

CONNECTION

Burke ♦ Fairfax ♦ Springfield ♦ Fairfax Station

This lovely Fairfax Station horse, Stroopwafel, belongs to Mark and Lisa Johnson.

Gentle Winter

Fatal Crash Claims Two South County Students

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Fairfax City Swears in First Female Mayor

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Is This Virginia's Year for Mental Health?

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PHOTO BY LISA JOHNSON



Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Jurisdiction	Feet Structure	Route #	Route Name	Structure	Posted Date
DANVILLE	20190	293	RTE 293	DAN RIVER	12/31/2022
MECKLENBURG	12001	660	OLD COX RD	BUCKHORN CREEK	12/30/2022
CHARLOTTE	4833	40	PATRICK HENRY HWY	TERRYS CREEK	12/29/2022
HALIFAX	9158	58	PHILPOTT RD (58 WBL)	DAN RIVER	12/29/2022
PITTSYLVANIA	13425	29	MAIN STREET	SYCAMORE CREEK	12/29/2022
AMHERST	1382	130	ELON RD	NS RAILWAY	12/28/2022
APPOMATTOX	1587	608	STONEWALL RD	WRECK ISLAND CREEK	12/28/2022
CAMPBELL	4236	630	CHELLIS FORD RD	GOOSE CREEK	12/28/2022
SCOTT	16832	681	RTE 681	CRACKERS NECK BRANCH	12/21/2022
RUSSELL	16529	770	OLD HWY 19	INDIAN CREEK	12/20/2022
PATRICK	13232	58	JEB STUART HWY/RTE 58	QUAKERFIELD BRANCH	12/19/2022
MECKLENBURG	11942	92	HWY 92	JOLLY HOLLOW CREEK	12/16/2022
NEW KENT	12740	631	SOUTH GARDEN RD	BEARS HILL SWAMP	12/16/2022
CARROLL	4612	221	FLOYD PIKE/RTE 221	BIG REED ISLAND CREEK	12/16/2022
PATRICK	13242	103	DRY POND HWY/RTE 103	LONG BRANCH	12/16/2022
PATRICK	13243	103	DRY POND RD/RTE 103	ELK CREEK	12/16/2022
PATRICK	13198	8	SALEM HWY /RTE 8	NOEL CREEK	12/16/2022
LEE	10857	640	RTE 640	LONG HOLLOW BRANCH	12/15/2022
BUCHANAN	3833	602	INDIAN CREEK RD	INDIAN CREEK	12/14/2022
FRANKLIN	7817	602	CALLAWAY RD/RTE 602	ROARING RUN	12/14/2022
FRANKLIN	7828	608	FORK MTN RD/RTE 608	BIG CHESTNUT CREEK	12/14/2022
FRANKLIN	7974	768	LIGHTHAVEN RD/RTE 768	TOWNE CREEK	12/14/2022
FRANKLIN	7978	778	NICHOLAS CK RD/RTE 778	NICHOLAS CREEK	12/14/2022
FRANKLIN	7897	684	BOONE MILL RD/RTE 684	MAGGODEE CREEK	12/13/2022
FRANKLIN	7930	721	PATTI RD/RTE 721	LITTLE DOE RUN	12/13/2022
PATRICK	13209	40	CHARITY HWY/RTE 40	ROCK CASTLE CREEK	12/13/2022
PATRICK	13196	8	SALEM HWY/RTE 8	ROCKY BRANCH	12/13/2022
BEDFORD	2705	620	BATEMAN BRIDGE RD	NS RAILWAY	12/12/2022
BEDFORD	2779	664	GOSHEN RD/RTE 664	ELK CREEK	12/12/2022
BEDFORD	2740	643	JOPLING RD/RTE 643	STONY CREEK	12/12/2022
CRAIG	5474	311	RTE 311	BRANCH OF CRAIG CREEK	12/12/2022
FLOYD	7505	221	FLOYD HWY S/RTE 221	BR OF W F LITTLE RIVER	12/12/2022
PATRICK	13199	8	WOOLWINE HWY/RTE 8	PUDDING CREEK	12/12/2022
FRANKLIN	7914	703	AYERS RD/RTE 703	POPLAR CAMP CREEK	12/9/2022
FRANKLIN	7858	635	EDWARDSVILLE RD/RTE 635	LYNVILLE CREEK	12/9/2022
FRANKLIN	7877	643	DILLONS MILL RD/RTE 643	N FORK BLACKWATER RIVER	12/8/2022
FRANKLIN	7839	623	FAIRY STN P RD/RTE 623	BEARDS CREEK	12/8/2022
FRANKLIN	7991	798	KNOB CHURCH RD/RTE 798	MILL CREEK	12/8/2022
PATRICK	13221	58	JEB STUART HWY/RTE 58	DAN RIVER	12/8/2022
PATRICK	13200	8	WOOLWINE HWY/RTE 8	SYCAMORE CREEK	12/8/2022
BEDFORD	2670	600	PETERS CREEK RD/RTE 600	BATTERY CREEK	12/7/2022
BEDFORD	2774	657	ROCKY MTN RD/RTE 657	IVY CREEK	12/7/2022
FRANKLIN	7861	637	BRANDY OAK RD/RTE 637	THARP CREEK	12/6/2022
FRANKLIN	7862	637	GRIFFIT HILL RD/RTE 637	OTTER CREEK	12/6/2022
FRANKLIN	7988	792	LAUREL BLUFF/RTE 792	RENNET BAG CREEK	12/6/2022
FRANKLIN	7967	792	LAUREL BLUFF RD/RTE 792	RENNET BAG CREEK	12/6/2022
BEDFORD	2874	737	AYERS RD/RTE 737	NS RAILWAY	12/5/2022
BLACKSBURG	28885	314	DUCK POND DR	STROUBLES CREEK	12/5/2022
FLOYD	7500	221	FLOYD HWY S/RTE 221	BRANCH GREASY CREEK	12/5/2022
FLOYD	7503	221	FLOYD HWY S/RTE 222	BRANCH HOWELL CREEK	12/5/2022
ROANOKE	14946	221	BENT MTN RD/RTE 221	BR BACK CREEK	12/5/2022
NEW KENT	12639	60	WBL POCHONTAS TR	SCHIMMOE CREEK	12/2/2022
BEDFORD	2897	755	MORGANS MILL RD/RTE 775	NS RAILWAY	12/2/2022
BEDFORD	2697	619	PENDLETON RD/RTE 619	SHOCKOE CREEK	12/2/2022
PATRICK	13245	103	DRY POND HWY/RTE 103	SANDY CREEK	12/2/2022
PATRICK	13220	58	RTE 58	N.FORKOF POORHOUSE CREEK	12/1/2022
ROANOKE	14809	F880	BRETHERN RD/RTE F880	BRANCH OF BACK CREEK	12/1/2022
PATRICK	13372	699	HUGHES BROWN RD/RTE 699	WHITE MUD CREEK	11/30/2022
ORANGE	13030	666	HAWFIELD RD	MOUNTAIN RUN	11/29/2022
FLOYD	7506	221	FLOYD HWY S/RTE 221	BR OF DODD CREEK	11/29/2022
MONTGOMERY	12131	11	ROANOKE RD NBL/RTE 11	POPLAR BRANCH	11/29/2022
MONTGOMERY	12115	11	ROANOKE RD WBL/RTE 460	BR SOUTH FORK ROANOKERIVER	11/29/2022
FRANKLIN	8023	919	GRASSY HILL RD/RTE 919	TEELS CREEK	11/28/2022
FRANKLIN	7866	640	TURNER CREEK RD/RTE 640	PIGG RIVER	11/28/2022

The list above is not a comprehensive list of all structures with weight restrictions in the Commonwealth, but shows only structures that have new or changed weight restrictions within the last 30 days. The list contains only basic structure identification and location information and the date the new or changed weight restriction and signage became effective.

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit <https://www.virginiadot.org> and navigate to Info Center/Trucking Resources. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT's Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730.

NEWS BRIEFS

Celebrate the Lunar New Year in Fairfax City

Fairfax City is celebrating the Lunar New Year in style with a fun-filled festival. It's set for Saturday, Jan. 28, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., at the Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Blenheim Blvd. (formerly Old Lee Highway) in Fairfax.

It's a multicultural, family-friendly event featuring live performances, arts and crafts, and food tasting. Live performances will include dances, martial arts and musicians.

Traditional arts and crafts such as paper cutting, lantern making, calligraphy, and coloring will be taught. There'll also be food for sale, including Asian baked goods and bubble teas. Attendees are encouraged to come dressed in cultural costumes of their choice and go home with their own handmade decorations for the Lunar New Year. It's a free event, but registration is requested; do so by emailing worldance.mk@gmail.com.

Britepaths Needs Food, Cleaning Supplies

Britepaths has an urgent need for donations to its emergency pantry. In great demand are full-sized bottles of toiletries and cleaning supplies, plus regular-sized food items. Reusable grocery bags are needed as well. To help and for more information about what's needed, go to Britepaths' Website at <https://britepaths.org/our-services/food-bridge/food-donations/>.

Donation drop-offs are preferred Monday thru Thursday. Britepaths is at 3959 Pender Drive, Suite 200, in Fairfax. Call 703-273-8829 or email info@britepaths.org to let them know you're coming, and they'll meet you in the parking lot to receive the delivery.

