

CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station

Fun at Fairfax Fall Festival

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Main Street view: Thousands of people converged on Old Town Fairfax for the 46th annual Fairfax Fall Festival on Saturday, Oct. 8.

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OCTOBER 13-19, 2022

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NEWS

Fairfax Woman Struck by Driver Dies

Fairfax County police say a pedestrian died Sunday, Oct. 9, after being struck by a driver while she was crossing West Ox Road. They identified her as Ligia Jeannette Herrera Betbeder, 63, of Fairfax.

The tragedy occurred at 5:54 a.m. on West Ox Road north of Legato Road in Fairfax. According to detectives, the woman was crossing the road from east to west, outside of the crosswalk, when a driver in a 2015 Honda Civic traveling south on West Ox struck her.

Responding rescue personnel pronounced Betbeder dead at the scene. The driver remained onsite and, preliminarily, police say speed and alcohol do not appear to be factors in the crash. However, the investigation remains active, and its details will be presented to the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office for review.

Anyone with information about this crash is asked to contact the Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips may also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by calling 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477).

— BONNIE HOBBS

Fatal Hit and Run

Virginia State Police is investigating a fatal pedestrian crash in Fairfax County. The crash occurred Oct. 11, 2022 at 3:06 p.m. on Interstate 95 at the 169 mile marker.

A 2011 Honda Accord was disabled and stopped on the shoulder of the southbound lanes of I-95. Jose Davi Hernandez-Zelayandia had exited his vehicle to assess the issue with it. As he was getting back into it, a 2022 Nissan Sentra ran off the road and struck him. The driver of the Nissan then attempted to leave the scene, but was stopped by witnesses.

Hernandez-Zelayandia, 35, of Woodbridge, Va., was transported to Fairfax Inova Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries.

The driver of the Nissan, John O. Hess, 61, Springfield, Va., was not injured in the crash. Hess was arrested for DUI and charged with one felony count of hit and run.

The Virginia State Police Crash Reconstruction Team is assisting with the ongoing crash investigation.

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NEWS

Bouncing, Shopping and Enjoying Fun Festivities

The 46th annual Fairfax Fall Festival was Saturday, Oct. 8.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



Divya Ahuja selling earrings from Mystic Lines jewelry.



From left, Noemi Riker and Nora Scott, both 7, drawing Halloween pictures for the chalk-art contest.



Main Street view: Thousands of people converged on Old Town Fairfax for the 46th annual Fairfax Fall Festival on Saturday, Oct. 8.



Raja Manansala, 10, watches brother Datu, 6, learn CPR from fire Lt. David Arrington.



Vendor Lynette Reed with her hand-marbled paper and patchwork Christmas trees.



James Fuge, 3, pretends to drive a backhoe loader.



Robbin Kapsalis and Vintage #18 wowed the crowd with blues/soul songs.



Synnai Mann, 2-1/2, with her balloon animal and fire hat.



Curt Smith displays his acrylic paintings.



From left, Taylor Turpin, Tim Henson and owner Walker Evans sell plants rooted in clay balls.



American Ninja Warrior Brent Steffensen flies through the air for Flippenout.



Children scaling the climbing wall.



West H., 4, enjoying the fun bounce.



From left, siblings Romi, 4, and Ryan, 2, have fun in a Fairfax City grounds crew mower.

Challenges for County's Special Education Students

Special Education PTA president and FCPS respond.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Disparities for special education students in Fairfax County Public Schools, cited in the 210-page FCPS Special Education Comprehensive Program Review: Year 2 Final Report by American Institutes for Research, did not surprise Amanda Campbell. She is the president of the Fairfax County Special Education Parent Teacher Association (SEPTA).

Campbell highlighted that the final review mirrored SEPTA's findings to the division. "It was very validating to see it backed by data," Campbell said.

The report was the second of two annual deliverables by American Institutes for Research, which the division contracted in October 2020 to conduct an independent, third-party review of its special education program.

American Institutes for Research presented its Year 1 interim report and presentation document at a session in September 2021, followed by its 2022 Final Report <https://bit.ly/3m3JQpv>. The report's scope did not include special education programs during COVID-19.

The division's four original goals for its special education program to AIR's two-year comprehensive review were: one, design, structure, and processes; two, human capital; three, evidence-based practices; and four, communication. "Restraint and seclusion would be specifically OUTSIDE OF SCOPE for the purposes of this review," according to the division's RFP 2000003084 Special Education Comprehensive Review.

