

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

FEBRUARY 16, 2023

## 36th Annual Mount Vernon District Town Meeting

### Featuring a Taste of Mount Vernon.

**O**n Saturday, Feb. 11, 2023, Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck hosted the 36th Annual Town Meeting. With over 500 residents in person and watching on streaming channels, and 60 exhibitors in the very popular Exhibit Hall, this annual tradition brought the Mount Vernon community together to share information, learn about what is happening in the County and the District, and engage in civic activism. This year's event was a community celebration, culminating with a Taste of Mount Vernon featuring local restaurants and providing an opportunity for friends and neighbors to socialize while enjoying delicious food.

Attendees were welcomed by the Mount Vernon Police Cadets as they started the day connecting with community services, various educational opportunities, local elected and community leaders. They were joined by the Mount Vernon Children's Business Fair displaying their very own start-up businesses and selling their wares. The Mount Vernon High School Chamber String Quartet provided musical entertainment. Special guest speaker U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) led the for-

mal remarks, followed by County Board Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay (D), County Executive Bryan Hill, County Police Chief Kevin Davis, Mount Vernon District School Board Member Karen Corbett Sanders and County Schools Superintendent Dr. Michelle Reid. Although unable to attend, video remarks were provided by Congressmen Don Beyer and Fort Belvoir Garrison Commander Col Joseph Messina.

Throughout the morning, Storck shared his vision for improving the quality of life for all Mount Vernon District residents, while outlining 2022 District accomplishments and sharing TEAM MVD's focus for 2023.

He talked about building community and highlighted the many investments, strategic partnerships, new and on-going projects, and educational opportunities. He emphasized his commitments to leaving no one behind, ensuring everyone who lives in the District can continue to do so and helping the community and each of us reach our full potential. Storck also remarked on the naming of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system in the past year, noting the new name, "The One", continues the theme that the Mount Vernon District is #1 and the best place to live, learn, work and play in the County.

During three question and answer sessions, audience members and those watching live on Facebook and Fairfax County Chan-



Supervisor Dan Storck, singer Denise Floores a Junior ROTC Color Guard, open the meeting.

nel 16 had the opportunity to ask questions of their local leaders. As the grand finale, Storck guided the audience on a virtual tour of the District, highlighting the changing Mount Vernon District from Huntington to Lorton, and the many new residential and public facilities construction projects.

Storck concluded the Town Meeting by thanking everyone who participated, adding "It is an honor and a privilege to serve as your Mount Vernon District Supervisor. Together we have accomplished much, and I know that together we will accomplish far more in the future."

The meeting and the virtual tour can be watched on Facebook, Channel 16 and on the Mount Vernon District website - <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/district-videos>.

The meeting video has English and Spanish closed captioning available.



Residents enjoy gathering information in the very popular Exhibit Hall.



Young Entrepreneurs show off their business start-ups.

PHOTOS BY CAMELA SPEARS/MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT





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~ Matt P. (2022 Buyer Client)



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9319 Maybrook Pl\*  
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7372 Montcalm Pl\*  
Sold for \$850,767



5505 Trin St\*  
Sold for \$850,000



1016 N Royal St\*  
Sold for \$789,000



1228 Morningside Ln\*  
Sold for \$775,000



4900 Bexley Ln  
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6575 Forsythia St\*  
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Sold for \$720,000



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3717 Lyons Ln  
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River Towers Condo  
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# NEWS

## On the Case: Bring FBI Headquarters to Springfield

Gathering highlights a strong argument for the site near the Springfield Metro station.

By Mike Salmon  
The Gazette

It's got location, transportation options galore and a diverse population, so Virginia officials on many levels got together on the site in Springfield on Wednesday morning to vocalize why the new FBI headquarters should be relocated there.

"We have all of the key ingredients the FBI needs to carry out their mission," said Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R), before laying out factors that seem to make the Springfield location an ideal spot for the FBI. Those factors include a business friendly ecosystem, the high quality of life, its land owned by the Federal government and all the transportation options surrounding the site. "Springfield sits at the heart of a multi-modal transportation system," Youngkin said.

