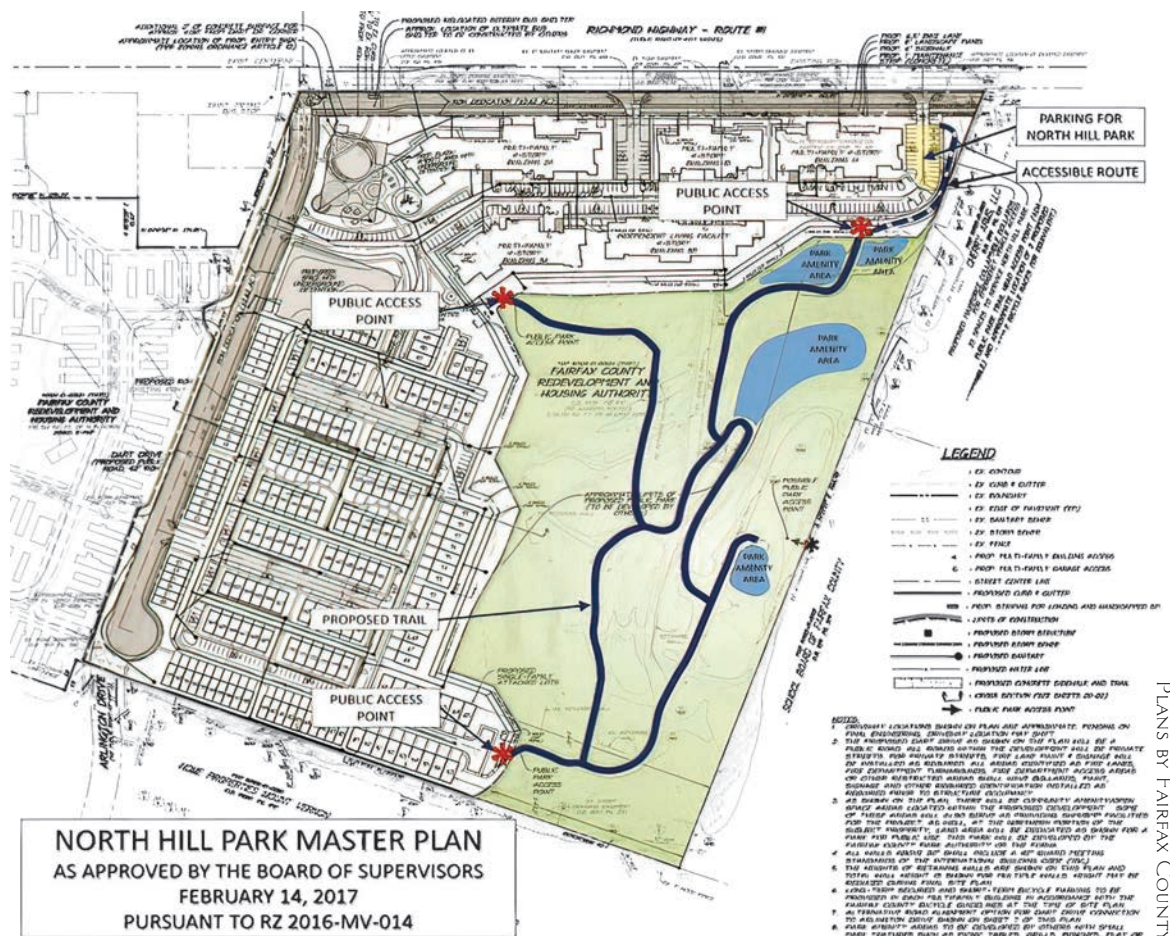


Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

JULY 21, 2022



Three access points and trails are part of the park's plan.

Construction Underway Includes Park Plans in Hybla Valley

Construction site dominates the changing landscape in this part of Mount Vernon.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

The pieces of redevelopment are coming together along Richmond Highway in Mount Vernon, including the plans for the new North Hill Park in the Hybla Valley area. Land here is dominated by construction of an apartment complex that includes some affordable housing, and this park will be included.

SEE CONSTRUCTION, PAGE 13



The park is mentioned on the sign which faces Richmond Highway.



North Hill will include affordable housing.

**The Office of Supervisor
Rodney L. Lusk Hosts:
Franconia District
PUBLIC SAFETY TOWN HALL**

Supervisor Lusk
Franconia District Supervisor

Chief Davis
Fairfax County Chief of Police

With guests Dr. Noah Fritz & officers from the Franconia and Mt. Vernon District Stations.

Thursday, July 21st 06:00 PM

Watch on Zoom or Facebook Live

Email questions to leedist@fairfaxcounty.gov

The Public Safety Town Hall is Thursday, July 21 at 6 p.m.

Why Are You Pointing Your Gun at Me?

Video went viral; but context is needed says chief of police. Town Hall scheduled for Thursday, July 21.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

The teenager in a video that went viral the weekend of July 9, 2022, asks two Fairfax County Police officers why they have their guns drawn. "Why you pointing your guns on me? Why you pointing your guns on me," he asks.

While one officer has her firearm pointed at the teenager, another officer commands the teenager to drop his cell phone and get down on the ground. The second officer, who said drop your cell phone, appears to have raised his gun, and the level of his voice, when the teenager doesn't immediately follow his instructions.

After the teenager is handcuffed and searched on the ground, a third officer asks the juvenile who has the gun?

"What gun?" the teenager asks.

The officer asks again, "Who has the gun?"

"What gun? No one has a gun," said the teenager.

"Someone has a gun, why do you think we are here like this?" said the third officer.

In searching, Fairfax County Police officers find eye drops in the juvenile's pocket, but did not find any weapon on him or the two other teenagers arrested at the car dealership across Arlington Boulevard from the IHOP restaurant at 6555 Arlington Boulevard in the Fairfax County area of Falls Church.

At the end of body worn camera footage released by Fairfax County Police, the officer gives the juvenile the answer of why he and his colleagues responded the way they did.

"I'm going to level with you,

SEE WHY ARE YOU, PAGE 14

Town Hall July 21, 6 p.m.

Register to watch on Zoom, or watch on Facebook Live.

Zoom

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Q7D_dhVURAecYSuQN5XyVg

Facebook

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What To Do with Robert E. Lee Lane

This street off Harrison Lane in Mount Vernon (Franconia District) is a privately owned street.

By Mike Salmon
The Gazette

Anyone looking at the news over the last two years has seen the Confederate statues come down and locality names change from names that might have honored the Confederacy. Robert E. Lee Lane off Harrison Lane in Mount Vernon seems to have slipped under the radar.

The sign is in the Franconia District, and they are aware of it, said Aaron Campbell in the Franconia District office. Until earlier this summer, the Franconia District was called Lee District before officials renamed it due to its association with the former Confederate leader.

Robert E. Lee Lane is privately owned by the nearby apartments and is not maintained by VDOT or the County, Campbell said. It was listed in the "History Commission's Fairfax County Confederate Names Inventory Report," that was presented in December of 2020. According to county map information, the road was constructed and named in the 1964-1965 time-frame. The street was likely named by builders Louis A. Zuckerman or B. Francis Saul, the property information stated.

The county report, Fairfax County Confederate Names Inventory Report, was compiled by the History Commission in response to a June 23, 2020, directive from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

The 536-page report was directed to design a "process that focuses on well-known Confederate officers and on locally well-known Confederates," it said in the executive summary.

The descriptions are historical in nature and tell any connection to the Confederacy or Union, even if the connection is a remote possibility. A Kingstowne street named Wiley Creek Way for example was cited as "Wiley Common Family Name." But Sgt. Robert Wiley (1840-1932) was a Confederate who enlisted in Company K, 19th Georgia Infantry on March 8, 1862 at Occoquan. He moved to the Lorton area after the war. Where his family lived in Fairfax County is today known as Wiley, Va., the report said. Another example is Van Dorn Street that goes through Alexandria to Kingstowne, thought to named for a "General, Confederate States Army, 1861-1863. Killed May 7, 1863," the report said. "In 1953, after Alexandria annexed a portion of Fairfax County, the City renamed many north-south streets after Confederate military leaders. In 2015, Alexandria's City manager, Mark B. Jinks, confirmed that Van Dorn Street was named for Brig. Gen. Earl Van Dorn," the report said.

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources has many rules for statues and urges those advocating for removal of these monuments in Virginia localities to allow for a legal and deliberative process, their

website stated. But it does not include road names in the text.

