

# CONNECTION

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PHOTO BY CHRIS PINOVER

SEPTEMBER 28 - OCTOBER 4, 2022

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## OPINION

# 'Is This the Fast I Desire?'

## Reflections on Yom Kippur and the Fight for Workers Rights.

BY DAVID BRODER



Next week, my family will join Jews around the world in observing Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year. Known as the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur is a time for prayer, reflection, repentance and fasting.

Every year, we read from the Book of Isaiah, in which God sends the prophet Isaiah to admonish those whose wicked acts undermine their fasting and prayers.

The people ask, "Why, when we fasted, did you not see? When we starved our bodies, did you pay no heed?"

Through Isaiah, God answers:

"Because on your fast day, you see to your business and oppress all your laborers! Because you fast in strife and contention, and you strike with a wicked fist! Your fasting today is not such as to make your voice heard on high.

"Is such the fast I desire, a day for men to starve their bodies? Is it bowing the head like a bullrush and lying in sackcloth and ashes? Do you call that a fast, a day when the Lord is favorable? No, this is the fast I desire: to unlock the fetters of wickedness, and untie the cords of the yoke. To let the oppressed go free, to break off every yoke."

In selecting this text for Yom Kippur, the rabbis were clearly making two points: our prayers are meaningless if our actions undermine them, and how we treat workers is central to our faith.

These lessons are as critical today as they were in Isaiah's time of the 8th century BCE.

In recent years, the pandemic has shone a spotlight on the inequities that have always existed in our economy. Frontline workers – disproportionately Black, Brown, API and immigrant – are called essential but not treated as essential.

However, in response, essential workers are rising up and demanding better. From Starbucks baristas to Amazon workers to Fairfax County employees, working people are now forming and joining unions in record numbers.

According to data from the National Labor Relations Board, workers across the country have won 80% more union elections in 2022 than the year before, with twice as many workers represented. Meanwhile, here in Virginia, tens of thousands of county and city work-

ers – mental health workers, educators, sanitation workers, and first responders – have won collective bargaining rights for the first time in Fairfax, Arlington, Alexandria, Loudoun and Richmond.

The benefits of unionization are clear. Joining together with your co-workers to bargain a contract is the best way to improve your pay, benefits, and working conditions. While raising standards for all workers, collective bargaining also closes racial and gender pay gaps, ensuring a more equitable, resilient economy for all. By improving recruitment and retention, collective bargaining enhances the quality of public services. So, it's no wonder that 71% of Americans support labor unions, according to the latest Gallup poll.

Unfortunately, just as in the Book of Isaiah, we see those who "strike with a wicked fist" against working people. Rather than recognize their workers' unions and sit down at the bargaining table, massive corporations like Starbucks and Amazon are attacking working people. Here in Virginia, many jurisdictions still refuse to pass union rights for their frontline employees.

Earlier this year, the NLRB accused Starbucks of 29 unfair labor practice charges, including over 200 violations of the National Labor Relations Act. The complaint accuses Starbucks of threatening and intimidating workers, firing workers, closing stores that voted to have a union, reducing workers' pay, and more.

The lesson of Isaiah, central to the Yom Kippur holiday, is that for our prayers to be heard above, we must take action and live our values here on earth. It's time for Starbucks, Amazon and all employers to live their supposed values and come to the bargaining table with their workers.

Doing so will mean a more just, more prosperous, and brighter future for us all. As the Book of Isaiah says: "If you banish the yoke from your midst, the menacing hand, and evil speech ... then shall your light shine in the darkness."

David Broder is the President of SEIU Virginia 512, whose union members are county and city employees, and home care workers, dedicated to building an economy that works for everyone. He lives with his family in Oakton.

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# NEWS

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON / THE CONNECTION



Students at Herndon High School walk out in protest against the VDOE's revised 2022 Model Policies.



Students at Herndon High School walk out in protest against the VDOE's revised 2022 Model Policies



Students at Herndon High School walk out in protest against the VDOE's revised 2022 Model Policies

## 'Hateful, Ignorant and Wrong'

Students around the state protest Youngkin revisions to VDOE policies, advocate for trans- and binary-student rights.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

It's not about bathrooms like it was never about water fountains. That is what a hand-made protest sign held by two Herndon High School students said the morning of Sept. 26 during a school-allowed protest activity. Approximately 300 students gathered in front of the school at 9:45 a.m. as part of a county and state-wide protest demonstration organized by Pride Liberation Project in response revisions to transgender policies in public schools that some called "cruel and anti-trans."

