

# THE CONNECTION

CENTRE VIEW ❖ Chantilly ❖ Great Falls ❖ Herndon ❖ McLean ❖ Oak Hill ❖ Oakton ❖ Reston ❖ Vienna



## Power Of Trees

PAGES 4, 10, 11

Children at Great Falls Elementary School point to their newly planted Flower of Kent apple sapling.

## A Day On Day of Service

PAGE 3

## 'Imagine If' At Chantilly High

PAGE 8

## Could This Be the Year For Mental Health?

PAGE 12

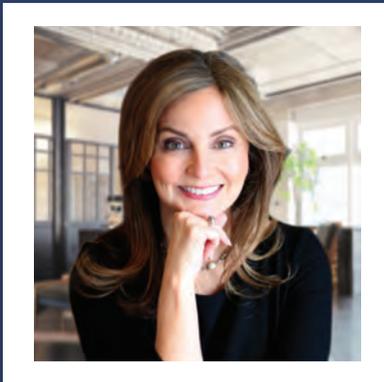
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JANUARY 18-24, 2023

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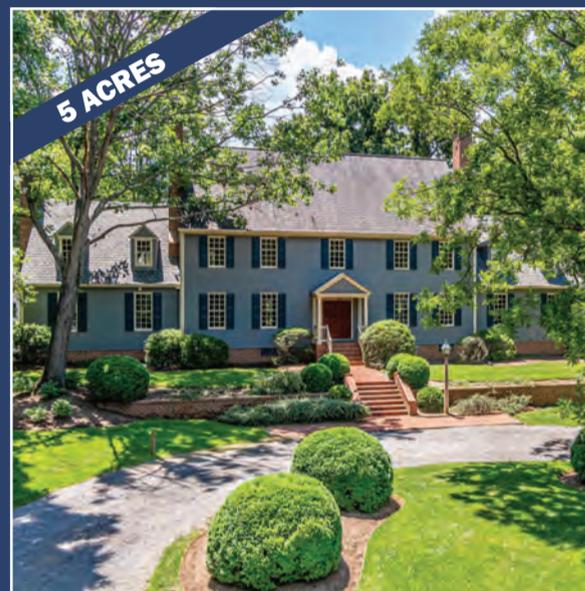
Great Falls

\$1,750,000



Great Falls

\$2,300,000



Great Falls

\$2,975,000



Reston

\$350,000



Vienna

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Great Falls

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# NEWS



Packing Power Packs for Food for Others, Fairfax.



Making fleece blankets for Homeward Trails Adoption Center in Fairfax Station.



The reflection station at Volunteer Fairfax's Give Together event creates the bright wall display, "Together We Light up the World."

## 2023 MLK Weekend of Service

### Supporting Martin Luther King's vision through service.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Volunteer Fairfax coordinated the 2023 MLK Jr. Weekend of Service as a "day on, not a day off." The transformative power of volunteerism empowered individuals throughout the county to bridge barriers, address social problems, and strengthen communities. It brought everyone closer to Dr. King's dream of a "beloved community" by having activities for people of all ages to do service work.

Volunteer Fairfax's Weekend of Service included a "Give Together" event for families with school-aged children. The organization had multiple events happening on Monday,

the federal holiday and the national day of service.

"The Valentine's Challenge had over 100 volunteers making cards for elderly community members aging at home — working with partners like the Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke," said Holly Gordon, senior manager of Volunteer Fairfax's Communications and Public Engagement. "Also, we had teen volunteers working on various projects for the area's homeless population with Recovery Program Solutions of Northern Virginia."

By the end of Monday, completed projects included seed packs with Hidden Oaks Nature Center to encourage plants that support butterfly populations; 200 care packages made for Capital Caring Health to support hospice patients; 105 fleece blankets for Homeward Trails Adoption Center; 100 packages along with handmade bookmarks for the English Empowerment Center; and 150 Sunshine Bags for Meals on Wheels, Gordon said.

PHOTOS VIA VOLUNTEER FAIRFAX



The completed wall display.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

From left, Master Sergeant Manuel Pfaff and Captain Khalid Hashmi of the German Armed Forces Command United States and Canada serve beside local community members in Fairfax County to assist Food for Neighbors with its first distribution event of 2023.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## German Armed Forces Help Fight Hunger Here

### Helps fight hunger.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

In 2016, Karen Joseph saw a need at a Fairfax County Public School, with food insecurity and hunger impacting the high school students. At the time, Joseph envisioned she and her friends would stock a single office drawer of one social worker with pre-packaged food items for her hungry students. That effort grew to become the nonprofit Food for Neighbors, one of the fastest-growing public charity food aid organizations for middle and high school students in Northern Virginia. It is operated and supported by

local donors, volunteers and businesses.

Joseph founded and continues to serve as president of the Herndon-based nonprofit Food for Neighbors. With 500 volunteers, the organization helps students in Fairfax, Arlington, and Loudoun counties. "We are feeding between 4,500 and 4,800 students at 37 middle and high schools weekly and biweekly," Joseph said on Jan. 14 at Herndon Middle School.

On that particular day, the school's cafeteria was one of the eight kickoff collection drop-off and sorting locations the organization had planned for its first distribution in 2023. The signature Red Bag Program is the heart of what they do at Food for Neighbors. People wanting to donate can request a bag, fill it

SEE HELPS FIGHT HUNGER, PAGE 19  
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# TREE CANOPY



VIENNA, VIRGINIA URBAN TREE CANOPY (UTC) ASSESSMENT REPORT, PREPARED BY DAVEY RESOURCE GROUP

Its urban tree canopy is a vital resource for the Town of Vienna, and it has declined significantly.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION  
Trees on the Vienna Town Green

MAP 1. LAND COVER



VIENNA, VIRGINIA URBAN TREE CANOPY (UTC) ASSESSMENT REPORT, PREPARED BY DAVEY RESOURCE GROUP

## Vienna Wants to Boost Its Tree Canopy

Protecting and increasing canopy a top 2023 council priority after losing 163 acres of trees in 10 years.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

One of the top four priorities for the 2023 for Vienna Town Council is to find ways to increase and protect its urban tree canopy. A recent comparison of aerial imagery from 2021 of the Town of Vienna to imagery from 2011 shows that the tree canopy in Vienna has decreased by approximately 163 out of the 2,817 acres of land within the town limits over the 10 years.

Vienna will prioritize preserving and growing its tree canopy now and for future generations.

“The bottom line is this: more trees are being cut down than are being planted, and this is unsustainable,” wrote Steve Potter, Vienna Town Councilmember in “163 Acres of Vienna’s Tree Canopy Has Been Lost in the Last 10 Years.”

On Jan. 9, 2023, the Vienna Town Council approved, in a split 4-3 vote, Councilmember Ray S. Brill, Jr.’s proposal to adopt four top priorities for 2023.

The other three priorities are completing both the Code Create Vienna for zoning and the Parks Master Plan, including uses for the former Faith Baptist Church property on Center Street, and reviewing and revising the noise ordinance.

Mayor Linda Colbert, council members Ed Somers, and Nisha Patel argued against approving the four priorities. Their concern was not the priorities but providing more public input.

### Vienna Urban Tree Canopy Assessment

In October 2021, Vienna officials contracted with the Davey Resource Group “to establish baseline data on the extent and function of Vienna’s existing urban forest, compare

current canopy data (2021) to levels seen in the past, and provide a resource to guide Vienna’s future community forest management efforts.”

The report on the town’s tree canopy was the first of its kind for the community, and it was made possible in part by a \$7,500 federal matching grant from the U.S. Forest Service and the Virginia Department of Forestry.