The Lamb Center Needs Supplies

The Lamb Center in Fairfax City is a daytime, drop-in shelter serving the local poor and homeless. But its supplies often run out, so it's seeking the community's help to keep them in stock. Items especially needed during January are as follows:

Sturdy, 9-inch paper plates and sturdy, 8-ounce paper bowls (no Styrofoam); disposable hot-drink cups (no Styrofoam); disposable, 8-ounce cold-drink cups; paper napkins; granola bars; chips and cookies.

Always needed, as well, are gift cards in \$25 or \$50 denominations to Walmart, Target, Safeway or Giant. All supplies may be delivered to or dropped off at The Lamb Center at 3160 Campbell Drive in Fairfax, Monday-Friday, from 8 a.m.-3 p.m., and Saturdays from 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Chronic Wasting Disease Found in Fairfax County

Chronic Wasting Disease has been confirmed for the first time in a white-tailed deer harvested in Fairfax County. An adult male deer that was harvested on private land in Vienna this deer hunting season has tested positive for CWD. The sample was obtained by the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) from a taxidermist participating in state-wide CWD surveillance and confirmed positive for CWD through laboratory testing. This deer was harvested and tested independently from the Fairfax County Deer Management Program.

Chronic wasting disease is a fatal neurological disease of deer, elk, and moose. The disease is caused by an abnormal infectious protein called a prion. Prions are

transmitted to uninfected deer directly through saliva, feces and urine shed by infected deer and indirectly as a result of soil contaminated with prions. The potential impacts of CWD to the white-tailed deer populations of Virginia are a serious concern. The DWR leads Virginia's CWD surveillance and management efforts and relies on assistance from hunters, taxidermists, processors, other agencies, and diverse constituent groups to implement surveillance and management strategies.

CWD is fatal to animals and there are no treatments or vaccines.

The CDC reports that to date, there have been no reported cases of CWD infection in

SEE CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE.
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PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION



Warning signs indicate the limited visibility in this spot on Lee Chapel Road in Fairfax Station.

Fatal Crash on Lee Chapel Road Claims Two Students' Lives

Steep hills are no stranger to fatalities in Fairfax Station.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

Two teens were killed in a fatal accident on Lee Chapel Road in Fairfax Station on Tuesday, Jan. 10, putting the spotlight on a hazardous spot that's been on area officials' radar for years. The recent crash occurred when a car full of teens from South County High School crested one of the steep hills, lost control and crashed into the woods, killing two girls and putting the driver in the hospital with serious injuries.

This area has been the site of several fatal accidents in the past. There are two sharp hills where a car can actually become airborne, a feature that is well known to drivers in the area. Currently, there are a few makeshift memorials for past accidents, including one big cross with flowers, intended to note an accident years ago that killed a girl named "Allie." A note remains on the cross:

"Dear Allie, today is the 17th and it's been a hard 17 years without you my sweetness, I love you, I miss you," it read.

According to the Fairfax County Police, dispatchers received an emergency notification at 9:26 p.m. on January 10, for a crash in the 7400 block of Lee Chapel Road. Officers searched the area and found a 2019 Lexus IS350 off of the road. Fire and rescue personnel extricated one victim, who was taken to a nearby hospital with injuries considered life-threatening. Two

other occupants of the Lexus were declared deceased at the scene.

Preliminarily, detectives determined the driver was traveling north on Lee Chapel Road.

As the sedan crested a hill, the driver lost control, left the roadway and the vehicle came to rest on its roof. Preliminarily, detectives believe speed was a factor in the crash. Alcohol was not a factor in the crash, police said.

This section of Lee Chapel Road is in the Springfield District and Supervisor Pat Herrity has looked at improvements in 2015 and 2017 but it became a budget issue. After this last fatality, he's planned a meeting with the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Fairfax County Department of Transportation. "I'm looking for an interim solution right now," Herrity said.

Speed is a big factor on this road, and recently Herrity worked with the police at the West Springfield station to get a speed enforcement team to address speeding. Lately the FCPD has experienced staff shortages so they eliminated these teams.

In the Springfield District, there have been other accidents on the rural roads, so Herrity is looking at other places in need of solutions as well. There are places on Popes Head Road, Hampton Road and Clifton Road that need some attention, he said.

On social media, there was a petition to get Lee Chapel Road fixed, as well as several other suggestions including "make that stretch a four lane, taking out the curves and humps," said one responder on Nextdoor. Lowering the speed limit was another option that was discussed. "If they do not follow the speed limit now, what good is lowering it?" asked a responder from Keene Mill Oaks.



This memorial is for another fatality here on Lee Chapel Road.



Looking west, the dips in the road impact the ride in both directions.

Chronic Wasting Disease

FROM PAGE 2

people. However, some animal studies suggest CWD poses a risk to certain types of non-human primates, like monkeys, that eat meat from CWD-infected animals or come in contact with brain or body fluids from infected deer or elk. The CDC says these studies raise con-

cerns that there may also be a risk to people. Since 1997, the World Health Organization has recommended that it is important to keep the agents of all known prion diseases from entering the human food chain. www.cdc.gov/prions/cwd/index.html

Fairfax County wildlife management staff, in collaboration with park ecologists and Virginia De-

partment of Wildlife Resources, have been conducting surveillance for Chronic Wasting Disease in Fairfax County since 2019 given the likelihood that the disease would spread to our area and the implications it poses for deer conservation and management. Over the past 4 years, county staff have sampled and tested over 750 deer harvested through the Fairfax County Deer Management Program. The majority of samples were taken from

hunter-harvested deer through the county's archery program.

County staff are working in close partnership with the DWR to determine any new rules or regulatory changes that will occur, testing options for hunters in the county program and on private property, and how this detection might affect local processors, taxidermists, and Hunters for the Hungry donations.

See Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/diseases/cwd/> webpage for more information

virginia.gov/wildlife/diseases/cwd/ webpage for more information

To report a sick deer, call the DWR Wildlife Conflict Line at 1-855-571-9003 to report sick deer showing neurologic signs (loss of coordination, droopy head or ears, lack of fear of humans, excessive drooling, etc.) and extreme emaciation. Accurately document the location of the animal.



Melanie Zipp swears in (from left) Councilmembers Billy Bates, Kate Doyle Feingold, Jeff Greenfield, So Lim, Tom Ross and Jon Stehle.



While Billy Bates, Kate Doyle Feingold and Jeff Greenfield look on, Melanie Zipp (at far left) administers the Oath of Office to Fairfax Mayor Catherine Read.

New Fairfax City Mayor, Council, Sworn In

Fairfax City's new mayor and City Council members were officially sworn in before the end of the year, so they could legally take office on Jan. 1. But before the Council meeting last Tuesday, Jan. 10, there was a ceremonial swearing-in ceremony for them before family and friends in City Hall.

Rick Herrington, with the City's Electoral Board, read and presented each new official with framed Certificates of Election proclaiming that the results of their election were officially certified on Nov. 14, 2022.

Then City Clerk Melanie Zipp swore in Councilmembers So Lim, Jon Stehle, Tom Ross, Billy Bates, Kate Doyle Feingold and Jeff Greenfield. After that, Zipp administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Catherine Read.



New Mayor Catherine Read poses with past City mayors, (from left) Steve Stombres, David Meyer and John Mason.



During her first City Council meeting as mayor, Catherine Read listens intently while a resident speaks.

"This is a historic night, being sworn in as your 13th mayor," said Read, who's also Fairfax's first woman to hold this position. "And I'm the only City mayor to not wear a tie while being sworn in. However, I did wear pearls."

"It's an honor to be your mayor and a privilege to serve with all of these people on the Council," she continued. "It's an awesome responsibility and one of the greatest roles I could ever have in my lifetime."

Dignitaries attending the ceremony included Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano and Town of Vienna Mayor Linda Colbert. A brief reception followed, and then the new slate of officers took their places in Council Chambers beneath the new City seal and got to work.

— BONNIE HOBBS

Phillips: Superintendent's Assistant, Fairfax City Schools

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Providence Elementary Principal Dan Phillips is moving up in the City of Fairfax Schools system. He's just been appointed assistant to the superintendent, replacing Diego Wilson who retired from this post in December. Phillips will begin his new job when a Providence Elementary principal is named to replace him.

In a letter he wrote last week to his Providence community, Phillips said, "While I am excited for this new opportunity, it means I will have to leave the best job in FCPS. As I have said many times before, Providence Elementary School is a special place."

"We have incredible support from the Region 5 team in Fairfax County Public Schools, and from the Superintendent and School Board in the City of Fairfax. We

have additional funding from the City, and as a Title 1 school, which gives us resources that are not available to most schools. We have a beautiful facility in which to meet every day. There will be a long line of people attracted to this job for those reasons alone."

However, even in his new role, Phillips will continue looking out for Providence Elementary's best interests and will do likewise for all the Fairfax City schools. As Assistant to the Superintendent, he'll work with Superintendent Jeff Platenberg on facility upgrades, will help support the administrators and will oversee grants to the City's four schools.

Phillips has deep connections



PHOTO COURTESY OF
CARRIE DORSEY
Dan Phillips

with the City of Fairfax, and his two sons attended and graduated from City schools. He's also worked for the Parks and Recreation Department and has been an administrator at both Daniels Run and Providence elementary schools. He's been at Providence as principal and assistant principal for 11 years.

"We are excited for Dan to join our team," said Platenberg. "He not only has a deep passion for education and students, but a love for the City of Fairfax. His voice advocating for all at Providence Elementary will be now a voice for all of our City school students, families and staff."