According to a communication from the principal of West Potomac High School to parents, 1,400 students walked out there. Walkouts were planned at most high schools in Fairfax County, Arlington and more around the state.

On Friday, Sept. 16, the Virginia Department of Education released its revised 18-page 2022 Model Policies, a revision of the Model Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students in Virginia's Public Schools (the "2021 Model Policies"), adopted on March 4, 2021 under Gov. Ralph Northam (D).

The VDOE's revisions include banning transgender students from using restrooms that align with their gender identity, ban-

ning gender-neutral pronouns, and banning social transitioning and expressing their gender identity.

The revisions prohibit school districts from protecting closeted students, requiring school districts to out students to parents. In addition, the revisions allow people to maliciously misgender students and allow parents to deny a student access to school counseling services, regardless of the student's wishes and mental health.

The revisions remove provisions requiring school districts to minimize gender segregation in extracurriculars and train school mental health professionals to support LGBTQIA+ students.

A tweet on Sept. 26 from U.S. Rep. Gerald E. Connolly (D-11) @GerryConnolly said, "This policy is fundamentally wrong and its outcomes tragically unacceptable. It helps no one, but it harms many. There is no justification for such transparent cruelty in Virginia."

Connolly and others said that what the VDOE proposed would have tragic consequences.

"There is one data point to keep in mind as this egregious new policy is debated and implemented: a young LGBTQ person attempts suicide every 45 seconds in America," according to the Trevor Project. "Among trans or non-binary American youth, the outlook is darker still. Transgender and non-binary



Students at Herndon High School walk out in protest against the VDOE's revised 2022 Model Policies

youth are more than twice as likely to seriously consider or attempt suicide compared to their other LGBTQ peers ... A peer-reviewed study published in 2021 found the transgender and non-binary youth who reported gender identity acceptance from at least one adult in their lives were 33 percent less likely to report a suicide attempt in the past year."

Public Comment is open for comment concerning the new policy on trans students in Virginia by Governor Glenn Youngkin (R) at <https://townhall.virginia.gov/L/Comments.cfm?GDocForumID=1953>

### Comments by Students:

**Beatrice Stotz, Fairfax HS student:** "As a transgender student, I just want a safe and accepting environment where my peers and I can thrive. Unfortunately, many do not feel we are entitled to such a luxury. These proposed regulations do not "protect students" as they are touted but instead actively harm us and erase our existence for political gain. I'm fortunate enough to have a supportive community, but many of my friends and peers cannot say the same, and these policies would put their lives at risk. I hope for schools that allow students to be themselves, but we can only achieve that goal if our education leaders reject these harmful guidelines."

**Nadia Garcia, Madison HS student:** "Our Governor is attempting to silence the voices of young people. He seems to think that denying us basic rights will make us stop existing, but it will only endanger our mental health and leave us vulnerable to harassment. Young people are walking out across Virginia because we know we can build schools that affirm everyone's humanity and let students succeed."

**Jaeda Fontaine-Rasaiah, Langley HS:** "The proposed guidelines defy logic. Erasing students' identities and allowing parents to unilaterally opt students out of trained mental health counseling doesn't advance anyone's ability to have a voice in their education. My peers and I are walking out because we believe schools should be inclusive spaces where students can thrive, not have their rights undermined by a politician's electoral future."

## Closer Look at Higher Education in Virginia

BY DELEGATE KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM



My advice to young people has always been to go to any college you want as long as it is in Virginia. Whatever the criteria for choosing an institution to pursue higher learning, Virginia colleges and universities can meet the need. For liberal arts, engineering, science, performing arts, big or small, there is a school well-ranked nationally that will meet the criteria. While the community college system is organized statewide, all other institutions are individually planned and administered with a personality all their own. Taking a granddaughter visiting college campuses recently reminded me once again of the diversity and strength of our colleges and universities.

