

Turner Farm Observatory Park in Great Falls. On Thursday, March 24, at 7 p.m, GFC's committees for Land Use & Zoning and Environment & Parks present a Town Hall Webinar on a proposed zoning ordinance amendment: "Dark Sky Preserve - Turner Farm Park Observatory."

# Great Falls CONNECTION

PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

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## ART



### Four Seasons

A collection of paintings by Layla Gray and Coty Dickson entitled "The Four Seasons" is on display at the Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, VA 22066. The public can view this collection of favorite seasonal paintings in the library's large meeting room from through Thursday, April 28, 2022 during regular library hours. Contact Coty Dickson at [cotyndickson@gmail.com](mailto:cotyndickson@gmail.com) for additional information.



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

### 2022 TEEN JOB FAIR

A Teen Job Fair will be held at Chantilly High School on March 19, 2022 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event is hosted by Supervisor Pat Herrity's office, Connection Newspapers and Fairfax County Public Schools. It includes a career-building workshop which focuses on students and young job seekers looking for a variety of employment opportunities; full time, after-school, seasonal positions, internship opportunities, and volunteer positions.

### KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION AT COLIN POWELL

Now Thru May 31, 2022. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Colin Powell Elementary School, 13340 Leland Road, Centreville. Colin Powell Elementary School in Centreville has begun kindergarten registration for the 2022-2023 school year. Children must be 5 years of age by September 30, 2022, to qualify for enrollment. Parents may call or email the registrar at 571-522-6008 / [RJ-johnson2@fcps.edu](mailto:RJ-johnson2@fcps.edu) for more information and to schedule an appointment.

Forms and other information are available online at: <https://www.fcps.edu/registration/kindergarten-registration>.

### KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION AT UNION MILL

Union Mill Elementary is currently registering new students for the 2022-23 school year. If your child will reach his or her 5th birthday on or before September 30, 2022, he or she is eligible to attend kindergarten in the Fairfax County Public School that serves your address. Follow the following steps to register your child:

1. Find your neighborhood school by entering your address at <http://boundary.fcps.edu/boundary/>
2. Complete a packet of registration forms on the Union Mill Elementary School website or by calling Union Mill's registrar at 703 322 8500.
3. Gather your supporting documents—proof of residence in the Union Mill boundary, a certified copy of your child's birth certificate, parent/guardian photo ID, and any custody orders. Certificate of physical exam and immunization will be required before the student may start school.
4. Save the date for our virtual Kindergarten Orientation on Tuesday evening, March 1st. We will also have an open house, by invitation only, on March 3rd. Reach out to the school for more information on both. Parents who choose to delay enrollment in kindergarten by one year are required to notify the school in writing of their intent.

### SEEKING SOFTBALL PLAYERS

The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia, a senior women's softball league, is looking for players. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. They play on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna. For more information, visit the website [www.goldengirls.org](http://www.goldengirls.org) or call Marilyn at 571-261-9163.

### SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 8





SCREENSHOT

Turner Farm Observatory Park in Great Falls.

## Preserving the County's Dark Skies Over Observatory Park

### Virtual Public Town Hall on proposing a zoning amendment.

By MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**T**urner Farm Observatory Park in Great Falls is a gem. It links the public to the universe beyond planet Earth. On Thursday, March 24, at 7 p.m, GFCA's committees for Land Use & Zoning and Environment & Parks present a Town Hall Webinar on a proposed zoning ordinance amendment: "Dark Sky Preserve - Turner Farm Park Observatory."

The invited panelists are Dranesville District Supervisor John W. Foust, Fairfax County Assistant Zoning Administrator Carmen Bishop, Fairfax County Park Authority Manager, Education/Outreach Authority, Tammy Schwab, and Jeffery Kretsch of the Analemma Society, according to Jennifer Falcone, chair of Land Use and Zoning. Following the Town Hall, the public may provide input through an online survey.

"The observatory is a wonderful community resource and many Great Falls residents support protecting its utility by limiting light pollution around the park. This meeting will allow residents to weigh in on proposed outdoor lighting regulations under consideration by the county," said Supervisor John W. Foust (D-Dranesville). "I look forward to hearing from residents, especially from those who live within a half-mile of the park, in the area that would be covered by the regulations."

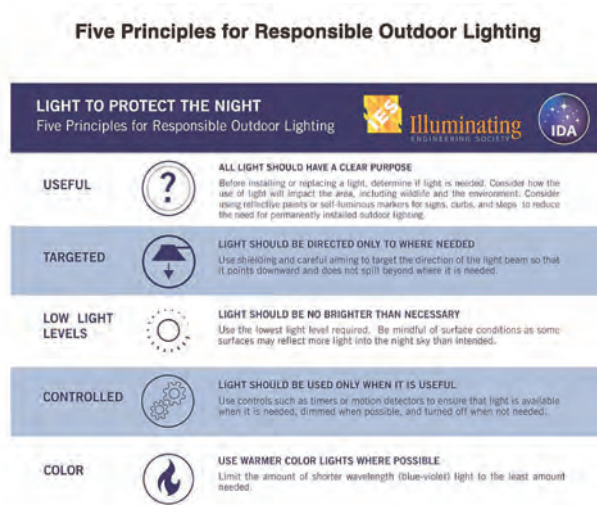
According to reports, Fairfax County staff is working on a lighting ordinance amendment to protect the dark sky in a 0.5-mile radius surrounding Turner Farm Observatory Park. "One of Great Falls' greatest assets is its dark skies, which enabled the Fair-



The Analemma Society hosts free public observing of the heavens each Friday night, 7:30- 9:30 this spring, weather permitting



SCREENSHOTS



SCREENSHOT

Five principles for responsible outdoor lighting by International Dark-Skies Association.

fax County Park Authority to build the only major public Observatory in Fairfax County, right in Great Falls," said Bill Ca-



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Turner Farm Observatory Park in Great Falls.

