

CONNECTION

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Memorial Day Stories

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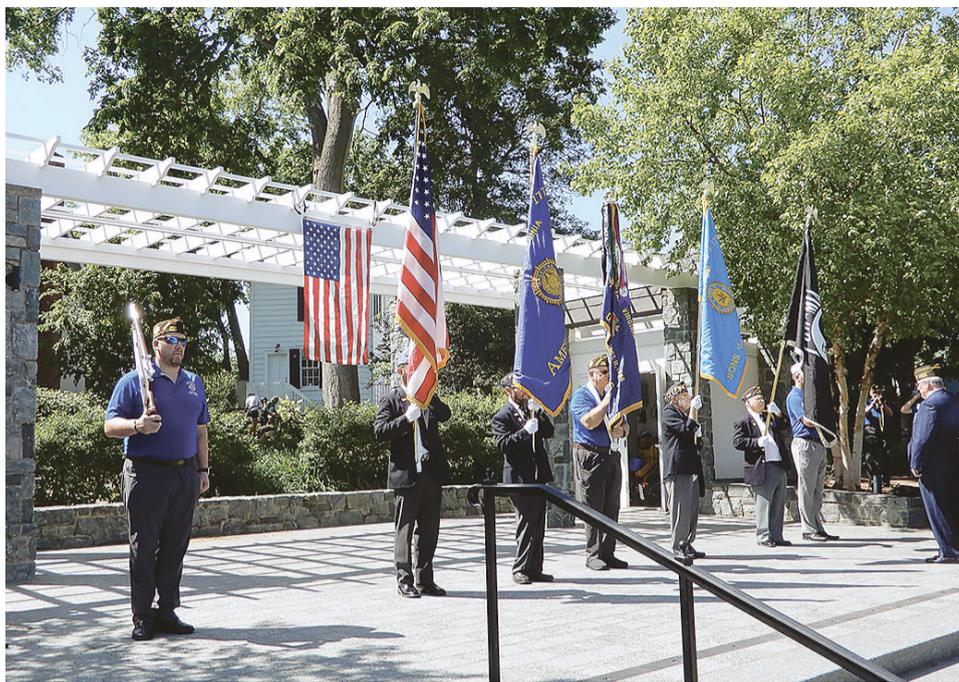
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The American Legion Post 177 color guard opens Fairfax City's Memorial Day ceremony.



Sang Yi (at far left) and other veterans and residents during the Pledge of Allegiance.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Remember and Honor That Sacrifice

Fairfax City's Memorial Day ceremony pays tribute to the fallen.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

At the start of Monday's annual Memorial Day ceremony in Fairfax City, VFW Post 8469 Chaplain Marcus Keiper gave the invocation. He asked God to "hear our prayer for those who made the ultimate sacrifice."

Held in the City's Old Town Square, the event was hosted by both VFW Post 8469 and American Legion Post 177. Since the American Legion post's commander, Jeff White, was ill, the VFW post's commander, Mac McCarl, was the sole master of ceremonies.

"Memorial Day differs from Veterans Day in that it's a time for reflection," said McCarl. "Around the world – from Arlington to the Punchbowl in Hawaii, to the bluffs above Omaha Beach in France, to the Vietnam Memorial, to small-town cemeteries – families, friends and fellow veterans will visit the graves and monuments of loved ones and friends who made the ultimate sacrifice, each in his own way."

For some, he said, the names are "unknown and distant – a person of family history. For others, it remains a raw and painful experience, as it was with my friend, Dru Sumner. Her husband died of wounds during the Vietnam War. Despite reticence, she visited the [Vietnam Veterans Memorial] wall, in a catharsis deep and personal. Yet she discovered others there on similar pilgrimages and realized she was not alone."

In this way, explained McCarl, Memorial Day lets grieving families know that others have also lost loved ones. And it reminds them that "We, as a nation, collectively remember and honor that sacrifice. For the fallen, none of the 372 people whose names we are about to read suspected they would be the object of our attention today. But they are. And we would be well to remem-



VFW Post 8469 Commander Mac McCarl

ber them for what they did for our nation, and the loss to their families – and not as the promoters of a mattress sale."

Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34th) then spoke about his friend, Marine veteran Justin Constantine, who died of cancer, May 6, at age 51. "We tend to think heroes are from ancient times, but a hero and friend of mine died recently," said Petersen. "We grew up in Fairfax City together and played rugby together, and he was a graduate of Fairfax High School's Class of 1988."

After graduating from law school, Constantine served five years with the Marines and then took a reserve billet. "But when the Iraq war broke out, he re-upped," said Petersen. "And in 2006, we heard the news that Justin had been shot in the back of the head by a hostile sniper in Anbar province. The bullet exited his mouth and effectively destroyed his face."

"A Navy corpsman saved his life, and it



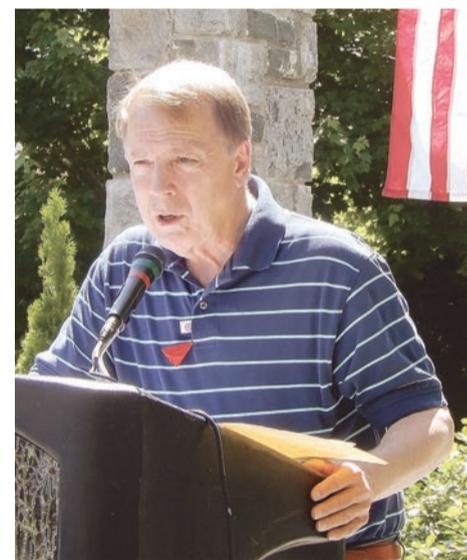
Sen. Chap Petersen

eventually took 20 operations to put his face back together. Months later, I joined a caravan from Fairfax City to attend Justin's Purple Heart ceremony. He was a hero and became an advocate for veterans. So on Memorial Day, we can also talk about people who grew up in the '80s and attended Fairfax High."

The next speaker, Del. David Bulova (D-37th), noted that his father and grandfathers all served in the military. "I recently found my grandpa's WWII helmet – which had a gash in it from a piece of shrapnel," he said. "Only the leather liner inside it prevented the shrapnel from going into his brain."

"But he and my dad came back," continued Bulova. "We owe those who sacrificed their lives and time away with their families so we could be with our families. The sheer magnitude of the debt we owe them can be overwhelming."

He also said he'd read about the "Bedford Boys" – a group of WWII soldiers from the small town of Bedford, Va. Among the



Mayor David Meyer

National Guard's 29th Infantry Division's regiments was the 116th Infantry, whose Company A was home to nearly three dozen men from Bedford – all of them volunteers. And on D-Day, June 6, 1944, they landed at Omaha Beach in Normandy and were part of those who perished.

"They stormed the beach at Normandy and knew they might not make it another day," said Bulova. "But they did it, anyway. And we can honor them by preserving the freedoms and democracy they fought for – and by redoubling our care for the families they left behind and making sure our veterans receive the care they need."

What gives him hope for the future, he said, are the young people of today "who defend those same ideals and freedoms that others fought and died for." So, he told the attendees, "God bless you and them on this Memorial Day."

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) said, "We should never forget the sacrifices of the fallen to make this a better world. We must try to repay their debt every day. So

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From left are Mac McCarl, Grayson and David Bulova, and Scott Henry. After reading some names of the fallen, Grayson cedes the stage to his father to do the same.



Singing patriotic songs are women's barbershop quartet, The Sound Advice. (From left) are Lori Greenlief, Carrie Bodoh, Bonnie Ashley, and Beth Kimlick.



Janice Miller



Sang Yi

Memorial Day Ceremony Pays Tribute To the Fallen

FROM PAGE 2

we thank them for what they've done for us so we can continue to pledge allegiance to that flag."

Stepping to the podium next was Fairfax City Mayor David Meyer. "My father-in-law, who's 94, flew C-130s in Vietnam and has cancer from transporting Agent Orange," he said. "He's still with us but won't be for much longer."

Meyer said his own father served in the Army in WWII and is now "at rest" in the Culpeper National Cemetery. And the name of his wife's cousin is engraved on the Vietnam Memorial to honor his sacrifice.

"Memorial Day, for me, is the most sacred of our federal holidays," said Meyer. "It's a time when our nation pauses to remember those persons no longer with us who have served our nation to preserve and affirm our Constitutional democracy, the rule of law under civilian government and the civil liberties that sustain our open and just society."

While noting that "God doesn't want to see His creation at war," Meyer said humanity's imperfection "sadly and repeatedly leads to conflicts. And while our democratic system of self-governance is far from perfect, democracy brilliantly attempts to keep those imperfections at bay and calls us to a more perfect union.

"The idea of democracy is worth defend-

ing. We're on a journey of ever-expanding freedom, married with economic and social justice for all persons. This hope has led many patriots to sacrifice so others may inherit and experience liberty and justice for everyone."