Behind the beautiful campuses and excellent program offerings there is a story that tells us that we need to move beyond bragging about what we have to making some fundamental changes that will strengthen an already great system. A study report on higher education in

the Commonwealth written by the think-tank organization, Education Reform, entitled "Fair Funding and the Future of Higher Education in Virginia" issued earlier this month points the way to some needed reforms.

According to the report, "A state of de facto segregation by income and race exists in Virginia higher education. At some of Virginia's wealthiest public institutions, barely one out of ten students come from low-income households ..." The report concludes that "the sources of the unfair distribution of access to higher education and uneven outcomes for those who enroll in the Commonwealth's colleges and universities are manifold, but unfair state funding creates significant drag on Virginia higher education's power to transform lives, communities, and economies."

In 2021 Virginia ranked 38th lowest in the nation for appropriation per full-time equivalent student while the state is the 12th wealthiest in the nation. State funding covers just 48 percent of the cost of public higher education today while in 2001 it was covering 77 percent

of the cost. Tuition is 4th highest in the nation among comprehensive institutions. George Mason University is the second best university in the state for increasing social mobility in the state, but it receives the smallest appropriation per student of any of the four-year institutions.

The findings of the report are not new to those who follow higher education issues in the state. The State Council of Higher Education issued a report earlier this year, "Virginia Cost and Funding Need Study Report," with many of the same findings and with a proposed conceptual framework to fund higher education in a way that makes it "affordable, equitable, and transformative." It is important that future legislative sessions follow through with the findings of these two reports. As I stated from the beginning, Virginia has an excellent system of higher education, and it is from this base that important changes can be made to make it an even better system. Funding considerations need to go beyond how long the institution has been in existence, how many of their alumni are in the legislature, or where they are located. Performance standards that demonstrate that colleges are affordable, equitable, and transformative should drive funding decisions in the future.

## Summer Is Gone, but Not Forgotten

JOHN LOVAAS



INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE

While I'm delighted to feel summer's heat begin to fade, part of me still wonders how summer slipped away so quickly. As I write this, early voting is already underway in 2022 congressional elections — a sure sign that fall indeed is here. More importantly, Reston Farmers Market berries, peaches, melons and even tomatoes have disappeared, being replaced by apples (30 or 40 varieties), pumpkins and squashes, root veggies and, yes, my favorite, broccoli. Proof from the farm that fall has arrived.

But, when one stops to think about it, it was an eventful summer in Reston.

Maybe I'm imagining it, but I think there was more energy this summer. People re-engaged, sensing the worst of the pandemic was over. We've seen it in crowded restaurants, stores, meetings and gatherings indoors and out, e.g., at Lake Anne's huge Reggae Festival. Among the many positive events of the summer are the following:

❖ After a year and a half and 58 meetings, Supervisor Walter Alcorn's handpicked task force finally delivered a new Reston Comprehensive Plan for comment by the community. This 162-page product of a 25-member group of community volunteers and developers reads like a committee job, a heavy

read but including imagination not found in standard comp plans. For example, future development must address health and wellness and equity principles. While the Plan does not include an expected population cap, it is estimated that if all the possible densities in the Plan were achieved Reston would reach a population of 110-120,000 in 30 years or so. The draft plan stresses transit-oriented development, with the greatest density nearest the transit stations. It also stresses livability in those areas, including the provision that each TSA will have at least one full athletic field — none of which currently exist. Take a look at the Reston Comprehensive Plan on Fairfax County's website and let the Supervisor know what you think.

❖ As a result of Supervisor Alcorn's call for construction of up to 400 new affordable housing units in Town Center North there are

now two responsive PPEA (public-private) proposals in play, either of which would achieve Alcorn's goal. In spite of all Fairfax County's talk of ending homelessness, no one has produced this many new affordable units in Reston in 50 years or more, so this is a really big deal. One concerning issue with this and most "affordable" housing projects in the county is the definition of affordable. When I think of "affordable" housing I think of housing for the homeless I see on the street, in the woods. Fairfax County funds rarely provide the minimalist units needed to serve these people most in need. Instead, they provide units affordable to families earning 50 or 60% of the

Average Median Income (AMI) in the County. The current AMI in this County is about \$125,000 ... e.g. teachers, other public sector employees, NOT minimum wage earners on the streets. IMHO, the major portion of the Town Center North project should provide housing solutions for the lowest-income segment of the population. If you agree, please let Supervisor Alcorn know.