The Region 5 office at FCPS will

begin the principal search process for Phillips's replacement in the coming weeks. And Providence fam-

ilies will be able to provide input on the important skills they believe their new principal should possess.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF CARRIE DORSEY

Meet Fairfax City's All-Female School Board

Fairfax City's first-ever, all-female School Board was sworn in last Monday, Jan. 9. (From left) are Rachel McQuillen, Amit Hickman (vice chair), Carolyn Pitches (chair), Sarah Kelsey and Stacy Hall. All are newcomers to the Board, except for incumbent Pitches, who ran for re-election after all four of her previous Board colleagues retired.

System in Crisis

Lawmakers to consider sweeping effort to transform behavioral health care.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

When Natasha McKenna was taken into custody by Alexandria Police in January 2015, the city's approach to handling people in the midst of a mental-health crisis was put to the test. Alexandria failed the test. Instead of receiving the services she needed to start a path to recovery, she was taken to INOVA Mount Vernon Hospital, and she eventually ended up in the Fairfax County jail, where she died after sheriff's deputies hit her with a Taser multiple times. Instead of celebrating her 45th birthday this week, her death eight years ago is yet another example of a broken system that repeatedly fails people in crisis.

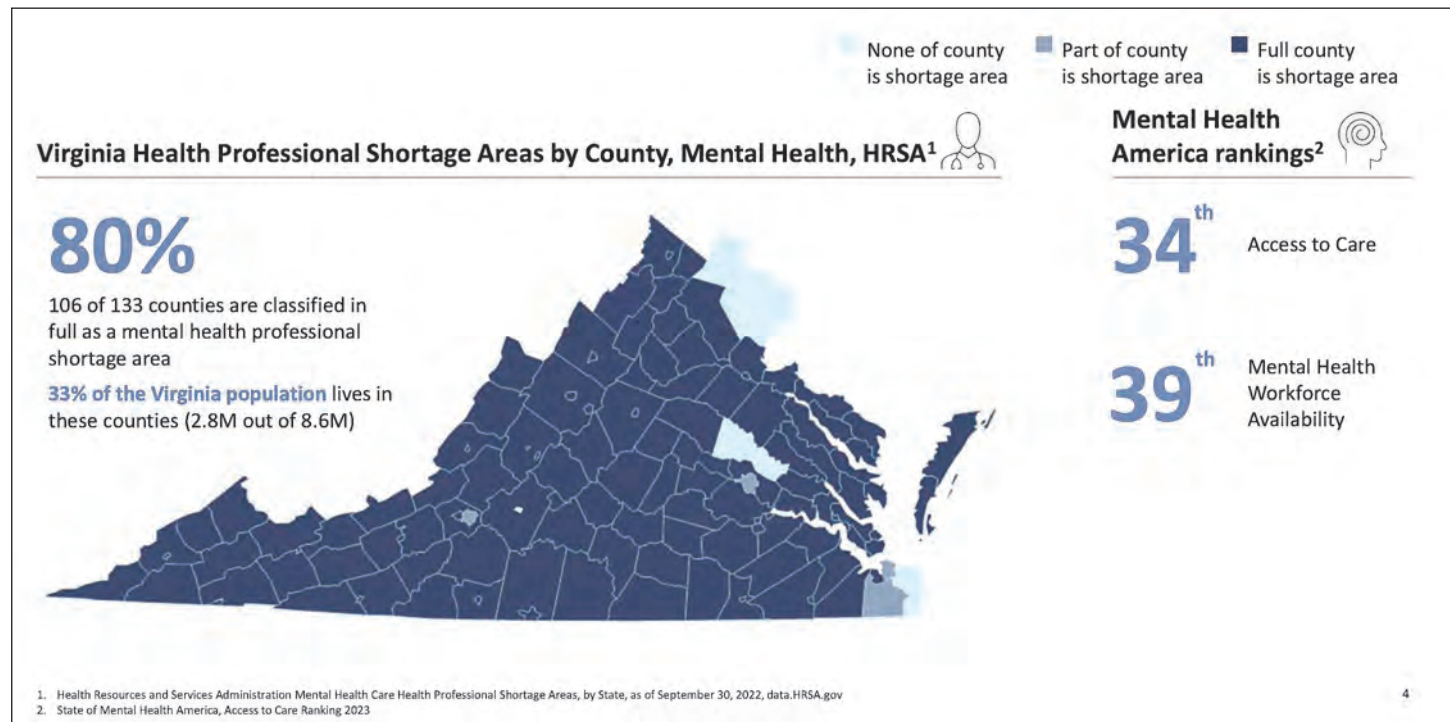
"I used to think that with mental health, you could move a few deck chairs around and add a few dollars to solve the problem," said state Sen. Creigh Deeds (D-25), whose son tragically died during a mental-health crisis in 2013. "What I've come to realize is the bigger issue is that over the long haul we've chronically underfunded mental health to such an extent that it's going to require a massive influx of dollars."

The crisis is not new, although the newly available \$3.6 billion surplus is creating a new opportunity to do something about it. Last month, Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin outlined a series of steps he wants to take with members of the General Assembly to transform Virginia's behavioral health system. The \$230 million proposal includes everything from mobile crisis teams and crisis receiving centers to expanding mental health education in public schools and expanding tele-health services. In a speech outlining his proposal, he said this may end up being one of the most important issues he faces during his time as governor.

ONE OF THE MOST significant challenges to confronting the crisis is knowing which crisis to confront. When people talk about problems with mental health, sometimes what they are actually talking about is a developmental disability or substance-use disorder. Experts who work in this field stress that those are different issues and mixing them together is counterproductive. For example, one of the action items for the governor is creating mobile crisis units. Advocates who work in this field stress that Virginia needs separate mobile crisis units for people with developmental disabilities.

"Mental illness is something that you can cure or treat but developmental or intellectual disabilities are something that you

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Right Help, Right Now Proposal

- ❖ \$58 million to increase the number of crisis receiving centers and crisis stabilization units
- ❖ \$57 million for 500 additional Medicaid Waiver Priority 1 waitlist slots
- ❖ \$20 million to fund more than 30 new mobile crisis teams
- ❖ \$20 million for partnerships with hospitals for alternatives to emergency departments for crisis
- ❖ \$15 million to expand the elementary, middle and high school-based mental health program to dozens of new communities
- ❖ \$15 million in opioid abatement initiatives including a campaign to reduce fentanyl poisoning among youth
- ❖ \$9 million to expand tele-behavioral health services in public schools and on college campuses
- ❖ \$9 million for transportation and in-hospital monitoring by law enforcement and other personnel
- ❖ \$8 million for Serious Mental Illness housing, creating 100 new placements for SMI patients with extraordinary barriers to discharge

are born with and that you can't cure. And they're not treated the same," said Brian Kelmar, who founded a nonprofit known as Legal Reform for the Intellectually and Developmentally Disabled. "Just because you understand mental illness doesn't mean you also have an expertise on autism or other developmental disabilities."

Similarly, people who suffer from substance-use disorder are an entirely separate category that requires a different set of training and resources. For many years, people have conflated substance-use disorder with mental health crisis in a way that drains the system of resources where they are needed. That's why lawmakers in southwest Virginia are trying to transform Catawba Hospital into a facility that also includes a state-of-the-art facility for treating substance-use disorders and helping people with recovery. The idea is that the facility could be replicated in other parts of Virginia after it proves the concept in Roanoke.

"Half of our mental health beds in the

western part of Virginia are currently occupied with those suffering from substance use disorder," said Del. Sam Rasoul (D-11), who is leading the charge to add a substance-use disorder facility in Roanoke. "Just imagine if we were able to effectively treat folks the right way how many of our mental health beds could be freed up."

THE CRISIS-FIRST APPROACH outlined by the governor aims to make sure people who are most in need of help get it when it's most critical. To accomplish this, he wants to set a goal of making sure same-day care is available for people in a mental-health crisis. To achieve this objective, Youngkin wants to double the number of mobile crisis units and increase the number of crisis receiving center slots by 50 percent and boost short-term crisis beds by more than 25 percent. The entry point of the new approach is the 988 Crisis Hotline, giving people an easy-to-remember phone number they can call when crisis services are needed immediately.

"This plan will improve crisis care by expanding capacity for those in immediate need while also helping Virginians before they reach the crisis point," said Del. Rob Bell (R-58), chairman of the influential Courts of Justice Committee. "I'm hopeful that we can make a real difference for those who are most in need."

Another key part of the reform effort is easing the burden on law-enforcement officers, who are often at the front lines of responding to calls for help. The average law-enforcement officer in Virginia spends 51 hours on a temporary detention order while the person in crisis waits for help. The solution to this, he says, is to spend more money on law-enforcement personnel who are dedicated to this issue. In addition, he wants to make sure alternative custody sites are available as well as transportation to get there and in-hospital monitoring for when these people arrive.

Police encounters with people experiencing a mental health crisis sometimes don't end well. In July, Jasper Aaron Lynch, 26, of McLean, was shot and killed by Fairfax County Police during a mental health crisis. Even though a behavioral health specialist responded with police initially, the team couldn't locate Lynch. Police responded to a second call later but the behavioral health counselor was no longer available, offering an example of the critical need for the right resources at the right time.

"This is a massive undertaking of the entire behavioral health system and continuum of care," said Secretary of Health and Human Resources John Littell. "Typically, mental health efforts in the Commonwealth only last one year and target a single area of the problem. We have a multi-year plan that takes on every facet of the system. This is the first time Virginia is doing this."