Furthermore, said Meyer, "We have a special responsibility to nurture and strengthen this idea so it can be given to patriots not yet born to carry forward. This Memorial Day, we remember with all the gratitude we can muster those who [died for our country]. These men and women were the best examples of faithful servants to our nation."

City Councilmember Janice Miller said her father was in the Navy. "During battle, he was a medic – and I can't imagine the horrific things he saw," she said. "And I'm forever grateful to him, to you [here today] and to all others who served in the military."

Next, Councilmember Sang Yi called it a solemn day but said he felt "an immense amount of gratitude. How can you ever understand the pain families feel when their loved ones are lost in war? The sun is shining, the birds are chirping, but today's not a happy day."

Every Memorial Day, he takes his children to Arlington National Cemetery to visit the grave of his friend, Frankie Toner. Yi, Toner and Aaron Seesan all attended the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy together. "Fighting in Iraq, Aaron suffered burns over 83 per-



Supervisor Pat Herry at the podium

cent of his body from an IED [improvised explosive device]," said Yi. "But when the medics came to him, he said, 'Take care of my men first.'"

"I've worn his name on [a bracelet on] my wrist for 11 years now," continued Yi. "He was gung-ho – but that's what America's about. Because of him, I was able to get married, graduate law school, have children and serve my city government. As a 24-year-old who died in Iraq, he'll never get to do that. So we should be grateful today for him and others who gave their lives for us. And we should be the kind of people and country



A little girl listens intently while the VFW's Hank Roeder plays "Taps."

worth dying for."

Then VFW member Hank Roeder played "Taps" on the bugle. After that, the names of all the Fairfax County residents who died in war – from WWI through the present – were read, with the VFW's Scott Henry ringing a bell for each one. Then Chaplain Keiper said a closing prayer.

"God, we pray that You bless them who gave their lives for us and also bless their families," he said. "Help us remember and respect their sacrifices – and bring healing to those who still hurt."

Hardening older FCPS Entrances To Secure Them from Shooters

Multilayered approaches to keep children safe in schools.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

At Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, preventive security measures did not stop the mass shooting deaths of 19 students and two adults on May 24. The presence of armed law enforcement and available mental health crisis intervention did not stop the carnage.

Since the Uvalde school shooting on May 24, there have been six other incidents reported by K-12 School Shooting Database where a gun is brandished, fired, or a bullet hits school property for any reason, regardless of the number of victims, time, day of the week. <https://www.chds.us/ssdb/about/>

On the day of the Robb Elementary School shooting, Fairfax County Public Schools immediately sent FCPS families and employees a message from Scott Brabrand, Superintendent, saying in part, “We condemn this senseless act of violence ... We want you to know that the safety of our schools, and the children and staff within them, is our highest priority. We continually work to make critical safety upgrades to our buildings each budget year. FCPS has one of the most advanced school security systems in the nation. While we hope we never see a day like today again, please be assured that we will continue to assess our protocols to ensure the safest learning and working environment possible.” Brabrand added that on the same day, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted 9-0 to declare June 3 as Gun Violence Awareness Day in Fairfax County.

On Thursday, May 26, at a regular meeting of the Fairfax County School Board, Melanie K. Meren, Hunter Mill District representative, presented a proposed follow-on motion regarding vestibule retrofits for facilities without them as part of the approved FY23 Budget. Meren first introduced a vestibule policy change on March 2, 2020, in a memo to the Fairfax County School Board Governance Committee Members.

Tamara Derenak Kaufax, Lee District Representative, said that on Dec. 19, 2018, a previous school board made the same motion to provide vestibules at all remaining



Melanie Meren, Hunter Mill District Representative, FCSB



Karl Frisch, Providence District Representative, FCSB



Meaghan McLaughlin, Braddock District Representative, FCSB



Karen Corbett Sanders, Mount Vernon District Representative, FCSB



Jeff Platenberg, assistant superintendent for Facilities and Transportation Services FCPS

FCPS schools. Superintendent Dr. Brabrand and his designate identified a plan to accomplish this over the three years. The motion passed, she said.

Kaufax asked, “Why was this not yet done?... Why was there no funding allocated?” Dr. Brabrand said that the focus shifted to mitigating the pandemic.

The proposed 2022 security vestibule program would add another layer to the school division’s physical safety and security measures, said Jeff Platenberg, assistant superintendent for Facilities and Transportation Services Fairfax County Public Schools. The controlled entry would be in addition to locked doors, intrusion alarms, electronic door access, closed-circuit tv, visitor management systems, and more, Platenberg said. These physical measures would be in addition to threat assessments, safety training, tabletop exercises, comprehensive division-wide safety plans, mandatory lockdown drills, and the like.

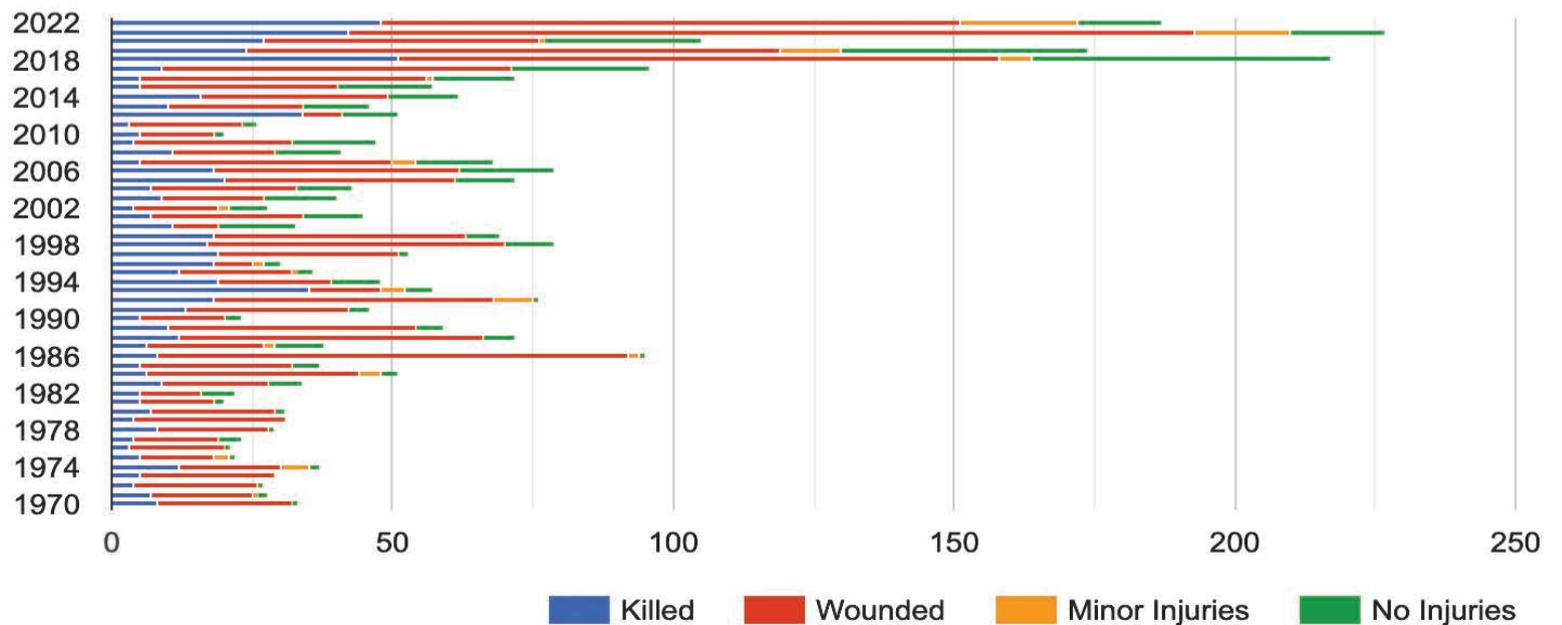
Elaine Tholen, Dranesville District representative on the school board, said she was “acutely aware that the discussion around sound school security needs to be about a myriad of components, some physical like vestibule entries, fences, locked doors, etc. and some not physical such as trained personnel,

SEE CAN MASS SHOOTING, PAGE 6



FCPS security vestibule constructed at a school’s entrance acts as a barrier.

Victims per Year



K-12 School Shooting Database, Victims per Year: Top row shows that as of May 31, 2022, in the United States, killed-48; wounded-103; minor injuries-21 and no injuries-15- Source: <https://www.chds.us/ssdb/charts-graphs/>

OPINION

Bipartisan Budget; Mixed Bag

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL

On Wednesday of this week, I cleared my trial calendar and headed to Richmond to vote for the bipartisan conference report on our \$188 billion state budget. The compromise was a mixed bag. This week, I will write about some local priorities in the budget. Next week, I will write about the coming tax cuts and some of the broader investments that benefit the entire Commonwealth.

First, the Commonwealth's current fiscal picture appears healthy but I have serious concerns that our excess revenues are largely driven by \$5 Trillion of federal stimulus monies that have been pumped into our economy instead of solid underlying economic fundamentals. It is very dangerous to reset tax rates assuming revenues that could vanish when the stream of borrowed money fizzles out.