### Preventing Glare, Light Trespass and Skyglow

The International Dark-Sky Association has certified outdoor lighting fixtures that reduce glare, light trespass, and skyglow. According to IDS, it is crucial to have fully shielded lighting and understand that the color of light is also significant.

IDA advises only warm light sources for outdoor lighting with a color temperature of 3000 Kelvins or less. Higher color temperature light sources are rich in blue. Both LED, and metal halide fixtures emit large amounts of blue light.

"The case against blue light is well founded with regard to discomfort, glare, circadian rhythm disruption, light scattering, skyglow and biological system disruption in wildlife. Outdoor lighting with high blue light content is more likely to contribute to light pollution because it has a significantly larger geographic reach than lighting with less blue light. In natural settings, blue light at night has been shown to adversely affect wildlife behavior and reproduction," cites darksky.org Fixture Seal of Approval - International Dark-Sky Association.

said, "Presently, staff is working on a Zoning Ordinance Amendment for dark skies. Supporting the Park Authority's nomination demonstrates the County's ongoing commitment to maintaining natural nighttime light." Foust added that one of the County's

nis, president of the Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA).

Attendees will learn about the history, background, and importance of the Turner Farm Observatory to the community, particularly its many educational programs; the Urban Night Sky Place application submitted to the International Dark-Sky Association; and the process for zoning ordinance changes, including research and public outreach.

Light pollution poses a significant threat to the observatory. "Preserving the dark sky in that vicinity is critical to the future viability of the observatory," Canis said.

Last fall, in his Oct. 5 Board Matter to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Foust

SEE DARK SKIES, PAGE 10

GREAT FALLS CONNECTION ♦ MARCH 16-22, 2022 ♦ 3



## Not Quite Finished

BY DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN"  
PLUM

The General Assembly adjourned its regular session last Saturday afternoon after sixty calendar days of deliberations on more than 2,500 bills and resolutions including a biennial budget. Its work was not quite finished, however, and legislators will need to return to the Capitol to complete work on the budget and nearly two dozen bills for which the differences between the House and Senate had not been resolved. While the Constitution provides that sessions may be lengthened, there has been a reluctance to do so in a state that prides itself on limited government and where a longer legislative session may be viewed as a failure. Special sessions may be called by the Governor and by a super majority of legislators to deal with exceptional needs for which a budget to keep the government running after June 30 would qualify.

The approximate \$158 billion budgets pro-



posed by the Republican House of Delegates and the Democratic-controlled Senate have major differences and were the major reason for the legislative work not being completed. With the higher-than-expected revenue levels of cash in hand and projected for the next two years, the task has been more difficult than usual. The Governor and Republicans want to return more monies to individuals through tax cuts and rebates. While the Democrats support those changes, to a much lesser degree, they seek to increase funding for public schools, programs for mental health and the disabled among others. There will be taxpayer relief for sure, such as eliminating the tax on food and personal hygiene products, but there also will be some relief to cash-starved schools and human service programs.

Republican lawmakers introduced many bills that would have rolled back reforms made by Democrats during the previous two years that they controlled the governorship and both houses of the General Assembly. Most all of

these proposals passed the House of Delegates on a party-line vote 52 to 48 and were defeated in the Senate on a party-line vote of 21 to 19. Republicans sought to repeal voting laws that Democrats had passed to make voting more accessible and easier to a time when it was harder to vote. Ironically Republicans won the governorship and control of the House of Delegates under the reformed laws that they then wanted to repeal. The Senate defeated this effort. The Senate also defeated Republican measures that would have made many abortions criminal and that would have capped the minimum wage. The Governor's various schemes for school choice with charter schools were defeated although laboratory schools associated with colleges were approved with details and funding to be worked out. A Senate committee defeated legislation that would have rolled back the 2020 Virginia Clean Economy Act which commits Virginia to 100 percent renewable energy by 2045. There is a proposal still being considered in a conference committee to use tax incentives to attract a football stadium to Northern Virginia which I adamantly oppose.

To review the fate of legislation you may have been following, go to <https://lis.virginia.gov/>.

## Local Students React to Crisis in Ukraine

Raising awareness and praying for peace are among the ways they're showing support.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

At schools across the region, students are encouraging peace, raising awareness and offering support to Ukrainians as they defend themselves against the Russian invasion.

Students at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School in Alexandria aids an orphanage in Romania that has had an influx of Ukrainian orphans since the conflict began, says Rev. Elizabeth Rees, Upper School Religion Teacher and Chaplain.

"That has been a big focus of our support," she said. "It's been interesting to see how engaged the teenagers are in learning about what is happening. We had an optional forum during lunch led by our history faculty and it was really well-attended."

The crisis has also allowed students to practice their faith. "Episcopal Relief and Development has been very focused on Ukraine," said Rees. "It's hard to know what to do other than raise money and offer prayers."

Students who are members of

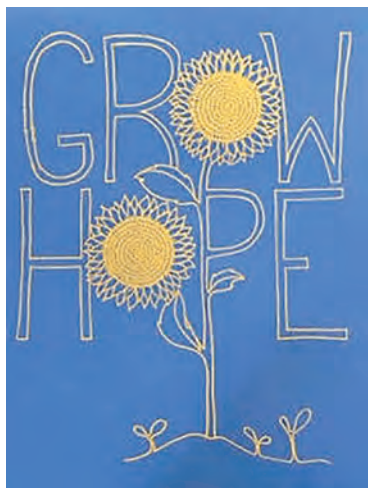


PHOTO COURTESY OF GROW HOPE  
Jenna Fournel created this piece of art for the Grow Hope effort to support victims of the conflict in Ukraine.

the Good Samaritans Service Club at The Heights in Potomac, Md. are working to craft a plan to support the war-torn country, said Linda Maher, a spokeswoman for the school.