The General Assembly of Virginia ruled on the renaming process as well in April 2020. Under Code 15.2-1812, before changing names, there has to be a procedure. "Prior to removing, relocating, contextualizing, or covering any such publicly owned monument or memorial, the local governing body shall publish notice of such intent in a newspaper having general circulation in the locality," it said. The notice shall specify the time and place of a public hearing at which interested persons may present their views, not less than 30 days after publication of the notice. After the completion of the hearing, the governing body may vote whether to remove, relocate, contextualize, or cover the monument or memorial. If the governing body votes to remove, relocate, contextualize, or cover the monument or memorial, the local governing body shall first, for a period of 30 days, offer the monument or memorial for relocation and placement to any museum, historical society, government, or military battlefield. The local governing body shall have sole authority to determine the final disposition of the monument or memorial."

This particular sign off Harrison Lane is in the Franconia District, formerly Lee District before a ruling earlier this summer. The historic Huntley Manor estate is located nearby.



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/GAZETTE

In the Franconia District, this street has avoided being recommended for a name change.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

ALEXANDRIA SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE JULY 21-29

The Alexandria Social Security office located at 5510 Cherokee Avenue, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA, office closing dates have been adjusted to Thursday, July 21 through Friday July 29. The office will be closed for renovations to improve customer experience and will reopen on Monday, August 1.

Customers needing in-office service may visit the Social Security offices located at: 1300 D Street SW, Washington, D.C. 9500 Center Street, Manassas, VA 10800 Parkridge Boulevard, Suite

100, Reston, VA Social Security office hours are from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The agency strongly encourages people, who can, to use its online services at www.socialsecurity.gov, call on the phone, and schedule appointments in advance rather than walking in without an appointment. Phone appointments can save people a trip to a busy office.

MT. VERNON FARMERS MARKET IS NOW OPEN

The market is located at the Sherwood Hall Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. From 8 a.m. to noon every Wednesday (through December 21), 18 farmers and local food producers will sell fresh, locally grown vegetables and fruits; meats; Chesapeake Bay seafood; breads and pastries; honey, jams and jellies; milk, cheese and eggs; herbs and plants; and more.

This year's vendors are:

Arnest Seafood - crab cakes, scallops, shrimp, rockfish, oysters and more
The Fermented Pig- charcuterie and gourmet bacons
Grace's Pastries - cakes, pastries and breads, with a Caribbean touch
Great Harvest Bread - breads and pastries
Honey Brook Farms - meats and vegetables raised with no chemicals, gluten-free baked goods
House of Empanadas - variety of empanadas
King Mushrooms - variety of locally grown mushrooms
Layla's Lebanese Restaurant - Lebanese hummus, eggplant dip, garlic sauce and more
Linda Vista Farm - fruits and vegetables, specializing in Asian and Latin produce
Memis - gluten-free paellas, quiches and more
Misty Meadow Farm Creamery - milk, ice cream, cheese and eggs

Ochoa Produce - vegetables, herbs and flowers
Salsa Las Glorias - fresh salsas, guacamole and chips
Sharkawi Farm - herbs, spices, teas, plants and flowers
Three Way Farms - vegetables, melons and herbs
Traveling Shepherd Coffee Co. - variety of freshly roasted coffee
Twin Springs Orchard - fruits, vegetables, cheese and more
Valentine's Bakery & Meats - meats and baked goods.
All of the items sold at the market are grown or produced by the vendors and come from within a radius of 125 miles. The McCutcheon/Mt. Vernon market is one of 10 farmers markets run by the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA); for more information, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
STEM VOLUNTEERS. The American

Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) needs scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and physicians to assist K-12 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) teachers in the Northern Virginia Area, during the 2016-17 school year. In the 2015-16 school year, the numbers of STEM volunteers in Northern Virginia were: Fairfax County - 40, Arlington - 20, and Alexandria - one. Details of the collaboration are worked out between the teacher and the volunteer, and may involve giving demonstrations, assisting in lab experiments, lecturing on special topics, assisting with homework, etc. The hours are flexible, and volunteers attend a one-day training in September before being assigned to schools. To see how volunteers

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

Hollin Hills Joins Pickleball Mania

Pickleball courts are now open.

BY REBECCA BOSTICK
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

You may have noticed all the construction and signage just off Fort Hunt Road at the end of the Hollin Hills Pool parking lot. Six pickleball-only courts opened for play on July 8 thanks to the support of the Civic Association of Hollin Hills (CAHH), especially its President, Patrick Kelly. Although Kelly had never played pickleball before, he was enthusiastic about the concept of new pickleball courts and how they could revitalize the tennis club.

"I saw a way to clean up the eyesore that has plagued the CAHH and provide access to the very popular sport for residents of Hollin Hills and the Alexandria community. While the club is private, its membership is open to all, just like the Hollin Hills pool," said Kelly.

Long-time tennis player, Steve Ryan had floated the idea to the CAHH Board in early 2021 but it wanted more details. Ryan approached pickleball advocate Milly Stanges to develop a plan to transform two dilapidated tennis courts to six new pickleball courts.

The New Hollin Hills Pickleball and Tennis Club

What started with two temporary nets on bumpy asphalt and a handful of pickleballers has grown into the active club even before the new courts are complete. With a six-figure financial assist from the Civic Association of Hollin Hills, the front two tennis courts will soon become six new pickleball courts.

Club chair, Rebecca Bostick says "We have over 100 members so far and it's growing fast. ... The courts have a new surface, new fencing and nets, as well as a new social area. Lights will be added within a year to extend the playing time in the fall and winter too."

HHPTC started with a vision

Last fall, a small group of volunteers turned one decrepit tennis court dating to the mid-1950s into two playable pickleball courts in Hollin Hills. But that was just the beginning. Thanks to the vision of Ryan, one of the last keepers of the courts, and local pickleball advocate Stanges, they

have taken those two barely playable courts to the next level.



Cutting the ribbon earlier this month on the new pickleball courts in Hollin Hills.

Stanges says "I reached out to my most enthusiastic pickleball-playing friends and a dozen of them were willing to play on less than perfect courts. By May, the original club had grown to 65 members who enjoy playing and socializing together."

Getting rid of the eyesore visible along Fort Hunt Road was just as important as creating a new six court pickleball cluster on the once dilapidated courts. Key to getting that done were the handful of talented member-volunteers who helped make the club viable. They created a "buzz" in the pickleball community, contributed ideas and money, and rolled up their sleeves to get the hard work done. Along the way, the club which has been the Hollin Hills Tennis Club since the early 1960s, became the Hollin Hills Pickleball and Tennis Club (HHPTC).

Detailed Planning Began in December 2021

After getting early interest for the six pickleball court concept from CAHH President Patrick Kelly in October 2021, HHPTC's next step was to find the right contractor for the job. With three bids in hand, the expanded HHPTC Board reviewed the proposals and settled on the contractor, Resurface, Inc. The club then was prepared to take the next step.

Ryan and Stanges were almost

ready to formally take their vision to the CAHH, the property owner. "We needed to get funding to build the new pickleball courts and restore the overgrown and ruined courts," says Ryan, and we're looking forward to getting the tennis courts restored too."

Working with long-time CAHH volunteer and new HHPTC Board member, Rebecca Bostick, they formed the funding appeal to the CAHH Board. Although Bostick is new to pickleball, as a long-time member of the pool board she is no stranger to the need to clean up the courts. Over the years she entertained many solutions for the tennis court problem. "I was frustrated by our efforts to find a viable solution. We needed a sport that could attract the necessary support to rebuild the failing courts and have a membership that would sustain them long term," Bostick said.

Earning Support from CAHH Members

The Club needed support from members of the Civic Association to grant the CAHH Board permission for a six figure loan to fund the renovation and expansion. The process wasn't easy and required many informal discussions, community information sessions and special Board meetings prior to finally getting approval for the loan. After all, many members had

never even heard of pickleball and questioned if it could really build a membership to support the financial commitment.

Working together, a dedicated and energetic team — the HHPTC governing board — hoped to not only create six new pickleball courts, but also to save the remaining two tennis courts. Although one of the two other tennis courts is rough but playable, the HHPTC is already raising funds to rebuild both courts and realize being a dual sport racquet club at Hollin Hills. This will be the first private outdoor club in the area with six dedicated Pickleball and two tennis courts.

Pickleball

A fun game that's easy to learn, pickleball is now the fastest growing sport in the United States. It's a mix of tennis, badminton, and Ping-Pong. It's played on a smaller court than tennis, making it easier for people of all ages. Seniors have embraced the sport, but so have kids and their parents, which encourages families to participate. The sport brings people together, as players are encouraged to welcome newcomers into the game and show them the basics. Community rather than competition is stressed — though the games can get quite competitive too. Several HHPTC members have competed in the Senior Olympics, as well as

the Richmond Classic Pickleball tournament.