The assessment used USDA one-meter resolution National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP) imagery and geographic information systems (GIS) data layers. It resulted in a GIS map layer that identified the extent of the existing tree canopy.

In 2021, the tree canopy covered 38.7 percent of Vienna or approximately 1,090 of the town’s 2,817 acres of land within the town limits. Compared to 2011 imagery, Vienna’s current tree canopy cover is 13.0 percent less. All trees within the town limits contribute to its overall tree canopy percentage, the urban forest.

Whereas the lowest level of canopy cover is located on the central west side of town, where much of the commercial property is located, the majority of tree canopy is concentrated on the northwest and south side of town.

Vienna’s greatest canopy cover concentration is in residential areas, parks, and other lower-level developed areas. Conversely, the town’s commercial, industrial, and other higher-level developed areas have the highest percentage of impervious surfaces.

The report assesses the annual value of the ecosystem benefits of Vienna’s tree canopy at more than \$4.3 million, with \$4 mil-

### Land cover class

Table 3. Canopy Percentage by Community

Location	Date	Canopy Coverage <sup>1</sup>
Town of Vienna	2022	38.7%
Fairfax County <sup>a</sup>	2016	51.2%
Falls Church <sup>b</sup>	2012	46%
Fairfax City <sup>a</sup>	2018	37.6%
Alexandria <sup>c</sup>	2018	32.5%
Arlington <sup>f</sup>	2017	38%
Washington DC <sup>i</sup>	2020	33%

VIENNA, VIRGINIA URBAN TREE CANOPY (UTC) ASSESSMENT REPORT, PREPARED BY DAVEY RESOURCE GROUP

### Canopy percentage by community

lion benefiting stormwater management.

“Our tree canopy provides an annual reduction of 23.6 million gallons of stormwater runoff and 37,710 tons of carbon stored within Vienna’s trees,” Potter wrote.

The report identified more than 650 acres of suitable planting areas in residential neighborhoods in the southwest and southeast parts of town. Another neighborhood with a higher classification is located south of the Westwood Country Club.

“If these areas were to be planted, the overall canopy level of Vienna would rise from its 2021 level of 1,090 acres to 1,303. This would bring the canopy level to 46.3 percent, a percent change of 19.6 percent when compared to 2021’s 38.7 percent,” states the report. Trees can also be planted within the town-maintained street right-of-way.

### How To Preserve and Expand Urban Canopy

The report provided guidance on preserving and expanding Vienna’s urban canopy

so that its environmental, economic, and social benefits can be sustained for future generations. The following steps are required:

Develop a percentage target for the town’s tree canopy.

Offer assistance with tree planting and preservation programs and activities.

Get residents and stakeholders in Vienna to support and participate in tree-related activities by engaging and educating them.

Create a program to encourage tree planting on private property.

Write a Vienna Urban Forest Master Plan.

Create a list of the town’s public trees in street right-of-ways, parks, and other public property.

Continue to collect and maintain data on annual tree planting expenditures and tree planting numbers to keep Vienna’s “Tree City USA” designation.

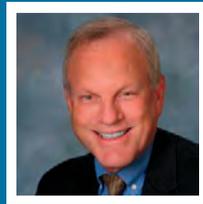
The report says that new research by American Forests recommends a 40 to 60 percent goal for urban tree canopy.

In October of 2022, Kirkland Kirkland & Ellis LLP, Town of Vienna Conservation and Sustainability Commission prepared a report on “Trees in Vienna: A Review of Programs to Help Vienna Preserve and Manage its Tree Canopy.” This report looks at how Vienna could retain, replace and add trees, especially in light of the teardown-new home development, resulting in a loss of mature trees on residential lots.

See [www.viennava.gov/home/showdocument?id=4451](http://www.viennava.gov/home/showdocument?id=4451), to learn more.

# The Great Falls Team

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Bob Nelson, Jr.

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## THINKING OF DOWNSIZING?

Many long time residents of Great Falls have thought about downsizing in the past few years. And we know firsthand that it can be a tough decision... one that Bob, Sr. recently made, even though Great Falls has been a huge part of his life for over 30 years. Paring down belongings and starting a new chapter can allow an unanticipated freedom.

Often one partner or spouse is reluctant to make a change. We are now offering our downsizing seminar on an individualized, in-home basis to show you the freedom it can bring to your lifestyle and how we can help you every step of the way.

So, if you're getting tired of the upkeep of a larger property, give us a call. We have the expertise to help you through what it takes to start a new chapter in your life!

*We invite you to join us for our next Military Appreciation Monday event at the Old Brogue. We've raised over \$2,000,000 for Military Support Organizations and brightened the holiday season for thousands of children through our annual Christmas Gift Wish List effort for injured and fallen service member families.*

To join us at the Old Brogue on February 13th for our next dinner in support of the CIA Officer's Memorial Foundation call 703-759-3309 to make a reservation for either the 5:30 or 7:30 seating.

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## The 2023 General Assembly Has Started Its Work

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL

**T**he 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. 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 Vir-

ginia 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](mailto:scott@scottsurovell.org)

## Taking Away a Right

BY DELEGATE KENNETH R  
"KEN" PLUM

**A**lready the United States Supreme Court has taken away a right that existed for women for over 50 years when they overturned the earlier court decision, Roe v. Wade, that had granted women certain rights to reproductive freedom. As most people know, Roe v. Wade is the case that legalized abortion in the United States in 1973. Now that the decision on reproductive rights has been returned to the states for action, one can expect that a woman's right to have an abortion will be debated in this session of the Virginia General Assembly.

On June 24, 2022, the Supreme Court made up of a majority who oppose abortion rights made a ruling in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization (JWHO) that ended the federal constitutional right to abortion in the United States. The ruling upheld Mississippi's ban on abortion at 15 weeks of pregnancy, overturning Roe v. Wade.

Current Virginia law essentially parallels the federal right to an

abortion that existed before the Dobbs decision. The difference is that the Supreme Court has granted states the right to establish their own laws on abortion. Several bills have already been introduced in the General Assembly that would eliminate abortion in Virginia or severely curtail it. The debate on these bills will be intense, and advocacy groups on both sides will be working hard to pass or defeat these bills as their position may dictate.

Governor Youngkin as a candidate for governor was quoted as having assured supporters that while he had to be quiet about abortion during the campaign to get himself elected he would take care of the issue once he was in office. Now, past a year in office we understand with clarity what he had in mind. In his speech to a joint session of the House and Senate, the Governor said, "When it comes to unborn children, we can come together. We can choose life, and choose to support mothers, fathers, and families in difficult decisions. This session, I have asked the General Assembly to come together to protect life at 15 weeks,

the point at which a baby can feel pain. It is clear, Virginians want fewer abortions, not more."

The Speaker of the House was quoted in the press as saying that the issue of abortion would not be taken up this session. What is the difference between the two Republican leaders? The Governor is delivering on a promise. The Speaker realizes that if his majority in the House votes to support abortion restrictions the Republicans are

likely to lose their slim House majority, and he would lose his job.

Advocates for women having control of their bodies in making reproductive decisions — including men who support these rights — must continue putting pressure on legislators and the administration to defeat measures that would limit women's rights.

Ultimately the decision will be made by voters in casting their votes for candidates this November.