The governor was on the stage of the Government Services Administration with local county supervisors, delegates and members of Congress to make the case.

In all of the speeches, there were convincing points for the FBI relocation, and many of the same points were vocalized more than once by different people, but they didn't care. They even joked about it, and about getting out so early and standing out on a cold, rainy morning to make their cases.

The press conference follows a letter from the Commonwealth's congressional delegation and Youngkin, detailing the ways in which Springfield best meets the



There were plenty of good vibes going around with all those on the stage. Chairman Jeff McKay and Gov. Glenn Youngkin while U.S. Sen. Mark Warner speaks.

five selection criteria set forth by the GSA and FBI, which are: transportation access; site development flexibility; promoting sustainable siting and advancing equity; and cost. The letter, dated Feb. 13, said, "Springfield offers the FBI the most advantageous site and provides the greatest opportunity to consolidate into one suburban headquarters, thus furthering the FBI's mission to protect the American people and upholding the Constitution of the United States."

The proximity to other law en-

forcement entities was part of the argument. It's only 27 miles to Quantico where the FBI National Academy and FBI National Crime Lab are located, and the U.S. Department of Justice is only 13 miles away. The other two locations that are being considered include Greenbelt, Maryland, and Lando-ver, Maryland, and both those locations are over 50 miles to Quantico.

"This site is proudly in Fairfax County," said Fairfax County Chairman Jeff McKay (D).

The county's diversity was also

touted, with a community college nearby where the students that speak a second language are a majority. This might be needed by the next generation of FBI agents. "We need to make sure we have a diverse workforce," said U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA).

Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D-Franconia) looked at the pockets of poverty surrounding the site, and said that the introduction of a federal entity like the FBI Headquarters is a way to end that poverty. "The single most effective

way to lift people out of poverty is investment," he said.

They all made a convincing case but in the end, the decision will be reached through a more complicated process involving officials at a higher level. All of the facilities competing for the FBI Headquarters have a solid case, said U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D) but this site in Springfield is solid too. "On merits, I believe it's a strong case," Connolly said, and added that the next step is a meeting with all the players that is planned for March.



Some of the surrounding buildings were new, others part of the old GSA.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE

## Area Transportation Projects Are Focus of Chamber Meeting

Four projects planned for southern Fairfax County corridor.

By Mike Salmon  
The Gazette

Transportation and area businesses are linked in many ways, so the recent Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce meeting focused on several transportation projects in the works in southern Fairfax County.

The four projects included the bus rapid transit line, Richmond Highway widening, the Frontier Drive extension and the Springfield parking garage, a project that is currently under construction. The chamber supports all these projects as a way to

increase the connectivity for residents and commuters alike.

Virginia Department of Transportation engineer Vanessa Agauyo was the first at the podium to discuss the BRT line called The One. The line is planned to run on separated lanes in the middle of Richmond Highway on articulated buses that will be able to hold 50-60 people, she said.

The cost is estimated at \$937 million which will be split between federal funding and local sources but this project is competing with other projects for funding. Agauyo put the completion date in 2031, and noted that they are currently discussing the stations, utilities and artwork for the stations. "A lot going on behind the scenes," she said.

One thing that is going on behind the scenes is an idea for artwork at the stations. Officials are working with student artists at a few of the local schools to create art that

will be put on the walls in one format or another for the local touch.

Next up was the Richmond Highway widening project, presented by VDOT engineer Dan Reinhard. The \$464 million project will span nearly four miles from Jeff Todd Way to Sherwood Hall Lane. In this stretch of highway, they will replace three bridges, outfit the road with bike lanes and create a road with at least three lanes of through traffic and turn lanes throughout.

Construction is expected to start in 2027, which will overlap with construction on the BRT line, which has the potential to impact traffic. VDOT has a complete Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) plan but as with other construction projects, there will be lane closures and flagmen so traveling through this area could be problematic.