All the public pickleball courts in our area share space with tennis and can't be reserved. Those courts are showing signs of wear due to age and weather despite on-going maintenance efforts by the Fairfax County Park Authority.

See You On The Courts

HHPTC membership begins with a one-time initiation fee of \$300 per household, annual dues of \$150 per household and \$50 for each additional household member. The Club has been taking new memberships for almost two months and has had an enthusiastic response. It is now close to its membership limit.

Next, the club will turn its attention to upgrading the last two tennis courts. In order to accomplish that goal, we've started a donation fund to cover the cost of renovations. The goal is to have 6 pickleball courts, 2 tennis courts, and a full social calendar of events.

There are a year of social activities on the calendar, along with free Intro to Pickleball sessions, professionally taught clinics and lessons for all levels of play, as well as ideas for round robin games and tournaments. For membership details, send an email to HHPTCinfo@gmail.com or check out the club's website at <https://hhpickleballandtennis.com>.

NEWS

Man Arrested in Springfield For Stabbing Death of Wife

Jose Heber Hernandez Mejia, 49, was arrested Monday morning July 18 in South Carolina.

Sunday at 12:13 p.m., Fairfax County police officers responded to a home in the 5200 block of Rolling Road in Springfield for the re

port of a stabbing. Officers found Evelin Molina deceased in an upstairs bedroom suffering from multiple stab wounds to the upper body.

Preliminarily, detectives determined Evelin Molina resided at the home with her husband, Hernandez Mejia, and their children. A family member, who does not reside at the home, received a call from Hernandez Mejia, stating he had stabbed his wife. When the family member arrived at the home, Hernandez Mejia handed over his wallet and fled in a black Honda HRV bearing Virginia tags TXV-1986.

A knife believed to be used in the stabbing was located inside the bedroom. The children were not home at the time of the inci-



COURTESY OF
ANDERSON COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE
**Jose Heber
Hernandez Mejia**

dent. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will conduct an autopsy to determine the exact manner and cause of death.

Detectives conducted several interviews and obtained an arrest warrant for Hernandez Mejia for second degree murder. Detectives from Fairfax County Police Fugitive Track and Apprehension Unit began

searching for Hernandez Mejia. This morning, detectives contacted officers from the South Carolina State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) to aid in locating Hernandez Mejia. Deputies from Anderson County and SLED officers found Hernandez Mejia traveling on Interstate 85 in Anderson County. He was arrested and will be extradited back to Fairfax County.

Anyone with information about this stabbing is asked to call detectives at 703-246-7800, option 2. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone - 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT STATION

SHOOTING INTO AN OCCUPIED DWELLING: 3500 block of Holly Hill Road, 7/11/22, 3:42 a.m. Officers responded to the area for reports of multiple gunshots. The victim found damage to her apartment. Several cartridge cases were recovered. No injuries were reported.

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY: 8150 Richmond Highway (Action Automotive Auto Dealership), 7/11/22, 3:52 a.m. Someone forced entry into the business, damaged property and took merchandise.

ATTEMPTED ROBBERY: Laramie Place/Tamarind Street, 7/13/22, 11:53 a.m. Three men approached a juvenile victim, assaulted the victim and took prop-

erty. No injuries were reported.

ROBBERY: 5900 block of North Kings Highway, 7/13/22, 10:22 p.m. The victim arranged to buy merchandise from a man near the location. The man assaulted the victim, took the victim's money and drove away. The victim was treated for injuries not considered life threatening. This does not appear to be a random act.

FRANCONIA DISTRICT STATION COMMERCIAL BURGLARY: 6500 Springfield Mall, 7/12/22, 5:40 a.m. Security saw a 22-year-old man emptying the contents of a cash register into a bag in a parking garage. Officers located the man and took him into custody. He was charged with burglary.

Stem Volunteers Needed

The AAAS STEM Volunteers Program, stemvolunteers.org, needs STEM professionals to assist K-12 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) teachers in the DC metro area during the 2022-23 school year. Our school districts are Montgomery County, DC, Arlington,

Alexandria, and Fairfax County. All lessons will be in the classroom, and it is anticipated that masks and testing will be optional. If you care about K-12 STEM education and have time to share your knowledge with students and teachers, please send a note to bcalinge@aaas.org.

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OPINION

The Time for Undergrounding Utilities On Richmond Highway Is NOW!

BY SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK

You may or may not have heard about undergrounding, but I bet you are in support of removing the ugly electrical lines from our roadways and placing them underground. That's it – undergrounding! The undergrounding of utilities (electric, fiber, cable, phone) becomes a more important topic every year, as our climate warms and storms become more damaging. As Resilient Fairfax puts it, "Our weather is becoming warmer, wetter and weirder." We all know this leads to more power outages, traffic disruptions, fires, injuries and even death, particularly in our most vulnerable neighborhoods. I believe that undergrounding of utilities needs to be part of every major County roadway or revitalization improvement discussion. Along with Chairman Jeff McKay and Supervisor Rodney Lusk, we have been supporting funding to include utili-



ty undergrounding as part of the more than \$1 billion, 7-mile Richmond Highway widening and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.

The future is clear, utilities will be undergrounded for our security, reliability, resilience, revitalization, property values and aesthetics, much like we have been requiring for new developments and in our comprehensive plans for years. It is not an "if" but a

how and when. We have watched our neighboring jurisdictions make this commitment and it is time to act for Mount Vernon's main street NOW. As such, I have shared with my Board colleagues several options to create a funding pool that could be used not only for Richmond Highway, but in future years, for additional areas throughout the County along our major roadways and revitalization areas.

Undergrounding for Richmond Highway is currently supported by the Fairfax County Council of Civic Associations, the Mount Ver-

non Council of Civic Associations, other area civic associations, Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation, the Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC), the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA) and many other area organizations.

I will be bringing this important topic to the Board for consideration at a meeting of the Economic Initiatives Committee on July 26. If you support undergrounding of utilities on Richmond Highway, I urge you to send a letter of support to the Board of Supervisors at ClerktotheBOS@fairfaxcounty.gov and share it with our office. I also ask that you talk to your friends, neighbors and others you know throughout the County to share this information and the opportunity to advocate for this important environmental, economic, quality of life issue. To assist you with this, we have posted talking points and background information to our website in our "Advocating for Undergrounding Utilities" at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon>.

A Slide Backward

DELEGATE KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM

For a record-breaking two years in a row, 2020 and 2021, Virginia was ranked as the number one state in the country for business. Unfortunately, when the results were announced recently for 2022, Virginia had slid backwards to number three. It was replaced at the top by North Carolina and at number two is Washington. To rank America's Top States for Business, CNBC scores all 50 states on 88 metrics in 10 broad categories of competitiveness. The results are studied closely by businesses as they represent the most objective measures of how states are doing in attracting and keeping businesses and jobs. The results are of interest as well to educators and social scientists on how the states are doing on issues like workforce training, access to education, health care, worker protections, and discrimination.

Contrary to messages of some politicians, business interests go well beyond who has the cheapest labor, the fewest regulations, and the lowest taxes. Businesses, especially in the era of technology and innovation, have a brand or repu-



tation to protect as well as an obligation to get the best employees who can grow their enterprises. The lowest paid and least educated workers may have been acceptable in the industrial era but not in the modern economy. Additionally, business leaders making decisions on locating their companies must take into account living conditions for their employees and their families.

For these reasons North Carolina, after a number of bipartisan actions taken by the Democratic governor and Republican legislature on education and training programs as well as worker welfare, put it to the top of the list as the best place to do business. Unsurprisingly, Mississippi for the same considerations made the very bottom of the states for business.

Interestingly, in the never-before accomplishment of making the best for business for two years consecutively, Virginia took significant actions that some would have argued would have made it less attractive to business. For example, the General Assembly and the governor working together raised the minimum wage on a schedule to get to \$15 per hour over the next

several years. Collective bargaining was approved for government employees. A human rights law was passed to outlaw discrimination in the workplace and community. Criminal justice laws were reformed. Record expenditures were made for public schools and colleges and universities. A free community college program was established. An energy plan was adopted to put Virginia on the path to energy independence and zero emissions.