❖ After nearly a year without a CEO, the new Reston Association Board of Directors identified an outstanding candidate in the state of Washington and bested the competition for his services. Mac Cum-

SEE LOVAAS, PAGE 4

### 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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# 'I Care and Want Them to Believe in Themselves'

Centreville Labor Resource Center changes lives for the better.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**R**un by the Centreville Immigration Forum (CIF), the Centreville Labor Resource Center (CLRC) is a place where local day laborers seek employment in a safe, welcoming environment. And CIF Executive Director Pamela Urquieta's sincere desire to help the workers succeed is fueled by her own background.

"When my parents first came here in 1990 as immigrants from Bolivia, my dad mowed lawns and my mom cleaned houses for 10 years," she said. "So I really wanted to work with minorities and immigrants and help them have better lives."

It's no wonder then that her mission at the CLRC hits close to home. "My vision is for people to come here and get the skills and resources they need to be sustainable," explained Urquieta. "That way, they can get on their own two feet so they can get better jobs and have a brighter future."

For example, the English classes offered by the CLRC can help the laborers negotiate for higher wages and better working conditions. Improving their English-language skills leads to greater diversity in the jobs they can do and aids them in their daily tasks.

CLRC classes in drywalling, painting, carpentry and electrical work also enable the workers to expand their skills, so they have more to offer to potential employers. (They're open to community members, too). Workers also learn how to use public transportation, get their contractor's licenses and



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION  
Pamela Urquieta stands in front of a list of the CLRC's rules.

**A place where local day laborers seek employment in a safe, welcoming environment.**

even start businesses of their own.

And men aren't the only ones to take advantage of these opportunities. "Our last electrical-training class was attended 80 percent by women because we also provided a nanny," said Urquieta. "More women are going out on jobs these days, especially landscaping and moving jobs."

She's looking into connecting with financial institutions so the workers can learn how to manage their money, build credit

and open a bank account. And, she added, "We also teach them computer literacy, including how to start an email account, research things and learn about I.T. security measures."

Since most of the immigrant laborers came from a particular section of Guatemala, their first language is Ixil, one of the Mayan languages spoken there. Others speak Spanish, so the center provides interpreters fluent in both languages during meetings between the CIF board members and the workers.

The center also has a close connection with the Sully District police officers. "The police tell the workers how to build great relationships with them, so they're not scared," said Urquieta. "They're also told what to do and what I.D. to show if a police officer stops them. And they learn how to keep their neighborhoods safe, as well."

The CLRC was closed during the pandemic, so it instead focused heavily on providing direct, financial assistance and food to the workers, via food drives. And in 2021, it also vaccinated more than 660 members of the community. "We hosted clinics here because residents felt safe coming to the center, and we wanted to help people get back to health," said Urquieta.

During that time, employers contacted the CLRC online to hire workers – and had to do it a day in advance. But since it fully reopened in May, people may just walk inside 5944 Centreville Crest Lane, in the Centreville Square Shopping Center, and hire someone without waiting. Hours are 6-11 a.m., every day but Sunday.

"Now that things are getting back to normal, we have a few hundred active CLRC

members," said Urquieta. "And we're finally going in an upward trajectory, with even more jobs going out than since before the pandemic began."

Also during the pandemic, ESOL classes and meetings were held virtually; but now, all classes have resumed in person. "We tell the workers they also need good English skills to build relationships with their employers," said Urquieta. "Doing so lets them exchange pleasantries and get to know each other as people."

She also stressed how capable the CLRC members are. "I believe in them more than anyone else," she said. "For them to get up and move to a country where they don't know anyone or the language – and there are more barriers than they could have imagined – is a testament to how intelligent and driven they are."

"And that's really why I'm here," continued Urquieta. "The CIF's goal is to give them the tools to succeed and empower them to do things for themselves. I want them to be able to build something better for them and their children. I tell them, 'Your kids are someday going to college – and if you want, you can apply for scholarships and go to college, too.'"