"We are very appreciative of the work that has been done in compiling this report," said Dr. Michelle Boyd, assistant superintendent of Special Services at FCPS. "Our staff has worked closely with students and families, which is reflected in the report's mention of positive feedback from parents on the quality of FCPS instructional staff."

Campbell addressed what she considered the top four important findings of the lengthy review.

❖ First, "Fidelity of implementation is a point that we (SEPTA) have been raising since being chartered in April 2017," Campbell said. She referenced a research question in the final report, "To what extent do schools implement special education services with fidelity?"

Fidelity of the implementation of special education intervention programs is minimal and inconsistent across programs, according to the independent report. And special education services are implemented inconsistently across the district.

Campbell said that programs and best



Amanda Campbell, president of the SEPTA

PHOTO VIA SEPTA.ORG



Dr. Michell Boyd, assistant superintendent of Special Services FCPS

PHOTO BY FCPS



Occupational therapists work to address a student's ability to access and participate in school activities.

FCPS.EDU/ACADEMICS

practices for students with disabilities had been identified. However, teachers and support staff who interact with students face difficulty implementing programs effectively. A poorly implemented program can fail students just as easily as a poorly designed one. AIR's finding was important to Campbell. "If the programs are not implemented with the same evidence-based science, then the outcomes are not going to be the same," she said.

"That time aspect is a critical part of fidelity," said Campbell. The time the program requires is not always what the students receive, according to Campbell. She described scheduling around multiple services as a giant jigsaw puzzle. "It is critical that we get kids the time they need in these programs for them to succeed," Campbell said. To implement a practice or program "with fidelity," teachers should understand how to im-

plement evidence-based practices centered on five elements: adherence, exposure/duration (time), delivery quality, program specificity, and student engagement.

❖ Second was Campbell's concern was that the division's special education services are inconsistently implemented across its five regions and schools (1k.2.). It is "very individualized and dependent on where you live in the county and what school," Campbell said — leading to a question of equity.

The Fairfax County Public Schools division is the eleventh largest in the United States. It serves a diverse population of about 178,635 students from Pre-K through 12. In all, 14.9 percent of the total student population are students with disabilities; 31.7 percent are economically disadvantaged; and 19 percent are English language learners. Approximately 198 schools and centers are

dispersed across five distinct regions within the district, covering 391 square miles.

❖ Campbell's third concern: Students with disabilities disproportionately receive in- and out-of-school suspensions compared with peers without disabilities (1a.3.). SEPTA and the division have discussed this since 2019. The differences are dramatic.

❖ Campbell's fourth concern was how little parent input was evident in IEPs. "Results from the IEP sample review show minimal documentation of parent input on IEP documents. Nearly 38 percent of the IEPs in our sample did not include any written evidence of parent input within the IEP itself," cited the review (1f.4). AIR reviewed a randomly selected, representative sample of 300 IEPs.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, "Each public school child who receives special education and related services must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Each IEP must be designed for one student and must be a truly individualized document. The IEP creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related services personnel, and students (when appropriate) to work together to improve educational results for children with disabilities. The IEP is the cornerstone of a quality education for each child with a disability."

According to Campbell, parents should be equal partners in the IEP process. "When you have a statistic showing so little parent input, it encapsulates the concerns that families have noted. Their input is not included. That is one of the incredibly validating findings of this report," Campbell said.

Boyd, the assistant superintendent of Special Services, said the division knows "there is work to be done to improve outcomes for students with disabilities." Boyd named areas such as "multi-tiered systems of support, inclusive practices, transitions, communication with stakeholders, and exploring ways to address special education teacher workload."

Among other findings related to students with disabilities, as reported by AIR, FCPS does not meet Virginia state targets for the percentage of time students with disabilities are included in the general education setting (1.e.1.). Access to evidence-based practices for students with disabilities varies. Special education students in some racial-ethnic groups are at a higher risk of being suspended or expelled for greater than ten days than their special education peers in all other racial groups (1a.3.).

The final review of AIR included 54 findings and 19 recommendations for changes to the division's policies, processes, and practices. AIR will engage in three months of pro bono strategic planning with the division's Department of Special Services to support them in the next steps. "We look forward to working collaboratively with stakeholders to develop a comprehensive special education enhancement plan," said Boyd.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

NEWS

Fairfax City Creates eGift Card Program

Fairfax City's Economic Development Office is implementing a new, community-based eGift Card program. And when consumers use the newly created Fairfax City Flex Card, 100 percent of all gift-card sales will remain within the City.