Already, there have been actions taken by the new governor that may in part explain the slide backwards that Virginia has taken in its ranking as business friendly. While the tall, affable governor and his success in the financial world may

make for a handsome salesperson for the Commonwealth, his words belie a philosophy from times since past that no longer fit the modern economy. Removing Virginia from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) costs the state money while ensuring that citizens of the state may be exposed to greenhouse gasses and a changing climate. Appointing cast-offs from the Trump administration and believers in the most perverse theories about education will cripple and not improve our schools.

Virginia has started a slide backwards to the past. We need to act now to stop that slide before the state is too damaged and finds itself tumbling in the rankings among states.

Let Us Know Your View

Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name. Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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

Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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A Connection Newspaper



NEWS

At Last Pepe's Pizza opens on Duke Street.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

New Haven-style pizza, already widely revered in culinary circles, arrived in Alexandria July 18 as Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana opened its doors in the Alexandria Commons Shopping Center on Duke Street.

Known as Pepe's Pizza, the iconic Connecticut-based eatery first opened in New Haven in 1925 and is one of the oldest and best recognized pizzerias in the country. Founder Frank Pepe popularized the thin-crust, coal-fired Neapolitan pizza of his native Italy and his granddaughter was on hand as local officials formally cut the ribbon to open the Alexandria location.

"I am beyond excited today," said Jennifer Kelly, who grew up working in the original Pepe's in New Haven. "I saw the hard work that my grandparents put into this – then my mom and her sister. My family worked so hard for so long then to see something like this happen, it is just so emotional for me."

Vice-Mayor Amy Jackson and Councilman John Chapman were on hand for the ceremonial ribbon cutting along with Chamber of Commerce CEO Joe Haggerty.

The Alexandria location is the 14th to expand beyond New Haven with another planned for Plantation, Fla., for later this year. All remain owned by the Pepe family.

"We began expanding outside of New Haven in 2006," Kelly said. "People were coming to us from all over so we made the decision to come to them."

Signature pizzas include the Fresh Tomato Pie, the first sold by Frank Pepe, which is topped with fresh tomatoes, mozzarella, basil, garlic, grated Pecorino Romano and olive oil. Also on the menu is Pepe's famous White Clam Pizza, featuring fresh clams, Pecorino Romano, proprietary oil blend, fresh garlic, and oregano.

All pizzas are baked in a coal-fired brick oven at 600 degrees resulting in a distinct thin, oblong crust with characteristic charring and chewy texture. The 97-year-old legacy brand has been consistently ranked as America's best pizza by The Daily Meal and other national media.

Located at 3231 Duke Street, Pepe's Pizza is open 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

Both indoor dining and takeout are available. For more information call 703-719-2035 or visit www.pepespizza.com.

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Workers prepare pizzas during the July 18 grand opening of Frank Pepe's Pizzeria.



Employees prepare to serve New Haven-style pizza at the July 18 grand opening of Pepe's Pizza in Alexandria.



Jennifer Kelly, left, granddaughter of Pepe's Pizza founder Frank Pepe, talks with Maria Ciarrocchi and Joe Haggerty of the Chamber of Commerce.



Jennifer Kelly, center, granddaughter of Pepe's Pizza founder Frank Pepe, is joined by local dignitaries and staff for the grand opening of Frank Pepe Pizzeria Napoletana in Alexandria Commons Shopping Center on Duke Street.

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Area Native Americans Gather for a Powwow

An “urban powwow” in Alexandria’s Ben Brenman Park.

By GLENDA C. BOOTH
GAZETTE PACKET

Native Americans from the Washington metropolitan area and beyond gathered on July 16 in Alexandria’s Ben Brenman Park for a powwow. A powwow is a celebration of being native that is focused on singing and dancing, explained emcee Dennis Zotigh, a Kiowa-Dakota-Pueblo Indian who works for Washington, D.C.’s National Museum of the American Indian.

Calling it “an urban powwow,” Zotigh said that unlike most powwows, this one was not on currently-owned tribal lands, but he pointed out that the area was once home to the Piscataway people.

Gregorio Kishketon, a Kickapoo tribe member and U. S. Marine Corps veteran, led the Grand Entry, followed by dancers of all ages. Kishketon carried a traditional eagle staff, which Zotigh said preceded the American flag. “Veterans are our living heroes. They’ve protected us,” Zotigh noted.



Dancers followed the leader, Kishketon, in the Grand Entry.



Greg Kishketon led the Grand Entry and carried the eagle flag.

The Zotigh Singers sang and drummed for the entry procession and dances. Many participants dressed in traditional regalia decorated with eagle feathers. See AN “URBAN POWWOW”, PAGE 12



Couples competed in the Potato Dance Contest.



The sponsors cooked and served fry bread.



Rico Newman wore deer toes.



The drummers sat and played in a circle.

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH
GAZETTE PACKET

Dennis Zotigh was the emcee and a drummer with the Zotigh Singers



Can't Afford A Vacation? Try a Staycation

This area offers a wealth of opportunities for families who are staying local this summer.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
GAZETTE PACKET

Eating french fries and burgers with her young children, Ava Black asked them what they learned during a trip to Glen Echo Park earlier that afternoon. They told her that they had fun riding the carousel, but her six-year-old son said they found out that only whites were allowed to enter the park when it was first established. The Alexandria single mother of two usually takes her children on at least one vacation each summer, but this year forgoing an out-of-state trip and opting for a staycation.

"They've been asking to go to our family reunion in North Carolina," she said. "We drive there every year, but [the cost of] gas is too high so we're staying at home. They are going to have to settle for a call to their aunts, uncles and cousins."

Like many families who are grappling with inflation, Black's budget is so tight this year, that they are eschewing a summer vacation and opting for a local staycation. From Mount Vernon to Great Falls, the Washington, D.C. region offers a wealth of options for families who are staying close to home.

"Family adventures are wonderful ways to introduce children to new places and interests," said Lisa Turissini, Ph.D., Director, School of Education, Marymount University. "So, whether you are getting away on a vacation or staying home to enjoy a staycation, your child will thank you for the opportunity to explore a new location or to be able to act like a tourist in your own city."

"Children can learn so much from staycations," added Mary Mukherjee, Senior Program Director, Montgomery College Youth Programs. "They learn about different cultures, the geography, the language, the food. The possibilities are endless."

Slathering on sunscreen, packing a lunch, and heading to the National Mall can feel like a vacation, says Turissini. "One of the easiest ways to squeeze in a little learning during your vacation is to visit historic sites and museums," she said. "We are so lucky to live in the DC area with a number of living history museums such as the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History and historic buildings such as Ford's Theatre, the White House [and] the Lincoln Memorial."

With two-thousand acres of land and 32 miles of trails for hiking and biking, Rock Creek Park is just one of the options for families who want to spend time outdoors. "Something as simple as exploring nature can be a great adventure for the little ones, said Turissini. "Great Falls Park is a great place to enjoy hiking trails, biking, bird watching, and picnicking. You don't have to be a child psychologist to see how much our children learn when they are just being kids and enjoying themselves."

Picking fruit at a local farm combines educational opportunities with family fun. "Once you're at home with your fruit, you can all measure the ingredients



Ava Black's budget is tight this year so she will not be taking vacation. Instead, she's creating a staycation for her children.

FOR ANOTHER TAKE ON STAYCATIONS, SEE "SUMMER'S HERE AND POSSIBLY TIME TO STAY PUT"

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2022/jun/13/summers-here-and-possibly-time-stay-put/>

needed to bake an apple or blueberry pie or make a delicious smoothie," she said,

"Another great adventure is to spend time at the National Zoo," she continued. "Children love animals. Have them learn about endangered animals that you might be able to visit. And take advantage of any one-of-a-kind animal encounters or activities that may be available for your visit."

Staycations can be found inside your home, says Mukherjee. "Go through family photo albums and learn the genealogy of the family," she said. "This could lead to online research or even interviewing relatives like grandparents, aunts and uncles in person, over the phone or using Zoom. Be sure to write everything down. These stories and snippets of information are priceless."

"Family adventures are wonderful ways to introduce children to new places and interests. Whether you are getting away on a vacation or staying home to enjoy a staycation, your child will thank you for the opportunity to explore a new location or to be able to act like a tourist in your own city."

— Lisa Turissini, Ph.D., Director,
School of Education, Marymount University.

Exploring your neighborhood and learning about its history can be challenging and enlightened, Mukherjee says. "Who established it originally? What is the history of the street names? Streets are often named for important people in the world and that particular neighborhood. Are there any historic houses? What is the geology of the neighborhood? What types of plants and trees grow there and why?"

By taking staycations, families can still have experiences that last a lifetime, Turissini says. "Teaching them these skills at a young age will serve them well as they grow up," she said. "And, as parents, joining your children in new adventures provides a fresh perspective and a view of the world through their eyes which strengthens family bonds and builds lasting memories."