The budget appropriates an additional \$214 million for Fairfax County Public Schools, \$219 million for Prince William County Public Schools, and \$78 million for Stafford County Public Schools. The state is now sending Fairfax County \$468 million more per year than the first budget that was adopted when I was elected in 2010. These funds will go a long way to ensure our teachers are paid fairly as long as localities match the state funding consistent with progressive Virginia policy.

Last year, Sen. Adam Ebbin, Del. Paul Krizek, Del. Mark Sickles and I secured \$2 million in the state budget to help defray the cost of purchasing River Farm which was under threat of development. Now that the threat has been eliminated, I proposed budget language to repurpose that money to provide public access improvements, education opportunities, viewing platforms and shoreline stabilization which was included in the final budget. It would not have happened without a team effort and will pay dividends for decades.

Water service to the Town of Quantico has been a long standing battle between the Town and Marine Corps Base Quantico. My proposal to use \$17 million of funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (APRA) to connect the Town to the Prince William County Public Service Authority water system was included. The amendments also restored many water quality priorities I secured in the Governor's



and Senate's budget including \$3 million for stormwater mitigation in the Town of Dumfries and \$300,000 of stormwater remediation in the Town of Occoquan which will help clean the Potomac River.

Del. Krizek, Del. Sickles, Sen. Ebbin and I also secured \$400,000 of ongoing funding for Good Shepherd Housing's to continue to provide housing, emergency services, children's services, budgeting, counseling and other resources for low-income families. Good Shepherd has found this additional funding to be crucial – even in our raging economy where our recovery has been uneven.

I was also able to pass and secure nearly \$400,000 of funding to conduct a bipartisan autopsy of the Commonwealth's pandemic response. This pandemic was (hopefully) a once-in-a-century opportunity to test Virginia's emergency and pandemic response systems. There are many lessons to be learned about not just the pandemic but also our way of life. We all received a crash course in remote meetings, vaccine distribution, vaccine mitigation and other practices that can pay us long-term dividends. We tested our stockpiles and state of emergency statutes, and learned exactly which workers are essential and must continue working no matter how risky it is. We need to continue our discussions in a post-pandemic environment.

While the budget has some important local priorities, it also contained major tax cuts and investments. Next week, I will discuss that along with funding I did not support along with major missed opportunities. As The Rolling Stones sang, "You can't always get what you want, but if you try, sometimes you get what you need."

I voted "yes" to reach a bipartisan compromise.

It is an honor to serve as your state senator. If you have any feedback, you can reach me at scott@scottsurovell.org.

CONNECTION

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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

Free digital edition delivered to your email box. Go to connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe

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Can Mass Shooting Tragedies Be Stopped?

FROM PAGE 4

sound gun laws, and policies, clear organizational responsibilities, mental health supports for students and staff and overall community supports.”

Tholen added that everyone must be part of school safety, “follow the rules about checking in, using the doorbell at the schools, and not letting unknown people in the building. ... I will continue my efforts to understand the work and needs of our staff, providing mental health supports for our students and providing school-wide programs to ensure that every one of our students has trusted adults they can go to at any time. It is only through this multi-pronged approach that we can be successful,” Tholen said.

During the May 26 FCSB meeting, Meren shared comments from constituents in the 48 hours after the shooting. They asked about a security audit, door handles and locks, and what kind of security expertise is on FCPS staff and their credentials. Meren said they questioned playground safety. “People walking on playgrounds; people making playgrounds secure so a gunman couldn’t come and shoot kids at playgrounds. I can’t believe I just said that sentence,” she said.

Meren added that her constituents asked about entrances to module facilities. Meren said she heard a sudden change in thinking about school resource officers. “Up until now, most I’ve heard is resistance to school resource officers because of the fear of the propensity of disciplinary action against our students of color. Now I’m hearing; please put school resource officers in. We want armed police in our schools. And certainly, the governor’s message reinforces that.”

At the Thursday night meeting, the FCSB approved the motion directing Brabrand and his successor, Michelle Reid, to prioritize the completion of the security vestibule program tapping multiple funding sources, and to provide the school board with a schedule to complete the initiative as soon as possible.

The estimated cost is \$15 million to install the vestibules and related equipment in facilities that don’t have them. Platenberg said the plan would be over five years, but he knew the board was “pushing for three years and better.”

Meren said the School Board’s mission is to educate children, but they can’t educate children if they are not safe. She added that the vestibule work in no way lessens the school board’s advocacy concerning effective gun violence pre-

Criteria for ‘School Shooting’ Three Incidents in FCPS reported

How many “school shooting” incidents have Fairfax County Public Schools experienced and what qualifies each as a school shooting?

FCPS said the data was not available on short notice.

The Connection filtered information provided by the K-12 School Shooting Database project conducted as part of the Advanced Thinking in Homeland Security (HSx) program at the Naval Postgraduate School’s Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS). <https://www.chds.us/ssdb/> The database compiles information from more than 25 sources, including peer-reviewed studies, government reports, mainstream media, non-profits, private websites, blogs, and crowd-sourced lists.

The K-12 School Shooting Database for 1970- to current reports three incidents at FCPS using the criteria as detailed.

❖ Incident 1: The date is 09-10-82. The location is inside Lake Braddock Secondary School in Burke, VA., at an afternoon class. The situation is domestic with a targeted victim. Nine students are held hostage for 21 hours. The shooter is 18 years old. The incident ends with no one injured or killed.

❖ Incident 2: The date is 02-27-1998, lunchtime at Marshall High School in Fairfax, VA. The location is the school parking lot. The shooter’s age is 18; he is armed with a rifle. One victim is killed. The incident is a drive-by gang shooting.

❖ Incident 3: The date is 09-15-21 during morning classes at Springfield Estates Elementary School. Inside the school building, a student used a stun gun on three classmates in the school. The shooter is a child. There are no injuries, and no one is killed.

FCPS referred us to the Virginia Department of Education Safe Schools Information Student/Offense Report. It uses different criteria than the K-12 School Shooting Database, and hence its findings differ.

— MERCIA HOBSON

vention laws.

According to Karl Frisch, Providence District representative, every level of government, national, state, county, and even the school board, has a role in gun violence prevention.

Frisch used as an example how Superintendent Dr. Scott Brabrand agreed to notify parents and guardians annually about their legal obligation to store their firearms securely. Called Gun Violence Prevention Resources and found online, it includes gun storage and modeling responsible behavior around firearms. It says, in part: “In order to prevent access, firearm storage practices should include three methods employed in combination—unloading the ammunition, locking the firearm, and storing the firearm and ammunition in separate locations.”

Virginia State Senator Barbara Favola (D-31), said that to keep schools safe, “School communities need to organize and talk to their state and federal representatives about the need for stronger gun safety laws. In 2020, under a

Democratically controlled General Assembly, bills were passed to expand universal background checks and create a red flag option, among other measures. Governor Northam enthusiastically signed these bills.”

According to Favola, gun safety has become a dividing line partisan issue with Republican lawmakers. Favola said that she believes voters on both sides of the aisle support common-sense laws that better balance public safety with 2nd amendment rights.

“Virginians would be best served if lawmakers implemented evidence-based gun safety measures that recognize responsible firearm ownership but better aim to protect our children and our communities,” Favola said.

Before the 21st century and the Columbine High School massacre of April 20, 1999, architects designed schools to educate students. Since then, the number one consideration appears to be building and renovating schools, hardening them to protect students from shooters.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

SHEPHERD’S CENTER OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA SPRING 2022 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

The Shepherd’s Center of Northern Virginia continues to offer educational, health and wellness and entertaining programming to our Senior Community. The programming includes Adventures In Learning, Active Wellness Classes, Great Discussions Book Club, Caregivers’ Support Group and much more.

The Adventures In Learning program began in April and repeats every Thursday for 8 weeks. There is ongoing AIL programming all year long. Topics this session include Health & Wellness, Arts & Entertainment & Travel as well as World Affairs Past & Present.

The Active Aging and Wellness Program is an Exercise Class to improve strength, balance and mobility for older adults. This class is held on Wednesdays (via Zoom) from 10:45-11:45 a.m. for eight week schedules. The cost is \$50/session and you can learn more about it and register on the website.

The Great Decisions Book Club is held the 3rd Friday of every month from February – November. Great Decisions is America’s largest discussion program on world affairs. This program is designed by the Foreign Policy Association to bring people together in study groups to discuss, debate and learn about important global challenges of our time.

The Caregivers’ Support Group, started in 2002, is for caregivers of adult family members. Most of the care receivers have dementia, but that condition is not a requirement. Some are cared for at home, some in local assisted living facilities, and some are out of state. Meetings are gently facilitated and encourage sharing of feelings, problems, helpful information, and bright spots. These sessions are held the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month from 10:00-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. For more information, contact Jack Tarr, 703-821-6838, jtarr5@verizon.net; or Lynn Rafferty, 703-508-1365, radmom8992@gmail.com.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Parent Support Partners, a service of the Healthy Minds Fairfax initiative, are all 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 or www.nami-northernvirginia.org/parent-peer-support.html.