This card launched Saturday, Oct. 8, at the Fairfax Fall Festival, where the Economic Development Office sponsored a Flex Card giveaway and encouraged shoppers to redeem their eGift Cards at participating businesses. The inaugural list of businesses accepting the Flex Card includes Capital Ale House, Ornerly Beer Co., Dante Salon and Wellness Spa, JoyLife Spa and DIY Scent Studio.

The Economic Development Office will run Flex Card promotions throughout the year to boost participation. Some are currently scheduled during Small Business Saturday, and a Buy One Get One event will be offered during the holiday season.

SEE eGIFT CARD, PAGE 11

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2022 PRESIDENT'S AWARD

2022 BEST OF PRINCE WILLIAM

DOGS AND HUMANS

Active Seniors Enjoy Area Parks

Dogs and humans, growing together.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Given northern Virginia's astounding number of city, county and regional parks, nature preserves, and miles of multi-use trails, outdoor enthusiasts have plenty of options for recreation. If you identify as a "senior" you likely have earned some extra time to devote to exploring those 420 parks and 334 trail miles in Fairfax County Park Authority, and the additional 12,000 acres in the NOVA Parks system.

If your trail buddy happens to be a dog of advancing years, though still keen to put nose to earth or paw to pavement, perhaps you two share a slightly slower pace of exploration or a few more physical hurdles that dictate the length or variety of your exercise. Having a trail buddy may encourage you both to get out and spend quality time together in nature, acknowledged as a means



Murphy with Christine Flynn, of Burke
Age: 13 years
Favorite thing: balls & cookies
Naughtiness: destroying toilet paper



Bosco Beletsky, of West Springfield (his owner declined to be photographed with him, hmmm, there could be a reason)
Age: 7 years
Favorite thing: romping on the beach
Naughtiness: wild berry picking and infamous disrespect for the full berry buckets of others



Tia, with the author, of Springfield
Age: 15 years
Favorite thing: greeting her many canine and human friends
Naughtiness: sneaking Frappuccino cream from the car cup holder



Snoopy with Rafael Ortiz, of Lorton
Age: 14
Favorite thing: sniffing out interesting smells
Naughtiness: sniffing out interesting smells



Rocky with Andy Novins, of Falls Church
Age: 12 years
Favorite thing: trail walks in the woods
Naughtiness: commandeering a disproportionate portion of the family bed



Nikki with LaVerne Henson, of Lorton
Age: 13 years
Favorite thing: chewing dental stick treats
Naughtiness: refusing to get out of bed

dogs have the good sense not to be embarrassed at all.

Sad editor's note: Since the writing of this piece in Sept. two of these senior dogs have died. Bosco and Rocky, cherished by their families, also were known and held in great affection by their larger communities of walkers. Proving again that few pets are 'just a dog'.



PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Regular customers, Phineas and Emma, owned by Rick and Julie Paisley of Alexandria, await the ribbon cutting and opening of the new Felix and Oscar location in Kingstowne Center with a little less patience than others in the line.

Felix & Oscar Pet Store Relocates

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Local natural pet food store, Felix & Oscar, held a grand opening at its new, larger location at 5840 Kingstowne Center, Suite 100, on Oct. 10. The business, now celebrating its 15th anniversary, was a favorite place for area pets and their owners at its prior location on Backlick Road in Springfield.

Current owners Matt O'Leary and Anthony Roberts, with their staff of nine employees, promise their mission to educate and teach how to feed dogs and cats healthier, with a focus on nutrition and personal attention to customers, will continue in Kingstowne. Specializing in natural foods, the store shelves are filled with brands not usually found in big box pet stores. O'Leary often has direct contact with manufacturers who can discuss their

field-to-product process.

The store is named for two beloved cats, adopted from the Fairfax County Humane Society in 2003, by business founders Steve and Diana Greiner. The Greiners hired O'Leary in 2012 after getting to know him during his cat Hank's run for



Matt O'Leary and Anthony Roberts, owners since 2019, promote a natural pet food philosophy in their store.

the Senate. O'Leary continued to work at the store, later as manager until the Greiners' retirement in 2019, when O'Leary and his husband Roberts purchased the business. Although Felix and Oscar are no longer alive, the store continues to offer the healthy foods choices they inspired.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

The official ribbon cutting of The Flats, with the parking-garage mural in the background.