3 Arrested for Theft Of County Computers

Franconia Police District – Detectives from Fairfax County Police Major Crimes Bureau's Criminal Investigation Division were notified in March of several thousand Fairfax County Public School laptops that were believed to be "illegally reallocated." The laptops were stored at a warehouse in the 6800 block of Industrial Road in Springfield and were set to be auctioned.

Detectives identified a box truck registered to Attyah Computer Recycling, 44190 Waxpool Rd Ste 157, Ashburn, that arrived on multiple occasions at the warehouse. The driver of the truck would not exit the vehicle nor provide the necessary paperwork required to receive auctioned goods. Laptops and computer parts would be loaded into the truck, and the driver would leave. Through the detective's investigation, two warehouse employees were identified as facilitating the unlawful transactions.

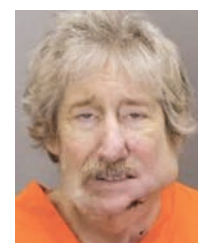
The morning of July 14, detectives were conducting surveillance at the warehouse and observed the truck arrive at the location. Detectives conducted a traffic stop and found stolen laptops in the vehicle. The driver, Fadi Atiyeh, 36 of Centreville, was arrested and charged with receiving stolen property and larceny with the intent to distribute. Detectives determined Atiyeh was employed by Attyah Computer Recycling. A search warrant was executed at the business, and additional evidence was recovered.

Later that day, detectives arrested two warehouse employees, Franque Minor II, 35 of Maryland, and Mario Jones Jr., 21 of Woodbridge. Both men were charged with embezzlement and larceny with the intent to distribute. Both men were also employed by Fairfax County Public Schools.

Detectives continue to comb through a significant amount of evidence to determine the extent of the embezzlement. Preliminarily, detectives believe as many as 35,000 laptops were stolen with an estimated value of over \$2 million. Detectives believe the offenses date back to November of 2020. Anyone with information about this embezzlement is asked to call detectives at 703-256-8035. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone – 1-866-411-TIPS.

FCPD Investigates Inmate Death

Detectives from Fairfax County Police Major Crimes Bureau are investigating the death of Glenn Myer, 61, who was an inmate at the Adult Detention Center. On July 15, Myer was transported to Fairfax Hospital for a medical emergency. Myer died Monday while in ICU. Myer was suffering from a terminal illness at the time of his death. Preliminarily, there are no signs of foul play. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner will conduct an autopsy to determine the exact manner and cause of his death.



Glenn Myer

Myer was charged on Dec. 19, 2020, with aggravated malicious wounding. He had been in the custody of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office since his arrest. His arrest stemmed from a Dec. 17, 2020, incident where he shot another person in his apartment. When officers arrived, he continued his acts of violence by shooting at the responding officers. The officers discharged their firearms striking Myer and ending the threat. Myer was transported to Fairfax Hospital immediately after the event. Upon his release from the hospital, he was taken to the detention center and charged. Myer has remained in the custody of the Sheriff's office since his arrest. Additionally, Myer was charged with two counts of attempted capital murder of a law enforcement officer, attempted first degree murder, and four counts of the use of a firearm in the commission of a felony related to the December 2020 event.

By policy, FCPD investigates all Fairfax County Sheriff's Office in-custody deaths. In December 2020, Officers responded to an apartment in the 2000 block of Peach Orchard Drive at 10:49 a.m. for a shot person on Dec. 17, 2020. A teenager called 911 advising that he had been shot in the face by a man who lives in the apartment. The teenager sought shelter from the armed assailant in a bedroom and told the police dispatcher that the man was actively trying to break into the room.

Officers assigned to our Patrol Bureau, Special Operations Division, Traffic Division and a Deputy assigned to the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office arrived on scene and attempted to negotiate with the armed man from outside of the apartment. These negotiations yielded no progress toward deescalating the situation, and it was evident the victim's life was in imminent danger. To preserve life, officers entered the home and encountered a 61-year-old man from Falls Church, who was armed with a gun. Two officers discharged their weapons, striking the man in the upper body. The victim suffered injuries not considered to be life-threatening and was treated at a nearby hospital.

NVTA Adopts \$625 Million Six Year Program

Fairfax County lands \$336 million.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
GAZETTE PACKET

With the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority unanimous vote on June 14 to adopt the FY2022-2027 Six Year Program, Fairfax County, Virginia's most populous jurisdiction, was allotted more than \$336 million, 53.7 percent of the \$625 million in approved infrastructure project funds to impact the region at large. NVTA received proposals for 26 FY2022-2026 SYP transportation candidate projects, and they adopted 20 multimodal transportation projects for full or partial funding. Six projects are in Fairfax County; one in the Town of Herndon; one in the City of Falls Church; one in the City of Alexandria; one in Arlington County; four in Loudoun County; four in Prince William County; and one in the City of Manassas.

The vote was both unanimous and nonpartisan. "That is just a very impressive thing to be able to do in this day and age," said Phyllis J. Randall, NVTA chair and Loudoun County chair (D-At-Large), who spoke at a press conference Friday morning, July 15.

"The fact that we passed this out last night unanimously, with every member of the Authority except one, being in the room. Everyone from Alexandria to Dumfries to Manassas to Loudoun, the entire region was there ... and of course, we also have State Senator Jennifer Boysko representing the State Senate and two gubernatorial appointees," Randall said. Del. Dave A. LaRock (R-33), who was put on the NVTA board by the governor and whose House district is north and west of Leesburg, was not present.

Monica Brockman, chief executive officer of NVTA said during the press conference that NVTA is in its sixth funding program since the passage of HB 2313, which is the transportation funding bill. "We are looking at slightly over \$3 billion (\$3.12 billion) in regional multimodal congestion relief solutions right here in Northern Virginia."

The projects will impact the region in three ways: first, as a multimodal/corridor focus with an emphasis on roadway/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on the Rt. 1 corridor; second, the projects include transportation technology, decarbonizing transit fleets, and an ITS (Intelligent Transportation System)

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

FY2022-2027 Six Year Program: **Adopted by the Authority**

7/14/2022

Jurisdiction	Application ID	Project Title	Requested Amount	Approved Amount
Arlington County	ARL-021	Ballston-MU Metrorail Station West Entrance*	\$ 80,000,000	\$ 80,000,000
Fairfax County	FFX-126	Fairfax County Parkway Widening: Nomes Court to Route 123*	\$ 108,000,000	\$ 108,000,000
Fairfax County	FFX-124	8 New Battery Electric Buses - Fairfax Connector Buses for Tysons to Franconia Service	\$ 10,000,000	\$ 10,000,000
Fairfax County	FFX-131	Richmond Highway Widening From Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway/Jeff Todd Way to Sherwood Hall Lane*	\$ 60,207,038	\$ 60,207,038
Fairfax County	FFX-128	Richmond Highway (Route 1) BRT*	\$ 80,000,000	\$ 80,000,000
Fairfax County	FFX-121	Soapstone Drive Extension: Sunset Hills Road to Sunrise Valley Drive*	\$ 73,793,037	\$ 73,793,037
Fairfax County	FFX-125	Seven Corners Ring Road Improvements: Arlington Boulevard (Route 50) Westbound Ramp to Castle Place/Sleepy Hollow Road	\$ 94,800,000	\$ 4,200,000
Loudoun County	LDN-023	Route 7 Corridor ITS Implementation Program	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 2,500,000
Loudoun County	LDN-025	Route 7 Improvements: Route 9 to Dulles Greenway	\$ 20,000,000	\$ 20,000,000
Loudoun County	LDN-024	Ryan Road Widening (Phase 2): Evergreen Mills Road to Beaverdam Drive	\$ 16,000,000	\$ 16,000,000
Loudoun County	LDN-028	Loudoun County Parkway Interchange at US 50*	\$ 35,250,000	\$ 35,250,000
Prince William County	PWC-028	University Boulevard Extension: Devlin Road to Wellington Road	\$ 53,000,000	\$ 53,000,000
Prince William County	PWC-036	Old Bridge Road Widening: Colby Drive to Minnieville Road	\$ 25,000,000	\$ 25,000,000
Prince William County	PWC-027	Van Buren Road North Extension: Route 234 to Cardinal Drive	\$ 80,000,000	\$ 8,000,000
Prince William County	PWC-030	Route 1 at Route 123 Interchange	\$ 61,200,000	\$ 3,000,000
City of Alexandria	ALX-018	West End Transitway Phase 1b: South Van Dorn Street and Bridge Design*	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 5,000,000
City of Alexandria	ALX-020	Alexandria Bike and Pedestrian Trails Construction and Reconstruction: Holmes Run Trail - Dora Kelly Fair-weather Crossing Bridge	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 5,000,000
City of Falls Church	CFC-008	North Washington Street Multimodal Improvements Project: Great Falls Street to Gresham Place	\$ 22,500,000	\$ 22,500,000
City of Manassas	MAN-002	Liberia Avenue 3rd Lane Eastbound: Route 28 to Euclid Avenue	\$ 8,851,639	\$ 8,851,639
Town of Herndon	HND-005	Herndon Parkway Improvements at Worldgate Drive Extension	\$ 4,581,000	\$ 4,581,000
TOTAL			\$ 845,682,714	\$ 624,882,714
NVTA-approved Regional Revenue				\$ 626,290,870
Unprogrammed				\$ 1,408,156

NVTA approved funding amounts for candidate applications from eight jurisdictions.

along the Rt. 7 corridor; third, the projects represent a balance of transit, bike and pedestrian, and transportation technology projects, spread geographically.