The creators of the Alexandria-based organization, Grow Hope are hosting a making, growing, gathering and peace event this weekend. Parents and their children will learn how to combine art

and gardening to encourage peace while raising awareness and funds for victims of the crisis in Ukraine. Organizers Lisa Delmonico, Jenna Fournel and Kathryn Coneway, say that their goal is to give families an opportunity to help those in the war-torn country.

"We are suggesting visitors make a donation to an organization working to help the people of Ukraine," said Fournel, who is hosting the event at her Alexandria home.

These who attend will be taught how to make peace bombs, which are balls of clay and soil that are infused with flower seeds. "When they dry, you can throw them in

unexpected patches of soil where they'll grow into a beautiful surprise," said Fournel.

They will also learn to make plantable sunflower pots with newspaper. "We have lots of sunflower seeds and plenty of potting soil so you can plant seeds and take your pots home to germinate," said Delmonico. "Ukraine's sunflower has been a symbol of peace resistance."

Delmonico, Fournel and Coneway will be on hand to teach event-goers the art of silk screening. "Bring a t-shirt or some other fabric you'd like to print the Grow

SEE CRISIS IN UKRAINE, PAGE 9

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## NEWS



Centennial mural "Equality for All" celebrates the leaders of women's suffrage and passage of the 19th Amendment.



Suffragist mural permanently installed at Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton, depicts marching suffragist and yellow roses symbolizing victory of the movement.

# Recognizing Women's Suffrage

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

Now, in March each year we recognize Women's History Month; the first enacted by Congress for 1987. Congress called on the President "to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such month with appropriate ceremonies and activities" in recognition of women's role in history, leadership, and often overlooked contributions. Starting as a weekly recognition, each March since 1987 has been designated to recognize women in history.

Much of women's progress toward equality can be traced to the decades long suffragist movement to win the right to vote for women in the United States. Passed by Congress on June 4, 1919, and ratified on Aug. 18, 1920, the 19th Amendment guarantees all American women the right to vote. Much of the work of that lengthy struggle went on in the nearby District of Columbia, with moments of significance even nearer, at the Workhouse in Lorton.

Known as 'Silent Sentinels' for picketing in front of the White House gates, 91 suffragists were jailed in 1917 in DC and Lorton for simply picketing quietly on the sidewalk. Of historical note, the Silent Sentinels were the first group ever to picket in front of the White House. Thirty-three suffragists from the National Woman's Party, arrested on Nov. 10, 1917, were clubbed, beaten, and tortured by guards while imprisoned at the Lorton Workhouse. Known as the 'Night of Terror', sympathy such treatment generated from the public was a turning point for the movement.

Today, the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial, located on the grounds of the Occoquan Regional Park, 9751 Ox Road, Lorton, honors those who participated in the suffragist movement; providing "a visual symbol and educational tool intended to elevate these women to their proper place in history and recognize this bloodless revolution," as described by the memorial association.

Near the Turning Point Memorial, a museum is sited on the grounds of the former Lorton Workhouse, dedicated to Lucy Burns, a suffragist leader, who served more time in jail than any other suffragist in America. (Library of Congress). The Lucy Burns museum tells the story of the prison, operated for 91 years, and of the suffragists held there. Opened in 2018 as part of the Workhouse Art Center, the museum includes a restored section of the prisoner cells, and provides examples of the work the incarcerated performed to rehabilitate their lives.

Also on the quad at the Arts Center, visitors can



Lucy Burns, a leader in the suffragist movement, served more jail time than any other suffragist, including time at the Lorton prison where she was handcuffed with her arms above her and left overnight.

view the newly installed mural, "Equality for All," by artist Sunny Mullarkey. Commissioned to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, by the national Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission, "The mural depicts suffrage leaders Carrie Chapman Catt, Mary Church Terrell, Alice Paul, and Ida B. Wells amid silhouettes of marching suffragists. The portraits of these trailblazing women are surrounded by 36 yellow roses, a symbol of the victory of the movement. At the center of the piece stands a mythological woman, inspired by historic suffrage artwork, holding a banner with the words, "Equality for All."

The mural can be viewed in building W-16 at the Workhouse Arts Center.

These nearby commemorations of women's struggle for suffrage: the Turning Point Suffragists Memorial, the Lucy Burns Museum, and the Equality for All mural, create an opportunity to steep oneself in the history of the women's movement, appropriate for the March recognition of women.

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nection 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.

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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.

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# Stand and Deliver: Protesting New Virginia Policies

BY EDEN BROWN  
THE CONNECTION

**D**urann Thompson wonders why she keeps on coming back to teach school in Fairfax County. “I am tired of having to work nights and weekends. It’s a job that in no way matches the compensation. But I left twice and came back twice. I taught summer camp. I even coached. So what’s wrong with me?” she laughs. “Because I am still brought to tears when I remember my students.”

Recently, Thompson got a letter from a student she had taught in the third grade. “She told me she was always in trouble. She thought I must have viewed her as the worst student I could ever have. She told me she got kicked out of two schools. But she wanted me to know that after all that, she went to nursing school, and was about to become a nurse, all because of her third grade teacher.” Thompson said, “Teachers do so much more than teach our students academics. We see a future for them when they don’t see it for themselves.”