Sometimes, she said, they don't think they're able to do something, but she tells them, "You can do it; I believe in you. For example, I encouraged our workers wanting to negotiate for better pay to do it themselves. One guy did and eventually became a manager at a landscaping company. I really care about them, and I want them to believe in themselves, too."

To hire a CLRC member for landscaping, painting, carpentry, drywalling, house cleaning or moving jobs, call 703-543-6272 or email [contact@thecifva.org](mailto:contact@thecifva.org).

# Reston National Golf Course: Case Closed

BY WALTER ALCORN  
HUNTER MILL SUPERVISOR

**S**ince I took office almost three years ago, the topic that my office has received the most emails about is the potential redevelopment of Reston's two golf courses, Hidden Creek and Reston National Golf Course. On this question I have consistently stated that any proposal to change the comprehensive plan for these properties from their current respective "golf course" designations would need support from surrounding communities.

**"I do not support changing the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan's current designation of this property as a golf course and consider this matter closed."**

— Walter Alcorn, Supervisor

The owners of Reston National have spent considerable resources during the past year

reaching out to the community to consider the condition of and potentially the redevelopment of, some or all of their privately-owned property.

Below is the information that has been compiled by my staff from emails and other communications I have received from residents of surrounding communities and beyond. I have also not received any requests from neighboring cluster association leadership to change the comp plan guidance for Reston National – in fact, I have heard the opposite from those neighborhood leaders.

**Input From Neighbors in 14 Communi-**

**ties Surrounding Reston National**

- ❖ Opposed to reopening the comprehensive plan: 489
- ❖ Support an open, public process to ensure that all voices are heard when considering the future of golf course: 9
- ❖ Should reconsider the comprehensive plan designation for the golf course: 1

**Total Input From Everyone Else (numbers do not include those from surrounding communities noted above)**

- ❖ Opposed to reopening the comprehensive plan: 422
- ❖ Support of an open, public process to ensure that all voices are heard when considering the future of golf course: 176
- ❖ Should reconsider the comprehensive plan designation for the golf course: 3

The numbers speak for themselves. Therefore, as with Hidden Creek, I do not support changing the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan's current designation of this property as a golf course and consider this matter closed.

## Lovaas

FROM PAGE 4

mins and his family have now relocated to Reston, unlike his predecessor who never really moved in. The Association now has a capable and more cohesive Board in place. While there are still a couple of senior leadership slots, including Chief Financial Officer, yet to fill, RA

now is more equipped to handle major challenges (such as aging pools and other infrastructure) on the horizon with the new team at the top.

So, overall Reston is in better shape at the end of the summer than we were at its beginning. Now if we can just get the Congressional election right.

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**Announcements**

Mount Zoar Baptist Church at Centreville, VA is seeking a General Contractor to complete the Construction of their new Sanctuary. Interested Contractors should email their company information including name, email address and phone number to rspruill@nmzoar.org, or call phone number 240-804-7388 with your information. We will send the construction documents and the invitation for the Pre-bid meeting and walk through that is coming up soon.

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# CALENDAR

## UNTIL SEPT. 30

Summerfest. 7 – 9 p.m. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. The Summerfest continues through September with Earl's Happy Hour, Kids Concert Series, Tysons Fit Club, Outdoor Family Movie Nights, Summer Concert Series, and live music on the plaza.

## SEPT. 15-OCT. 9

Mlima's Tale by Lynn Nottage. Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 and 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. At 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. Tickets: \$50 general admission, \$47 seniors (65+), \$15 students, educators, and military. Purchase online at [www.1ststage.org](http://www.1ststage.org) or 703-854-1856.

## SEPT. 24-OCT. 30

Fall Festival. At Reston Farm Garden Market, 10800 Baron Cameron Ave., Reston. The festival will run Friday, Saturday and Sundays September 24 to October 30 with five 90 minute online ticketed sessions. Fall Festival hours are Friday through Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., and 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. \$28 per child and \$7 per parent, children 2 and under free. For times and tickets visit <https://www.restonfarm.com/fall-fest>.

## WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 28

The Caboose Comes to Town. 7 p.m. At the Herndon Historical Society Depot Museum, 717 Lynn Street, Herndon. Email [HerndonHistoricalSociety@gmail.com](mailto:HerndonHistoricalSociety@gmail.com) for Zoom information.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 1

Oktoberfest Vienna. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. At Church Street in Vienna. 3 Stages of Entertainment, Two Beer and Wine Gardens, Great International Food, Free Kids Activities and Games, Car Show, Business Expo, Vendor Market, Handcrafters. Visit the website: [ViennaOktoberfest.org](http://ViennaOktoberfest.org).

## SATURDAY/OCT. 1

Reston 75-family Yard Sale. Halley Rise Complex, 12010 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Register at RA's Community Yard Sale. Bargains on children's clothes, toys, furniture, and more. Sign up for a booth covering two parking spaces.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 1

Mykle Lyons Commemorative Concert. 12 p.m. At Lake Anne Plaza, Kalypso's Sports Tavern, Reston.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 1

LEGO Bricks by the Lake. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Participants can either build a LEGO creation in advance to compete in a themed contest or compete the day of the event in a timed competition building creations separated by age group. Those who don't want to compete can enjoy the day viewing the LEGO competition, a Master Build creation, and kids can engage in the free play area and craft activity. Activities will take place across Reston Museum, Reston Community Center, Reston Art Gallery and Studios, and Lake Anne Brew House. A Reston-themed custom limited edition kit will be available. Register to compete, become a sponsor, or preorder the kit at <https://www.restonmuseum.org/bricks-by-the-lake>.

## SATURDAY/OCT. 1

The McLean 5K Race. 8 a.m. At McLean Square [www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



The Reston Farm Garden Market Fall Festival will take place Sept. 24-Oct. 30 in Reston.



Mlima's Tale has been extended thru Oct. 9, 2022 at 1st Stage in Tysons.

Shopping Center, 6631 Old Dominion Dr., McLean. Hosted by the McLean Community Center with the support of sponsors, Century 21 New Millennium and the Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce, the race features a USATF-certified course through the heart of McLean and is designed to appeal to runners of all abilities.

## OCT. 1-30

"Modern Illuminations – Knowledge and Power" by Rosemarie Forsythe. Presented at Reston Art Gallery and Studios. Rosemarie Forsythe's intricately detailed paintings depicting symbols of knowledge, strength, hope and resilience will be presented in a featured exhibit, "Modern Illuminations – Knowledge and Power," at Reston Art Gallery and Studios (RAGS) from October 1 until October 30. Everyone is invited to meet Forsythe when she is at the gallery for the show's opening weekend, October 1 and 2.

## SUNDAY/OCT. 2

Vienna CROP Walk. 2 p.m. The Vienna CROP Hunger Walk supports local and international hunger relief efforts. The walk is approximately 2 miles and takes about an hour. Registration/check-in starts at 1:30 p.m. at CHO, Vienna Court Condos, 133 Park St. NE, Vienna. Water and light snacks will be provided along the route. To register, donate, or for more information, go to Vienna CROP Hunger Walk.

## THURSDAYS/OCT. 4-25

Big & Messy Art classes for kids, a four-session class. Brown's Chapel Recreation Area, 1598 Browns Chapel Road, Reston. Click this link to register or for further details: Big & Messy Art class details. Kidcreate Studio partners with Reston Association.

## SATURDAY MORNINGS

Summer Programming for Kids. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Reston Museum, 1639 Washington Plaza, Reston. Reston Museum is launching new summer programming for kids! Visit the Reston Museum to participate in fun and creative activities inspired by Reston's history. Program is free and everyone will receive an Explore Reston packet.

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

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

Please, help save these historical papers. All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

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

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

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

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## As I Was Saying Last Week



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I was venting about the difficulty I was having locating a specific Entenmann's cake: the "Marshmallow Devil's Food Iced Cake" for what seems like my lifetime. Whatever timeline actually applies, it minimizes the impossibility I was experiencing finding this staple of my diet. However, let me state for the record before you read and I write any further: I am not undernourished and, I am, generally speaking, able to satisfy my sweet teeth. Nevertheless, there was something definitely missing from my diet. I wouldn't say I was deprived, more that I was chronically disappointed; especially when I would walk by the Entenmann's display at my local Giant, and occasionally at Safeway or some other less conveniently located supermarkets (Aldi's, Magruder's, Food Lion, et cetera). Now that you're reminded of the context and of my perspective/need, let me set the scene as to how this cake (times two) made its way into my house in Maryland on September 10th, 2022. A date that will be long remembered in Burtonsville, Md. (If I was Klingon, we'd sing songs about it.)