To make way for the wider road plan, SEE TRANSPORTATIONS, PAGE 11



Vanessa Agauyo highlights "The One," BRT project for Richmond Highway.

PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH



PHOTO BY FAIRFAX COUNTY

Students, teachers and others involved in the Historical Marker Project launched as part of the Black/African American Experience Project gather at the dais after the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors recognized them at its Feb. 7 meeting.

## Six New African American Historical Markers

Students uncover seminal Black figures who transformed Fairfax County's history.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE GAZETTE

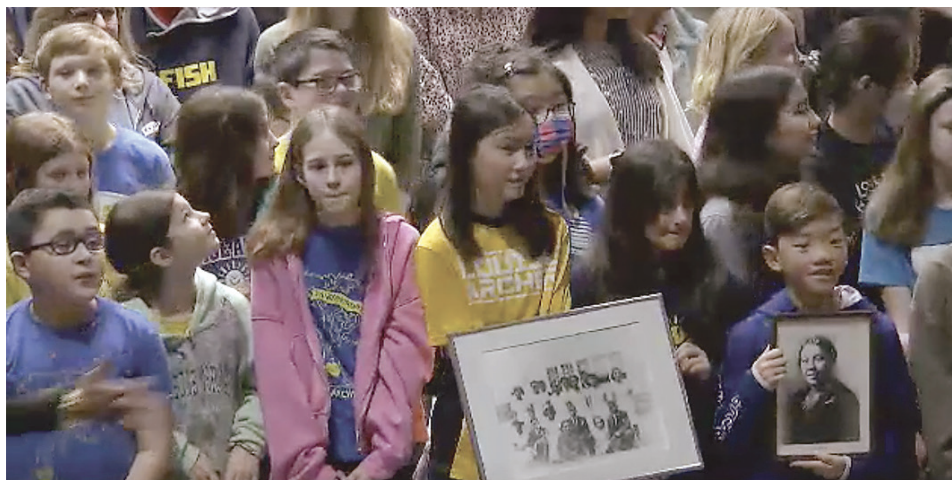
Could Fairfax County's students, as young as elementary school, from all walks of life, from every ethnicity, from every background, one day come together and become the historians who unearthed and shed light on the underrepresented, diverse and rich stories of the county's African-Americans and Blacks? In the embodiment of the Board of Supervisors One Fairfax policy, it happened recently.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors announced at its February 7 meeting that its inaugural Black/African American Historical Markers Project, launched on February 1, 2022, has generated six new historical markers. The Fairfax County History Commission's historical marker review committee approved the six markers, no more than one marker per magisterial district.

"(The project) allow(s) new stories to be shared with our community," said Supervisor Dalia Palchick (D- Providence). She was reading a resolution requested by Chairman Jeffery C. McKay (D-At Large), Supervisor Kathy Smith (D-Sully), and herself to recognize the staff, students, teachers, and community members involved in the project.

A few moments earlier, McKay had welcomed all the children and anyone who was there in the auditorium of the Fairfax County Government Center for the proclamation to come down and gather in front of the dais where he and the supervisors sat. A quick, unofficial headcount totaled slightly over one hundred students, teachers, and others.

"My goodness, how many school buses



SCREENSHOT

Students assemble in front of the dais, some holding up photos of Black/African Americans who they researched for the Historical Marker Project.

did they have to take?" Vice chair Penny Gross could be heard through her live mic quietly commenting. "It should be part of 4th-grade civics."

On behalf of all residents of Fairfax County, Palchick congratulated and thanked the participants and supporters who made the inaugural Historical Marker Project a success. She called out "a special congratulations to the students whose work helped uncover these important stories from our history."

Palchick said that the goal of the project was "to reveal narratives and oral histories of the county's African American communities, whose history, culture and accomplishments in the county are underrepresented in its history books, lessons, and markers." Fairfax County's Neighborhood and Community Services collected oral histories from

residents to increase the visibility of Black/African American experiences in the county.

Supervisor Rodney Lusk (D-Franconia) said that the county wants to reflect on the contributions of all community members and that "we are all woven together." "This is information that we can share for future generations, and I think it's just so important," he said.