First Bill on MLK Day

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

As you know, I am down in Richmond for the 2023 General Assembly Session. On Monday, it was Martin Luther King Jr. Day, marking 40 years since the day was made an official holiday. This day is even more significant in 2023, as this year is also the 60th anniversary of Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial during the March on Washington. As we reflect on the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., we remember, in addition to his lifelong dedication to civil rights and racial justice, his activism and accomplishments in the area of promoting non-discrimination in housing policy, which culminated in the eventual passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968. This landmark piece of legislation prohibited discrimination in housing and housing-related transactions on the basis of race, religion, or national origin, which was later expanded to include sex, familial status, and disability.

Today, the fair housing fight is focused in large part on affordability. In this second week in Richmond, my first bill to receive a hearing this session at 7am on Martin Luther King Jr. Day was House Bill (HB) 1578. HB 1578 is a bill to support the residents of manufactured home parks. Manufactured homes, also known as mobile homes or trailers, are one of the best forms of naturally occurring affordable housing available on the market. They are a valuable component of the solution to the nationwide affordable housing crisis. Manufactured homes make up 5.4% of the Virginia housing market, with 184,000 units across the state. Manufactured home parks are unique in that residents typically own their homes and pay rent on the land that the home sits on. I am particularly proud of the parks in my district: Audubon Estates, Harmony Place, Woodley Hills, Rays and Engleside, and Penn Daw Terrace. However, these parks—all located



Krizek

along Richmond Highway—are endangered by coming development. Harmony Place and Rays and Engleside were recently bought by equity investment firms, something that is happening all across the country. In both cases a nonprofit was willing to purchase the park and the residents formed organizations to represent themselves in order to make an offer. But because the park owners had already signed sales contracts with high penalties for backing out, they did not consider other offers. This maneuver pointed out a big loophole in legislation passed a couple years ago requiring park owners to make any sales contract public so nonprofits could make a counter offer.

Clearly park owners needed an incentive to sell to nonprofits. HB 1578 offers a tax credit to owners of manufactured home parks to incentivize selling to nonprofit organizations or resident associations rather than profit-making

organizations that may close a park and evict residents, raise rents, or reduce maintenance. The bill would allow park owners to deduct any gain from such a sale from their taxable income. Across the state, a number of parks have been stabilized and improved under the ownership of nonprofit organizations like Habitat for Humanity and Catholics for Housing, who run parks for the benefit of the residents. The choice to sell to these groups is completely optional, but HB 1578 strongly incentivizes that choice. Providing incentives to sell to nonprofits or resident cooperatives is the only way to level the playing field and preserve these valuable sources of market-rate affordable housing. Mobile home park tenants benefit not only from resident-centered management but also because the bill requires the sold property to be maintained as a manufactured home park for at least thirty years after the sale. These parks are not just people's homes, they are also communities, and those communities deserve to decide how they

SEE FIRST BILL, PAGE 14

The 2023 General Assembly Has Started Its Work

The first week of the General Assembly session is in the books. We spent most of it getting organized.

On the day before the session started, we learned that Virginia Beach voters had elected Virginia Beach Councilman Aaron Rouse to the state Senate in a special election to replace now-Congresswoman Jen Kiggans. That changed the party composition of the Senate to 22 Democrats and 18 Republicans. Senator-elect Rouse will be sworn in this week after his election is certified and he will be a welcome addition.

The Governor delivered his State of the Commonwealth Address to a joint session of the legislature during our first week. While it appears the Governor has presidential ambitions, I was disappointed that he used the occasion to blame President Biden and former Governor Northam for national and international trends like inflation and learning loss instead of offering more solutions that we could work together on. The Senate has common ground with him on issues like bolstering investments in mental health.

Governor Youngkin's presidential ambitions appear to have prodded him to focus on China at the expense of his state's needs.

He focused part of his speech on banning Chinese land purchases. The next day, we learned that he had cut off negotiations with Ford Motor Company on the construction of an electric vehicle battery plant in Halifax County. Ford's plan would have created 2,500 jobs in a county that has a median family income of \$45,000 per year – 40 percent of Fairfax County's – because Ford had chosen to partner with a Chinese technology firm to produce the batteries. While China bashing is a popular sport right now with other presidential hopefuls, raising this topic in a speech historically meant to address the state's problems, puts personal, national ambitions ahead of Virginians' needs.

I am carrying 31 bills and about a dozen budget amendments. Among them, I have introduced legislation to expand transparency in our utility policy process. Many people have concerns that Virginia's regulated monopolies, like electricity transmission, have too much influence in making policy by moving billions of dollars around annually through your utility bills.



Surovell

While we have attorneys to help draft legislation, the General Assembly has no permanent policy staff to brief us and provide objective advice on many issues. My legislation would require the Virginia Commission on Utility Regulation to meet regularly, hire permanent policy staff and help better inform legislators. With so few professional, knowledgeable staffers working for the General Assembly, I fear that too many legislators rely too heavily on industry lobbyists. We have made massive changes in our energy laws in the last three years, involving billions of taxpayer and ratepayer dollars, and we need enhanced, professional policy support to transition to a clean energy economy.

I am also carrying legislation to protect Virginia women in the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court's Dobbs reproductive choice decision. Several out-of-state attorneys general are targeting those who facilitate abortions. I am concerned that a Virginian could be charged for giving a ride or otherwise helping a friend seeking this medical care. My bill would prevent their extradition.

Today's smartphones can log your every move and it is very easy to purchase data that shows who has visited a reproductive healthcare clinic. Several phone applications also allow women to track their menstrual activity. My bill would allow a person to sue if any information regarding their reproductive health history is sold by a third-party data broker. Senator Barbara Favola is also proposing similar legislation prohibiting Virginia prosecutors from seizing such information by search warrant.

The Virginia 529 Plan has generated a \$1.2 billion surplus due to investment management fees and lower-than-anticipated tuition inflation. I have proposed to create an endowment, fund it with the surplus and create 2,500 full scholarships for Virginia students who agree to remain in Virginia for eight years after graduation.

Finally, I am hosting my Mount Vernon town hall meeting this Saturday, Jan. 21, 9 to 11 a.m. at Walt Whitman Middle School with Senator Adam Ebbin and Delegate Paul Krizek. I will hold meetings in Franconia District the next weekend and South County after that. If you have any feedback, please email me at scott@scottsurovell.org

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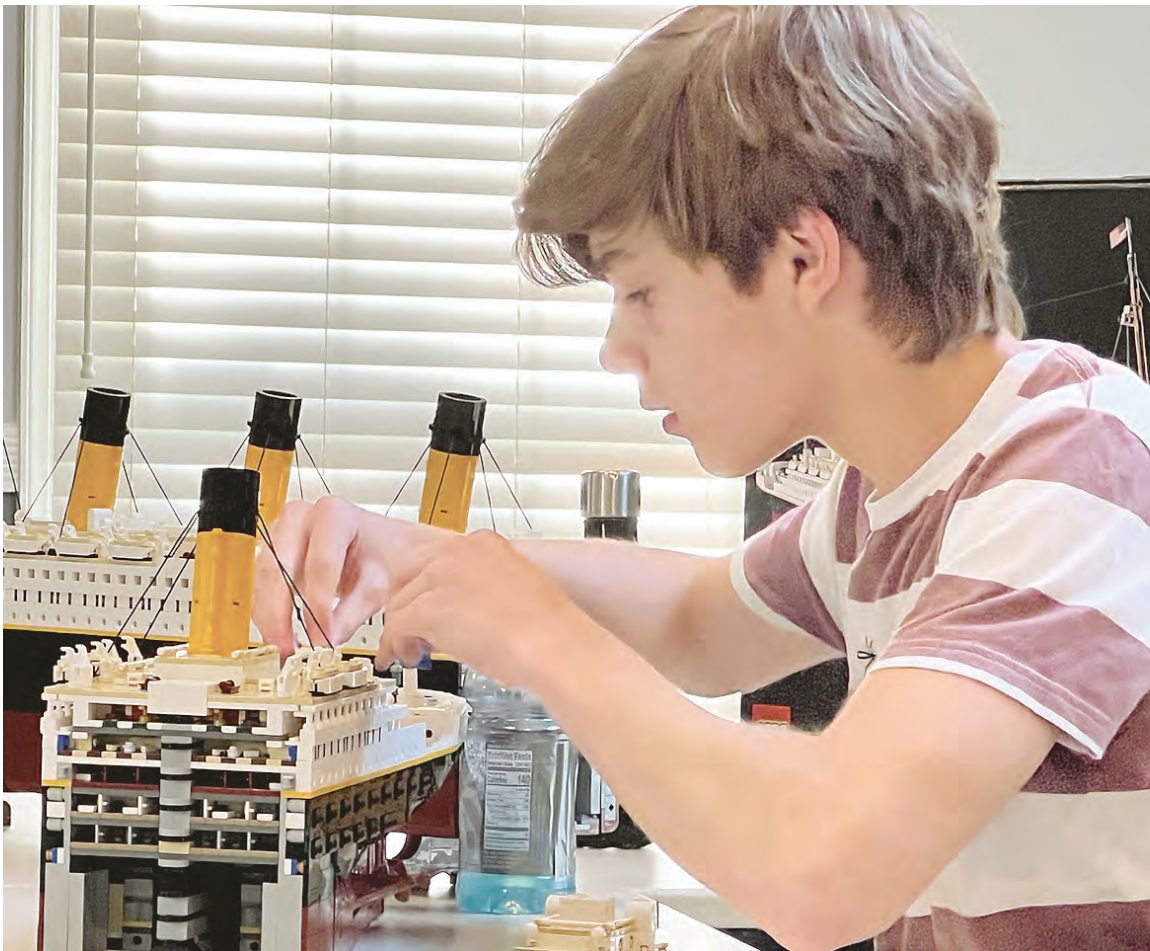


PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Sebastian Haworth laser focused on his task during his May Guinness World Record attempt

It's Guinness Official

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

It was all hands on deck at 8 a.m. last May for Sebastian Haworth's attempt to assemble Lego's massive USS Titanic kit in Guinness World Record time. His parents Michelle and Pedro assisted, within the rules of Guinness's protocols, with arranging space, camera recording, and timers. A supportive audience of a couple dozen friends and relatives assembled, coming and going as the block action continued over the hours.