Randall said that NVTA is the "financial engine of the Commonwealth" in many respects, and congestion relief is its first goal. "If we cannot get home ... to our jobs, if we cannot get around, it does affect not only our economy but the economy of the entire Commonwealth. Transportation is a quality-of-life issue," Randall said. NVTA works on a 30 percent split, meaning that 30 percent of NVTA funds go back to localities. They can use those funds in whatever way they choose. "If they want to do bike and ped (pedestrian) with that 30 percent money, they are certainly welcome to," Randall said.

Seventeen of the 20 approved roadway transit, intersection, bike and pedestrian, and transportation technology projects are fully funded in line with requested funding amounts. Three are partially funded, preliminary engineering phase only.

Two of NVTA's three most significant funded projects are in Fairfax County: \$108 million for Fairfax County Parkway Widening, with a congestion reduction relative to cost rank, or CRRC, of #3 out of the 26 candidate applicants. \$80 million is for the Richmond

Highway Route 1 BRT, bus rapid transit. CRRC rank #17. Arlington County's Ballston-MU Metro Rail Station West Entrance is tied funding-wise at \$80 million.

FAIRFAX COUNTY CHAIRMAN Jeffrey C. McKay (D-At-Large) said, "We regularly talk about our goal in Fairfax County to 'move people' no matter how they choose or need to travel. I could not be more pleased with this investment in our community. I am especially thrilled for how we are transforming bus service in Fairfax County. The Fairfax Connector will add eight battery-powered vehicles, providing a clean, quiet, and efficient trip for customers traveling between transportation and employment hubs."

McKay said that when construction begins for The One, the county's new BRT, or bus rapid transit, in the Route 1 corridor, it "will completely remake this section of the county from a congested, aging commuter route into a vibrant, mixed-use model of living, working, and relaxing."

Mark Duceman, transportation planner at the Town of Herndon, noted that the NVTA funding of \$4.581 million does not fund the actual roadway extension for the Herndon Parkway at Worldgate Drive Extension project. The road-

way project depends on the town's additional state funding under VDOT's Smart-Scale funding program. While the town is in Fairfax County, it is a separate jurisdiction.

Duceman explained that the project is directed toward the signalization of the future intersection of Worldgate Drive Extension with Herndon Parkway. "The signalization project is to relieve peak-hour congestion by increasing roadway capacity via additional turning lanes, raised median, and mode-separated ADA streetscape and cycle track. Ultimately, the project will result in improved traffic flow, safety, and multimodal circulation for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders for access to Metrorail as well as local and regional destinations," he said.

NVTA is a regional governmental entity of 17 members established to plan, prioritize, and fund regional transportation programs. The program funds what the Authority has deemed to be the most important transportation projects that would relieve congestion in relation to cost and improve the quality of life for Northern Virginians. The program focuses on geographic and modal balance.

What Makes a Project More Likely to Receive Funding?

Determining which projects land funding and which do not is tied to four key components of NVTA's project selection process. It begins with an eligibility review. The candidate project must be in a NOVA jurisdiction. Second, a quantitative analysis of congestion reduction relative to costs and long-term benefits. Third, qualitative analysis, past performances, external funding, projective readiness, and modal and geographic balance. Finally, NVTA considers public comment.

NVTA received 1,609 comments from 448 members of the public on the 26 candidate projects, according to the NVTA approved summary minutes. The public comment period ran from April 15, 2022 to May 22, 2022. On June 2, NVTA's CEO Monica Backmon posted a summary report of public comments along with the comments themselves on NVTA's website.

NVTA funds pedestrian and bicycle modes only if they lead to a more extensive transportation system.

"If there is a bike path that leads you to the Metro, then that is something we will look at. But for NVTA overall, our first goal is to do congestion relief," Randall said.

NVTA's next Call for Regional Transportation Projects is anticipated for May 2023.

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BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 3

are assisting their teachers, view the video clips at www.seniorscientist.org. To volunteer, contact donaledge@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, or visit www.alnv.org.

United Community (formerly UCM), 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, seeks volunteers for Food Pantry assistance, Early Learning Center teacher aides, basic needs counselors, youth tutors and mentors, office administration/data entry, and community outreach. Flexible hours and schedules. Opportunities for all ages to serve, including community service hours. More info at ucmagency.org/volunteer-opportunities or email volunteer@ucmagency.org.

Operation Paws for Homes, a Virginia based 501(c)(3) organization seeks volunteers, especially to foster dogs. See www.ophrescue.org for information and all volunteer opportunities.

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 or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Line Dance Instructor needed for the Gum Springs Senior Program once a week on either Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Volunteer Solutions, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711.

Volunteer Fairfax makes it easy for individuals and families, youth and seniors, corporate groups and civic clubs to volunteer. Fulfill hours, give back, or pay it forward through a variety service options. Visit www.volunteerfairfax.org or call 703-246-3460.

Fairfax County's Community Services Board is seeking volunteer office assistants. Volunteers are needed to assist CSB staff with greeting guests, making reminder phone calls, data entry, filing, shredding, stocking shelves, and other duties as needed. Hours are flexible, but would be during normal business hours. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/viva/volunteers.htm for more.

Yoga Teachers are needed. Help improve a person's well-being by teaching yoga classes to adults who are staying in a residential facility. The day/time is flexible, but would be during the week. Prior yoga instruction is required. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/viva/volunteers.htm for more.

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.

Respite Care volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a 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 Kristin Martin at 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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 and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The Gum Springs Senior Program in Alexandria is looking for a Line Dance Instructor. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The Kingstowne Center for Active Adults in Alexandria needs Instructors for the following classes: Country-Western Line Dance, Hula Hoop and African Style Dance. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The Hollin Hall Senior Center in Alexandria needs instructors for the following classes: Basic Woodworking, Italian and Ballroom Dance. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

ty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The Mount Vernon Adult Day Health Care Center in Alexandria needs front desk volunteers and patient Card Players. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The Advisory Board of the Joe and Fredona Gartlan Center for mental health is looking for volunteers. The board meets the second Tuesday of the month from 9-11 a.m. at Gartlan Center 8119 Holland Road.

Mount Vernon At Home is a community Village, providing support, services, and community to seniors in the area. Volunteers are needed for a variety of services, with transportation to medical appointments are greatest need. They can also use help with in-home handyman work and handling IT problems. If you are interested in volunteering, contact us at info@mountvernonathome.org or call 703-303-4060.

Volunteer Advocates for Nursing Home & Assisted Living Residents needed throughout Northern Virginia. Contact the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltcombudsman/, or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-324-5861, TTY 711.

Hollin Hall Senior Center is looking for a DJ ballroom and dance instructor. The Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road.

The Mount Vernon Adult Day Health Care Center is looking for social companions for participants on Fridays from 3-5 p.m. and front desk volunteers on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 11 a.m.-noon and 3:30-4:30 p.m. Located at 8350 Richmond Highway. For these and other volunteer opportunities call 703-324-5406 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults.

ONGOING

Mobile DMV. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Sherwood Hall Library. Two programs, DMV Connect and DMV 2 GO, will provide full DMV service to the Route 1 area. At the Sherwood Hall service centers, customers can apply or renew their ID cards, drivers licenses, take road and knowledge tests, apply for special ID cards, get copies of their driving records, obtain vehicle titles, license plates, decals and transcripts, order disabled parking placards or plates, purchase an EZ-Pass transponder and more. A full list of services is available at www.dmv.virginia.gov.