825 Students All Moved In

The Flats on University celebrates grand opening in Fairfax City.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Boasting first-class amenities and 100-percent occupancy, The Flats on University – GMU's first, off-campus student community – held a ribbon-cutting Sept. 28 to celebrate its opening. It's directly behind the Courthouse Plaza shopping center in Fairfax City, and both City officials and representatives of the developer, Capstone Communities, were on hand for the festivities.

"We're so happy to be part of the City," said Amanda Wallis, Capstone's executive vice president of development. "This is so much more than a building – it's home and a place where memories will be made."

At the corner of University Drive and Democracy Lane, The Flats houses 825 students in 267 units and is just a 1-mile bike or bus ride from GMU. Units range from studio to four bedrooms and come fully furnished. Rooms are rented individually, allowing students to apply together as a group or participate in a roommate-matching program. And since they're leased by the bedroom, if one roommate leaves, the others aren't left paying for that person's rent.

"The City didn't have this type of model, so we knew it would fill a need," said Wallis. "And the relationships we've made with the City are just fantastic. It's such a friendly community, it makes it an enjoyable place to be."

The building has both four- and five-story sections, plus a parking garage, and each unit contains a full-sized washer and dryer. Amenities include a clubhouse, heated pool, two hot tubs, fire pits, state-of-the-art fitness center, entertainment area with big-screen TVs, private and group study areas with access to a computer and printer, and courtyards throughout the property.

In addition, a colorful mural adorns the parking-garage side facing the interior courtyard, pool and clubhouse. "Instead of staring at boring concrete, I asked the City to put us in contact with someone who could come up with an idea to liven up the space," explained Wallis. "They put us in touch with Murals at Mason, which solicited artists and got 35-40 responses. The idea we liked best and selected was from local artist Nicholas Zimbardo. We think his mural is fantastic and really activates the space."

Local dignitaries attending the ribbon cutting included Fairfax Mayor David Meyer; City Council members So Lim, Tom Ross and Jon Stehle; and Jennifer Rose and Doug Church of the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce. During the ceremony, Wallis said an office building, parking lot and Fairfax County's probation department used to be on this site, and Capstone worked several years to make The Flats a reality.

"There were 75-100 neighborhood meetings," she said. "But with everyone's support, plus City Council approval, we're here today. The 2020 pandemic delayed construction, and every day brought new challenges. But on Aug. 19, we moved almost 825 people in – and today, we're completely full."

Meyer called the culmination of The Flats "really remarkable." He said it was made possible because of "a group of people coming together and seeing the potential here for GMU housing on this 6-acre parcel. Working with Capstone has been a rewarding experience for all of us. This will be where friendships are made in a safe, enjoyable and fun place."

With all these new students living near the heart of the City, said Meyer, "The Flats plays an important role in supporting our local, downtown businesses and continued growth. We're proud to partner with a proven developer like Capstone and pleased that it chose to bring this incredible development to the City of Fairfax." Another benefit was Capstone's installation of two, new, CUE bus stops near The Flats.

Wallis said Capstone has "built a legacy in student housing," for the past three decades. And, she added, "We hope GMU students will enjoy The Flats for many years to come."

And so far, the students are doing just that. Freshman Mohammad Dashti is studying cybersecurity at GMU and living at The Flats. "Everyone's really nice and welcoming, and people even helped me move in," he said. "And the diversity is incredible – that's one of the reasons I came here."

Dashti said he was surprised by how big the building is. "I've never seen a place take care of its residents like this. The rooms have just enough space, and I like the gym and being able to get up in the morning and exercise – and then sit in a massage chair afterward."

A GMU junior Allanah Brathwaite has three roommates and said they've already established a good routine. "I really like The Flats," she said. "It's upscale, and I heard the gym, pool, sauna and tanning areas are great – and I plan to try them all."

She's studying public administration and wants to eventually go to law school and become an environmental attorney. Originally from New York, Brathwaite said, "I like this area so far; it's pretty cool."

COFFEES



No frills is just the way many coffee fans like it.



They roast fresh beans in-house.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION

Off-The-Beaten-Path Is Cervantes Secret

Artisan coffees accent the Central American theme with an industrial look.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

If you go...

CERVANTES COFFEE
7644 Fullerton Rd, Springfield
(703) 455-0011
Open Monday through Saturday, 8 am – 3 pm

There's another choice out there for coffee in the south county area where the aprons aren't green, and the cup choices aren't tall, venti and grande. The new face on the block is Cervantes Coffee on Fullerton Road, and the theme is Central America.