The Shepherd’s Center of Northern Virginia Caregivers’ Support Group takes place the first and third Tuesdays of each month, 10-11:30 a.m. via Zoom. This group is for caregivers of family members with dementia. Meetings are gently facilitated. For more information and to get the Zoom link, contact Jack Tarr at jtarr5@verizon.net or 703-821-6838.

Haven of Northern Virginia provides support, compassion, information and resources to the bereaved and seriously ill. To become a Haven volunteer, please call 703-941-7000 to request an orientation. Volunteers must complete a 30-hour training and commit to one year of service answering Haven phones (2.5 hours weekly). Next training is scheduled for fall 2017.

ONGOING

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, or visit www.alnv.org.

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, during the 2019-20 school year, beginning in September. Please contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488 or donaldrea@aol.com.

Docents Needed. Sundays 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Greet museum visitors and tell them about the exhibits, the museum and its railroad and Civil War history. Ideal for those interested in railroads, the Civil War and Northern Virginia history. Training and orientation provided. Other volunteer opportunities are gardening, publicity and exhibit planning. Call 703-945-7483.

Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed. Help assist the Department of Family Services’ BeFriendA-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 or 703-324-4547.

Volunteers needed at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Museum offers a variety of exciting volunteer opportunities in Museum events, programs and administration. Contact volunteers@fairfax-station.org or 703-945-7483 to explore services that will fit your schedule and interests. Visit www.fairfax-station.org, or call 703-425-9225 for more.

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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

Virginia Reports First Case of Monkeypox

DH: Northern Virginia resident with recent travel history to African country where the disease is known to occur.

The Virginia Department of Health has identified the first presumed monkeypox case in a Virginia resident. The initial testing was completed at the Department of General Services Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services. Confirmatory test results will come from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

According to the report from the Virginia Department of Health:

The patient is an adult female resident of Northern Virginia with recent travel history to an African country where the disease is known to occur. She was not infectious during travel. She did not require hospitalization and is isolating at home to monitor her health. To protect patient privacy, no further information will be provided. The health department is identifying and monitoring the patient's close contacts. No additional cases have been detected in Virginia at this time.

"Monkeypox is a very rare disease in the United States," said State Health Commissioner Colin M. Greene, MD, MPH. "The patient is currently isolating and does not pose a risk to the public. ... Transmission requires

close contact with someone with symptomatic monkeypox, and this virus has not shown the ability to spread rapidly in the general population. VDH is monitoring national and international trends and has notified medical providers in Virginia to watch for monkeypox cases and report them to their local health district as soon as possible. Based on the limited information currently available about the evolving multi-country outbreak, the risk to the public appears to be very low."

Although rare, monkeypox is a potentially serious viral illness that is transmitted when someone has close contact with an infected person or animal. Person-to-person spread occurs with prolonged close contact or with direct contact with body fluids or contact with contaminated materials such as clothing or linens. The illness typically begins with fever, headache, muscle aches, exhaustion and swelling of the lymph nodes. After a few days, a specific type of rash appears, often starting on the face and then spreading to other parts of the body. Symptoms generally appear seven to 14 days after exposure and, for most people, clear up within two to four weeks. Some people can have severe illness and die. As with many viral illnesses,

treatment mainly involves supportive care and relief of symptoms. <https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/clinicians/clinical-recognition.html>

Virginia Department of Health advises that if you are sick and have symptoms consistent with monkeypox, you should seek medical care from your healthcare provider, especially if you are in one of the following groups:

Those who traveled to central or west African countries, or parts of Europe where monkeypox cases have been reported, or other areas with confirmed cases of monkeypox during the month before their symp-

toms began,

Those who have had contact with a person with confirmed or suspected monkeypox, or

Men who regularly have close or intimate contact with other men.

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news/item/2022-DON385>

If you need to seek care, call your healthcare provider first, according to the Department of Health. Let them know you are concerned about possible monkeypox infection so they can take precautions to ensure that others are not exposed.

On May 20, 2022, VDH distributed a Clinician Letter to medical professionals reminding them to report any suspected cases of monkeypox to their local health department as soon as possible and implement appropriate infection prevention precautions

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 6

for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403- 5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org. Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke serves those 50 and older who no longer drive. Volunteer drivers are needed for trips (Monday-Friday) to medical appoint-

ments and companion shopping within the Fairfax/Burke area. Office workers are needed to answer phones in the SCFB office (Monday-Friday) to match drivers and those who need rides. Call 703-323-4788. Positive Parenting Strategies Course. At PHILLIPS, 7010 Braddock Road, Annandale. A series of classes and in home consultations taught by PHILLIPS' counselors. Open to all local families. Call Stacy Stryjewski at 703-658-9054.

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Parents and attendees with Supervisor Pat Herry.



Supervisor Herry with the winners.



Supervisor Pat Herry and School Board member Laura Jane Cohen with winners from Chantilly High School.

Local Shark Tanker's Go Before the Board

Creativity to cope with aging brings out local entrepreneurs.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

When a product or service idea comes to mind, forget about the patent office or a rich relative to back it, bring it up to the sharks on the hit reality show “Shark Tank.” Fairfax County has its own shark program for local entrepreneurs and a few of these students took their product to a Board of Supervisors meeting as part of the Fairfax County Shark Tank Challenge hosted by Department of Family Services Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, Neighborhood & Community Services, George Mason’s Kellar Institute, Fairfax County Public Schools, and INTEGRITYOne Partners.

These entrepreneurs from Chantilly High School, Oakton High School, and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology all had products aimed at the senior population seeking to age in place. Student innovations included an app interface specialized for visual and audio impairment for medication access; an interactive web ap-

plication to incentivize physical activity and creative activity; and the winning team from Chantilly, “AutoTrem,” created a walker that can move automatically, causing less stress on the user’s muscles and allowing them to gradually gain their strength and confidence back.

Supervisor Pat Herry (R-Springfield) was the county sponsor for these “sharks.” Herry chairs the Fairfax County Older Adults Committee that focuses on helping residents age in place, so he was supportive of the students and their ideas.

“This is one of my favorite events each year because our bright, young students get to engage in this intergenerational challenge where they learn about the challenges our older adults face and come up with solutions to help them. I was truly impressed with the innovations the students developed and their presentations at the Shark Tank Challenge,” Herry said.

At the meeting, the Board presented plaques honoring the teams as well as individual certificates. INTEGRITYOne Partners provided monetary awards for the winning students, totaling \$5,750. Prior to recognizing the students at the Board of Supervisors meeting, students and their families were invited to attend a reception honoring their innovations. Judges, members of the Board of Supervisors, as well as TJHSST Princi-



Organizers, judges, staff, and supervisors.

pal Ann Bonitatibus and Springfield School Board member Laura Jane Cohen were in attendance.

“These students get to go in front of business leaders who challenge them on how their proposed technology could be marketed and sold as well as produced,” Herry said. “We have had at least one of the winning teams apply for a patent for their technology,” he added.

Herry turned it into a Board matter to recognize these Shark Tank winners. The Fairfax County High School Student Shark Tank Challenge competition started in 2015 and returned this year after being halted for two years by the pandemic.

Sharks with Financial Fins

The original “Shark Tank,” is a show on ABC that features tough, self-made, multimillionaire and billionaire tycoons who continue their search to invest in the best businesses and products that America has to offer. On the show, there are explanations, arguments and tears setting the stage for good reality show. Products from the show vary widely from edibles, and each shark tastes a sample, or services and everything has a twist that provides a surprise.

Springfield had a real Shark Tank success recently when Nahum Jeannot started “Go Oats,” in the winter of 2021 and presented the breakfast food to the Sharks, getting support from Barbara Corcoran, a food shark, who provided a financial backing.

PRESERVATION

Historic Houses Preservation Highlighted by Resident Curators

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Two historic houses were open to the public on Saturday, May 28, both part of the Fairfax County Resident Curator Program.

Tours led by their resident curators were both an opportunity to show the work accomplished in restoring the properties during the curators' tenancies and a means to meet their contractual obligation to provide annual public access. Located within a few miles of each other in Lorton, those taking advantage of the event could easily visit both properties. The event attracted a handful of people with an interest in history or who are tackling restoration projects of their own. Attendees found two very different restoration approaches.

Each property is associated with a period of significance, meaning their renovation could be guided by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. These are common sense historic preservation principles that promote best practices to protect the nation's irreplaceable cultural resources. www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm

Get to know the houses and their curators.

The Stempson House

Stephen McCullough, Resident Curator

Stephen McCullough became the county's first resident curator when he signed his lease in December 2017. With a term of approximately nine years, the lease signing came after a lengthy application process that began the prior March. Now retired from military service as a U.S. Coast Guard pilot as of July 2021, McCullough is pursuing a second career as a certified home inspector and adding to his catalog of skills by taking a welding class.