The Titanic kit is one of Lego's largest and most expensive; one that Haworth, a Lego fan, had saved for with lawn service earnings and gifts. After saving enough, his watch began for the kit, not always available, to come back in stock.

When it all came together and he finally raised his hands in the air on that May 26th afternoon at about 4:40 p.m. after placing the final piece in place, the West Springfield High School sophomore had unofficially bested the prior record by about two hours. A little tired, in need of a rest break, and with sore fingers from pushing over 9,000 pieces into place, there was a high five for his dad and a quick hug for his mom, as the small crowd applauded. Then the wait began for confirmation from Guinness and certification of his record.

It would take several months before the family would receive the certificate from Guinness.

Now West Springfield can now claim an official Guinness World Record holder in its midst.

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PHOTO COURTESY M. HAWORTH

Sebastian Haworth displays the official Guinness World Record certificate he earned in his successful bid for the world's fastest Lego Titanic model assembly in May. (See Springfield Connection, May 26, 2022, pg 4)

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TREES

Champions of the County's Fragile Urban Forest

Winners of the 2022 Friends of Trees Awards recognized.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Trees in Fairfax County are constantly in danger from strangling vines, development, pollution, and a lack of basic tree maintenance. Fortunately, there are people in the county who've undertaken this work with a passion and effort to support tree regeneration, ensure it, and raise the standard of tree coverage.

On Jan. 5, the Fairfax County Tree Commission recognized twelve winners of the 2022 Friends of Trees awards during a ceremony at the commission's virtual meeting. Cindy Speas, chair of the Tree Commission, praised the winners for exemplifying the local residents' passion for trees. "The winning projects are perfect examples of what all of us — individuals, government agencies, groups, and businesses — can do together to save trees and improve our green spaces."

The winners fulfilled one or more of the following criteria: protecting and preserving existing trees and their associated habitats; increasing Fairfax County's tree canopy and their associated habitats; educating and inspiring people to plant more trees and take care of them properly; going above and beyond Fairfax County's requirements for developers to either protect or preserve trees and their associated habitats; and educating and inspiring people to plant more trees and take care of them properly.

"You all have shared a passion with me for not only trees, of course, but for the environment of Fairfax County and how we can make a difference," said Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon).

Friends of Trees Award Winners for 2022

- ❖ Margaret Fisher and Heidi Allen from the Plant Nova Trees "Tree Rescuers" program
- ❖ Cathy Ledec, Friends of Huntley Meadows Park, former Tree Commissioner, Northern Virginia Audubon Society, and Mount Vernon District Environmental Committee
- ❖ Great Falls Citizens Association
- ❖ Loft Ridge Homeowners Association
- ❖ Megan McCullough and Dan Malone of Stantec Consulting for Hollin Hills Stream restoration
- ❖ Fairfax County Public Schools and Fairfax County's Urban Forest Management Division for joint projects at Fort Hunt Elementary School, Greenbriar West Elementary School, Irving Middle School, together with Girl Scout Troop #5532, Justice High School and Whitman Middle School.

The Board of Supervisors relies on the 15-member Commission for advice and support regarding urban forest conservation and preservation. Despite urbanization, tree canopy covers more than 50 percent of Fairfax



Cathy Ledec, Friends of Huntley Meadows Park, former Tree Commissioner, Northern Virginia Audubon Society and Mount Vernon District Environmental Committee implemented many tree planting projects; unceasingly advocated for trees; and provided ongoing educational testimony to elected officials.



Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon), chair of the Board of Supervisors Environmental Committee



Cindy Speas, member-at-large and chair of the Fairfax County Tree Commission

County. The Commission is composed of a representative from each of the magisterial districts plus one At Large member and a representative of the Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council, Soil and Water Conservation District, Virginia Department of Forestry, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Fairfax County Park Authority and Fairfax County Urban Forest Management Division.



Individual winners included Heidi Allen and Margaret Fisher, co-founders of Tree Rescuers, a tree preservation program supported by Plant Nova Natives and Plant Nova Trees. "They saved more than 6,000 trees and have set a new goal of saving 8,000 more in 2023, and I've learned just today that Heidi has recruited and trained eight folks to work individually in our parks," Cindy Speas, chair of the Tree Commission, said.



The commission recognized Great Falls Citizens Association for its thorough survey of all trees more than 12 inches in diameter at breast height along Georgetown Pike. "More than 12 volunteers measured 129 mature trees within 20 feet of a 12-mile length of the pike, and submitted this data report with the complete GPS coordinates to VDOT. The goals were to show authorities where developers may not remove trees and also to help monitor tree health and safety along the pike," said Cindy Speas of the Tree Commission.



Megan McCullough and Daniel Malone, of Stantec Consulting designed the Street Restoration project. "This was the largest and most comprehensive and complex project submitted for this award, and it offers best management practices for future stream restoration work," said Cindy Speas of the Tree Commission. "It implemented extraordinary tree protections for all the healthy, mature trees that were to be saved."



Loft Ridge Homeowners Association in the Franconia District executed an extensive conservation program, battling invasives to preserve the trees already growing on its property. It also planted 43 native trees and shrubs, implementing best practices. "A terrific model for other HOAs throughout the county to become champions of our urban forest," said Cindy Speas of the Tree Commission.



The commission highlighted the student-hands-on-work of several county schools in partnership with the Urban Forest Management division's tree planting program. Each project was incorporated into the school's curriculum. All five projects, Fort Hunt Elementary, Greenbriar West Elementary, Justice High, Walt Whitman Middle School, and Washington Irving Middle School, that partnered with Girl Scout Nation's Capital Troop 5532 received an award.

SCREENSHOTS VIA FAIRFAX COUNTY TREE COMMISSION



PHOTO COURTESY RICHMOND SPCA

Animal champions Senators Jennifer Boysko and Bill Stanley have sponsored several bills to protect research animals, including the Envigo beagles



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/ THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Animal Shelter assisted in placing about 30 of the over 4,000 beagles rescued from the Envigo research breeder's facility as a of enabling legislation passed in 2022

Dog & Cat Bills Filed In 2023 General Assembly

Penalties considered for animal testing facility violations.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Last year's Virginia General Assembly 2022 session was a busy one for animal protections. Legislators passed six bills, dubbed "the beagle bills," for companion animals and considered nearly a dozen. Regulation of research animal breeding facilities were at the forefront as lawmakers grappled with how to prevent future violations at the now infamous breeding facility, Envigo in Cumberland County. Envigo bred and sold beagles for use in research in the United States and foreign countries. They were cited with a significant number of on-going cruelty violations during repeat inspections by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The embattled company agreed to close its doors and more than 4,000 beagles were placed in adoptive homes all over the country in a settlement agreement monitored by the U.S. District Court.

Strengthening regulation of research animal testing facilities

Now that Virginia's only research animal breeding facility is closed, legislators have turned an eye toward strengthening animal protections at research facilities which use animals in testing. Animal testing facilities, including private organizations, state agencies, and institutions of higher education that "confine or use animals for research, education, testing or other experimental, scientific or medical purposes," would come under greater scrutiny with penalties for violations under the proposed legislation. Sen. Bill Stanley (R- 20th District), a frequent animal welfare champion, has introduced a



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/ THE CONNECTION

Legislation would prohibit declawing of cats protecting dainty paws

bill, and along with a companion bill in the House, introduced by Del. Michael Weber (R-18), would require annual registration and fees for entities so engaged with animals, with monetary penalties for violations of animal care regulations. Another pair of bills, by Sen. Jennifer Boysko (D-33), a past sponsor of bills regulating animal research testing and animal cosmetic testing, and Del. Irene Shin (D-86), like bill in the House, seek to require annual reporting of animal use by animal testing organizations and to establish a whistle blowers fund to reward employees who report animal use violations or abuse. A bill sponsored by Del. Kaye Kory (D-38) would require Virginia's public colleges and universities to have potential sources of research animals inspected by the state veterinarian's office prior to acquisition, to assure animals had been raised humanely.

Cat Declawing Prohibition

While dogs enjoyed most of the 2022 session's animal welfare action, this year cats will receive some special consideration as well. Two introduced bills relate to the well being of cats: HB 1382, a prohibition on declawing, and HB1527, a bill establishing

regulations for use of Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) programs. Del. Wendy Gooditis (D-10) the sponsor of the declaw prohibition bill, and animal advocates, want to see Virginia join Maryland, New York, in preventing the practice of declawing cats. Already considered inhumane and seldom practiced by Virginia veterinarians, rescues, or shelters, the procedure was once a popular elective surgery for cat owners who wished to protect furniture from cat's scratches.

Dr George Coty, of Alexandria, an advocate of the bill, says that "Scratching is a normal, instinctive behavior for cats. They just need to be taught what they can scratch, like posts and pads made of sisal, cardboard, carpet and wood."