My wife, Dina and I were day-tripping to Phoenixville, Pa., approximately 130 miles north, to visit some close friends, Shelley, and Fran. It was late afternoon on that Saturday as we sat in their living room after spending an enjoyable day together preparing to say our good-byes when I asked Fran (the husband) quite casually if there was a supermarket nearby. I then mumbled something in Dina's direction about looking for the cake since we were a few hours from home. I was thinking (hoping) that we were far enough away from Maryland that this cake might be available here somewhere. (After all, I'm a Red Sox fan; I know about hope.) When I mentioned cake/my need, Fran perked up and asked what kind of cake I was looking for. Shelley, his wife chimed in that Fran loves sweets. I didn't need to be asked twice: Entenmann's "Marshmallow Devil's Food Iced Cake," I said. To which Fran asked: "Is that a vanilla frosted cake?" Then I perked up. "Yeah," surprised by his familiarity, I again reiterated my desire for this cake. "I saw that cake in my local supermarket last week. It was a 'BOGO,' I almost bought it," Fran recalled. I immediately asked/insisted on directions to that store and/or asked Fran if he would mind driving us/driving ahead with us following him - so there would be zero chance that I'd get lost. (I was too close to take any chances now.) To which Fran responded with the following words which will endear him to me for the rest of my cake-eating life: "Don't bother. I'll just drive down there myself. It's only two miles away and see if they have any left." Incredibly hopeful, and appreciative, I said: "Sure, if you don't mind?" "Don't be silly." He says. "I'll be right back" Fran then happily grabbed his car keys and headed out to his car.

It couldn't have been more than 10 to 15 minutes before Fran came walking back into the living room smiling as he moved closer to where the three of us were still sitting on the living room couch and deposited two Entenmann's "Marshmallow Devil's Food Iced Cakes" on the coffee table right in front of me, almost like magic. (My over-the-top salivation for this cake had convinced Fran to buy one for himself, he offered.) I wasn't totally dumb founded by the cake's appearance; we're only talking about cake here, but I was nearly speechless nonetheless while gushing my gratitude and excitement over his effort, and his awareness even for noticing this cake in the store in the first place. It's not exactly my white whale but locating it has been the bane of my existence as well as a reoccurring void in my dessert selections.

Now I have a resource/outlet, at least, one place I know where I can, for the moment anyway, buy this cake. Unfortunately, its location is a two hours-plus drive from home and as for mailing it, it's an item that I don't think would travel very well, considering its packaging, if you know what I mean? Still, my future (cake wise) looks brighter than it has in years. I am finally going to have my cake and eat it, too; literally and figuratively; thanks to Fran in Pennsylvania, (my new favorite state).

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

# BANDS

PHOTOS BY CHRIS PINOVER



The Pride of Herndon performs at the Herndon Showcase of Bands 2022



The James Madison High School Band wins 1st Place in their Group at Herndon-Showcase of Bands 2022

## Herndon High School Hosts Showcase of Bands 2022

### Virginia Marching Band Cooperative, NOVA Regional.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**H**erndon High School hosted the Herndon Showcase of Bands 2022 on September 24. It is the Virginia Marching Band Cooperative's (VMBC) NOVA Regional all-day Marching Band competition. Twenty-seven bands joined The Pride of Herndon and performed at the 25th Annual Showcase kicking off the Marching Band competition season. The ticketed event took place at the Herndon High School Stadium.

"I love getting to meet people from other bands and watch their performances," said Call Inman, senior. There are always so many unique concepts."