**TEACHERS, STUDENTS** and parents in Fairfax and Arlington stood in the cold on Sunday, March 13, 2022 to protest the new governor’s campaign to control content in schools. The kick-off rally for “Stand and Deliver Virginia” was emceed by Pat Hynes, a classroom

**“I fail to understand how it is harmful to students to talk about the past. Students will learn about our painful past, whether it is taught in schools or not.”**

—Sophia Lander,  
Arlington Career Center student

teacher and former Fairfax County School Board member, and Micaela Pond, an Arlington teacher. The event gave voice to the many Arlington and Fairfax county parents, students, and teachers who have been made deeply uncomfortable by the first executive order issued by Governor Youngkin, which prohibits the teaching of “inherently divisive concepts,” including critical race theory, an academic concept which examines the ongoing effects of racism in American policies and institutions.

The executive order was followed by the state rescinding a wide range of policies, memos and programs established to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in schools. Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction Jillian Balow said she was rescinding equity policies in obedience to the executive order from Gov. Glenn Youngkin.



Monte Bourjaily, a teacher at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, teaches his students to look at facts and make a judgment. He doesn’t teach Critical Race Theory, he teaches critical thinking.

lowed by the state rescinding a wide range of policies, memos and programs established to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in schools. Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction Jillian Balow said she was rescinding equity policies in obedience to the executive order from Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

Adele McClure, Executive Director of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus, and a candidate for the House of Delegates (in the new District Two) in Arlington, spoke out against the tip line, which the governor installed to allow parents and students to complain anonymously about teachers who talked about race, gender, or any issue that could be perceived as divisive. McClure was even more concerned about the removal of equity policies from public schools. “This was done without input from the schools,” she said. In addition, she decried the possibility of public dollars being taken away from public schools to fund private schools.

Sophia Lander got up to speak. The Arlington high school student told the crowd, playing off the governor’s pledge to return excellence to the schools, “I can assure you excellence was in full display when our gym teacher taught us from her hospital bed when she was about to give birth, that’s how dedicated she was.” She zeroed in on the issue of teaching about racial and gender discrimination, “I fail to understand how it is harmful to students to talk about the past. Students will learn about our painful past, whether it is taught in schools or not. And I think we can all agree it’s better to learn from teachers than from Instagram.” Lander continued, “The governor has placed the blame on teachers for bringing up ‘difficult or upsetting’ topics. I



Adele McClure, daughter of an early childhood educator and a Filipino immigrant who served in the U.S. Army, is running for delegate in the newly formed District Two in Arlington. She would be the first Black person and the first Asian person to represent Arlington in the Virginia General Assembly. As executive director of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus, she decried the loss of equity programs in schools and the spending of public dollars on private schools.

understand that some things can be upsetting but should I not apply for college because it frightens or upsets me?”

Kyungsup Hwang and her twin brother Theodore Hwang made reference to the “Don’t Say Gay” policy in Florida and noted that efforts to quash discussion of LGBTQ issues threatened Virginia students. They had organized a successful walk-out over the Florida policy at



Patty Barbour, a veteran of the US Army and the Fairfax County Public Schools, was at the protest to show her support for teachers. Barbour retired recently from teaching but still works as a substitute teacher because she wants to be there for the students.



Del. Marcus Simon addressed the crowd, reminding them that despite Youngkin’s concern about restoring excellence in Virginia’s public school system it is already rated fourth in the nation. Simon also highlighted the failure of the General Assembly to pass legislation designed to fix school buildings because legislators were distracted by the anti-public school rhetoric trending after Youngkin’s election.

their school, and experienced harassment and name-calling in the process of standing up for the rights of transgender and gay students. Were they upset about the slurs being hurled at them by some students? “The students weren’t born knowing these words,” Kyungsup Hwang said. “They learned them.” The siblings stressed the importance of schools in teaching the origin of slurs that harm the LGBTQ community, the history of discrimination, and other lessons of tolerance. “Educators need to help us face issues head on.”

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Robert Rigby has been teaching for 38 years in Fairfax County Public Schools and is president of FCPS Pride. He is about to retire.

in, and other lessons of tolerance. “Educators need to help us face issues head on.”

Luisa Boyarski of the Virginia Grassroots Coalition said as a professor at Georgetown University, she teaches the importance of public policy being formed with inputs from those affected. The new policy banning “equity” as part of the school program wasn’t broached with the superintendents. That is why a letter from all VASS (Virgin-

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Sophia Lander spoke to the crowd. Her main point was that teachers help students process difficult concepts in a world that can feel overwhelming for young people. Should we leave it up to social media to educate students or applaud teachers for the job they do?



Micaela Pond introduces speakers. She and Pat Hynes are the co-founders of Stand and Deliver Virginia which was set up to take the narrative back from Richmond and stop “demonizing” teachers.



Kyungsup Hwang and her twin brother Theodore Hwang organized a school walk-out over the Florida policy of “Don’t Say Gay,” and view new Virginia policies as threatening to LGBTQ teachers and students.



Former Special Education teacher Ethan Fayne left the Arlington County school where he taught because he no longer felt safe. He is now a doctoral student in Psychology.

PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

**“Inherently divisive concepts, like critical race theory and its progeny, instruct students to only view life through the lens of race and presume that some students are consciously or unconsciously racist, sexist, or oppressive, and that other students are victims.”**

— Glenn Youngkin, Governor of Virginia

the demographics of our representation in the U.S. Congress over the years, and decide whether the shortage of women representatives would have led to legislation that was less favorable to women. This might lead my students to conclude that women have been discriminated against in our country: what am I to do? I’ve just broken a rule?”

Former teacher Ethan Fayne said he was talked down to as a black student in the county, and then as a teacher in the county. As a kid, when he moved to a new school which was primarily white, he was called the “N” word and the teacher did nothing.

In the seventh grade, he was in honors history. “I had a teacher who besides constantly asking me if I belonged in honors history, one day told our class that the KKK wasn’t all that bad. They were actually a social group that did nice things for the community, and they even let some black people join.”