Behind the roaster at Cervantes is Marialy, and her specialty is artisan roasting using single origin coffees from Central and South America. "I have fond memories of my grandfather's farm in Eastern Bolivia, picking coffee with my brothers and cousins," she wrote on her website.

They specialize in certain green coffees working directly with suppliers, coffee cooperatives, and individual growers.

"Our goal is that you know exactly where your coffee is from all the way to the farm or region of the world," she said.

Fullerton Road is not a central location for retail, so the customers either work in the area or found it through word of mouth. One customer was searching on the web and

made the trek from Arlington. "It's good to go to these non-chain restaurants," he said.

Inside, the shop is industrial looking, with high ceilings and lots of space. There are five small tables, a two-seat bar made from a pallet and an upstairs area with more seating. The pallet theme seems to be everywhere, giving the place an environmental slant where they reuse materials. There are burlap bags of coffee beans, and they don't seem to be just for decoration. While other bigger names may cater to the Sunday morning crowd, Cervantes is closed on Sunday.

"It's very creative," said Laura Olsen, who was sitting at the pallet bar. She's another Arlington resident that made the trip down I-95 but felt the drive was worth it for the drink she loves, the Swiss Mountain Decaf. Olsen likes the South American theme too. "Seems like they have a connection to where the coffee is made," she said.



Reused packing crates are reused for many things at Cervantes.



Blueberry muffin and a mug of coffee are their specialty.

CALENDAR

NOW THRU NOV 15

Fruit Sale Signup. 7-11 p.m. Signup now for Fairfax Lions notices and discounts for Lions Club Fruit Sales in November and December. They sell fresh Florida oranges, mandarins, grapefruit, maple syrup, peanuts to raise funds for charity. Website: <https://www.fairfaxlions.org/citrus-sale-notification/>

NOW THRU NOV 17

ESL Class. 7-9 p.m. Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced level English classes. Classes will be in-person or online. Classes will meet twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Books are included in class cost.

OCT. 1 TO NOV. 5

Workhouse Haunt: Nightmare Harvest. At Workhouse Arts Center,

Lorton. This year's Haunt, titled "Nightmare Harvest," will run on weekends from Saturday, Oct. 1 through Saturday, Nov. 5. Friday and Saturday hours are 7-11 p.m. and Sunday hours are 7-10 p.m. The Haunt will also perform on Halloween night, Monday, Oct. 31, from 7-9 p.m. Each Friday and Saturday night from Oct. 7 through Oct. 29, live bands will perform in the Rizer Pavilion near the Haunt Bar, where guests can purchase snacks and beverages. Tickets are now available for purchase and prices start at \$30 per person. Visit www.workhousearts.org for schedule and event details.

NOW THRU OCT. 17

Hummingbird Photo Exhibition. At Green Spring Gardens in Alexandria. For those who can't get enough of the beauty of hummingbirds, a group of local photogra-

phers are mounting an exhibition this summer at Green Spring Gardens in Alexandria. 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. At the Historic House at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria.

OCT. 11-15

Fall for the Book. At GMU's Fairfax Campus and around Fairfax County After two years of offering the festival virtually, Fall for the Book is thrilled to be back with both in-person and online events for

the 24th year. The festival will be headlined by bestselling novelist Emily St. John Mandel, graphic novelist Gene Luen Yang, comic book heavy-weight Alan Moore, and champion goalkeeper Briana Scurry. Other featured authors include actress Sarah Edmondson, novelist Melissa Scholes Young, Planet Money host Mary Childs, meteorologist Matthew Cappucci, short story writer Morgan Talty, memoirist Rhajika Bhandari, and more. A special day of Children's Events will also take place on Saturday, October 8 in Old Town Hall as part of the City of Fairfax's Fall Festival. Visit www.FallfortheBook.org/schedule.

THURSDAY/OCT. 13

Visiting Filmmakers Series. 6 p.m. At Johnson Center Cinema at George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Free screening of

"Unapologetic", followed by a live Q&A with the filmmaker, Ashley O'Shay. Told through the lens of Janae and Bella, two fierce abolitionist leaders, Unapologetic is a deep look into the Movement for Black Lives, from the police murder of Rekia Boyd to the election of Mayor Lori Lightfoot. The film illuminates the love underpinning the anger and frustration that comes with being Black, queer women in the U.S., and elevates those who are most often leading the way while being denied the spotlight.