Pulling their claws through a resistant surface is a daily routine for cats in order to mark territory, exercise muscles, relieve stress and remove worn nail sheaths. For cats spending time outside, claws are essential for defense and hunting prey. The declaw surgery is major, called onychectomy, a procedure which removes bone, sensory and motor nerves, the nail beds and claws. It requires amputation of the first knuckle of each front claw; akin to removal of a human finger or toe at the first knuckle. Surgical recovery is painful with the potential to result in chronic, life-long pain. That pain may result in a change to the animal's gait and intolerance of some surfaces including litter boxes and carpet, for pain avoidance. Many groups, including the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and the American Society for the Prevention Cruelty to Animals (ASAP-CA) have strongly discouraged declawing,

SEE DOGS & CATS BILL, PAGE 15

LION DANCES

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Before the official performance, the lions danced through the library to attract guests.



The elaborately decorated, oversized lions' heads can weigh up to 15 pounds.

Lion Dances Celebrate the Chinese New Year across Fairfax County

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Libraries are usually quiet zones of muffled sounds at best, with patrons calmly searching for books, browsing the Internet or reading in the hush-hush. But on Jan. 14, drums boomed, cymbals clanged and gongs bonged loudly in six libraries. Colorful lions swooped, swayed and dipped their heads, dancers from Herndon's Jow Ga Shaolin Institute who performed traditional southern China lion dances in six libraries to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

At Mount Vernon's Sherwood Regional Library, dancers ages 10 to adult transformed into two glittery, colorful lions that undulated, reared up on their hind legs and twisted their oversized heads back and forth, in a choreographed dance that is thousands of years old. Each lion consisted of two people who coordinated to make the lion come alive. The front dancer was the lion's front limbs and manipulated the head. The other dancer was the lion's back and hind legs. Together, for 15 minutes, they imitated a lion's movements paced to the rhythmic music of a drum, gong and cymbals.

In traditional Chinese culture, lion dances are part of Kung Fu training and performed for many celebrations, including the New Year, this year on Jan. 22, the first day of the Year of the Rabbit. Lion dances are intended to bring good luck, happiness and prosperity.

The Buddha, wearing a full-head mask bearing a bright red smile and a bright



The lions dancing.

yellow robe, swirled around the room and teased the lions with their favorite food, represented Saturday by lettuce, as they chased him. The lions successfully took the prized lettuce, tore it into pieces and flung the bits out to the crowd to bring them good luck.

Colorful Costumes

Attendees were dazzled by the elaborately painted, oversized lions' heads imported from China and made of bamboo and paper maché. The heads can weigh from five to 15 pounds. The front dancer made the lions' eyes move back and forth, the eyelids blink and the mouth open and close. A mirror



The lions at rest.



The lions dancing.

between the eyes is intended to scare away evil spirits and a horn on the top of the head to fight evil. The lions' bodies were made of sparkling, sequin-covered cloth and fake fur. The lions' legs were the dancers' legs, satiny

red pants decorated with sequins and faux fur. Red and gold are traditional Chinese colors which represent good luck.

SEE LION DANCES, PAGE 11
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LION DANCES

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Musicians played percussion instruments, a gong, drum and cymbals.



The Buddha teased the lions with lettuce.



Youngsters were captivated. Here the lion shows them his foot.

Lion Dances Celebrate the Chinese New Year

FROM PAGE 10

Sarah Parker played the drum, which reached almost to her waist from its stand. Her drumming set the pace for the dancers, including her three daughters. Trinity, age 17, has done Kung Fu for nine years and danced for seven. "I enjoy it," she said, preferring it to the hip-hop favored by many teens.

Instructor Steve Johnson likes to take the dancers "to libraries for cultural outreach," he explained, especially around the Chinese New Year. Dancer Mike Kammer said he grew up watching Kung Fu movies. On the lion dance, he remarked, "It's a lot of fun and good exer-

cise. It builds a team. It's exhausting, but fun."

Local fans of all ages were enthralled. Colleen Walker, who lives in Collingwood, said, "It was intriguing. I always wondered what was under those heads. It's more than pure entertainment." Her friend, Deanna Jones, Williamsburg Manor North resident added, "It was exciting to learn about the culture and especially see the kids speaking to the crowd." Some of the young dancers did a Kung Fu demonstration before the dance and explained it to the audience.

The Lion Dance and Dragon Dance are the main attractions of many Chinese festivities, like banquets, weddings, birthdays and

other events, says Allie Shaw, the Institute's dance coordinator.

In addition to the Sherwood Regional Library, on Saturday, Jow Ga Shaolin Institute dancers performed the Lion Dance at the Thomas Jefferson, Fairfax City Regional, Lorton, Centreville Regional and John Marshall Libraries.

The Jow Ga Shaolin Institute was founded 22 years ago. "We teach anyone who wants to learn," says Shaw. Visit <https://www.jowgashaolin.com/>.

Washington, D.C.'s Chinatown businesses will stage a Chinese New Year's parade on Jan. 22, 2 p.m. Visit <https://dcp parade.com/>.



An inside look at the bamboo and paper maché head imported from China.

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ENTERTAINMENT

JAN. 5-21

“White Rabbit Red Rabbit.” 7 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Thursday-Saturday, Jan. 5-7, 12-14 and 19-21, 7 p.m. No rehearsals. No director. No set. A different actor reads the script cold for the first time at each performance. Forbidden to leave his country, playwright Nassim Soleimanpour distilled the experience of an entire generation in a wild, utterly original play.

NOW THRU JAN. 23

8th Glass National. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Oshiro's high-contrast illustrations and paintings depict surrealistic scenes of characters with unique experiences related to identity, be it from race, gender or neurodiversity.

NOW THRU JAN. 23

Off We Go to Paradise. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Oshiro's high-contrast illustrations and paintings depict surrealistic scenes of characters with unique experiences related to identity, be it from race, gender or neurodiversity. Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/off-to-paradise>

NOW THRU FEB. 5

“Women Playing Hamlet.” 8 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. A non-traditional look at one of Shakespeare's most revered works, presented in modern English, Women Playing Hamlet follows a young actress tackling the role of Hamlet in a comedic romp that examines gender norms, actors' egos, and Shakespeare. Women Playing Hamlet, by William Missouri Downs. Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/women-playing-hamlet>

NOW THRU FEB. 12

Winter Lantern Festival will debut a spectacular holiday light adventure at the Lerner Town Square, 8025 Galleria Drive in Tysons starting Dec. 16 through Feb. 12. Winter Lantern Festival will feature over 10,000-LED Chinese-inspired artisan lanterns, along with live performances and on-site food vendors. Guests will wander through a wonderland of light that includes Chinese myths, legends, and zodiacs. In addition, they will view handmade lanterns encompassing a world of ice, including displays of mammoths, polar bears, and penguins. There will also be interactive light swings, see-saws, and tunnels. Be prepared to indulge your friends, family, and yourself in photo opportunities. Hours are Fridays to Sundays from 5-10 p.m. Visit www.winterlanternfestival.com.

NOW THRU APRIL 30

Score: Mixed Media Art. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Score explores 20 years of the work of Virginia-based mixed media artist, Joan Dreyer. While developing her MFA thesis at Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia, PA, Joan began taking tools, techniques and imagery that have been historically considered “women's work” and transforming them into innovative, contemporary art that is responsive to the tone and tensions of our times. Created by combining fiber techniques with unexpected materials like X-rays, her work is a subtle art that asks questions about life, loss, symbolism, and the impact of war instead of providing one size fits all answers. The artist's work provides a space for the contemplation of life stages that we all encounter. The result is a body of work that allows for meaningful but also multiple interpretations by the viewer. Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/score-mixed-media>

THURSDAY/JAN. 19

Lunch & Learn on Senior Housing Options. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Trinity UMC Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Seniors Real Estate Specialist Karen Briscoe HBC Principal, and HBC partner Lizzy Conroy are hosting this important discussion for seniors in the



The Three Musketeers will be presented at GMU Center for the Arts on Saturday, Jan. 28, 2023 in Fairfax.

The Three Musketeers

8 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. Escape into Alexandre Dumas's swashbuckling epic The Three Musketeers, performed by The Acting Company. Full of charm, wit, and swordplay, this world-premiere adaptation by Kirsten Childs follows D'Artagnan, who joins up with a band of noble Musketeers on a mission to root out the corruption of Cardinal Richelieu's spies and assassins.

northern Virginia area. Also participating in the Lunch & Learn event is Jeanina DiVittorio, a Senior Living Expert.

Subjects to be discussed include:

- ❖ In-home care vs. retirement community living
- ❖ Senior community programs
- ❖ Retirement community options and their costs
- ❖ How to decide when to downsize and move
- ❖ Selling your home to help pay your long-term needs
- ❖ Resources to help organize and declutter for your next move

Lunch will be served to all attending. RSVP by January 12 to # 703-734-0192 or Homes@HBCGroupKW.com.

FRIDAY/JAN. 20

Snowball Dance. 7-9:30 p.m. At the Old Firehouse, McLean. Parties are also open to 7th and 8th graders. Old Firehouse 5th & 6th grader parties are themed and decorated accordingly. Free catered food and beverages will be distributed to participants. Parties feature a DJ, open dance floor and a variety of activities.