McCullough honed his restoration skills working on a 1930s farmhouse in upstate NY and other rental properties. When his duty station changed to this area, the program provided an opportunity to match his skills with a place to live. In his application he described himself as "a DIY handyman, with experience with building codes and permit offices, as well as subcontracting certain jobs when required."

The Stempson House, 9501 Furnace Road, circa 1932, is a vernacular farm style residence with Colonial Revival style elements. The home is significant due to its association with the Occoquan Workhouse and Reformatory, later known as Lorton Prison. The Lorton Prison is significant due to the incorporation of Progressive Era reform ideals and for its association with the Women's Suffrage movement of the early 1900s. The house and associated garage are listed as contributing structures to the D.C. Workhouse and Reformatory Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.

Originally, the land on which the house sits was part of a grant to Robert "King" Carter in 1729. Carter became a major land holder in northern Virginia. His will left this portion of land to Lord Fairfax, who then in 1742 granted it to Dr. Charles Green, the first rector of Pohick Church. It was later

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Resident curator, Stephen McCullough installs new front door and fixes trim at the Stempson House

returned to Lord Fairfax's family when the church location changed. They subsequently sold it to Hector Ross around 1757. In 1767, Ross became responsible for keeping a portion of a new road that connected Ox Road with the nearby port city of Colchester in good condition; today this road is renamed Furnace Road. Following the Revolutionary War, in 1787, the land was purchased by William Lindsay, a major and aide to George Washington. Lindsey called it Laurel Hill; his house still stands today, but is in poor repair, on non-public property. The portion of land where the Stempson house sits went to Lindsey's daughter Maria, who called it Marble Hill. It remained in the Lindsay family until it was sold to the federal government in 1910 for construction of the Workhouse. In 1937, amid the Lorton Reformatory orchard trees, prisoners constructed a residence for a prison officer and his family. Ultimately, the residence was converted for use by the prison security office.

The house is a three bay by two bay frame house of approximately 1,500 square feet with three porches and a separate garage of approximately 400 square feet. The basement walls, chimneys, portico floors, walkways and basement areaways are of brick construction. The construction materials and methods used are typical of residential housing construction in the early 1930s. The home has a living room, office, kitchen, dining room, three bedrooms, one full bath and two half baths, and an unfinished attic.

The first and second levels have finished wood flooring. The walls are comprised of plaster with cement on wood lath, which were covered with brown paper prior to



Stempson House features a wide staircase to the second floor with a detailed knell post

painting. The two-coat plaster has a first coat of hard-wall plaster with the addition of black and white hair plaster, topped with a white coat finish. First floor ceilings are covered with plastered sheet rock. There is evidence of the use of joint tape. The living room is dominated by a large pyramidal shaped brick fireplace painted white; with the fire brick was installed upside down. Plaster walls in the living room also were covered with paper before a first coat of paint. A texture finish was applied to a new ceiling. A wood stairway connects to the second floor hallway.

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Resident curator Amy McAuley, pictured behind the kitchen addition to the original Hannah P. Clark/Enyedi stack house

The county allocated a \$175,000 operating budget to supplement curator renovations, and invested about \$75,000 for new electric and septic systems and a well. "The house was definitely not turnkey," McCullough said. "The walls, ceilings, plumbing and bathrooms were in rough shape, and there was no kitchen." He added that it took longer than expected to reach the point of restoration at which he could move into the house. His work to restore the house and acreage continues, with about five years remaining on his current lease.

Source: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resident-curator-program/stempson

The Hannah P. Clark/Enyedi House - Amy McAuley, Resident Curator

Amy McAuley, moved to the Northern Virginia area from Oregon with her partner in 2019 and was introduced to the Hannah P. Clark/Enyedi House while touring another property. McAuley operated a business in Oregon specializing in building and restoring windows and doors using 18th and 19th century techniques and tools. She will be profiled in a Smithsonian initiative highlighting traditional trades people to encourage others to pursue building construction arts. Her professional level skills, now as restoration manager at the historic home of George Washington's Mount Vernon, make her ideally suited to undertake the challenges of the Clark/Enyedi House. The house, having been constructed, moved to a new location, added to in phases, and eventually left vacant for nine years, has required a

SEE RESIDENT CURATOR, PAGE 10

Historic Houses Preservation Highlighted by Resident Curators

FROM PAGE 9

determined curator. McAuley says that she and her partner, Stacy Giltner, were drawn to undertake the project after learning of the strong personality of the original owner, Hannah Porter Clark. McAuley is taking pains, not just to restore the property to living order, but to use original materials and techniques wherever possible in doing so. Their lease period is now 10 to 12 years.

The Clark/Enyedi House, 10605 Furnace Road, is a two-story, cross-gable vernacular farmhouse with 1,250 square feet of finished space. Features include vertical-peeled-log framing construction and a living room with exposed ceiling beams. It was constructed circa 1876 during Virginia's Reconstruction Period after the Civil War. The house sits on a one-and-one-quarter acre wooded parcel on the edge of Old Colchester Park and Preserve.

The period of significance is 1876 to 1925: the period during which Hannah Potter Clark constructed, expanded, moved, and resided in the house. Early 20th century expansions and improvements to the railroad forced Clark to move the house across the road to where it stands today.

Her father, James Porter, owned land near the now defunct town of Colchester, on the north bank of the Occoquan River; founded to take advantage of the economic benefits of the nearby port. The town was chartered in 1753, but long before that native Americans and European settlers used the vicinity as a place to cross the Occoquan to reach the northern region of Virginia. During the Revolutionary War, Colchester sat in a precarious location, always under threat from British raiders coming up the river. In 1782, both American and French troops passed through or camped outside of Colchester on their way to and from the Battle of Yorktown. For a short period of time after the Revolution, the town continued to thrive. There was an important fishery on the river and productive agriculture with tobacco a key crop. Colchester was a stop along the stage-coach route and was used by prominent local landowners, such as George Washington, George Mason, and many visitors to their estates. It also had the only post office stop between Dumfries and Alexandria. But the Occoquan River was filling with sediment, limiting the size of ships that could dock at the Colchester port. New bridges on the river left Colchester in further decline, all but eliminating significant trade at the town. In the early 19th century, the area shifted from a town to an agricultural community. Hannah Clark's father was one of the largest land owners. The worth of his farm, of about 68 acres, doubled between the 1850 and 1860 censuses to \$1500; he had personal property, including three enslaved people, valued at \$2,000 on the eve of the Civil War. Her father and her future husband, James Clark, were arrested during the war, in 1862, as suspected secession sympathizers. The period following the war brought many hardships to area land owners including the Clark family.

Hannah Porter Clark, faced several difficulties with spunk during her lifetime. She

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



McAuley displays a pottery shard with design (held), haired plaster, Aquia sandstone, plaster keys, and period nails, and a bobby pin found during restoration

was 20 years old when her father died, dividing his estate between her two younger brothers; she received a cow, support from the estate and 100 cords of wood per year. She married James Clark less than a month after her father's death in December 1865. The couple lived on the Clark family's small farm. James Clark was a "boatman" and worked in the fishery. A year later she filed an injunction against her mother, Barbara Beach Potter, her father's common law wife, for not providing the estate support or timber as provided in her father's will. Her mother died before the case could be heard in court. Eventually Hannah Clark would exchange her wood annuity for 65 acres. The couple constructed a house there in multiple phases between 1876 and 1878.

Hannah and James Clark had seven children, four of which lived to adulthood, but it was not an easy marriage. He moved out and boarded with neighbors in 1887. She accused him of lack of support, desertion, and brutal treatment, and of having a drinking problem. In 1893, they were divorced; as Hannah stated in court, "[James Clark] contributed little or nothing to the support of his family;" her daughter adding, "she has had to depend on her own exertions." She was the only woman in her community who was divorced and was described by a town member as "a woman who knew her own mind." She retained all the land and personal property, and custody of the children.

Hannah Clark was a woman with fortitude, facing several difficult situations impacting her home. She was on her own when the railroad double-tracked their line between 1902 and 1907, in effect moving the rail closer to her small house. Another sample of her "own exertions" was reported in *The Washington Times* in February 1904; "a man attempted to burglarize Hannah's house. The sheriff who was supposed to take the burglar from Colchester to the police station was unable to do so. And so Hannah and one of her sons apprehended and took the man themselves to the station in Alex-



Basement restoration exposes peeled log construction used to minimize construction costs

andria that same night." Then in 1913, the Washington Southern Railroad made further improvements to its line, straightening and building a new bridge; taking her land. She would be forced to abandon her house. She chose to move it instead. It took two days, hooked up to horses and a winch, put on logs and rolled down Ox Road. It was necessary to leave the house on the road overnight. Lanterns were hung on the house to warn approaching travelers on the road. Clark and some of her grandchildren stayed in the house overnight to further protect it. She lived there until her death in February 1925.