In a joint collaboration involving the Board of Supervisors, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), the History Commission, and Neighborhood and Community Services, numerous students, scout troops, and other groups submitted proposals for 53 individual and group markers.

Ramona Carroll of Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) spoke on behalf of the group. "These youth have given us a history lesson and unearthed some

things about Fairfax County that maybe us, as adults, didn't know," She thanked the history commission partners who worked with NCS and gave them information the students and teachers needed to know to do the research.

According to McKay, the students' participation in the project helped the county "authentically and deeply engage with the contributions of our Black American community in the county."

The stories on the markers may shock some and make others think deeply about the county around them. Fairfax County Public Schools named and explained the six new markers:

These six markers are:

❖ **Louise Archer**, an educator, who supported numerous students over her time.

❖ **Lillian Blackwell**, who sued successfully to ban segregation of movie theaters and public schools.

❖ **Annie Harper**, who challenged the constitutionality of Virginia's poll tax.

❖ **Robert Gunnell**, a freedman who conveyed land for Gunnell's Chapel, a 19th century African American Methodist Church.

❖ **Colin Powell**, who was a long-time county resident, four-star general, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, founder of America's Promise and the first African American secretary of state. There is an elementary school named after him in Centreville.

SEE BLACK HISTORY, PAGE 8  
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



# NEWS

## Arrest for Murder

Detectives from the Fairfax County Police Fugitive Track and Apprehension Squad arrested Malik Johnson, 22, of Alexandria in the Dec. 5 fatal shooting. At 8:02 p.m. Dec. 5, 2022, Mount Vernon District officers responded to the 7900 block of Audubon Avenue for a reported shooting. A community member found an injured man lying on the sidewalk. Officers arrived and discovered Jordan Summers, 26, of Lorton, suffering from trauma to the upper body. Fairfax County Fire and Rescue personnel declared the man deceased at the scene.

Through surveillance footage and forensic evidence, detectives charged Johnson with 2nd degree murder and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony. The warrants were obtained Feb. 9, and he was taken into custody Feb. 10. He was transported to the Adult Detention Center and held without bond.

The firearm connected to this shooting has not been recovered. Detectives are asking anyone with information regarding this incident to call the Major Crimes Bureau at 703-246-7800, option 2.

## BULLETIN BOARD

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

### FOSTER PARENTS NEEDED

Interested in becoming a foster parent? There is always a need for caring foster parents looking to open their homes to foster youth. Get in touch to learn more. Visit [fcsvanow@gmail.com](mailto:fcsvanow@gmail.com) or [www.FCSVA.org](http://www.FCSVA.org). Or call 703-817-9890.

### LOOKING FOR SOFTBALL PLAYERS

The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia, a senior women's softball league, is looking for players. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. They play most Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna from May-July and September-October. For more information, visit the web site [www.goldengirls.org](http://www.goldengirls.org).

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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

**Assistance League of Northern Virginia** is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email [info@alnv.org](mailto:info@alnv.org), or visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org).

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

**Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed.** Help assist the Department of Family Services' BeFriendA-Child mentoring program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil ([Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov)) at 703-324-4547.

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

**RSVP,** a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at [chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org) or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit [www.rsvpnova.org](http://www.rsvpnova.org).

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

**Volunteer Fairfax** makes it easy for individuals and families, youth and seniors, corporate groups

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 8

## A vibrant community enriched and supported by strong businesses

The Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce was created by combining the former Mount Vernon Lee Chamber and the Greater Springfield Chamber into a new regional chamber of commerce. Joining forces expands our reach, offers a stronger support network for businesses, a greater voice to our members and more opportunity for all. The future is bright for a united chamber of commerce working to strengthen our community.