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CALENDAR

NOW THRU AUG. 31

Creative Summer Programs. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery in Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Learn techniques in drawing, mixed media, mosaic, jewelry, watercolor, and more from local artists. Delve into creative exploration solo or with friends. Sign up for the programs that inspire you and make your own “stay-cation” art experience. Visit the website: <https://DelRayArtisans.org/programs/creative-summer/>

NOW THRU OCT. 17

Hummingbird Photo Exhibition. At the Historic House at Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. For those who can't get enough of the beauty of hummingbirds, a group of local photographers are mounting an exhibition this summer. The title of the show is “A Bouquet of Hummingbirds,” and it will feature works from more than 20 area artists and include hummingbirds from all over the Western Hemisphere. All profits from the sale of photos will be donated to the Friends of Green Spring, a non-profit organization devoted to maintaining the gardens and furthering public education and outreach.

NOW THRU SEPT. 10

Yoga Sessions. 12-2:15 p.m. Yoga at the National Museum of the United States Army hosted by Honest Soul Yoga, 1775 Liberty Drive, Fort Belvoir. Honest Soul Yoga and The Army Historical Foundation invites you to take a moment to de-stress by enjoying an afternoon of yoga at the Museum. Join trained instructors for an afternoon of flow and sound meditation. After class, grab a coffee and some healthy snacks in the Museum Café or take some time to explore the exhibits.

NOW THRU JULY 31

SOAR Exhibition. At Van Landingham Gallery, Studio 311, Torpedo Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. The Torpedo Factory Artists' Association's Van Landingham Gallery presents SOAR, a new show featuring artworks by Joyce Zipperer, Samantha Shelton, Guido Zanni, Tom Kelly, Eileen O'Brien, Jennifer Brewer Stone and Rebecca McNeely. Artworks include original hand pulled prints, photography, paintings and sculpture. Additionally, the gallery offers small gifts, art cards, block-printed totes and jewelry.

NOW THRU JULY 31

“Tick, Tick...Boom!” Presented by Monumental Theatre Company in Alexandria. The story follows an aspiring composer, Jon, in New York City in 1990 who worries he made the wrong career choice as he approaches his 30th birthday. Tickets will be available online at <http://www.monumentaltheatre.org/>

THURSDAY/JULY 21

Music at the Market at Old Town North. 6-7 p.m. At Montgomery Park, 901 N Royal St., Alexandria. The Old Town North Community Partnership, with support from NOTICE, The



California artist Shima Shanti's artwork will be featured at Nepenthe Gallery in Alexandria on Thursday, July 21, 2022.

Special Exhibit by California Artist Shima Shanti

6 p.m. At Nepenthe Gallery, 7918 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Nepenthe Gallery is pleased to announce that Shima Shanti, one of the west coast artists, will be the featured artist and speaker. The evening's exhibit will showcase paintings by Shima, a San Diego based fine artist who uses beeswax and fire in the ancient medium of 3-D encaustic art. The exhibit will feature nine of Shima's works.

Old Town North Alliance and local businesses and residents, present Music at the Market on the third Thursday of the month throughout the summer. Head to the Old Town North Farmer's and Artisans Market to browse, pick up a bite and picnic in the park while soaking in great live music. Rain dates are July 28 and September 8.

THURSDAY/JULY 21

Old Town Art Walk. At various locations in Old Town Alexandria. Enjoy a self-guided tour of Old Town Alexandria and explore the fine art and studio crafts found in art galleries and boutique shops on the third Thursday of each month, May to October. The stroll is a great activity after an early dinner, or before enjoy-

ing a meal at one of Old Town Alexandria's restaurants. The Old Town Art Walk is presented by the Old Town Business Association.

FRIDAY/JULY 22

Horror Trivia. At Lee-Fendall House & Gardens, Alexandria. 7-9 p.m. Staff members at Carlyle House Historic Park and the Lee-Fendall House Museum combine their knowledge to create bi-weekly trivia nights throughout the summer in the beautiful gardens of the Lee-Fendall House. Test your knowledge on everything from pop culture to history. Registration must be done in advance. Limited capacity so register early!

Tickets are \$8 per person and include snacks and one complimentary drink. Additional drinks

can be purchased at our bar. Teams are limited to 6 people, ages 21+ only.

SATURDAY/JULY 23

Floral Design Workshop - Fun with Tropicals. 1-2:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. (16-Adult) Get a taste for the exotic with an arrangement of tropical flowers made with the help of certified floral designer Betty Ann Galway. Register for both the class and the \$30 supply fee. Bring disinfected shears and a short box or container that will help you transport your arrangement home. \$40 per person (plus \$30 supply fee). Code F67.Z4X1.

SATURDAY/JULY 23

Auxiliary Improv Show. 7:30-9:30 p.m. At The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria. They're putting on a show! Everything will be completely made up on the spot, so everything performed is totally unique and limited to this night only! Suggested \$10 donation to help defray the costs of space rental.

SUNDAY/JULY 24

The Hot Lanes Jazz Orchestra. 7 p.m. At Fort Hunt Park, Pavilion A, Alexandria. Outdoors and free. Bring a chair or grab a picnic table early - a cool drink helps as well!

JULY 25-29

Summer Art Camp. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans invites young campers ages 8-12 years old to spend a week creating art with professional local artist instruction. All artist supplies are provided. Details and registration: <https://delrayartisans.org/programs/creative-summer/#event=art-camp-2022>

TUESDAY/JULY 26

Simpson Park Demonstration Garden. Tuesdays 10 a.m. – 11 a.m., Simpson Park Demonstration Garden, 420 E. Monroe Ave., Alexandria. From The Ground Up - Garden Challenges? Simple steps to help your container garden or whole yard, whether it's adding soil amendments, the value of a soil sample, or other easy solutions. Contact mgnv.org.

THE BIRCHMERE

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

JULY

Sun. Jul. 24: CROCE PLAYS CROCE Performed by A.J. CROCE \$39.50
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An “Urban Powwow” in Alexandria’s Ben Brenman Park

FROM PAGE 8

orated with jingles, beadwork, stitchery and other handmade crafts. Rico Newman from Upper Marlboro, Maryland, welcomed all in his native Piscataway Conoy language and gave thanks to the Earth, water and winds.

“English is a foreign language brought here by immigrants,” Zotigh told the gathering.

Around 25 couples entered the Potato Dance Contest, a

competition in which each pair faced each other and danced gently with their hands behind their backs while holding a potato between their two foreheads. If either person touched the potato or if it fell, the couple was disqualified. The last couple standing won \$50. “Gotta get the rhythm. Talk to your potato,” urged Zotigh.

The Washington area has around 5,000 or so Native Americans, according to Zotigh. The U.S. has around 600 tribes. Native people

prefer to be called by their tribal affiliation, he said.

Sponsors of the powwow were Running Strong for American Indian Youth (<https://indianyouth.org/>) and the Udall Foundation's Native American internship program (<https://www.udall.gov/OurPrograms/Internship/Internship.aspx>).

Jennifer Night Bird with the Red River Metis Michif tribe came from Delaware.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH/GAZETTE PACKET

Construction Underway

FROM PAGE 1

According to project information, the Fairfax County Park Authority began construction of North Hill Park at the North Hill Development located at the intersection of Richmond Highway and Dart Drive.

The contractor, Avon Corporation, is on site, and moving forward with the project, which includes clearing and grading and the construction of trails, a pavilion, pickleball courts, a half basketball court, playground and fitness areas, an open lawn area, picnic tables and benches. Construction is anticipated to be completed in spring 2023, project information said. Residents should expect occasional construction traffic on Popkins Lane entering and exiting the park through a temporary construction entrance located on the Bryant High School property.

The park site has steep slopes with very unstable clay soils which required a large site wall to be installed first to stabilize the hill for the park and housing development, project information said.

The \$1.45 million project is funded via the 2016 Park Bond and by Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development.

Embark Richmond Highway

In the big picture, the North Hill site is a piece of the Embark puzzle that is coming together for a multi-faceted project promoting revitalization along a 7.5 mile segment of the Richmond Highway Corridor.

This revitalization is highlighted by a series of mixed-use activity centers supported by a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system. Other transportation improvements of Embark include pedestrian and bicycle improvements, open space and park systems, and ultimately a three-mile extension of the Metrorail Yellow Line from Huntington to Hybla Valley, the plan description stated.

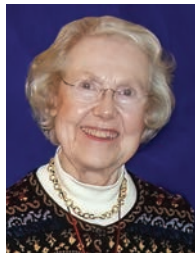
The segment for this area where the park will be located is labeled the "Lockheed Boulevard," segment.