In 1986, artist Janos, and his wife Diana, Enyedi purchased the property and they began construction on a new art studio on the land. They named the studio Furnace Road Studio after the road to which the house fronts. During the Spring of 2011, the Enyedis sold the house and Furnace Road Studio to Fairfax County Park Authority.

The original small house was constructed with peeled logs, as a stack house. Stack houses were one room in plan and two stories. In the Mid-Atlantic stack houses were constructed throughout the nineteenth century as affordable and quickly constructed houses. The walls, second floor ceiling joists, and roof rafters were framed with peeled logs. The sills and first and second floor joists are hand-hewn timbers. This vernacular type of framing, using mainly peeled and lightly hewn logs, was likely quite common since it required relatively minimal manual labor compared to log cabins or full timber framing. However, very few examples survive or are known about since it was likely used in small or modest houses that have been since demolished or buried inside multiple additions and expansions. An addition was added on the west side circa 1885, doubling the size of the house. A one-story kitchen addition on the south side was constructed by 1903 but may have been rebuilt or modified after the house was moved circa 1915. Today, the house is a two-story, cross-gable vernacular farmhouse with 1,250 square feet of finished space. It has

three bedrooms; one full bath and one-half bath. It features vertical-peeled-log framing construction and a living room with rough-hewn joists in the ceiling. It has a brick and concrete foundation; asphalt shingle roof; sun room entrance foyer; eat-in kitchen; separate office; one fireplace; and narrow plank pine floor. The house has well-water; a new septic system installed; and gas and electricity.

McAuley displayed some original materials found during her work in the house. She identified what is likely Aquia Creek sandstone, a brown to light gray stone used extensively in building construction in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Quarried at the Aquia Creek in Stafford County, the stone was valued for its ease in shaping and the quarry's proximity to the Potomac River. It was used in portions of the White House, Capitol building, and the historic homes, Gunston Hall and Mt Vernon. Also on display, were samples of "haired plaster". For centuries hair and other fibers were added to lime and gypsum plasters to give greater strength. The hair had to be strong; with ox, cow, horse, or goat hair preferred. The type of fasteners used in a building is one of the most popular means of estimating its age. McAuley is using nails to determine the different phases of construction of house, along with differences in the type of siding panels, windows, and trim. They have restored the first floor and added new heating and hot water systems. Source: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resident-curator-program/hannah-p-clark

The Resident Curator Program

Local jurisdictions received authorization to develop and establish resident curator programs from the General Assembly in January 2011. The Code provided that, "private entities through lease or other contract may be engaged to manage, preserve, maintain, or operate, including the option to reside in, any such historic area, property, lands, or estate owned or leased by the locality."

Subsequently, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted the Resident Curator Program Ordinance in 2014, establishing the program in Fairfax County. The program required that resident curators maintain and improve the leased properties according to historic property standards and provide reasonable public access consistent with the historic property's nature and use. In return, curators pay no rent as long as they continue to fulfill their contractual obligations. Curators are responsible for upkeep, property maintenance expenses, utilities, and county property taxes. A curator can be a private citizen, a non-profit entity, or a for-profit entity. The county lists the following resident curator properties and their status: proposal under review: White Gardens, Falls Church; applications closed; Ash Grove House, Vienna; re-advertising soon; Lahey Lost Valley, Vienna; Curators selected: Ellmore Farm House, Herndon; Hannah P Clark/Enyedi House, Lorton; Turner Farm House, Great Falls; Stempson House, Lorton; and coming: Barrett House, Lorton; Dranesville Tavern, Herndon; and Mount Gilead, Centreville.

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Frisch Recognized by Capital Pride

Capital Pride Alliance has announced the individuals, leaders, and activists it will recognize as part of Capital Pride Honors at Penn Social, on Friday, June 3, at 7pm. The event kicks off LGBTQ+ Pride Month celebrations in the National Capital Region.

Among the honorees is Fairfax County School Board member Karl Frisch (Providence District) who will receive a "Heroes Award," which recognizes individuals who have furthered causes important to the LGBTQ+ community and brought about positive change in the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the region. Frisch is the first openly LGBTQ+ local elected official in Fairfax County, and the only out school board member in Virginia.

"The progress our school board is making in the fight to protect and affirm LGBTQ+ students is long overdue. I am humbled by this recognition, but the real heroes are our LGBTQ+ students who show up at school each day with remarkable authenticity demanding respect for who they are, and our LGBTQ+ educators who serve as incredible role models at a time when their simple existence is under attack," said Frisch.

Since joining the School Board in 2020, Frisch has led efforts to protect LGBTQ+ students and staff, successfully sponsoring Virginia's strongest protections for transgender and other gender-expansive students. He also spearheaded successful efforts to affirm LGBTQ+ students by making family life education more inclusive, providing updated transcripts and diplomas reflecting a student's correct names, and prohibiting malicious outing, deadnaming, and misgendering. Additionally, Frisch is currently sponsoring a proposal to provide LGBTQ+ school system

employees with the same family planning benefits enjoyed by their heterosexual coworkers.

Upcoming Regional Pride Events:

June 3 – Capital Pride Honors: Friday, June 3 from 7-10 p.m., Penn Social, 801 E St NW, Washington, DC 20004 <https://www.capitalpride.org/event/honors/>

June 4 - Reston Pride: Saturday, June 4 from 12-6pm, Lake Anne Plaza, 1609 Washington Plaza N, Reston, VA 20190 <https://www.restonpride.org/reston-pride-2022/>

June 7 - Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Pride Month Resolution: Tuesday, June 7 at 9:30am, 12000 Government Center Pkwy, Fairfax, VA 22035

June 11 - Capital Pride Parade: Saturday, June 11 from 3-7:30pm, Logan and Dupont Circle Neighborhoods, Washington, DC <https://www.capitalpride.org/event/parade/>

June 12 - Capital Pride Festival: Sunday, June 12 from 12-10pm, America's Mainstreet, Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC <https://www.capitalpride.org/event/festival/>

June 16 - Fairfax County Public Schools Pride Month Resolution: Thursday, June 16 at 7pm, Luther Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Rd, Falls Church, VA 22042

June 24 - Northern Virginia Pride Prom: Friday, June 24 at 7pm, The St. James, 6805 Industrial Rd, Springfield, VA 22151 <http://safespacenova.org/once-upon-a-prom/>

June 25 - Mosaic Pride: Saturday, June 25 at 1pm, Mosaic District, 2910 District Ave, Fairfax, VA 22031

June 26 - Loudoun County Pride: Sunday, June 26 from 1-8pm, Heritage Farm Museum, 21668 Heritage Farm Ln, Sterling, VA 20164

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Plastic Pollution Is Pervasive

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE CONNECTION

“Plastics are everywhere -- in the atmosphere, in the ocean, in the environment and in the food chain,” Sarah Kollar told the Friends of Dyke Marsh at their May 19 meeting. Every year, worldwide, eight million metric tons of plastics enter the ocean, the equivalent of one garbage truck load of plastics every minute, she reported. Kollar is the Outreach Manager for the Ocean Conservancy’s International Coastal Cleanup which began in 1986 and takes place every September.

The world is experiencing a plastic pollution crisis, much of it driven by single-use packaging, Kollar said, adding that 40 percent of plastic produced each year is for packaging. Plastic waste generation has been steadily increasing since 1960 and in 2016, the U.S. was the top generator of plastic waste, a 2021 National Academy of Sciences study found. Half of all plastic ever made was made in the last 13 years.

Plastic items can travel thousands of miles down storm drains, streets, streams, rivers and oceans, from bottles to straws to dental flossers. Single-use plastic items that people use in their everyday lives are a major component of marine debris, Kollar said.

Plastic pollution increased during the covid pandemic partly because more people bought takeout food in plastic containers. Nearly 92 percent of cleanup volunteers reported they had collected personal protective equipment during trash cleanups in 2020, with face masks being the most common. Incidents of disposable wipes blocking wastewater infrastructure and causing sewer overflows increased exponentially, the Ocean Conservancy found.

Plastic Harm

Plastic products like beer six-pack rings and fishing lines can entangle wildlife and cause their deaths. Animals can die from ingesting plastic bags, especially marine wildlife that mistake the bags for jellyfish. Small critters can suffocate in plastic bottles. Kollar estimates that 800 marine species have been adversely impacted by plastic.

Plastics carry toxic chemicals which can move up in the food chain when zooplankton and their predators absorb or eat them.