### Let Us Know Your View

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

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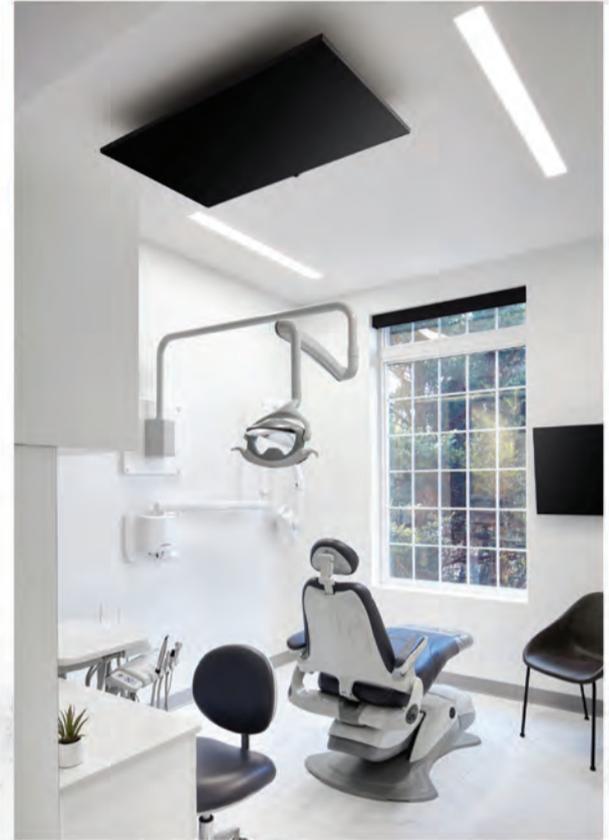
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## HIGH SCHOOL PLAY

# ‘Kids Are Really Going to Like this Show’

Chantilly High presents children’s play, ‘Imagine If.’

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

In Chantilly High’s upcoming children’s play, “Imagine If,” Nadia’s imaginary friend Ralph gets her in trouble with a prank gone awry. So the pair escapes to the Land of Fun Friends, where imaginary friends live but humans aren’t allowed. What can possibly go wrong?

Show times are Thursday - Friday, Jan. 26-27, at 7 p.m., and Saturday, Jan. 28, at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tickets are \$7 at the door or via [www.chantillyhsdrama.com](http://www.chantillyhsdrama.com). Featuring a cast and crew of some 40 people, this play is double cast to enable as many students as possible to participate.

“This show is near and dear to my heart,” said Director Shannon Spicer. “I wrote it about my son when he was 5 years old and had an imaginary friend. The cast has done an amazing job of capturing the comedic timing, as well as the over-the-top physicality and energy.”

Calling it “a perfect show for the entire family,” Spicer said “Imagine If” is full of hearty laughs and special moments for parents and children alike. “I always try to write my plays with relatable characters so the audience members can see themselves in some of the characters’ qualities or traits,” she explained.

Sophomore Camille Dausch portrays 8-year-old Nadia. “She’s a bit lonely; people tease her in school because she has an imaginary friend,” said Dausch. “She’s also friendly, adventurous and athletic. She can go into an imaginary world because Ralph told her where the portals to it are, so she does.”

“She then enters a contest at the festival there and has to do lots of challenges. She wants to stay in that world awhile because, when she goes home, her mom will be mad at her. She’d gotten in trouble at school and was grounded and not supposed to leave her room.”

Enjoying her role, Dausch said, “It’s really fun to act for little kids and interact with them, too. Nadia is an energetic character, and playing her is a great learning experience to improve my acting skills. Nadia’s open to new things and always wants to have fun. It’s cool and a big responsibility to play the lead, but it also gives me room to grow.”

She said the audience will love the show’s humor, plus the actors’ interactions with the audience. “They’ll talk to the kids and will also go into the audience,” said Dausch. “It’s an adventure story, and little kids will like seeing characters about their age, up on stage, having such a good time.”

Junior Kai Obernberger plays Ralph. “He’s very mischievous and likes to pull a lot of pranks,” said Obernberger. “He often gets Nadia in trouble but is mainly just trying to make her laugh. He’s outgoing and will sing and dance randomly and do whatever comes into his head.”

“It’s a fun role and requires a lot of move-



ANNA DIMAIUTA

Sophomore Madison Cole plays Nadia’s sister, Ashley.

ment,” continued Obernberger. “You get to do lots of things you don’t normally get to, like run into the audience and sing the ‘Sophia the First’ theme song. I also have lots of stage time and act with the largest number of actors in this show, which is fun because everybody’s character is so different.”

In a children’s show, he explained, “You have to act over the top and use big movements and goofy voices – and it’s fun to act that way, once in a while. And the kids will like when we give yellow flowers to five audience members and then try to get them back. They’ll also like the silly jokes, and we have some for parents, too.”

Lily Payne, a sophomore, plays three roles, including Queen Bathilda Matilda of the Land of Fun Friends, which exists in children’s imaginations. “This land has everything kids like,” she said. “For example,

the main food is candy, and play is prioritized over work. Its inhabitants wear comical outfits with bright colors and patterns; and as queen, I help run the festival and am respected by everyone. I’m also accepting and love my people.”

Payne likes portraying the queen because she’s “more fun, sillier and brighter than my past characters, and I have more emotions to work with. This show has really enjoyable, big, diverse, expressive characters, so audience members will have definite feelings about them – because these characters demand attention.”

Besides the cast, tech crew members are always a critical part of any production, and one of them helping bring “Imagine If” to life is Lighting Director Ray Islam. “Lighting is especially important during scene changes and to show differences in emotions,” said



ANNA DIMAIUTA

Camille Dausch (Nadia) and Kai Obernberger (Ralph).

Islam. “I change the LED colors to do this. For example, for battle scenes, we’ll have intense, deep-red lights. And for blue-outs – similar to blackouts – we can have a couple follow spots [spotlights] so the audience can see certain actors onstage.”

“In this parallel universe, it’s really colorful, so I use a lot of different colors,” continued Islam. “And because kids like bright colors, I also use greens, purples, yellows and pinks.”

It’s a great job, said Islam, because “I get to make a lot of decisions about what a scene might look like. And that’s crucial because a scene’s lighting could change its entire context. It’s fun and I’m enjoying it. It’s my second year working on lighting, but my first as the director.” As for the audience, added Islam, “The characters are very entertaining, so kids are really going to like this show.”

### ROUNDUPS

## Teen Sexting & Sextortion Webinar, Jan. 25

The FBI, in partnership with ICE and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, recently issued a national alert regarding an explosion in incidents of children and teens being coerced into sending explicit images online and extorted for money. And over the past year, there were more than 7,000 reports of financial sextortion – the crime of online financial extortion of minors.

Many cases start on social media sites, such as Facebook and Instagram. This increasing threat has resulted in an alarming number of deaths by suicide, suicide attempts, and suicidal ideations. So the public is invited to join Fairfax County’s Communities of Trust next Wednesday, Jan. 25, from 6:30-8 p.m., for a free, educational webinar on Teen Sexting & Sextortion. Register at <https://bit.ly/reg4webinar012523>.

Panelists include FBI Supervisory Special Agent Barbara Smith, Fairfax County Police Department’s Child Exploitation Detective Justin Urbaniak, and National Center for Missing & Exploited Children’s Director of Survivor Services Kathryn Rifenburg. Questions

may be sent to panelists in advance at [FairfaxCOTC@gmail.com](mailto:FairfaxCOTC@gmail.com).

## Remove Valuables and Lock Cars and Homes

Sully District police are encouraging residents to incorporate a particular 9 p.m. routine into their daily lives. It’s a nightly reminder to people to remove valuables from their vehicles, lock their vehicle doors, lock the doors to their homes, turn on exterior lights and activate all alarms and security systems.