To learn more about Stand and Deliver Virginia, see on Twitter, @Stand\_DeliverVA.

Fayne said he got tired of being treated poorly in the Arlington Public Schools system and opted out of teaching to get his doctorate in psychology. He no longer felt safe being a teacher.

**NEWLY FORMED** organization Stand and Deliver Virginia is three weeks into its mission of giving teachers, parents, and students a voice to take back the narrative from the anti-teacher, anti-truth, anti-public schools statements emanating out of Richmond since Youngkin’s inauguration. For many parents who have monitored the changes since January, particularly the “tip” line, it was about time someone spoke up to defend teachers against policies which force them to walk a tight-rope in a job which is already one of the most demanding careers in the country.

GREAT FALLS CONNECTION ♦ MARCH 16-22, 2022 ♦ 7



# CALENDAR

## NOW THRU MARCH 30

Fiber Optics. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At McLean Textile Gallery, 6819 Elm Street, McLean. Philadelphia printmaker Fay Stanford will show her fabulist banners. Stanford creates wry fairy tales about suburban family life – especially death, disease and aging. Visit the website: [mcleantextilegallery.org](http://mcleantextilegallery.org).

## NOW THRU APRIL 30

The Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park invite the public to participate in its 2022 photo contest. Help celebrate all that is special about the farm with the second “Focus on the Farm” fundraiser. Open to photographers of all ages and abilities, capture the beauty and farm life at Frying Pan Farm Park. The categories include nature, landscape and scenery, and farm animals. Photos must be taken, and entries submitted between March 1 and April 30, 2022. You can enter up to 10 photos. The fee is \$7 per entry for adults, and \$5 per entry for children up to age 16. The fees will directly support the park and care and feeding of the animals at the farm. Go to the Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park website for detailed instructions and submission information; or email the Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park at [friends@fryingpanpark.org](mailto:friends@fryingpanpark.org). Frying Pan Park is located at 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Call 703-437-9101.

## WEDNESDAY/MARCH 16

Unruly Theatre Project Improv Show. 7 p.m. At the Old Firehouse, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd., McLean. The area's hottest professional teen improv troupe brings you a hilarious night of comedy. Come help spread some joy while being wildly entertained by these young performers.

## MARCH 18-20

Super Pet Expo. At Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. Dogs, cats, Champion Trainer, hermit crabs and reptiles will highlight this show. Cool Zoo, an interactive and educational wildlife travel exhibit, which features hands-on encounters with exotic animals, will be featured. Their exhibit features a variety of activities like learning about rescued Hermit Crabs, strolling through a Butterfly Exhibit, interacting with a giant tortoise, and watching an educational exotic bird show. Friday, March 18 – 3-8 p.m.; Saturday, March 19 – 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sunday, March 20 – 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission: Adults \$15; Children aged 4-12; \$10, age 3 and under, free. Visit: <http://coolzoo.org/> Tickets: [www.superpetexpo.com](http://www.superpetexpo.com).



The Annual Kids' Trout Fishing Derby will take place Saturday, March 19, 2022 in Herndon.

[com](http://www.com).

## SATURDAY/MARCH 19

Annual Kids' Trout Fishing Derby. 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Behind Herndon Police Station, 397 Herndon Parkway at the Sugarland Run Trail Stream, Herndon. Join this annual tradition at Sugarland Run Trail behind the Herndon Police Station, where the stream will be stocked with Rainbow Trout just for this event. Limited fishing poles and bait will be available for use. Trout Unlimited will be on site to help clean and store your catch. Teens and adults, age 16 & up, must have a valid Virginia State Fishing License to fish if they wish to fish after the event (12:00 p.m.). Visit [herndon-va.gov/recreation](http://herndon-va.gov/recreation) or call 703-787-7300.

## MARCH 19, 20

Dionysian Play Festival. At Traveling Players Studio, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, in Tysons Corner. Ariadne's Thread – 11 a.m.; The Odyssey – 3 p.m. and Hecuba – 7:30 p.m. Tickets are

now available for Traveling Players' Dionysian Play Festival, which runs weekends at their Studio in Tysons Corner Center. Performed by Traveling Players' students, the festival will travel back in time to the beginning of Western Theatre, in ancient Greece, with three modern twists on classic myths.

## SUNDAY/MARCH 20

Lunasa. 3 and 7 p.m. At Reston Community Theater's CenterStage. Named for an ancient Celtic harvest festival in honor of the Irish god Lugh, patron of the arts, Lunasa is a gathering of some of the top musical talents in Ireland. Cost is \$25 Reston/\$35 Non-Reston. Visit [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com).

## MARCH 25-27

Capital Art & Craft Festival. At Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly. The Spring Capital Art & Craft Festival will feature art in more than a dozen mediums including glass, jewelry, leather, paintings, prints, photography, pottery, wearable art and wood. Friday, March

25: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Saturday, March 26: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Sunday, March 27: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tickets: \$10 in advance; \$12 at the door Senior discount available; children under 12 free. Ticket information: [www.CapitalArtAndCraftFestivals.com](http://www.CapitalArtAndCraftFestivals.com).

## SATURDAY/MARCH 26

Spectacular Falls, A Slippery Solo Musical. 8 p.m. Featuring Anita Hollander. At Reston Community Theater's CenterStage. Come share a humorous, edgy, moving and somewhat slippery exploration of how we all fall, how the world can fall apart and how we rise again. Cost is \$15 Reston/\$20 Non-Reston. Visit [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com).