SATURDAY/JAN. 21

Dinos Roar in Puppet Show. At Hidden Oaks Nature Center, 7701 Royce Street, Annandale. Naturalists at Hidden Oaks Nature Center will ignite the imaginations of young audiences with an interactive experience to introduce children to the legacy left by dinosaurs. Have a look at real fossils and learn interesting and fun facts about dinosaurs through a puppet show and crafts. The program is open to children ages 4 to 8 years old with two hour-long sessions available on Saturday, Jan. 21, 2023. Register for the 1 p.m. or 3 p.m. Enrollment fee is \$10 per child. All children must be

accompanied by an adult. Call 703-941-1065 or visit Hidden Oaks Nature Center.

SATURDAY/JAN. 21

Meet Flying Squirrels, Snakes, Toads and Turtles – Oh My! 6-7 p.m. At Hidden Oaks Nature Center, 7701 Royce Street, Annandale. Have a close encounter with some of the area's common but curious critters! Join naturalists at Hidden Oaks Nature Center for some interactive experiences and get a closer look at the life and times of flying squirrels, snakes and turtles.

SUNDAY/JAN. 22

MCC MLK Day Celebration. 2 p.m. At the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. “Black Music Excellence through the Ages” with Richelle Claiborne. Charlottesville, Va. native Richelle Claiborne brings her joyous ride through the history of African American music across the diaspora to The Alden. It's more than a soul revue, more than a gospel concert, more than a night of great jazz...it is one part history lesson, one part testimonial and filled with inspired musical performances. Richelle tells a powerful story that includes a Charlottesville not mentioned on the news or social media.

THURSDAY/JAN. 26

Performing Arts Movie. 1 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Learn a little about the performing arts through these one-hour (or so) documentaries. Join Performing Arts Director Sarah Schallern Treff for a discussion after.

FRIDAY/JAN. 27

Celebrate the Lunar New Year. 5-6:30 p.m. At Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Commemorate the Lunar New Year



Monty Python's Edukational Show will be presented Jan. 20-Feb. 5 in Vienna.

Monty Python's Edukational Show At Vienna Community Center

120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. Vienna Theatre Company and Vienna Dept. of Parks and Recreation present Monty Python's Edukational Show, a collection of sketches, songs and animation from “Monty Python's Flying Circus.” 8 p.m. on Jan. 20, 21, 27, 28, Feb. 3, 4; 2 p.m. on Jan. 29 and Feb. 5. Visit www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

with crafts, games, New Year's resolutions, traditional snacks, and a discussion about history and culture. The beginning of the year is determined by the Chinese lunar calendar and is associated with an animal sign according to the Chinese zodiac cycle. The sign for 2023, the rabbit, is a symbol of longevity, peace and prosperity. Regional customs and traditions vary widely but share the same theme: seeing out the old year and welcoming in the luck and prosperity of a new year. Call 703-323-6600.

FRIDAY/JAN. 27

(the) Unruly Theatre Project. 7-8 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Come enjoy a night of laughs on us! (the) Unruly Improv is The Alden's professional teen improv company dedicated to bringing comedic performances to the community. In May 2022, UTP was named 1st place Champions at Improvicon of Northern Virginia!

SATURDAYS/JAN. 28 AND FEB. 4

Something Different. 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. At Vienna Community Theatre, Vienna. Something Different is an exhilarating romp through fairytales and folklore from around the world. Fasten your seatbelts for an hour of high-energy children's theater with a crazy ensemble of actors dedicated to introducing youngsters to the theater. Whether you're 3 or 93, you're sure to enjoy the always entertaining and mostly fractured fairytales that will leave you laughing. This performance is suitable for ages 3 and older.

SUNDAY/JAN. 29

Silkroad Ensemble. 4 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. The Grammy Award-winning Silkroad Ensemble, founded by cellist Yo-Yo Ma, debuts their newest program Uplifted Voices at the Center, as part of their multi-year participation as a Mason Artist-in-Residence. Championing women and non-binary members of the Silkroad Ensemble alongside special guest Tuscarora/Taíno musician Pura Fé, Uplifted Voices weaves a musical tapestry connecting the sounds and rhythms of indigenous North America to the World.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Celebrating 13th Anniversary and Expansion

Fairfax's Bollywood Bistro celebrates anniversary and expansion.



Ganesh Jagtap playing the dhol, a traditional Punjabi instrument, for the anniversary celebration.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Bollywood Bistro in Fairfax City dishes up good times with friends and family, plus delicious food in a warm and welcoming atmosphere. And customers and well-wishers flocked there recently to celebrate the restaurant's 13th anniversary and building expansion.

"People have been so good to us in Fairfax City since my wife and I started this restaurant here," said co-owner Pankaj Sharma. "We've now enlarged it from 1,800 square feet to about 4,000 square feet."

Over the course of some seven months, Bollywood Bistro expanded into half of the former Panera Bread location in the City's Old Town Plaza. (Brooke's Bridal & Ball opened its store in the other half).

"Now we have seating for 100, and the whole interior has been redone," said Sharma. "People love the new look and new colors that make it more modern and unique. The ceilings went from black to gray, and the off-white, blue and orange walls are now painted maroon and gray/green. We even have a brand-new bar that can be closed off for private events, as well as

new furniture for our patio."

Offering authentic, fresh and modern Indian cuisine, Bollywood Bistro is at 3955 Chain Bridge Road. It got its name from the paintings on the walls depicting photos and black-and-white filmstrips of Bollywood movie stars.

"People come here because we offer the most authentic Indian food and outstanding service, and we greet everyone personally," said Sharma. "We also do weddings and catering."

The recent changes to the restaurant also included a new menu, while keeping many of its trademark favorites that keep loyal customers returning for more. In October, Chef Sunil Bastola began offering a 13-course menu, plus new appetizers. For example, Chicken 65 is an Indian and Chinese fusion of batter-fried chicken with curry leaves and chilies, and Gobi Manchurian is Chinese-style, batter-fried cauliflower with a sweet and spicy sauce.

A new entrée item is the Kerala Fish Fry, flavored with ginger and other spices. "We're mainly a North Indian restaurant," said Bastola. "But we also serve Malabari Chicken from Southern India. It's chicken curry cooked with co-



Pankaj Sharma in Bollywood Bistro's dining room.



Chef Sunil Bastola standing in front of the new bar.



An appetizer of Ginger Chicken Kebabs.

conut milk and curry leaves. And from Eastern India, we have Bengali Macchi, which is sea bass in a gravy with mustard seeds, onions and tomatoes."

Among the most popular entrées, said Sharma, are Champe – rack of lamb marinated with herbs and spices; Malai Kofta – carrots, cheese and potato croquettes cooked with onion, cream and spices; and a new dish of Yellow Crab Curry – jumbo lump crab simmered in turmeric, coconut milk and spices. And for dessert, a customer favorite is Mango Kulfi – a frozen treat in either mango or malai (cardamom) flavors.

Customer Jenna Sands goes to Bollywood Bistro once or twice a week. "I come with my bunco friends for lunch, and then my family gets jealous, so we all come here on the weekend," she said. "We've been coming here since they opened. They've always been so welcoming and warm; my children grew up eating their food."

Calling the whole menu "amazing," Sands said, "I've never had anything here that wasn't the best I ever had. We've also celebrated birthdays and anniversaries here. Their Tikka Masala – either chicken or vegetarian – is perfect. My son's favorite is the Chicken 65,



(From left) are City Councilmembers So Lim and Jon Stehle, former Mayor David Meyer, Pankaj Sharma and Councilmember Tom Ross.

and their Dal Makhani [black lentils with cream and pureed tomatoes] is absolutely delicious. We've forgone all other Indian restaurants for this one."

Fairfax resident Alexandra Kepler said she and her husband Daniel eat at Bollywood Bistro at least once a month. "I especially like their incredible, appetizer salad," she said. Called Aam Palak Chat, it features crispy spinach and fresh mangoes tossed with mint and tamarind chutney. "It's savory and crunchy and has fruit in it," said Kepler. "And it's so addictive, we dream about it."

She also likes the Gobi Manchurian. "It's rich, spicy and sweet and uniquely delicious," she said. And besides the food, she added, "The service is extraordinary – everyone's so attentive and friendly."

"We're vegetarian, and more than half the menu is vegetarian," said Daniel Kepler. "And if you want something Indian spicy, they'll make it that way." He said their third favorite dish there is Paneer Makhani, which is "like Butter Chicken made with cheese,



Akshith Shiva holds a plate of Paneer Tikka – Indian cheese with yogurt and spices.

instead of chicken. It's saucy, and we dip the naan in it."

"It's always a lovely experience dining here," said his wife. "They've never disappointed us – we love it."

Comments such as these are music to Sharma's ears. "I'm blessed to be here in Fairfax City," he said. "Everyone has been great, and I thank them all for their business and love."

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OPINION

First Bill

FROM PAGE 6

should be run, with help from outside, not interference.

Park residents are standing up to keep their homes. I am proud of the mobile home owners and tenants in four of the parks in my district for forming a residents' coalition to press for nonprofit or cooperative ownership of their parks as well as improved conditions. The coalition grew out of residents associations formed at several parks to help make counter offers to park owners. Organized by Tenants and Workers United, a couple dozen of these mobile homeowners came to Richmond on MLK Day to lobby for more supportive laws. They are learning how to raise their voices to determine their future.

Last year, I introduced two bills on manufactured housing and passed HB 1065, which established a work group of manufactured home park stakeholders to develop a sample manufactured home lot rental agreement and sample manufactured home park notices regarding the intent to sell. The series of meetings the group had in late 2022 brought together a diverse group of interested parties, including the South County Task Force here in my district, Supervisor Rodney Lusk, landlords, tenants, lawyers, and state representatives, with the goal of keeping these parks accessible while clarifying rights and responsibilities between landlords and tenants. Draft recommendations were compiled by the Virginia Housing Development Authority and are now under review.