FRIDAY/OCT. 14

New Orchestra of Washington, Dia de Los Muertos. 7:30 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton, W16, McGuireWoods Gallery. A one-of-a-kind ensemble, performing as a small chamber orchestra, with flex-

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 9

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CALENDAR



Rainier Trio will appear at Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton on Sunday, Oct. 16, 2022.

FROM PAGE 8

ible instrumentation, so that each program is attractive, inspirational and memorable. This time they will be performing a memorable “Day of the Dead” concert!

SATURDAY/OCT. 15

Children’s Consignment Sale. Grace Weekday Preschool at 7434 Bath Street, Springfield is holding a children’s consignment sale on Saturday, October 15, 2022 from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Cash only and all sales final.

SATURDAY/OCT. 15

John Bullard. 7:30 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton, W16, McGuire-Woods Gallery. Inviting audiences to share in a transformative revelation and to experience the artistic marriage of banjo and classical music. “Absolutely enchanting,” writes critic Graham Rickson of the UK-based The Arts Desk

SATURDAY/OCT. 15

Carol’s Creations. 6-9 p.m. At Arches Art Gallery, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. On the second Saturday of the month the Workhouse in Lorton has a gallery walk. Carol Mather is the featured artist of the Arches Art Gallery in October The gallery is open Saturdays 11-6 and Sundays 12-5. Visit the website: archesgallery.com

SATURDAY/OCT. 15

Costumes for Kids. 12-3 p.m. At Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 8922 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Costumes for Kids Fall Volunteer Festival is the perfect opportunity to celebrate fall while doing something for our community. They will prepare costumes for kids who attend Title 1 Schools. Visit the website: www.kidsgiveback.org/events

SATURDAY/OCT. 15

Lady Liberty’s Birthday. 4-6 p.m. At Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Join Just Neighbors for a night of music, cocktails, hors d’oeuvres, silent auctions and more. They’re celebrating Lady Liberty’s Birthday to support legal services for low-income immigrants and refugees.

SATURDAY/OCT. 15

Fall Festival. 12-4 p.m. At Fellowship Baptist Church, 5936 Rolling Road, Springfield. Community Outreach Fall Festival. Join us for a day of family fun including a petting zoo,

inflatables, food, prizes, games, crafts for kids, face painting, cake walk and more. Visit the website: www.FellowshipBaptistVA.org

SATURDAY/OCT. 15

Fall Choral Festival Concert. 4 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax, Dewberry School of Music. Free and open to the public.

SUNDAY/OCT. 16

Rainier Trio. 2 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, W16 McGuire Woods Gallery, Lorton. Hailed as “two perfect virtuosos”, at their international performance debut, the Rainier Trio were received with critical acclaim at their Carnegie Weill Recital Hall debut as part of the Ibla Grand Prize competition winners’ tour.

SUNDAY/OCT. 16

Faculty Artist Showcase. 3 p.m. At Harris Theater at GMU. Presented by Dewberry School of Music. Free and open to the public.

SUNDAY/OCT. 16

Organ Concert. 4-5:30 p.m. At St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Will feature organist Robert McCormick, described by Choir & Organ as “indomitable and immensely gifted” and by The Macon Telegraph as “an artist of rare sensitivity and passion.” Widely known for his unique abilities in organ improvisation, Robert McCormick is heralded as one of the finest concert and church musicians of this era. Visit the website: www.standrews.net

SUNDAY/OCT. 16

Model Trains Running. 1-4 p.m. At Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will have N gauge model trains on display and running at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. Admission: Museum members and children 4 and under, free; children 5-12, \$3; adults 13 and older, \$5; special events, \$6. Seniors and military, active and retired, \$4. For more Museum events visit, www.fairfax-station.org, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR, 703-425-9225.

MONDAY/OCT. 17

Mason Wind Symphony and Symphonic Band Concert. 8 p.m. At GMU’s Dewberry School of Music, Fairfax.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BAND WASHINGTON, D.C.

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FROM PAGE 9

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 19
Mason Jazz Ensemble. 8 p.m. At GMU's Harris Theatre, Fairfax. Presented by Dewberry School of Music.

OCT. 20-23
Annandale Book Sale. 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m. At George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Thousands of books, CDs, DVDs, and more at the George Mason Friends Fall Book Sale. Come early for the best selection, then come back on Sunday for half-price bargains. Visit the website: georgemasonfriends.blogspot.com.

