive. I know Lou Gehrig was "the luckiest man on the face of the earth," but given my original diagnosis and subsequent prognosis, to still be alive and reasonably well in 2022 is nothing short of a miracle. I've been pretty lucky, too.

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

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ENTERTAINMENT

George Washington's Birthday

FROM PAGE 12

Alexandria, VA. Masks will be required. FREE.

Friendship Firehouse Museum is Open Feb. 19, 2022, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Friendship Fire Company was established in 1774 as the first volunteer fire company in Alexandria. Younger visitors will receive a free fire hat and a take-away bag of fun activities. Guests must wear masks that cover their mouth and nose while in the building. Admission is \$2 per person and free to Alexandria residents. Location: 107 S. Alfred Street.

Virtual Birthnight Banquet & Ball Feb. 19, 2022, from 7 to 9 p.m.

Join in the celebrations that have been ongoing for hundreds of years—General Washington's Birthnight Ball. Gather your bubble to honor our first President over Zoom. Begin the evening with a video presentation about the history of this event and hear from those that have participated in it for years. Have conversations about your favorite Birthnight experience. Then, the General will be available live for all y

our questions. Lastly, enjoy English Country Dancing called by our expert dance master from the historic Ballroom that you can do with 1, 2, 4, 6 or 8 people at home. Period costumes of the 1790s encouraged. One virtual dance class on February 17th is included. Tickets are \$15 per person. A dinner from Gadsby's Tavern Restaurant and traditional Birthnight Ball cake from Bittersweet are available for pickup with separate purchase of \$50. For more information and to purchase tickets, go to AlexandriaVA.gov/Shop.

Free Admission to George Washington's Mount Vernon

Feb. 21, 2022,

from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Feb. 22, 2022,

from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Celebrate the first president of the United States at his beloved home. Admission is free for Presidents Day and George Washington's birthday. Admission tickets must be reserved online in advance. Tickets will be released to Mount Vernon members on February 11 and to the general public on February 15. A limited number of tickets are available.

Washington Symposium

Feb. 26, 2022, at 1 p.m.

The George Washington Masonic National Memorial hosts leading scholars of the life and legacy of George Washington. The theme of the 2022 George Washington Symposium is "The Political Education of George Washington, 1758-1774." The George Washington Symposium is held annually to honor Washington's birthday by providing the public with enlightening contemporary research on the life of George Washington. Admission is free and free parking is available.

George Washington Birthday Gala

Feb. 26, 2022,

beginning at 5 p.m.

Formal (white tie optional). Reception at 5:00 p.m. Entertainment in the Memorial Theater at 6:30 p.m. Banquet in the Memorial's Grand Masonic Hall at 7:30 p.m. The presentation of the George Washington Memorial Award will take place during the banquet. Tickets are \$200. To purchase tickets, visit gwmemorial.org. Tickets are limited.

George Washington Birthday Parade Day Activities – Feb. 21, 2022

Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association Breakfast

Feb. 21, 9 to 10:30 a.m.

Meet special guests and enjoy a hearty breakfast with members of this historic association. First appearance of the day of General and Martha Washington. Speaker: Mark Jinks, retired Alexandria city manager, relating his "hidden ghost" stories and other anecdotal experiences. Location: The Westin Alexandria Hotel, 400 Courthouse Square, Alexandria. Ticket Price: \$45, table of 10 \$400. For more information and to purchase tickets, contact Bill Kehoe, Secretary, kehoefd@aol.com.

Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier of the Revolution

Feb. 21, 11 a.m.

Join the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Sons of the American Revolution as they honor the soldiers of the Revolution. Location: Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 321 So. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. No registration required. FREE.

Armed Forces Community Covenant Ceremony

Feb. 21, 12 to 1 p.m.

Join us as we honor our Nation's Veterans, Active Military, and their families with music and demonstrations. Speakers include Alexandria's Mayor and the commanders of major military installations in the metropolitan area. Sign the Covenant Document and show your support for our Military as we honor our first veteran. Location: Parade reviewing stand at King & Royal Streets. FREE.

George Washington Birthday Parade

Feb. 21, 1 to 3 p.m.

The nation's largest George Washington Birthday parade marches a one-mile route through the streets of his chosen hometown. Location: Old Town Alexandria. For more information, including parking, maps, route and status, visit washingtonbirthday.com, email gwbirthdayevents@gmail.com or call 571-384-8170. FREE.

Museums Open on Parade

Day Feb. 21

While in Alexandria for the parade, stop by Gadsby's Tavern Museum and the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Regular admission applies, which means City of Alexandria residents can visit for free. Guests must wear masks that cover their mouth and nose while in the buildings.

Gadsby's Tavern Museum will have costumed guides throughout the museum sharing stories about the many people who worked in and visited the tavern, including George Washington. Location: 134 North Royal Street. For more information, call (703) 746-4242.

The Apothecary Museum will be offering both first-floor admission as well as guided tours at 11:15, 12:15, 1:15, 2:15, 3:15 and 4:15 p.m. Residents interested in reserving space on a guided tour for free can call the museum at 703-746-3852. Location: 105-107 S. Fairfax Street.

Thank you to the 2022 George Washington Birthday Parade Sponsors: Silver Sponsor: Simpson Real Estate Services; Bronze Sponsors: Burke & Herbert Bank, Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association, HBP, Inc., McLaughlin Ryder Investments, Inc., Redmon, Peyton & Braswell and Wayne Valis; Supporting Sponsors: Honorable Frank Fannon IV and Kate Waller Chapter, DAR.

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