## SUNDAY/MARCH 27

Chatham Rabbits Concert. 7 p.m. At Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. NC Bluegrass + Americana husband/wife duo Chatham Rabbits will perform a concert of their original material and share stories from the stage. Cost is \$10. Visit the website: <https://www.jamminjava.com/shows/chatham-rabbits/>

## SUNDAY/MARCH 27

The Judy Carmichael Trio. 2 p.m. At The Alden at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Maybe you know her from 20 years on National Public Radio's “Jazz Inspired” or as one of the world's best stride pianists. But until you experience her brilliant combo of musicianship on the Great American Songbook, sultry vocals, comedic stories and interplay with her saxophonist/ guitarist, you don't really know Judy Carmichael. Visit [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org).

## MAY 21-22

Girls on the Run Spring Registration. GOTR NOVA will be offering an in-person, 10-week curriculum for the Spring 2022 season. Two in-person 5Ks presented by Cigna will be held on May 21st and 22nd in Sterling and Ballston, respectively. Teams will continue to be school and community-based to further our outreach efforts in being accessible to every girl across Northern Virginia. Currently, 105 teams throughout Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, Loudoun, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William are open for Spring 2022 registration through March 1, 2022. For more information about spring registration and sites for Girls on the Run of NOVA, visit [www.gotrnova.org](http://www.gotrnova.org).

## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 2

parents who have received training and are qualified to offer education, support and assistance at no cost to families or caregivers. They provide reliable information that families can use in decision-making and are familiar with services and resources that can help families in distress. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/healthymindsfairfax) or [www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html](http://www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html).

## ONGOING

STEM Professionals Needed. Volunteers are needed to assist K-12 STEM teachers in northern Virginia as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, [stemvolunteers.org](http://stemvolunteers.org), during the 2019-20 school year. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488 or [donaldrea@aol.com](mailto:donaldrea@aol.com).

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax

and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email [info@alnv.org](mailto:info@alnv.org), or visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org). Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed. Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriend-A-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil at [Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-324-4547.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at [chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org) or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit [www.rsvpnova.org](http://www.rsvpnova.org).

Sunrise at Reston Town Center offers a monthly Caregiver Support Group on the fourth Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8 p.m. Monthly support group offers a safe place for family caregivers, to meet and develop a mutual support system and to exchange practical information and possible solutions. Learn about resources available in the community and how to manage caregiver related stress. Call 703-956-8930 or email [Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com](mailto:Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com) to RSVP.

Exercise for Parkinson's. Every Monday, 1:15-2:15 p.m. Reston Sport&Health, 11445 Isaac Newton Square, Reston. This program brings together people impacted by Parkinson's Disease to participate in various physical exercises aimed at improving posture, balance and circulation and increasing strength, muscle control and mobility. Free. [parkinson-foundation.org](mailto:parkinson-foundation.org). Call Natalie McCall [nmccall@onelifitness.com](mailto:nmccall@onelifitness.com) 703-904-7600 for more.

Master Gardener Training. The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit [fairfaxgardening.org](http://fairfaxgardening.org) or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

Over-40 Softball League. A Fairfax-based league

is looking for players. Players must be at least 40 years of age to be eligible. All games are doubleheaders - played on Sundays at Bready Park in Herndon between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Email [skeduman@aol.com](mailto:skeduman@aol.com) for more.

Hypothermia Prevention: An Emergency Program for People Experiencing Homelessness Fairfax County provides overnight shelter with a “no turn-away” policy at all emergency homeless shelters during freezing weather. Through the coldest months of the winter, the Hypothermia Prevention Program is in place, a countywide community network of 45 overnight shelters. Through this program last winter, non-profit and faith-based community partners served almost 1,000 men and women with a safe, warm place to sleep. If you see someone at night who is unsheltered and you think could be at risk of hypothermia, call the county's non-emergency phone line at 703-691-2131, TTY 711.

Passages DivorceCare. For those experiencing the pain of separation or divorce, the caring community at Vienna Presbyterian

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9



## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 8

Church offers Passages Divorce-Care. This 15-week program offers a path toward healing. Vienna Presbyterian Church is located on the corner of Maple Avenue (Rt. 123) and Park Street in Vienna. Cost to cover materials is \$20, scholarships available. For more information or to register, call 703-938-9050, go to [www.viennapres.org](http://www.viennapres.org), or send an email to [Passages@ViennaPres.org](mailto:Passages@ViennaPres.org).

The Herndon Adult Day Health Care Center needs volunteers to assist with fitness activities, arts and crafts, mealtime, entertainment and much more. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email [Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov). Also visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/).

Fairfax County needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Respite Care volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break so they can go shopping, attend

a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or [Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Fairfax County's Meals on Wheels urgently needs drivers in the Annandale, Franconia/Kingstowne, Reston, Mount Vernon and McLean areas. 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults).

Habitat Heroes Project. The fourth Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. - noon. Join the Habitat Heroes in protecting Reston's forests from aggressive plants and restoring them to their natural state. Wear long sleeves, long pants, and if possible, gardening gloves to protect from insects and dangerous plants. R.A. will provide tools, gloves, snacks, and water. To volunteer and find more information, contact [habrock@reston.org](mailto:habrock@reston.org) or 703-435-7986.

ARTSPACE HERNDON - ArtSpace Herndon needs volunteer docents to greet guests, answer the phone and complete sales during normal gallery hours. Volunteers are also needed a few hours each month to assist with exhibit installation and special performing arts events. Training is provided. Flexible shifts are available. For additional information see our website [www.artspace-herndon.com](http://www.artspace-herndon.com). Or contact us at 703-956-9560, [volunteer@artspaceherndon.com](mailto:volunteer@artspaceherndon.com). ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon.

## OPINION

### Crisis in Ukraine

FROM PAGE 4

Hope logo on and we'll help you screen print your own Grow Hope image," said Coneway.

College students across the region are also giving and receiving support. Dr. Jermaine F. Williams, Ph.D., president of Montgomery College, is reaching out to the school's Ukrainian students to make them aware of the assistance, guidance and counseling services that are available to them.