THURSDAY/OCT. 20
Fairfax Wind Symphony Fall Concert. 7:30 p.m. At Katherine Johnson Middle School, 3801 Jermantown Road, Fairfax. A community band concert presenting dance music to please all ages. Music of Bernstein, Dvorak, Gershwin, Sousa and others. Free admission, donations accepted.

SATURDAY/OCT. 22
Tour de Mount Vernon 2022. Meet Up at the Workhouse for a Community Bike Ride. The 7th Annual Community Bike Ride will be on Saturday, Oct. 22, 2022, at 8:30 a.m., starting and ending at the Workhouse Arts Center. The Tour de Mount Vernon brings cyclists on a fun ride through the southern and central portions of the Mount Vernon District including a scenic route through Fort Belvoir. The route consists of paved roads, paved trails and has several challenging sections. Ride monitors and Fairfax County Police help with directions and keep everyone safe. Details and registration www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/tour-de-mount-vernon-2022

SATURDAY, OCT. 22
Adult Hearth Cooking. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Mason Neck. Join the chefs at Gunston Hall for the ultimate slow cooking experience where they employ 18th-century cooking techniques to create period dishes over an open flame. \$125/person, \$100/member

SATURDAY, NOV. 5
Revolutionary War Day. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at George Mason's Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Mason Neck. Join Colonel Mason and his fellow Virginians as they support the war effort. This family-oriented program has activities for all ages that may be explored in whatever order desired. \$10/adult, \$8/child, 50% off for members

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Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE

AT&T proposes to modify an existing facility (new tip heights 96") on the building at 7409 Eastmoreland Rd, Annandale, VA (20221084). Interested parties may contact Scott Horn (856-809-1202) (1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091) with comments regarding potential effects on historic properties.

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HALLOWEEN



The Synetic Theater's Vampire Ball 2022 will take place on Friday, Oct. 28, 2022 in Arlington.

OCT. 1 TO NOV. 5

Workhouse Haunt: Nightmare Harvest. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. This year's Haunt, titled "Nightmare Harvest," will run on weekends from Saturday, Oct. 1 through Saturday, Nov. 5. Friday and Saturday hours are 7-11 p.m. and Sunday hours are 7-10 p.m. The Haunt will also perform on Halloween night, Monday, Oct. 31, from 7-9 p.m. Each Friday and Saturday night from Oct. 7 through Oct. 29, live bands will perform in the Rizer Pavilion near the Haunt Bar, where guests can purchase snacks and beverages. Tickets are now available for purchase and prices start at \$30 per person. Visit www.workhousearts.org for schedule and event details.

FRIDAY/OCT. 14

Sly's Magic Halloween-Themed Show. 7:30 p.m. At StageCoach Theatre, 20937 Ashburn Road, Suites 115 and 120, Ashburn. Sly's Magic, Northern Virginia's only ongoing magic show, has scheduled a special spooky Halloween-themed performance. This full-length show features six professional magicians in

performances filled with magic and comedy that is appropriate for adults or older children. Sly's Magic show is available in two formats: in person and by livestream. Tickets can be purchased online at <https://www.stagecoachtc.com/slys-magic/> for \$15 with advance reservations and livestream viewing, or for \$20 at the door. Space is limited; advance reservations are encouraged.

FRIDAY/OCT. 28

Synetic Theater's Vampire Ball 2022. At 1800 S. Bell Street, Arlington. Synetic Theater's Vampire Ball is DC's hottest Halloween party with everything you need for a spooktacular night. There will be Dracula themed cocktails, dancing, physical theater, spooky Georgian remixes, fun-sized candy bars, and more. The festivities start with a performance of Dracula followed by an indoor/outdoor dance party with all the food and drinks that a ghoul could ask for. Gather all your Basic Witches for a party to wake the dead! Costumes encouraged!

Fairfax City Creates eGift Card Program

FROM PAGE 5

"The Flex Card is one of our many programs focusing on strengthening the City's economic base, promoting businesses and shopping local," said Economic Development Director Chris Bruno. "We're excited to offer this new eGift Card program that supports our City businesses, provides versatile gifting options, and makes it easier and more convenient for residents and visitors to shop local."

"This program exemplifies how the City

is dedicated to supporting local businesses and demonstrates our commitment to cultivating a thriving, business community," added Fairfax Mayor David Meyer. "Our citizens have a long and proud history of lifting up our business community, and this unique program represents yet another way they may do so."

For more details about this program or to purchase a Flex Card, go to fairfaxcity-connected.gov/flex.