“Criminals look for easy targets,” said MPO Meg Hawkins. “You can make it more difficult for them by following this routine. Many larcenies from vehicles, and stolen vehicles, occur as a result of vehicles being left unlocked.

“Criminals walk through neighborhoods, trying vehicle door handles, hoping to find an unlocked vehicle. The best way to prevent larcenies from vehicles is to remove all your valuables from them, lock your vehicle’s doors upon exiting and take the keys to the vehicle inside your residence.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID HUXSOLT

Technician Michael C. Pickering receives the Emergency Medical Services Commendation Medal at Fair Oaks Fire Station 21. Flanking Pickering are (from left, in front middle) Fairfax Resolves Chapter Vice President Jon Rymer and Chapter President Forrest Crain.

# Fair Oaks Firefighter Honored for Service

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

A local firefighter was recently honored with a Public Service Medal for his heroic actions in the line of duty. On Dec. 13, Technician Michael C. Pickering, of Fair Oaks Fire Station 21, received the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) Emergency Medical Services Commendation Medal. It was presented at his station by the SAR's Fairfax Resolves Chapter.

A 12-year veteran of Fairfax County's Fire and Rescue Department, Pickering holds the rank of Technical Rescue Operations Team Technician. He's a nationally registered paramedic and an active member of Virginia Task Force 1, a domestic and international disaster-response resource containing some 200 specially trained career and volunteer fire and rescue per-

sonnel.

Each one has expertise in rescuing victims from collapsed structures after a natural or man-made, catastrophic event. As a task force member, he fills the role of Medical Specialist, as well as overseeing Medical Logistics for the team.

The SAR recognized Pickering for his commitment to Emergency Medical Services excellence. According to his commendation, "He always looks for ways to perfect his craft and consistently provides EMS training and mentoring for the shift and battalion, always furthering the emergency medical knowledge and skillsets of personnel. Technician Pickering has shown, time and again, that he can remain calm and in control under extreme stress on the EMS incident scene."

He recently performed an emergency cricothyrotomy (tracheo-

SEE FAIR OAKS, PAGE 15

# Sully Police Station Has Safe Exchange Zone

The Crime Prevention Unit of the Sully District Police Station has a warning and important information for residents planning to sell or buy products to or from strangers they've only met online.

"Please use caution when [dealing with] people you do not know," said police MPO Meg Hawkins. "Over the last month, we have taken reports from community members who were selling their iPhone and had it stolen by the potential buyer.

"The meeting was in a public setting, and the buyer asked

to look at the phone prior to the transaction taking place," she continued. "After obtaining the phone, the buyer ran off with it. There are detectives from the Sully District following up on these incidents."

However, there's a much safer solution, and residents are urged to take advantage of it. There's an exchange zone in the parking lot of the police station at 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. The parking spaces are painted with blue stripes and are directly in front of the building.

Furthermore, this parking lot is

SEE SULLY POLICE, PAGE 15



## 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	Food Station #	Route #	Route Name	Designation	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
HALFAX	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	7987	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	SCHIMNOE 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 SOUTHFORKROANOKERIVER	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](mailto: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.

# 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."

SCREENSHOTS VIA FAIRFAX COUNTY TREE COMMISSION



Shaila Muralidhar, FCPS 5th-grade teacher of the Advanced Academics Program



Jimmy Oliver of the Great Falls Garden Club and Shaila Muralidhar, FCPS 5th-grade teacher of the Advanced Academics Program



Shaila Muralidhar, FCPS 5th-grade teacher of the Advanced Academics Program waters the sapling.

## If the Apple Doesn't Fall Far From the Tree ...

### Library and elementary school receive pedigreed saplings.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

It is a pair of scrawny Flower of Kent apple saplings, only about two feet tall, if that. Yet, even with their sprigs of brown withered leaves at their crown poised to rest dormant until spring, they are the apple of the eye for over 500 Great Falls Elementary students.

On Thursday, Jan. 12, Jimmy Oliver of the Great Falls Garden Club planted a very special, pedigreed Flower of Kent sapling, a Malus domestica variety, in the garden of the community's Fairfax County Public Library located at 9830 Georgetown Pike. The garden is designed and maintained by club members.

Oliver planted the other sapling early the following day at Great Falls Elementary School, 701 Walker Road. The school is the site impetus of the gifted saplings.

"Countyside Nurseries did a great job. They did all the grafting work and the trees were in their hands for the last six months," Oliver said.

Oliver referred to the Flower of Kent as the "top" of his lifetime tree planting significance pyramid. He did not praise the trees for their future crops of large sweet but slightly acidic cooking apples, but because the trees are a historical link to the past, going back 357 years.

It is reported that in 1666, a student returned home from his closed London university. It was shuttered because the city was in the grip of a pandemic, the Black Plague. The young man, Isaac Newton, sat under a tree at his family home, Woolsthorpe Manor near Grantham, when he witnessed an apple fall from a tree, the eureka moment for his theory of gravity.

"The seeds of the project were planted a year ago, almost to the day, on Isaac Newton's birthday," says Shaila Muralidhar, FCPS 5th-grade teacher of the Advanced Academics Program.

In 2022, 500 Great Falls Elementary School students petitioned L. Rafael Reif,



Members of the Great Falls Garden Club and others gather to witness the tree planting.

president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The students requested a grafted cutting of Newton's apple tree from the MIT President's Garden to plant in their new Friendship Garden ("Yu Jyo No Niwa") campus to commemorate their first STEAM Lab.

In their Newton and gravity lesson, the students discovered that an "offshoot" of the original tree that inspired Newton grew on the MIT campus. The tree was grown from a cutting of a tree in England's Royal Botanical Gardens that was grown from a cutting of Newton's apple tree. "Could we get Newton's tree to branch out to Great Falls?" the students wrote.

The tree at MIT was a gift from Ed Vetter, a MIT alumnus. He donated the tree to the institute in 1977. The former commerce undersecretary in President Ford's administration received it as a gift from the National Bureau of Standards.

Last week, Oliver planted one sapling at the Great Falls Library Garden and the other at Great Falls Elementary School the following day. "This tree is at the top of our significance pyramid simply because the stu-

dents wrote the grant to obtain it; it was a student-centered project," said Sara Harper, principal of Great Falls Elementary School. She added that the students would be writing thank you letters soon.

Three students gave their viewpoints about the forthcoming apples and the tree. "I would like applesauce or apple pies," said Alexandria Niamien, 8, of Great Falls. "Then we could donate them to people who need food."

Vivienne Sung, 10, of Great Falls, discussed the best time to plant an apple tree. "I think, maybe in January. Things are dormant right now. In the springtime, then flowers will start blooming."

Wolfgang Dailey, 11, of Vienna, said he does not have an apple tree where he currently lives, but he would like to have one and other fruit trees when he grows up. "I will probably grow oranges as well and a couple of different types of apples like Red Delicious, which is misleading, Granny Smith, and Golden Delicious." Wolfgang added that he would likely not get a Flower of Kent tree. "It's probably going to be expensive."

# System in Crisis

Lawmakers to consider sweeping effort to transform behavioral health care.

By MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE CONNECTION

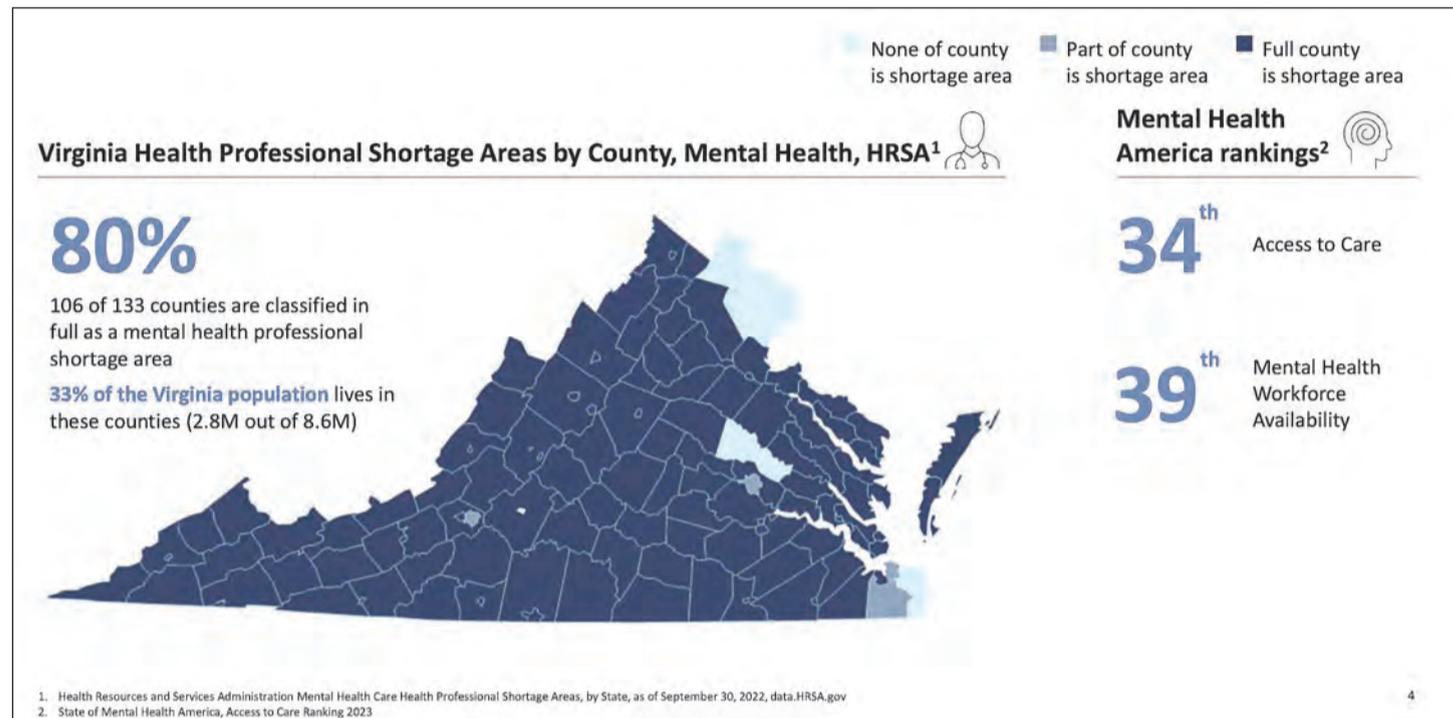
When Natasha McKenna was taken into custody by Alexandria Police in January 2015, the city's approach to handling people in the midst of a mental-health crisis was put to the test. Alexandria failed the test. Instead of receiving the services she needed to start a path to recovery, she was taken to INOVA 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 are born with and that you can't cure. And



## 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

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 occu-

pled 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 Littel. "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."

## RV Camping at Lake Fairfax

Lake Fairfax has a little something for everyone. Spend the day fishing. Enjoy a hike or bike ride along the park's outstanding trail system, which connects to the Washington and Old Dominion trail for longer excursions. You can also leave the RV behind and visit a wide range of historical sights and local attractions, including a visit to Washington, D.C. on Metro's Silver Line from the nearby Wiehle-Reston East station.

RV Camping at Lake Fairfax is open all year long. RV sites are electric only; however, there is a fill/dump station on the side of the bath house. Electric sites have a maximum electrical output of 50 amp or 30 amp, depending on the site; and do not have water, sewer or cable hook ups. Reserve your site at the Lake Fairfax Campground webpage, over the phone at 703-471-5415, or in person at the camp office. Advanced reservations are preferred to guarantee your site. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-fairfax/camping>

Lake Fairfax Park is located at 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive in Reston. For more information, visit Lake Fairfax Park or call 703-471-5415.

## Farmers Market Vendors Sought for 2023 Season

Vendor Interest Meeting held on Jan. 20, 2023.

The Fairfax County Park Authority is

beginning the Vendor Application process for the 2023 farmers market season. FCPA operates 10 farmers markets across Fairfax County to provide residents access to locally grown products and create market opportunities for area farmers and food producers. FCPA is seeking producers of food and agricultural products such as milk, cheese, certified organic produce, prepared foods, meats and seafood. All local farmers and food producers are invited to apply.

All farmers and producers must come from within a 125-mile radius of Green Spring Gardens in Alexandria, Virginia, with a few exceptions for hard-to-find products, such as dairy and organic produce. Markets are strictly producer-only, meaning that all farmers and producers may only sell what they raise on their farms or make from scratch. Vendors are encouraged to source ingredients from local farmers and producers as much as possible.

The New Vendor Interest Meeting will be held on Jan. 20, 2023, and applications will be open on farmspread.com from Jan. 20 to Feb. 10, 2023. A \$50 application fee is required before vendors will be considered. Fill out the Interest Form on the Farmers Market website to receive an invitation to the Interest Meeting and updates on the application process. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/become-vendor>

Questions can be directed to the Farmers Market Coordinator Caroline Hockenberry at [Caroline.Hockenberry@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Caroline.Hockenberry@fairfaxcounty.gov).

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## Make a Difference in Your Community! Run for a Seat on the McLean Community Center Governing Board



### PUBLIC NOTICE OF ELECTION

MCLEAN COMMUNITY CENTER GOVERNING BOARD  
SMALL DISTRICT 1A-DRANESVILLE  
FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA



McLean  
Community  
Center  
*The Center of It All*



SMALL  
STAIRS.  
BIG  
TALENT.



This **OFFICIAL NOTICE** of election to select members of the 2023-2024 Governing Board of the McLean Community Center (the Governing Board) is given to residents of Small District 1A-Dranesville, Fairfax County, Virginia (referred to as "Small District 1A"). The McLean Community Center (MCC) operates as a Special District Agency of the Fairfax County Government through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Governing Board. On February 8, 1984, the Board of Supervisors approved the Memorandum of Understanding, which authorizes the election. MCC is funded by residents of Small District 1A in Greater McLean for their use through a real estate tax surcharge, the result of a 1970 Small District 1A bond referendum.

**Absentee Voting (ballots available in person at MCC, online or by U.S. mail upon request) will be from 9 a.m. on March 15, through 5 p.m. on May 17, AND in-person voting will be available from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on McLean Day (May 20, 2023) at Lewinsville Park.**

#### Candidate Qualifications:

Each resident who lives within Small District 1A is eligible to run for a seat on the Governing Board within the appropriate category. If you need help determining whether you reside in Small District 1A, please contact MCC at **703-790-0123, TTY: 711**, or by email at [elections@mcleancenter.org](mailto:elections@mcleancenter.org).

**ADULTS:** Candidates must be residents of Small District 1A and must be at least 18 years of age on or before May 20, 2023.

**TEENS:** Candidates must be 15, 16 or 17 years old on or before May 20, 2023, live within Small District 1A, and live in the boundary area for either Langley or McLean high schools. You **do not** have to attend either high school. You may attend another school, including one that is outside of Small District 1A, or you may be home schooled. You can only run for the seat representing the high school boundary area where you live.

#### Available Governing Board Seats and Terms:

Three (3) adult Governing Board seats will be filled through the election. The candidates who receive the three (3) highest numbers of votes will serve three-year terms on the Governing Board.