Unfortunately, HB 1578, has not been as successful as HB 1065 was last year, as the House Finance Subcommittee #1 was unable to reach a consensus on referring it to the full committee, and it died on a 4-4 vote. This was also due, in part, to a miscalculation by the Department of Taxation on the fiscal analysis of the proposal, which concerned the subcommittee members. Realistically, the portion of park sales that would be impacted by this bill is small, most likely no more than 2% of annual manufactured home park sales. Being in the minority means sometimes watching good bills die, but thankfully the Senate version of this bill, Senate Bill (SB) 922, is progressing through the other chamber. Hopefully SB 922, patroned by Senator Hashmi, will pass the Senate and make it over to the House side to give this legislation a second chance, which would be a win for both the residents of these parks and the owners who want to do the right thing.

Dog & Cat Bills Filed In 2023 General Assembly

FROM PAGE 9

unless medically necessary, for example, due to bone infection or cancer in the nail bed, and then only to affected digits, not all toes. The simplest non-surgical alternative is to regularly trim nails to blunt the tips.

TNR programs

Although a similar bill was filed last year without passage, Trap Neuter Return proponents have re-introduced a bill this year under the sponsorship of Del. Kelly Con-virs-Fowler (D-21). TNR programs, used throughout the Commonwealth, attempt to deal with the overpopulation of feral cats, those living outside on their own, not as household pets. The law would codify the legitimacy of such programs and protect volunteers in the program from charges of animal abandonment. The bill also would set requirements for animal handling, trap identification, record keeping, and set fines for non-compliance.

The bill is likely to renew the battle of cat people versus bird people. In 2013, “Nature Communications” published a systematic review and quantitative study of mortality caused by cats. The study estimated wild-life kills by free-ranging domestic cats at 1.3 - 4.0 billion birds, and 6.3 - 22.3 billion mammals, annually. Unowned cats, opposed to owned pets, were cited as the cause of the majority of the mortality. Leading bird groups, such as Audubon, oppose allowing house cats to roam and the re-release of feral cats. Cat people argue, however, that TNR programs serve as an aid to the bird kill problem since they stifle feral cat population growth. Groups such as Alley Cat Allies, founded in 1990, cite TNR programs “as the only humane and effective approach for community cat management.”

Defining ‘Adequate Water’ for Dogs/Cats

A bill affecting both dogs and cats is HB1984, requiring continuous access to potable water.

The bill, sponsored by Del. Kaye Kory (D-38), co-chair of the General Assembly Animal Caucus, would update Virginia’s existing code definition of “adequate water” to mirror required water access in the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA). In May 2020 the AWA was changed and has required that potable water be continuously accessible to dogs. For cats, if potable water is not continuously available, it must be offered not less than twice daily for at least one hour each time. Only an attending veterinarian can restrict water from that standard.

No change was made to Virginia’s code language for comprehensive animal care at the time of the federal change in 2020. Kory’s bill will put the federal and state laws in sync again. In addition, Kory’s bill adds guidance on water delivery sourcing based on scientific knowledge of dog and cat natural drinking behaviors. According to university researchers, dogs thrust their tongues with power into water, pulling water behind

the tongue, with three laps moving water toward the back of the throat [Crompton, Alfred; Musinsky, Catherine; and Reis, Pedro; “ingestion and intramural transport in Canus familiars”, Royal Society Journal Biology Letters, 2011; <http://doi.org/10.1098/rsbl.2011.0336>]. Cats drink a bit differently as explained by Virginia Tech professor Sunghwan Jung who researched drinking behavior in cats. “Cats place their tongue on the water surface and then lift the tongue very rapidly and create the nice column of water. Before the column pinches off ...they bite the column of water and drink it.” With dog’s need to insert the tongue into water, and cat’s need to touch the tongue surface and create a water column, the practice of using small mammal drip bottles for expediency at certain facilities does not meet the definition of providing “adequate water” in a suitable manner to the species and type of each animal” as required by current Virginia code. Kory’s bill provides that guidance.

Other Animal Bills

Kory and Del. Robert Orrock (R-54) have bills relating to pet shops which sell dogs and cats. Their respective bills require annual registration and civil penalties for failure to follow posting, reporting and operational requirements.

Animal advocates will push for passage of a prohibition on animal killing contests for coyotes and other fur-bearing animals. Animal advocates are likely to oppose legislation related to roadside zoos introduced by newly elected Del. Ellen Campbell, who filled the vacancy created by the death of her husband Ronnie Campbell (R-24). Last year Ronnie Campbell sponsored a zoo related bill which was held over during the 2022 session. This year’s bill would make cruelty seizure of animals at road-side zoos more difficult for State inspectors by eliminating animals defined as “livestock” from seizure language.

The roadside zoo in Natural Bridge drew national attention in 2019 for the zoo’s poor treatment of Asha the elephant. The zoo agreed to pay \$41,500 to settle six of nearly 150 violations of the Animal Welfare Act cited by the USDA and was subject to animal seizures related to inadequate care, and even animal bludgeoning as a form of euthanasia. The zoo has only one elephant who has resided there without the company of other elephants for over 30 years. Recently, the animal welfare group In Defense of Animals placed the Natural Bridge Zoo on their list of the ten worst zoos for elephants in North America.

These animal bills will be heard in agriculture subcommittees in both houses in the coming weeks. Those deemed to have merit will proceed for consideration by their full agriculture committees, before moving to the Senate and House floors for vote. Those passed by each body will crossover to the other body and if successful, move to the governor’s desk for final enactment.

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

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

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Still Struggling



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

If any of you regular readers thought one week would be enough content for me to write any wrongs concerning my brother, Richard's premature death, you were mistaken. Given the depth of the loss – for me, and even more so for Richard's wife, Vanessa, one week of literary substance is not nearly enough (your real concern should be that writing forward, this space will become Richard-centric, brotherly driven). Nevertheless, for this week at least, the subject of my brother's death is front and center, again.

Practically speaking, life goes on. Still, when one of your foundational pieces is destroyed (for lack of a better description) and replacing it is completely impossible, where does one go to rudder-the-ship back on track. Unfortunately, I don't think there's any place to go, and that's what scares me. Moreover, being the sole survivor of the Barry Lourie family (neither Richard nor I had natural-born children) carries a certain weight/finality to it that seems awfully heavy.

If either of your parents are living, you feel connected to previous generations. However, when your surviving parent dies, you become – in essence, an orphan, and often your connection with the family is adjusted, sort of. It's just not the same. Combined with the passing of time – and simple geography in many instances, many of these connections don't stand the test of that passing time. I'm not admit, exactly, but I'm something I wasn't prior to my brother's death: lonely. I'm not alone, but the loss/his passing is palpable. It's as if the connection to myself has been severed. And it will be impossible to reconnect. Because for me, being the one surviving sibling, is all it's cracked up to be: lousy. It's not as if there's any accrued benefit in surviving, as in a last-man-standing scenario where assets, associations, memories, et cetera, accrue – to some unspoken benefit. Granted, the memories are priceless, but I'd rather talk to him – in person, not remember him. It's almost an injustice to remember him, as if that's sufficient. It's not. He deserves so much more but there's nothing I can really do to change that. I must accept it. He's gone. Never to be forgotten, for sure. Nevertheless, it seems a hollow testament to a life well lived.

What bothers me as much as anything is the age when he died: 73. I thought that he (and I) would live at least as long as our parents did (presuming the succeeding generations live longer) who were 87 and 86 respectively, and who had minimal health problems until their final years. Yet, Richard has already passed at age 73 and yours truly, who is five years younger, has a “terminal” form of papillary thyroid cancer, which likely makes me mortality challenged as well and unlikely even to reach my brother's age at death. In summary: what a rip!

This column is not at all an admission that only upon my brother's death did I realize how lucky I was to have had Richard as my older brother/caretaker. I knew, very clearly during his life, how fortunate I had been to have Richard in my corner. As a few examples: when I was hospitalized for a week in early August 2015, my brother was at the hospital every day, all day – and I knew it. A few years ago, I was again hospitalized, for nearly another week due to elevated calcium, the aftereffects to a previous month's thyroidectomy. Again, every day, my brother was present at the hospital, advocating, when necessary, but mostly supporting. In the two most significant cancer-related hospital admissions (not to mention all the oncology appointments and infusions where he, as a founding member of Team Lourie, was always present and accounted for) my brother didn't just talk the talk, he walked the walk, on my behalf. When I had the chance, this past summer, to return the favor and commit to his welfare/recovery from sepsis, I was, along with his wife, Vanessa, likewise present and accounted for every day. I had learned from the best how to act in a family crisis.

And it's that commitment which makes his passing difficult to process. Vanessa and I put so much time and effort into his recovery (happily so) that it's hard not to feel cheated by his semi unexpected death. Certainly, we were aware/had been educated as to the severity of septic shock, which precipitated his emergency room visit that mid-July evening, and subsequently left him comatose for almost two weeks; still, his miraculous recovery made us all so proud and hopeful that since he endured the worst of it, perhaps we all might be rewarded with the best of it: his return to a normal-type life. We thought he had dodged a bullet and that his future was bright. When he died that early Dec. morning, we were surprised but not shocked. Still, it's been difficult to process. He was doing so well.

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

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