— BONNIE HOBBS

BULLETIN BOARD

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

GrandInvolve Seeks Volunteers. Would you like a unique and interesting volunteer experience to make a difference in a school, classroom, or in one child's life? GrandInvolve.org facilitates rewarding, flexible adult volunteer opportunities at Fairfax County Title I elementary schools, providing classroom assistance with math, reading, and other

simple educational tasks. Visit www.GrandInvolve.org/volunteer-with-us for details and to complete an interest form. Or email info@grandinvolve.org.

NOW THRU NOV. 17

ESL Class. 7-9 p.m. At Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Road, Fairfax. Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced level English classes. Classes will be in-person or online. Classes will meet twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 to 9 p.m. Books are included in class cost. Email: Heather@andberg.org.

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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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Time is Telling



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

After nearly three months of 24-7 focus on my brother's struggle to survive the effects of sepsis (and septic shock), the immediate, imminent danger seems to have passed. Passed into a daily grind of occupational, physical and speech therapies, all of which are monitored six to eight hours a day by a care giver who lends her assistance as well to assisting my brother with his activities of daily living. All of which are improving due to his commitment to get better. No doubt my brother has come a long way since his admission to SICU in mid-July and has progressed further and faster than those original doctors anticipated. Nonetheless, the path ahead is fraught with obstacles (not literally, although there are three sets of stairs inside his house and even two smaller ones outside just to get in).

My challenges are all too familiar to you regular readers: 13 years-plus living with non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. Originally characterized as "terminal," changed approximately three years ago to simply "incurable" after my diagnosis changed to papillary thyroid cancer, supposedly the "friendly cancer" because of its curability. For my situation, not so much, however. I'll spare you the details, most of which I've relayed in previous columns anyway. Not that I ever expected a health guarantee but given my parent's long lives (both lived into their mid to late 80s), I kind of figured that I'd live into my 80s as well. That being presumed; it turns out the facts are somewhat different. Initially, in Feb. '09, I was "prognosed" for "13 months to two years." After my re-diagnosis three years ago, I was given a new lease on life, sort of, until a procedure to rid the thyroid cancer from my body was unsuccessful and so I received an amended timeline/prognosis: the prescription medication that I have been taking daily since Sept. '19 is effective for three years-ish. I'm now into the "ish" time.

But this is my obstacle, as it has been going on nearly 14 years. Nothing new, but it sure gets old, slowly. A cancer diagnosis upsets every thought/plan you had concerning your "road to find out," to quote Cat Stevens, concerning your future (heck, your present, too). And not that I didn't share this feeling with my brother, quite the opposite in fact. Other than my wife, Dina, he was my go-to resource. But now, given his own health challenges and his own cancer diagnosis to boot, we've sort of become equal partners. Not in crime, but in the methodology of surviving. Now, we're on the same team, if you get my meaning: both having been diagnosed with cancer. And it's this shared burden that binds us together more than we ever imagined. (When you've had two healthy parents who lived well into their 80s, you don't anticipate having your own health problems at younger ages than ever afflicted them. It's a presumption, sure, but doctors will often learn a great deal about your prospects by asking about your immediate family history: mother, father, siblings.)

Even though my brother is five years older than me, I never imagined him dying before me. As an older, big brother, I looked up to him. He took care of me. He couldn't possibly die before I do. This feeling became even more prevalent after I was diagnosed with lung cancer. Now I had a perfectly good explanation/understanding of why I was going to predecease him. Not that I was happy about it. Hardly. It just seemed the normal order of things, in my chronological life, anyway. Yet, after his recent health struggles and near-death experience (sepsis is very often a killer and extremely difficult to overcome), I'm forced to consider that my brother might die before my time, despite my issues. And this awareness/revelation has weakened me. Seeing him fight for his life every day in SICU as I did for nearly six weeks was a life-changing experience, especially as a younger brother who looked up to and was somewhat dependent on that older brother.

Now that he's home recuperating and rehabilitating as vigorously as he can, he is – to me, anyway, establishing his bona fides. He is not letting his recent health struggles/challenges negatively affect him at all. He has accepted his deficits and is working every day to overcome them. And even though he can't walk without the assistance of a walker, his goal is to do so. Though he may not be able "to leap tall buildings in a single bound" (or even walk up a few steps) he is my superman and I'm proud to share all our burdens together. And due to his tireless efforts to get better, once again, I don't feel as if he's going to predecease me; and in an odd way, that's extremely comforting to me.

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

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