The other eight segments are the Huntington, Penn Daw, Beacon Hill, Hybla Valley, Gum Springs, South County Center, Woodlawn and Fort Belvoir. One of the five guidelines for urban design in the Embark plan is to cluster housing around transportation nodes like the future Lockheed Boulevard BRT station.

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Obituary



Sarah (Sally) Bond Welch Geary was born October 6, 1921, daughter of Robert Sellman Gray Welch, MD of Annapolis and Sarah (Sally) Maria Bond Welch of Calvert County. After graduation from Hood College Sally taught kindergarten in Annapolis then married LT John T. Geary from Phoenix, Arizona. Their duty stations included San Diego and Long Beach, CA; Pearl Harbor, HI; and Norfolk and Alexandria, VA. Sally pursued her interests in music and historic preservation as a member of the first Board of Historic Annapolis, Junior League docent at Gunston Hall, and member of the DAR and the Colonial Dames. Her most rewarding activity was participating in the New Life Series, a Bible study conducted by the Rev. Everett Fullam in Washington, D.C., and serving on the steering committee. As long as she could remember, Sally tried to live in obedience to the Golden Rule. She died on July 16 and was predeceased by her husband, CAPT John T. Geary, USN (Ret) and her brother, Robert B. Welch, MD. She is survived by her son, CAPT John Welch Geary, USN (Ret) and his wife, Kathleen; her grandson, Robert Geary; and her granddaughter, Meredith Hawley, her husband, Kevin Hawley, and their daughter, Natalie.

Obituary

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More Than I Bargained For



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As a longtime homeowner of a historic home, one dating back to the early 1800s, to say there's ongoing upkeep/maintenance required is to state the obvious. What wouldn't be so obvious is the total inability of yours truly, cancer notwithstanding, to do any kind of constructive, presumed-to-be-within-the-man's purview-type repairs. Moreover, home improvement projects and/or any number of garden variety/common sense modifications like adding shelves, changing light switches/adding a dimmer, fixing a toilet, hanging pictures, et. cetera, are also outside of my comfort zone. A zone which barely exists. Nothing too complicated in the scheme of things mind you, but way too complicated for me. In addition, as you might imagine, tools are not my friends. In fact, they are my sworn enemies. If I pick up a hammer or a chain saw (which I do own), I'm more likely to hurt myself than I am to hit my target. I can live with my shortcomings. However, it's becoming increasingly difficult for my wife, Dina, to endure my incompetence.

Aside from my shortcomings, not being able to do anything costs money. And to hire anybody to do these kinds of homeowner tasks costs big money, usually a retail-type of cost to what it might cost compared to what it might cost a more capable homeowner – unlike myself, to do the job himself (wholesale). And other than Ghostbusters, who you gonna call? If you're lucky, you have a referral to somebody reliable and knowledgeable. If you're me, you don't so you have to find some other trusted resource. And that resource amazingly exists online. You simply list your project, your zip code and other pertinent information (cell phone and email specifically) and wait for the feedback. It's almost immediate. Within seconds almost, the phone rings and/or your email receives – with offers. Within these offers are typically star-type evaluations and comments from previous users of this specific service. It's all, in my limited experience, reassuring and so I've hired these "pros" on multiple occasions and so far, so good. I still feel helpless, but I don't feel directionless – if that's even a word.

But there's a downside. The amount of communication either over the phone or electronically before the job and/or after the job has been completed is relentless. It's nonstop. Initially, there is the solicitation of the job which spawns any number of calls/emails offering. Once you're able to commit and hire the pro, the solicitations don't stop. On occasion, I've received calls/emails for another day or two until my non-reply eventually stops the outreach. It's intrusive enough before the job, but after, it's worse. In the pursuit of feedback, presumably (I've only responded electronically, never on the phone though), the calls continue for days. The caller ID tells me who's calling so I don't have to answer but I still make note – mentally, of who called. I don't tally the calls, but I can tell you, it's been upwards of a dozen over a couple of days – along with emails. I can appreciate that the service wants feedback from the person who hired the pro to post it on their site to educate the public, so to speak, but enough is enough. A good faith effort to contact me is all that's required. If I don't respond after a few calls, leave me be.

Nevertheless, because of this service, I have been able, recently to get out of my own way and let a professional handle the work. And so far, I have had good luck – with a plumber, an electrician, and a gutter/air-duct-cleaning service, to name a few. I feel as if we've made some progress, which as the owner of a historic home (yes designated as such), is a constant battle, one which I have consistently lost – for years. But I don't feel as irresponsible since I have a resource. I still can't do any homeowner-type stuff myself, but I can certainly hire someone. I just wish the cost – literally and figuratively, for the experience was less. Because, unfortunately for me, the demand far outweighs the supply, and the end is nowhere in sight.

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

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NEWS

Why Are You Pointing Your Gun at Me?

FROM PAGE 1

okay? We got called because they said somebody had a gun and was threatening people with it at the IHOP across the street, alright. The officer saw you three running from that IHOP, that's why we're having the response that we are, alright?" said the officer.

The three juveniles were detained and later released to their parents. An investigation continues.

SIX DAYS LATER, Fairfax County Chief of Police Kevin Davis held a press conference.

"We want you to be concerned when you see a video like that," he said.

"I know why you watch this and see a police officer pointing a gun at another person, that makes us all kind of cringe. If it didn't make us cringe to see a police officer pointing a firearm at someone, something would probably be wrong with us," Davis said.

Davis shared the level of distress from the 911 caller. Police learned that three juveniles entered the restaurant around 9:12 p.m.

"One of the juveniles threatened the hostess while another lifted his shirt revealing what appeared to be a handgun in his waistband," according to police reports.

The restaurant employee, who did not call earlier, called 911 around 11 p.m., saying that the group was back, circling the building, and were trying to get her to come out of the building.

"Can you come please? They are coming inside. Please, they are coming inside. Please, please, please."

"That call for service was made with great emotion. She was scared. She saw a gun, she was threatened and she called the Fairfax County Police department and we responded," said Davis.

Her call was not played to protect her identity, said Davis.

"This was a priority response to a 911 gun call," he said. "Adrenaline is running high when you're dispatched to a 911 gun call. They're getting information from the dispatcher that's compelling, compelling."

The police officers that responded to this call acted lawfully, acted in accordance with Fairfax County police training and policies, and in accordance with community expectations, Davis said.

"Pointing a gun at someone in 2022 in America, a police officer pointing a firearm at someone is very serious, very serious. But if you just go by this viral video that kind of popped last weekend, I think there's an assumption that this person was a passerby. He was not a passerby. There's an assumption that maybe this person had nothing to do with the gun call. He did," said Davis.

"A viral video that lacks context can make its way around the world twice while the truth is putting its shoes on," said Chief Davis. "We're here five or six days later because we wanted to get it right. We can get it fast and not get it right or we can get it right. Now, we have enough information that we want to share it with our community."

SUPERVISOR RODNEY LUSK will convene a virtual public safety town hall meeting on July 21 at 6 p.m. to address community concerns about multiple incidents of police use of force in the last few weeks.

Fairfax County Police officers shot and killed two men in separate incidents. A Reston man, Christian Parker, 37, was shot and killed in the parking lot of Springfield Town Center on June 30. Jasper Aaron Lynch, 26, was shot and killed in a McLean home on July 7 in a mental health crisis. (The week of July 1-7, Fairfax County Police reported that they responded to 194 calls for service for "persons experiencing mental health crisis.")

"Over the past three weeks, there have been a series of high profile incidents involving the Fairfax County Police Department," said Lusk in a statement released as he announced the date of the town meeting. "I share the concerns that I've heard from many in the community about both the nature of these incidents and the frequency at which they are occurring."

"I remain completely committed to providing the transparency required to ensure trust between our community and FCPD," Lusk said. Lusk is chairman of the Board of Supervisors Public Safety Committee, and as such provides policy oversight for the police.

BOTH FATAL incidents were recorded on officers' body cameras, and that footage will be released along with audio recordings "within 30 days or when it no longer jeopardizes the integrity of the investigation."

Per department policy, the officers have been placed on restricted duty pending the outcome of an administrative investigation by the Internal Affairs Bureau.

An independent review will be conducted of the incidents by the Fairfax County Independent Police Auditor, Richard G. Schott. The Office of the Independent Police Auditor was established by the Board of Supervisors on the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, in the wake of the police shooting death of John Geer of Springfield. The recommendations of the commission also led to the timeline for release of information.

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