"Several dozen of our students hold visas from Ukraine and nations that surround it," he said. "Being far from home when conditions turn violent can undoubtedly be a frightening experience."

The staff at Marymount University's Office of Ministry and Spiritual Life is planning a prayer service and vigil for peace this Thursday, said Jasmine Pelaez of the school's communications office.

A myriad of mental health counseling services are available to students at George Mason University. The school established the Ukraine Crisis Support Fund to help students who might have lost monetary support that they receive in their home country.

## Fill Us In!

### In-Person Public Hearing on the McLean Community Center's FY 2024 Programs

Wednesday, March 23, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

The governing board and staff of the McLean Community Center seek **input from residents** of Dranesville Small District 1A at a Public Hearing on Programs for FY 2024 (which runs July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024).

**This is an opportunity for residents to suggest class offerings, community events, theater programs, art exhibits, youth events and teen activities that are meaningful to the community.**

If you would like to speak at the hearing, call the Center to have your name placed on the speakers' list. You may also submit comments to [holly.novak@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:holly.novak@fairfaxcounty.gov).



**McLean Community Center**  
1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean VA 22101  
703-790-0123, TTY: 711  
[www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org)

## THE CONNECTION

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### Special Connections Calendar 2022

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursdays unless noted.

#### MARCH

3/2/2022.....Wellbeing  
3/9/2022.....HomeLifeStyle  
3/16/2022.....A+ Camps & Schools  
3/23/2022.....Senior Living  
3/30/2022.....Spring Family Fun

#### APRIL

4/6/2022.....Wellbeing  
4/13/2022.....HomeLifeStyle  
4/20/2022.....A+ Camps & Schools  
4/27/2022.....Senior Living

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# Dark Skies

FROM PAGE 3

environmental goals had been to reduce light pollution. Part of the Board's 2020 Work Program, he said, was an item to establish lighting provisions to protect dark skies around astronomical facilities.

One of the most critical needs for preserving the site's value is to decrease bright sources of light that penetrate the dark night sky. During the Town Hall, county staff will present preliminary thoughts on how the county could manage exterior lighting in that area to benefit the county Observatory.

The Analemma Society manages the Fairfax County Park Authority's, Observatory Park. The Analemma Society holds public observing sessions at the park and inside the Roll-Top Observatory on clear Friday evenings. These sessions are open to all without registration. Artificial light pollution from nearby areas diminishes the telescopes' ability to make visible astronomical objects, the motions of the planets and stars, and phenomena observed in the night sky. On Friday, January 5, 2022, visitors to the observatory clearly saw the Orion Nebula, the double star Almach, the giant red star Betelgeuse, Saturn, Jupiter, and Earth's moon.

According to the Analemma Society, Turner Farm Observatory Park has been the site of geodetic observations that contributed to developing the global geodetic system. They played a role as reference points for observations that resulted in creating the reference system used for the Global Positioning System. And, as noted on [www.analemma.org](http://www.analemma.org), "Continuing Observatory Park's legacy as a geodetic facility, surveyors from NOAA's National Geodetic Survey visited in November 2020 to conduct astronomical observations. This visit aimed to test the Total Station Astrogeodetic Control System (TSACS), an instrument package that captures images of stars and returns a precise answer to the original question, 'Which way is up?'"

A Spring Equinox Celebration is set for Sunday, March 20, from noon to 2 p.m. at Turner Farm Park's observatory. Learn about the path of the Sun on the equinox, the seasons of the year, sundials, observe the Sun through solar telescopes, and take a solar system walk. Online registration is available at the Fairfax County Park Authority.

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# NEWS

## Real Estate Tax Rate 'Ceiling'

Lower tax rate expected, but homeowners will still pay more.

BY KEN MOORE  
THE CONNECTION

Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay recommended advertising a \$1.14 advertised real estate tax rate per \$100 of assessed value, "which reflects no change from the current real estate tax rate and is consistent with the County Executive's proposed budget."

"We are advertising a ceiling here, not the actual tax rate," said McKay, at the Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday, March 8, 2022.

Keeping the same tax rate would result in an increase of more than \$600 for the average Fairfax County homeowner because of rising real estate values and assessments.

"As I have said repeatedly, I expect and I will only be voting for and supporting a budget that is a lower tax rate than this," he said.

The Board will adopt a budget, with the year's actual tax rate, in approximately two months.

"This is a floor, we cannot increase it above this rate, but we can decrease it to any amount," said McKay.

"I want to make it clear to the public that I in no way shape or form intend to support a budget at this rate, but this does give us the flexibility should anything occur between now and then," he said.

McKay and Hunter Mill Supervisor Walter Alcorn iterated the uncertainty of the world, replete with the pandemic, war, and economic uncertainty, making it prudent to leave open the ability to deal with the unexpected.

"Given the situation in the world and the economy, I think it's prudent, but I would just remind us that as we talk about these really critical compensation issues, we have to remember that they have to be paid for," said Hunter Mill Supervisor Walter L. Alcorn. "I too will be looking at the tax rate and tax relief this year."

"It's the fiscal responsible thing to do with what is going on in the world today, what we've been through certainly over the last two years, the uncertainty of our economy, world affairs, inflation, all the other things that are affecting us," said McKay.

County officials have been holding public meetings to explain the budget and gather public input. See sidebar for upcoming meetings.

The Board of Supervisors will hold budget policy committee meetings on March 15, 2022 and March 29, 2022, from 1:30 to 3 p.m.

The Board will hold public hearings on the budget on April 12-14, 2022.

The budget markup will be on April 26, 2022 and the board will adopt the final budget on May 10. The School Board follows with adopting its budget on May 26, 2022.

"My intention is to see that tax rate come down a bit," said Lee Supervisor Rodney L.