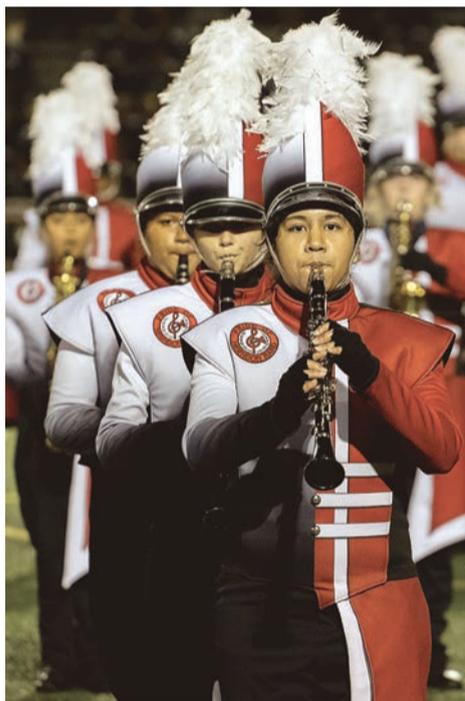
According to Herndon High School Band Director Kathleen Jacoby, the event is titled "Showcase of Bands" because it showcases the incredible work that students from across Virginia have put into their performances this season.

Tasneem Abdul-Rashid, junior, must have agreed. Tasneem said, "I can't wait to see what other bands put their sweat and tears into. Marching band is an activity that takes a lot out of you, so to see what others have created is a really fun experience."

Jacoby said that she believes bands keep returning because The Pride of Herndon makes their experience a priority. Freshman CJ Doan agreed, saying, "I have been volunteering since elementary school, and I look forward to it every year."

Gustavo Bonilla added, "Showcase is such a fun experience and great way for us as band members to bond and connect and make new friendships while working together."

"Showcase isn't just about receiving adju-



The Pride of Herndon performs at the Herndon Showcase of Bands 2022

dicator feedback or rankings, but about performing for a hometown crowd made of supportive families and community members," Jacoby said. "We are the largest competition in Northern Virginia and tied for the second largest competition in all of Virginia," she said.

Many students expressed similar comments that it is more than winning. "As the drumline captain, I'm looking forward to hearing all of the drum lines and seeing what I can add to make us better," said Michael Fullerton, junior.

"I can't wait for Showcase because it allows bands to learn from one another while connecting to members of other bands. Showcase is a part of the process that reminds bands around our area that we are all here to support one another." Jason Coleman, junior.

1st Place winners in the six groups com-



The James Madison High School Band performs.

peting from smallest to largest bands are as follows: Group 1 - Broadway HS, Broadway, VA; Group 2 - Park View HS, Sterling, VA; Group 3 - South County HS, Lorton, VA; Group 4 - Dominion HS, Sterling, VA; Group 5 - James Madison HS, Vienna, VA; and Group 6 - Lightridge HS, Aldie, VA.

The HHS band was established in 1947, making it the oldest high school band in Fairfax County. Its growth has paralleled that of the town, which is now a thriving community with a station on the Silver Line of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. The band expanded from its original fifteen musicians to more than one hundred fifty instrumentalists. Under the direction of Jacoby, it consists of the Marching Band, Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Jazz Band, and Indoor Drumline.

Scheduled Bands at Herndon Showcase of Bands 2022

**GROUP 1**  
Brooke Point HS - Stafford, VA  
Kettle Run HS - Nokesville, VA  
Falls Church HS - Falls Church, VA  
Broadway HS - Broadway, VA  
Tuscarora HS - Leesburg, VA

Annandale HS - Annandale, VA  
Loudoun Valley HS - Purcellville, VA  
Strasburg HS - Strasburg, VA

**GROUP 2**  
James Wood HS - Winchester, VA  
Park View HS - Sterling, VA

**GROUP 3**  
Alexandria City HS - Alexandria, VA  
Colonial Forge HS - Stafford, VA  
South County HS - Lorton, VA  
Riverside HS - Leesburg, VA  
Stone Bridge HS - Ashburn, VA

**GROUP 4**  
West Potomac HS - Alexandria, VA  
Centreville HS - Clifton, VA  
South Lakes HS - Reston, VA  
Wakefield HS - Arlington, VA  
Dominion HS - Sterling, VA

**GROUP 5**  
John Champe HS - Aldie, VA  
James Madison HS - Vienna, VA  
Westfield HS - Chantilly, VA  
WT Woodson HS - Fairfax, VA

**GROUP 6**  
Langley HS - Mclean, VA  
Freedom HS - South Riding, VA  
Lightridge HS - Aldie, VA  
Exhibition  
Herndon HS - Herndon, VA