One (1) Governing Board youth seat representing the Langley High School boundary area will be filled for a one-year term.

One (1) Governing Board youth seat representing the McLean High School boundary area will be filled for a one-year term.

#### Candidate Petitions Requirements:

**ADULTS:** Must collect the signatures of ten (10) residents of Small District 1A who are 18 years old or older on or before May 20, 2023.

**TEENS:** Must collect the signatures of ten (10) residents of Small District 1A who are 15, 16 or 17 years old on or before May 20, 2023 and live in their respective school boundary area (McLean H.S. or Langley H.S.)

Candidate Packets containing a petition, instructions and all pertinent paperwork may be obtained at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean, Virginia, 22101, **starting on Wednesday, Jan. 18.** Candidates must pick up and return their own petitions in person.

**DEADLINE:** Each resident seeking election to the Governing Board shall file a completed petition with MCC at the address shown below **by 5 p.m. on Friday, March 3, 2023:**

McLean Community Center  
1234 Ingleside Ave.  
McLean, VA 22101

For more information about the election, please call **703-790-0123, TTY: 711**, go to [mcleancenter.org](http://mcleancenter.org), or email MCC at [elections@mcleancenter.org](mailto:elections@mcleancenter.org).

**Shivani Saboo, Chair**  
Elections & Nominations Committee  
McLean Community Center Governing Board

# GLASS RECYCLING

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



The public has supported glass recycling, county officials maintain.



A new purple bin arrives at the Mount Vernon Government Center.

## Giving Glass Bottles and Jars a New Life

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
THE CONNECTION

**T**hat wine bottle you toss into Fairfax County's purple recycling bin will likely get a new life and maybe several, thanks to the county's glass recycling system. As Fairfax County Board Chairman Jeff McKay puts it, "Your next bottle of juice could be Fairfax County vintage glass!"

The county has 18 purple collection bins in every magisterial district, where since 2019, people have shoved glass bottles and jars through the bins' windows day and night for recycling at the I-95 landfill complex. Alexandria and Loudoun County also take glass there. Fairfax County processed 7,240 tons of glass in 2021.

Before installing the purple bins, which county officials dub the "Purple Can Club," Fairfax County collected most glass containers in what officials call a "single stream system" from curbside, individual blue bins. But most glass went to landfills, because glass in the waste stream could create problems, including damaging equipment and contaminating other recyclables, says McKay. Some jars and bottles went to a materials recovery facility where they were separated from other materials, ground up and used as landfill cover.

Today, glass containers deposited in purple bins take one of two paths. On the first path, haulers take the bottles in the purple bins to the I-95 landfill, dump them into a bunker and tractor trailer trucks from a Pennsylvania company called CAP Glass take them to their glass beneficiation plant to remove labels, separate them by color, remove plastics and metals and break them down into small pieces called "cullets." CAP Glass sells the cullets to a glass manufacturing company, Owens-Illinois. Furnaces at Owens-Illinois's two Virginia plants in Danville and Toano then melt the glass and the company makes new bottles. "Glass bottles and jars are 100 percent recyclable and can be recycled endlessly without any loss in purity or quality," reports the CAP Glass website.

The other track is a "trip" through "Big Blue," an Andela Products glass-crushing machine that pulverizes glass, pulls out any metals with magnets and spews out sand-



Signs on the purple bins promote glass recycling and give guidance.



like glass and glass pea "gravel." Big Blue is the only glass crusher in Northern Virginia, say county officials. The glass "sand" is used as construction material, for example, as bedding material under pipes and fill material around pipes instead of the traditional crushed stone. "The glass aggregates processed by Big Blue are safe enough to walk on barefoot," says Eric Forbes, Deputy Director of solid waste management.

Glass put in regular trash cans is burned at the Lorton Covanta Waste-to-Energy Plant with all the other non-recyclables.

"The Purple Can Club is a system to collect glass separately and allows us to truly recycle glass, keeping it out of landfills, where it was lost forever," says Forbes. "We recycled 100 percent of the glass collected in the Purple Can Club, which is 98 percent pure glass thanks to our residents who participate in the program."

### Why Recycle Glass?

"There are remarkable environmental benefits including reducing the volume in our landfills and lowering carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases," explains McKay. "There are also economic benefits as the County has to purchase fewer construction materials when it uses recycled glass. Glass-to-glass recycling even supports hundreds of jobs in the state. This is a true win for everyone and I hope all residents of Fairfax County and the region continue to support

and participate in the Purple Can Club."

Tom Blackburn of McLean puts glass containers in the purple bins because, he says, "Recycling is good for the environment. It cuts down on waste in landfills and it reduces the amount of raw material needed to manufacture new bottles."

"Recycled glass can be substituted for up to 95 percent of raw materials," maintains the Glass Packaging Institute. Recycled container glass uses include tile, filtration, sandblasting, concrete pavement and parking lots, says GPI.

Ann Allman, a Mount Vernon-Collingwood resident, offers, "I take my bottles to the purple bin because they'll be recycled into something useful and to keep them out of landfills."

Reston resident Joanne Bauer likes to recycle. "Initially, I worried that taking glass to the recycling bins and putting items in one at a time would be onerous. That turned out not to be true. Now it's just another task on the chore list and one I am happy to do for the environment," she says.

Some may even find it fun, suggests McKay. "We regularly encourage residents to join the 'Purple Can Club' and bring their bottles, jars and other household glass for easy disposal. It's actually kind of fun, sending the bottles through and hearing a very satisfying crash and break at the bottom."

Some bins fill up twice a week. Unscientific observations suggest that wine bottles

### Glass Recycling Tips

- ❖ Rinse out glass containers to remove any food or beverage residue.
  - ❖ Check all the purple bins' windows. The bin at one window may make the bin appear to be full when it is not.
  - ❖ Do not put dishes, windows or other glass materials in the purple bins.
  - ❖ Do not leave things behind like boxes, bags or other trash. That may be illegal dumping.
  - ❖ If you observe broken glass at the bins, contact [trashmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:trashmail@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-324-5230 to request a cleanup.
  - ❖ To determine how best to dispose of items, visit the county's waste wizard at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/recycling-trash/residential-materials>.
- More Information: Fairfax County Glass Management, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/recycling-trash/glass>  
The glass container recycling loop, <https://www.gpi.org/glass-recycling-facts>

top the list of glass container types left in the bins, says Forbes. "If you look at the piles of bottles at loading sites, it looks like there are a lot of parties going on," he joked. "Glass recycling has been well received because people care about the environment. People want to do good."

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# Sully Police Station Has Safe Exchange Zone

FROM PAGE 9

monitored by video camera, 24 hours a day. If an issue arises there and requires law-enforcement attention, people may contact police at the numbers listed on the sign there – either 703-691-2131, or 9-1-1 for an emergency. Or people may come directly inside the station to speak with an officer.

Police also offer the following advice:

Only do transactions with local buyers/sellers; if someone isn't willing to come to the police department to do a transaction, it's probably not a legitimate transaction. Don't go into someone else's house, and don't allow them into yours. Take your cell phone with you, and don't go to a transaction alone. If you

must go alone, make sure a friend or family member is aware of the transaction details.

Insist on meeting in a public area, such as a safe exchange zone; or at least, use a well-lit, public parking lot that has video surveillance. Whenever possible, complete the transaction during daylight hours. Don't carry large amounts of cash to the meeting. Be extra cautious when buying or selling valuable items, such as vehicles and jewelry.

Trust your instincts – if something sounds like a scam, it probably is. And if something doesn't feel right, don't go to the meeting site or make the exchange.