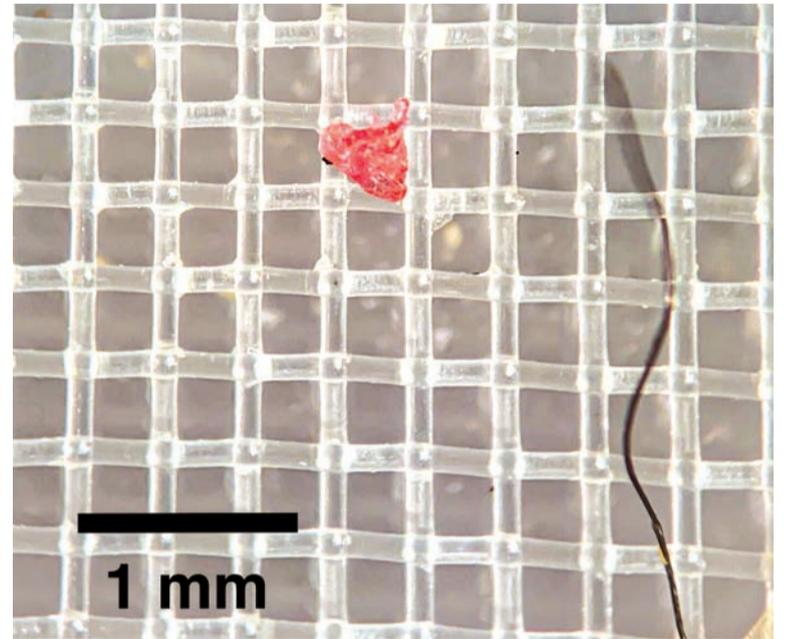
Microplastics Cause Macro Harm

Many plastic items take hundreds of years to break down and as they do they become microscopic microplastics, less than five millimeters in size, from the size of a grain of sand to the size of a pea, explained the second speaker, Kurt Moser, president of Northern Virginia’s Four Mile Run Conservancy Foundation. Many of these tiny plastics end up on river bottoms, in the ocean or in sand, making them virtually impossible to clean up.

The Conservancy conducted a study in 2018 and 2019 of microplastic pollution in Four Mile Run, the stream flowing through Arlington and Alexandria in its 20-square-mile watershed. Their findings:



Sarah Kollar at a cleanup in 2020, along the Anacostia River.



Magnified image of microplastics (a fragment and a fiber) collected at Four Mile Run, seen against the filter mesh screen.



Researchers at Four Mile Run pour a water sample through a sieve to collect microplastics for lab analysis.

❖ Every water sample tested had microplastics.

❖ The most common form was microplastic fibers from clothing or carpets.

❖ Microplastics were found both above the wastewater treatment facility and below it.

Harmful plastic pollution is as much of a local problem as it is an international one, Moser said, and other Northern Virginia tributaries probably carry similar loads of plastic pollution. “If you eat fish, it probably ends up on your plate,” he warned.

Plastic fibers from clothing and carpets often become airborne and can get into people’s lungs, Moser said.

“While more research is needed, some findings suggest these virtually ubiquitous tiny plastic particles – that have been found in human blood – have the potential to disrupt immune and endocrine systems, damage organs, cause inflammation, increase cancer risk and possibly affect pregnancy outcomes,” wrote Stanford Center’s Erika Veidis and Jamie Hansen in the April 5

Washington Post.
Solutions

Noting that only five to six percent of plastic is recycled in the United States, Kollar said that plastic products labeled “recyclable” must be recycled in an industrial facility, not in home composting bins. The country’s recycling processes are “grossly insufficient to manage the diversity, complexity and quantity of plastic waste,” the National Academy study concluded.

Some localities, including Fairfax County, have imposed fees on some single-use, plastic bags to discourage their use and other jurisdictions have banned smoking on beaches. The Ocean Conservancy urges people to reject drinking straws in their “Skip the Straw” campaign.

Kollar and Moser stressed that the most fundamental solution is to use less plastic, like single-use, plastic bags, beverage bottles and food packaging and to substitute non-plastic items. Other approaches include more stringent waste management practices.

Both Kollar and Moser support what is

The Conservancy conducted a study in 2018 and 2019 of microplastic pollution in Four Mile Run, the stream flowing through Arlington and Alexandria in its 20-square-mile watershed. Every water sample tested had microplastics.

called “extended producer responsibility” which makes the manufacturer responsible for the entire life cycle of a product, including the takeback and final recycling or disposal. A few apparel companies allow consumers to return damaged or to-be-discarded clothing for possible recycling into new garments.

Electronic equipment is one of the fastest-growing waste streams in the world and some companies allow consumers to return electronics for refurbishment or recycling. The technology company Hewlett Packard (HP) recycles used printer cartridges, for example.

At the Consumer Technology Association’s website, [https://www.cta.tech/Landing-Pages/Greener-Gadgets/Recycle-Locator#/,](https://www.cta.tech/Landing-Pages/Greener-Gadgets/Recycle-Locator#/) you can find local sites for electronics recycling by entering your zip code.

Many plastic products will likely always be part of American life, and cleanups will always be needed, Kollar and Moser predicted.

To learn more, visit <https://oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/plastics-in-the-ocean/> and <https://www.fourmilerun.org/>.

ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THRU JUNE 11

"Xanadu." Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. At The Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. This is a hilarious, roller skating, musical adventure about following your dreams despite the limitations others set for you.. Tickets are \$20-30. Visit <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/xanadu>

NOW THRU JUNE 12

Art Blossoms 2022. At Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic, 2905 District Ave. #105, Fairfax. A new exhibit at the Torpedo Factory Artists @ Mosaic gallery in Fairfax offers its own interpretation of the beauty of nature in a show titled Art Blossoms 2022, featuring artists from the highly acclaimed Torpedo Factory Artists' Association. This is the third year hosting a floral inspired show and it's one of the favorites of gallery visitors. This exhibit by Torpedo Factory Artists' Association members includes paintings, fine art photography, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics and exquisite jewelry.

JUNE 2-4

Used Book Sale. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Over 5,000 like new books in all categories, plus CDs, DVDs and special gifts. Children's books too! Lots of summer reading selections and gifts for grads and dads. Wednesday Preview Sale, June 1, 2 - 5 p.m., \$10 entry fee; Thursday, June 2, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. (free); Friday, June 3, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. (free); Saturday, June 4, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. (free); Sunday Bag Sale, June 5, 12 - 2 p.m., \$5/bag.

FRIDAY/JUNE 3

Music Works. 4-10 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Featuring performances by Vulfpeck collaborator and Grammy-nominated multi instrumentalist Cory Wong, Billboard chart-topping mandolinist Sierra Hull and DC-based indie-soul sensations Oh He Dead. Visit the website: workhousearts.org/musicworks

SATURDAY/JUNE 4

Journey into the 7 Chakras + Sound Bath. 3:30-5:30 p.m. At Honest Soul Yoga, West Springfield. The seven Chakras ("wheel"), or centers of swirling energy or Prana, run along the length of the spine and reference areas of our bodies with major organs and bundles of nerves. When balanced and flowing freely, our Chakras help to promote a healthy emotional, physical, and mental state of being. In this workshop, you will explore various methods of balancing all 7 Chakras including: Flow, Chanting/Mantra, Meditation, Mudra, and discuss exercises for you to practice OFF of your yoga mat that will continue to nurture this sense of balance in all areas of your life. Visit the website: <https://www.eventvesta.com/events/16970/t/tickets>

SATURDAY/JUNE 4

Pohick Church First Saturday Tours. 1-3 p.m. At 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. During the Colonial period, Pohick Church was the congregation of many of our country's most prominent families, including the Washingtons, Masons



Pohick Church First Saturday Tours take place on Saturday, June 4 in Lorton.

and Fairfaxes. The Historic Pohick Church Docent Guild will give free guided tours of the historic colonial church on the first Saturday of every month between 1:00-3:00 p.m. Visit the website at <http://www.pohick.org>.

SATURDAY/JUNE 4

Taste of Springfield. At Springfield Town Center, Springfield. 12-5 p.m. Attendees will enjoy local dishes that are guaranteed to delight from over 15 food vendors, while perusing the over 60 local business vendors that range from handmade crafts to health and wellness vendors. New this year, enjoy the Beer Tasting Tent featuring Lost Barrel Brewing – must be 21 years or older to enter this area. Featured food vendors include Hometown Grill & Bar, this year's Food Sponsor, as well as local favorites including Soulific Seafood, Supreme Kabob Food Truck, and many more.

JUNE 4-5

RiverFest and Craft Show. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In Occoquan's Historic District, Lorton. Featuring a spotlight on the Occoquan River and water-related activities for everyone. Discover artisans, crafters, and makers, along the streets in Occoquan's historic district. Beer and Wine Garden in River Mill Park, both days from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m., featuring local craft brews from Water's End Brewery and a variety of handcrafted wines from Woodlawn Press Winery. Kayaks

and standup paddleboards will be available for rent all weekend at Penguin Paddling at 201 Mill Street. Visit occoquanva.gov/riverfest.