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### BUDGET TIMELINE

April 12-14, 2022 Public Hearings at Board of Supervisors on FY 2023

April 26, 2022 Board of Supervisors marks-up FY 2023 Budget, adopts FY 2023- FY 2027 Capital Improvement Program

May 1, 2022 Board of Supervisors adopts FY 2023 Adopted budget

May 5, 2022 Public Hearings at School Board on FY 2023 budget

May 26, 2022 School Board adopts FY 2023 Approved Budget

July 1, 2022 FY 2023 Budget Year Begins

### Upcoming Budget Town Halls

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2023-budget-town-hall-meetings>

THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2022, 7 PM

Lee District

Budget Town Hall

The Budget Town Hall will be televised on Channel 16 (Cox Channel 1016; Verizon/Comcast Channel 16) and streamed online

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2022, 6 PM

Providence District Budget Town Hall

The Budget Town Hall will be televised on Channel 16 (Cox Channel 1016; Verizon/Comcast Channel 16) and streamed online

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2022, 6 PM

Mount Vernon District Budget Town Hall

Zoom. Or call 602-333-0032 or 888-270-9936 (toll free.) Conference code: 711201

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2022, 7 PM

Hunter Mill District Budget Town Hall

Use this link to attend and participate. You will be prompted to register with your email address and ZIP code before logging in. Or listen to the meeting by phone, by calling 844-621-3956, access code: 2334 051 4882. Watch the meeting on YouTube Live.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2022, 7 PM

Springfield District Budget Town Hall

Springfield Governmental Center, 6140 Rolling Road, Community Room, Springfield

THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2022, 7 PM

Dranesville District Budget Town Hall

The Budget Town Hall will be televised on Channel 16 (Cox Channel 1016; Verizon/Comcast Channel 16) and streamed online

Lusk, "and also on the personal property tax as well. I think both of them are going to be difficult in light of the increases that we have seen both in the values of cars and the values of homes."

Springfield Supervisor Pat Herrity, the Board's sole Republican, was the only supervisor to reject the proposed real estate tax rate.

"For many years I have been saying that this Board's spending is out of control and unsustainable for taxpayers as the Board, over my objection, approved new spending initiatives and used one-time funds and federal pandemic funds to pay for new positions while neglecting priorities like public safety and employee compensation," said Herrity. "Residents cannot afford any kind of tax increase this year as we are facing record inflation, rising gas prices and an economy recovering from the pandemic."

The challenge remains that sources of revenue are limited in Virginia, forcing localities to fund operations with property taxes alone.

"Until the General Assembly and the Commonwealth of Virginia give us additional opportunities to diversify our revenues, we are stuck. We have been talking about diversification of revenues for well over a decade, probably two decades," said Mason Supervisor and Vice Chair Penelope "Penny" Gross.

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## Nothing Sensational Here

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Can I admit to a lack of sensation? It might sound a bit odd, but I don't feel like I have cancer. Furthermore, when I go to a medical facility to have one thing or another done, I never feel as if I'm on a slippery slope, health wise. Naively or not, what I most think and feel about whatever procedure or diagnostic scan I'm having or prescription drug I'm ordering, is that I'm at a certain age, over age 65, where some of the parts don't work as well as they used to, and a tune-up, so to speak, is merely the cost of doing business, if you know what I mean? The older one gets, the more difficulties there are getting from here to there - and everywhere in between; with varying hurdles at almost every step (more so if there's a bend-over involved). For some inexplicable reason, I don't see the cancer issue as the extremely serious and complicated problem that it is. I just see it as another day alive and in semi paradise (especially considering my original two-year prognosis).

And though I joke when referring to being in paradise, compared to the "terminal" diagnosis I was initially given by my oncologist, specifically: "13 months to two years," in late February 2009, it's impossible for me to consider any blip on my health radar now as anything but amazing good fortune that I'm still even blipping. As in I'm still alive being able to experience any blips/symptoms. (The presumption being that one doesn't feel symptoms when they're dead, so my thinking is, if I'm still feeling; then I'm still in the game, and it's a game I very much want to continue to play.) Honestly though, none of it really bothers me, too much.

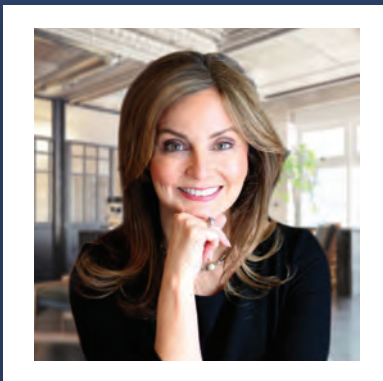
For a while, back in early 2009 when Team Lourie was trying to assimilate the "terminal" diagnosis I received: (stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer), it was difficult to see a future. Heck, it was difficult to see a present - which by the way, had just been taken away. But my attitude then, as it remains so today, is a kind of blissful ignorance while respecting and adhering to the many medical steps I regularly take. I mean it's serious, of course, very serious. Still, I do my best to compartmentalize the bad and try to live my good life going forward; as if nothing has been taken away.

Thinking back, thirteen years ago, when I was initially diagnosed, seems like an eternity, another lifetime, one might say. Considering I'm now living in year 14 after being told I might not make it to year two, and perhaps you can appreciate how little - and even some big things, don't bother me nearly as much as one might imagine. Having dodged a bullet (a hail of bullets, actually), I don't feel as if I'm on shaky ground. Quite the contrary. I feel like I'm on hallowed ground. I've not been to the mountain top or seen a burning bush, but I have lived a life I had no expectation of living.

I may not be "The Iron Horse" (Lou Gehrig), but I feel very fortunate, nonetheless. Life has gone on. Amazing.

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





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