- BONNIE HOBBS

# Fair Oaks Firefighter Honored

FROM PAGE 9

my) on an unconscious, pulseless patient who had been choking. This procedure is a last-resort, surgical intervention that establishes an airway in a patient's throat.

It's rare to conduct it in the field and even rarer for a patient with a medical condition. However, thanks to his efforts and those of his team, the patient arrived at the

hospital with a pulse.



The Sons of the American Revolution is the largest, male-lineage organization in the United States, comprised of descendants of patriots who participated in the American Revolution. It's a non-profit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history

and promoting education to future generations.

The Fairfax Resolves Chapter conducts various patriotic, youth, public service and historic programs throughout the area. Men who believe they may be eligible to join the SAR and are interested in membership may contact the Fairfax Resolves registrar at registrar@fairfaxresolvessar.org.

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# CALENDAR

## 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

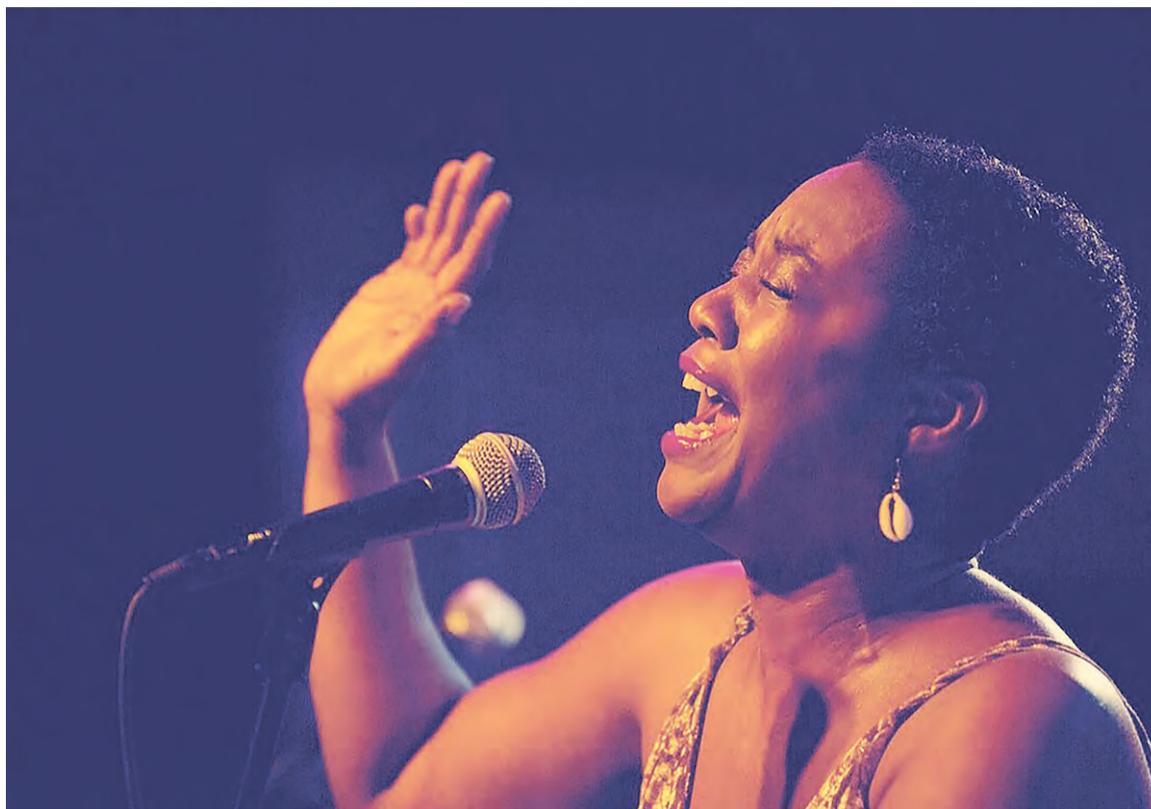
"Women Playing Hamlet." 8 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. A non-traditional look at one of Shakespeare's most revered works, presented in modern English, Women Playing Hamlet follows a young actress tackling the role of Hamlet in a comedic romp that examines gender norms, actors' 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](http://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 Dreier. 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 interpreta-



MCC MLK Day Celebration features Black Music Excellence through the Ages with Richelle Claiborne on Sunday, Jan. 22 in McLean.

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 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

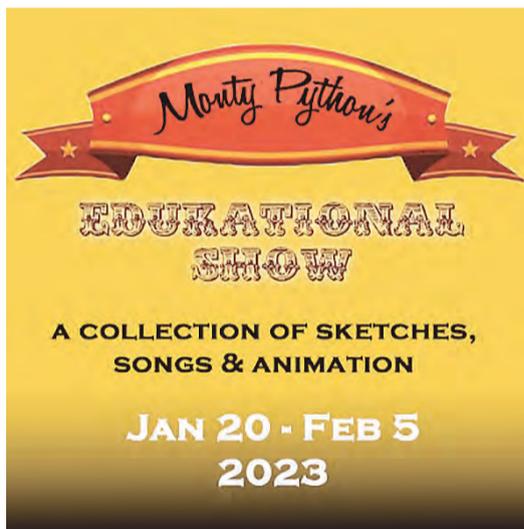
Something Different. 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. At Vienna Community Theatre, Vienna. Something Different is an exhilarating romp through fairytales and folklore from around the world. Fasten your seatbelts for an hour of high-energy children's theater with a crazy ensemble of actors dedicated to introducing 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.

## SATURDAY/JAN. 28

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.

## 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/Taino musician Pura Fé, Uplifted Voices weaves a musical tapestry connecting the sounds and rhythms of indigenous North America to the World.



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

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](http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org).

## 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

tions 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 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 [HBCGroupKW.com](mailto:HBCGroupKW.com).

## JAN. 20-FEB. 5

Monty Python's Edukational Show. At Vienna Community Center



DAVID MADISON PHOTOGRAPHY

Polar Dip 2022

## 15th Freezin' For A Reason Virginia Polar Dip - FINALE

Saturday, Feb. 11, 2023 at Lake Anne

The wintertime tradition when crowds of spectators and jumpers dressed in crazy costumes converge on Lake Anne Plaza is set for Saturday, Febr. 11, 2023. All are invited to join in the fun of the finale of the 15th Freezin' for a Reason Virginia Polar Dip beginning at 12 p.m. with music by Quickspin's Quick Planning and family friendly activities. Registered participants will take a chilly full plunge or a "Chicken Dip" (just their toes) to raise funds for Camp Sunshine. Online registration for the Virginia Polar Dip is now open at [freezinforareason.com](http://freezinforareason.com). On Feb. 11, sign-in and on-site registration starts at noon and the Polar Dip begins at 2 p.m.