JUNE 4 TO AUG. 27

Summer Saturdays. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road Lorton. Explore history in different ways with this drop-in summer program. Each Saturday will have a host of different activities around a different theme. Savor history, dig in the dirt, and play games as we learn about the 18th century at Gunston Hall. Visit the website: <https://gunstonhall.org/events/summer-saturdays-2/>

SUNDAY/JUNE 5

1970s Picnic Bash. 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. At St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. St. Andrew's Episcopal Church will hold a '70s Bash picnic to celebrate its 50th year as a parish. Join them for live music by "Gotcha Covered", food trucks and games. Visit the website: <https://www.standrews.net/>

MONDAY/JUNE 6

Nature Puppet Show. 10:30 a.m. At Old Town Square in Fairfax City, 10415 North Street, Fairfax. Perfect for Preschoolers! Delight in the fun and funny antics of Cobra Caroline and her prehistoric animal puppet friends. Join us near the Splash Pad. Visit the website: <https://www.fairfaxva.gov/government/parks-recreation/cultural-arts>

Fido Fest in Fairfax City

Fairfax City's annual Fido Fest offers a fun and family-friendly outing for local residents and their dogs. It's set for Saturday, June 11, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at the City's dog park at 11000 Berry St. Attendees will enjoy a wide array of vendors, as well as doggy activities, demonstrations and a K9 splash zone.



The Caiso Steel Drum Band.

Beer in the 'Burbs Slated for June 4

Fairfax City's annual Beer in the 'Burbs is a celebration of suds in the commonwealth. And this year's event is slated for Saturday, June 4, from noon-6 p.m., in Old Town Square, 10415 North St.

With a Beach Bash theme, this free, family-friendly gathering will also offer food trucks, live music and fun galore. The CAISO Steel Drum Band will entertain from noon-1 p.m., and The Landsharks will perform from 3-6 p.m.

Caiso stands for Caribbean American International Steel Orchestra, and its festive music features the steelpan instrument in Calypso, Reggae and Latin Jazz genres. The Landsharks are a tribute band specializing in the music of both Jimmy Buffett and The Beach Boys.

Billed as one of the region's biggest events of its kind, Beer in the 'Burbs raises a mug in salute of Virginia's craft breweries from Loudoun to Virginia Beach and from Roanoke to Richmond. More than 15 breweries will be showcased, and the cost will be \$3 for a 3.5-oz. taster and \$8 for a 16-ounce cup.

Fairfax City's own Chubby Squirrel Brewing Co. and Orner Beer Co. will be among the participants, as will Ono Brewing Co. of Chantilly and



Event logo

Port City Brewing Co. of Alexandria. Other craft breweries taking part include Troegs, Starr Hill, Smartmouth, Honor, Devils Backbone, Aslin, Heavy Seas, New Realm and LostBoy Cider.

Sponsors are HB Home Services, Fairfax Surf Shop, Sundog Productions, Washington Area Parrot Head Club and Paul Mitchell of Tysons Corner.

Parking (including accessible parking) is available at the following places:

- * East Street parking lot (enter from Main and East streets);

- * Sager Avenue parking lot (enter via Sager Avenue and University Drive);

- * City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St. (enter from University Drive and Old Lee Highway);

- * Old Town Plaza parking garage, 3955 Chain Bridge Road (enter via Chain Bridge Road and University Drive).

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The Landsharks.

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WELLBEING

Helping Children Cope with Tragedies

Local therapists offer suggestions for easing fears around recent school shootings.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Compassion, exploratory dialogue and honesty are among the suggestions that psychologist Robyn Mehlenbeck, PhD, director of the George Mason University Center for Psychological Services, offers to her patients who are struggling to ease the fears of their children after the tragic school shooting in Texas. While it occurred far from her Fairfax office, parents are still facing the complicated task of helping their children process their emotions.

"I always encourage being direct, although developmentally appropriate," said Mehlenbeck who is also a professor in the Department of Psychology at George Mason University. "For example, starting with a question is always good. 'I know you have been talking about what happened in Texas. What do you think about it? Did anyone talk about it in school today?'"

Because each child processes tragic events differently, Mehlenbeck says that there are a variety of ways in which a child can express their emotions. "Some of the signs are fear or anxiety around going to school, not wanting to sleep alone, worrying about parents going to work," she said. There can be physical complaints like stomach aches or headaches."

When beginning a discussion about a child's fears and emotions, ask open-ended questions and listen without judgment, advises therapist Caroline Fenkel, Ph.D., LCSW. "Your answers should always validate their feelings in these situations," she said. "Sometimes it might be helpful to guide your kid toward being able to name their emotions. Try your best to limit their consumption of the news. There's no net positive to continuing to take in footage of police swarming or photos of victims."

It is important, says Fenkel, "that parents check in with their own emotions before starting a dialogue with their kids. It's important to make sure that you're in a safe headspace and emotionally regulated enough to have this type of conversation. Think about what the purpose of the conversation is. Is it to explain what happened? Help them process emotions? Be clear and prepared."

Parents can explore a child's emotions while engaging in pleasurable activities or hobbies, says Bethesda therapist Keisha Ranson, LPC. "Children and teens often communicate best through play. Watch them as they



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBYN MEHLENBECK

Robyn Mehlenbeck, PhD, GMU Center for Psychological Services.

play," she said. "If they seem to be playing out scenes of people getting hurt, it is perfectly fine to ask them how they are feeling in that moment. If they continue to play out scenes of violence, a trained professional may be needed to help them feel safe again."

A parent's response to devastating events will have a significant impact on a child's response, said Ranson. "If a parent is calm, that will communicate safety more than the words that are being spoken," she said. "Parents should get themselves grounded first and then find fun, safe activities. Nature can be a big help. Go for a walk. Play games that are easy and rhythmic such as catch."

Teens are able to understand the role they play in their own safety, says Ranson. "Remind them of where they can get support," she said. "Review safety procedures like what they should do in the case of an emergency."

"Children feel a sense of safety when parents remind them that no matter what is going on in the world, they are safe," said Ranson. "Maintain normal routines such as riding the bus to school, doing their homework and going to sports practices," suggested Ranson.

"Whatever the state of the world, your family is safe right now and that needs to be communicated," continued Ranson. "Nurture healthy coping skills, by encouraging your child to do things that they enjoy doing. This distracts them from the crisis and allows them to focus their attention on activities that bring them joy. Acknowledge the sadness but then move on and distract with life-affirming activities."

"I always encourage being direct, although developmentally appropriate."

— Robyn Mehlenbeck, PhD,
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Time is What I'll Make of It



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As I sit here and wonder about tomorrow/the future, I try not to wonder about it too much. Since I have cancer, and at present a type of papillary cancer which, due to some unusual circumstances/dare I say, missteps, is characterized as "terminal." 'Terminal' in that currently there is no medicine, other than my present daily pill, that can sustain me beyond three years, give or take, from date of this most recent diagnosis. (Although, I'd like to believe that end date is not prescribed in stone.) I had been treated for non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV for the preceding 10 years or so until a biopsy revealed the tumors were thyroid cancer which had moved to the lung. A subsequent surgical removal of my thyroid glands didn't exactly solve the problem due to some persistent cancer that remained embedded under my collarbone. And soon thereafter, I officially became a thyroid cancer patient, for which I take a 10mg pill daily called lenvima. The side effects are modest, but unfortunately, the cancer is considered incurable.

In summary, I'm sort of taking a long walk off a short pier. And given that there are no guarantees/alternatives to my present protocol, and furthermore, given that the cancer is beyond anybody's control – aside from taking all my supplements and drinking alkaline water, I don't worry about what I can't control. As an example: I can't worry about the Red Sox bullpen. As much as it matters to me, as a life-long member of Red Sox Nation, that Boston's relievers are ordinary at best and disastrous at worst (see game one of the most recent Orioles/Red Sox series when the bullpen gave up two six-run leads), I have zero influence or input and/or control over any of it. And unlike the cancer, it's not exactly my problem, if you know what I mean? Now if the Red Sox wanted to pay me for my opinion, then perhaps it might be my problem. However, given the unlikely occurrence of yours truly getting paid for his baseball opinions, I'll have to narrow my focus and worry about my own problems. Cancer is enough of a problem that I don't need to look elsewhere for additional problems/challenges (and the Red Sox bullpen is most certainly a 'problem'/challenge).

Obviously, I can't ignore any symptoms or neglect my health. And even though my life expectancy has been shortened, I don't have a death wish. On the contrary, I have a life wish. And that 'life wish' consists of this cancer patient navigating through the ongoing demands without letting any of take me down emotionally. My intention/philosophy is, now in my 14th year post cancer diagnosis, to somehow rise above the inevitable downward pressure and try not to get dragged down by the sheer weight of the diagnosis. As my close friend and fellow cancer patient, Lynne said to me at the beginning of my diagnosis: "this is going to be the toughest thing you'll ever have to do." And of course, she was right. Consequently, I don't need to make matters worse. They're already bad enough on their own. If pretending, disconnecting, and laughing in the face of all this adversity gets me to the promised land (a normal life expectancy), then I promise to keep laughing and stay positive about the negative. "Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither was Milwaukee." I'm in this fight for the long haul. Besides, I'd like to live long enough to see how it all ends.

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

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