The Virginia Polar Dip is a fundraiser for Camp Sunshine, a national year-round retreat for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. This year's goal, for the final Virginia Polar Dip, is to bring in \$100,000 for the charity, to reach the mark of \$1M raised since it began in 2008. Through pledges or self-sponsorship, each participant will raise/donate a minimum of \$100 for the opportunity to plunge into the

### "Cold Toes and Warm Hearts"

#### 15TH FREEZIN' FOR A REASON VIRGINIA POLAR DIP

When: Saturday, Feb. 11, 2023  
 Where: Lake Anne Plaza Waterfront - 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston, VA 20190  
 Time: 12 p.m. - 3 p.m. (Registration, Music, Activities, Post-Dip Celebration). Actual Polar Dip Begins at 2 p.m.  
 Benefits: Camp Sunshine  
 Websites: [www.freezinforareason.com](http://www.freezinforareason.com), [www.campsunshine.org](http://www.campsunshine.org), [www.lakeanneplaza.com](http://www.lakeanneplaza.com).  
 Cost: \$100 minimum donation to plunge and is open to anyone willing to brave the elements for a good cause. Free to spectators. Rain or Shine  
 Social Media: @LakeAnnePlaza @GoCampSunshine @VirginiaPolarDip

frigid waters and will receive a commemorative "I DID IT" event shirt. The funds will help send families from the Mid-Atlantic area to attend Camp Sunshine. Businesses and individuals can also add support with online donations on the Virginia Polar Dip web page. [http://events.campsunshine.org/site/TR/PolarBearPlunge/General?fr\\_id=1590&pg=entry](http://events.campsunshine.org/site/TR/PolarBearPlunge/General?fr_id=1590&pg=entry)

## Satellite Gallery in Reston for Vienna Arts Society

### "Earth, Wind and Fire" opens in Vienna.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
 THE CONNECTION

The Vienna Arts Society is displaying its paintings in watercolor, acrylic, and mixed media at the North County Governmental Center in Reston. The site houses the Fairfax County Hunter Mill District Supervisor's Office of Walter Alcorn

(D), who represents the Town of Vienna and other areas on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

The building is located at 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. The society invites the public to visit all of its venues currently displaying its artwork. "Earth, Wind and Fire" is the latest exhibition at the Vienna Arts Center in the Windover Professional Building at 243 Maple Ave NW, Suite 100LL in Vienna. The exhibition will run until Feb. 5, 2023. Check the society's website <https://www.viennaartsociety.org/> for more information.

## Child Safe After Car Stolen with 5-Year-Old Inside

for the car and the child were quickly provided to surrounding jurisdictions.

Detectives from Fairfax County Police Department Missing Persons Squad and Auto Crimes Enforcement Unit continue to search for a 2012 gray Honda Accord that was stolen from the 6200 block of Little River Turnpike in Lincolnia Sunday.

At 6:30 p.m. officers responded to a parking lot in the 6200 block of Little River Turnpike for an Accord that was stolen with a 5-year-old girl in the backseat.

Preliminarily, police report the child's stepfather left the car running while he went inside a restaurant to pick up food. When he came back outside, the car and the child were gone.

A helicopter and officers from around the county saturated the area while detectives from the Major Crimes Bureau began the Amber Alert process. A lookout

Around 7:18 p.m., the Metropolitan Police Department was called to the area of 13th Street and E Street, NW after two community members found the child alone. Fire and rescue personnel were requested to ensure the child was unharmed. Officers worked with the Metropolitan Police Department to reunite the child with her parents.

Detectives continue to search for the stolen 2012 gray Honda Accord with Maryland plates 94667CJ. The car has a black hood with damage to the front and back end. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call our Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone - 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477)



From left, Herndon Town Councilmember-elect Keven LeBlanc, Herndon Councilmember Signe Friedrichs, Anthony Basiliros, Deli Italiano, Yasser Basiliros, owner of Deli Italiano, Sheila Olem, mayor of the Town of Herndon, Bobbie Singh, co-owner of Midtown Jewelers, Herndon Councilmember Naila Alam, and Imad Hanoon, managing partner at Z North Studio.



With their hands on the scissors, Bobby and Julie Singh, owners of Midtown Jewelers, join Sheila Olem, mayor of the Town of Herndon, who is standing between them, to cut the ceremonial red ribbon at the opening of Midtown Jewelers' new location. (Far left) Councilmembers Signe Friedrichs, Naila Alam, and (far right) Herndon Town Councilmember-elect Keven LeBlanc join the celebration.

## Three Businesses Open in Historic Downtown Herndon

### Fill in the missing specialty niche.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
 THE CONNECTION

Midtown Jewelers and Deli Italiano are two of the three newest businesses in downtown Herndon's historic district. Midtown Jewelers, a family-owned boutique with roots in the area since 1982, is owned by Bobby and Julie Singh, 700 Elden Street.

Deli Italiano, 700 Lynn Street, is owned by Yasser Basiliros.

On Thursday, Dec. 8, Midtown Jewelers and Deli Italiano held their opening ribbon cutting ceremonies. "Herndon is a place of great business opportunity. We are here to serve the local community and be part of it, growing and expanding," said Julie Singh.

The third business to open is Fire & Eve Spa, located on the third floor of 700 Elden Street, Suite C. The business trio fills a void

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION



Anthony Basiliros watches as Henry Aмага cuts generous slices of pizza at Deli Italiano.

in the town's specialty services market.

"When I started meeting with every neighbor who came in, it was a really, really good fit to be in Herndon," Basiliros said. "I thank God I am here."

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		1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31		

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Front row from left, Karen Joseph, president of Food for Neighbors; Colonel Jörg Dronia, commander of the German Armed Forces Command; Sheila Olem, mayor of the Town of Herndon; Supervisor John W. Foust; (back row, from left) Master Sergeant Manuel Pfaff; Captain Khalid Hashmi; and Commander Dirk Miesler, German, German Armed Forces Command.

# Helps Fight Hunger

FROM PAGE 3

with some of the items listed on the attached tag, and leave it outside their front door on the recorded Saturdays. Volunteer drivers pick up the bags, and other volunteers sort the items to distribute the same day to local schools. “They (the students) check in regularly to pick up food, toiletries, or grocery store gift cards from the social workers and family liaisons at their schools,” said Joseph.

The impact of Food for Neighbor’s distribution helps middle and high school students with basic human needs. “We have an amazing organization here that is helping us meet that need,” said Dranesville District Supervisor John Foust (D), who attended. “We’re fortunate to live in a society where the schools have programs that will feed children and students during the school day, but a big gap needs to be addressed ... We rely on the nonprofit community to help make life bearable and better for so many residents of our community.”

Sheila Olem, the mayor of the Town of Herndon, said, “I was amazed at the local churches and nonprofits that teamed up together and looked after our community because the government can’t do it all.”

Colonel Jörg Dronia is the German Armed Forces Command commander at 11150 Sunrise Valley Drive in Reston. Dronia said that when he assumed the position approximately one and a half years ago, he inquired about their relationship with Reston and Herndon. “No clue,” Dronia discovered. “That can’t be. We have been here for fifty to sixty years,” he said.

Dronia knocked on the local supervisors’ and mayor’s doors. He talked to community members and realized that the United States social system and safety net differ from that of Germany. Dronia said he learned about volunteers in the U.S. and their contributions.

Wanting to be a part of this change team, the colonel said he raised funds for community activities. “That was our strategy. That was our game. That was my game, and it



MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

From left, Supervisor John W. Foust, Colonel Jörg Dronia, commander of the German Armed Forces Command, Sheila Olem, mayor of the Town of Herndon, and Karen Joseph, president of Food for Neighbors

was strongly supported by staff,” Dronia said.

As members of the German Armed Forces Command stood with other volunteers awaiting the first drivers to drop off their collected Red Bags, Dronia presented what he called a “small donation” to Joseph. He explained that the funds came from a portion of the German Armed Forces Command’s 2022 Christkindlmarket and Oktoberfest. Dronia provided Food for Neighbors with a \$4,093.60 check.

Food for Neighbors’ mission is to end child hunger in the Northern Virginia area by raising awareness and community involvement. Through awareness comes a desire to help because no one believes a child should struggle with hunger. Interested in engaging your community to help local teens? Find out more at [www.FoodforNeighbors.org](http://www.FoodforNeighbors.org)

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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.

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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 and both made our survival possible. We now await a 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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