Mount Vernon ★ Springfield  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

[f @MtVSCChamber](https://www.facebook.com/MtVSCChamber) [@MtVSCChamber](https://www.instagram.com/MtVSCChamber)

[in Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Mount-Vernon-Springfield-Chamber-of-Commerce)

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# Dr. Whyte's New Book

## Released February 14, 2023

## TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEART DISEASE RISK

**JOHN WHYTE, MD**

Chief Medical Officer of WebMD



Heart disease is the leading cause of death among Americans. You have the power to reduce your risk, and WebMD's Dr. John Whyte, MD will show you just how easy it is to do it.

## You Have Heart Disease

Are words no one ever wants to hear. But, what if there was a way for fewer people, including yourself, to hear those words?

### So now what?

Take Control of Your Heart Disease Risk, Dr. Whyte shares straightforward information to help you on your health journey, including:

- A risk calculator to assess your personal risk level
- A four-week meal plan with tasty recipes
- An exercise guide to help you move your body without needing to purchase fancy equipment
- Discussion of various digital tools and apps and whether they're worth the money

Despite advances in diagnosis and treatment, heart disease remains a major cause of illness and death. However, by proactively living a heart-friendly lifestyle, you can mitigate your risk for years to come.

*...and this book will show you just how easy it is.*

**Order this and Dr. Whyte's other books on Amazon.com**





## Making Progress in Richmond

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL

As the General Assembly completed its fourth week of work last week, I am pleased to report that the state Senate approved 29 of my 32 bills and sent them to the House of Delegates. The Senate voted for 19 unanimously and only one bill passed without any Republican votes.

I am carrying legislation on behalf of the Virginia Crime Commission that requires the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to issue an annual report showing the incidence of drunk driving (DWI) arrests for both drug and alcohol relative to numbers of officers and population densities. The bill also requires DMV to collect data on drug levels related to motor vehicle deaths and DWI arrests so that we can determine where to leverage our resources and make adjustments in the law.

We need this bill because most police officers report that incidents of “drugged driving” or driving under the influence of other drugs is rising. We also need to be better prepared to interdict high drivers as we move toward the retail sale of marijuana. A recent poll shows that 30 percent of Virginians think it is acceptable to drive after smoking marijuana, which is very dan-

gerous.

The number of alcohol-related arrests has plummeted in Fairfax County and in the entire state, although alcohol-related collisions have not dropped by nearly the same amount. Much of this decline in prosecutions has to do with reduced emphasis on enforcement. I hope that this bill will help educate us all on the dangers of driving under the influence of drugs and marijuana and help focus law enforcement.

### Budgets Indicate Priorities

The Senate and House announced their proposed budgets last week. Here are some of the key differences. The Senate rejected all of Governor Youngkin’s proposed \$1 billion in tax cuts. First, corporations should not pay a lower tax rate than people. Second, most of our programs have been historically underfunded and our excess revenues are being generated by inflationary pressures. Our police, fire, teachers and other government employees have not received raises that keep pace with inflation.

The proposed Senate budget provides \$300 million more for K-12 education than the House



Sen. Scott Surovell

budget and includes a 2 percent teacher pay increase instead of the one-time merit bonus proposed by the Governor. We also allocated \$230 million to lift the cap on non-teaching support positions in schools such as guidance counselors, mental health counselors and nurses. Virginia has had 63,000 more students enrolled while employing 1,700 fewer support staff since that arbitrary cap was put in place in 2010. Our children especially need these services post-pandemic.

The Senate also eliminated the Governor and House’s proposed increase in funding for so-called “lab schools” and reallocated the funding to make up for the Governor’s \$200 million error in school funds the state reported it was sending to localities. The Senate budget also allocates \$224 million more for financial aid than the Governor’s budget and \$200 million more than the House budget. We also included a \$75 million payment towards our \$22 billion unfunded pension liability.

The Senate budget includes my request for \$600,000 to fund new staff to help us navigate our green energy transition and \$200,000

each for the Lorton Community Action Center and Ecumenical Community Helping Others in Springfield.

The budgets will now head to each chamber and a joint conference committee will resolve the differences. The most difficult discussion will revolve around tax cuts. We already cut \$4 billion in taxes last year and our chamber does not believe that we should continue reducing our resources given our underfunded programs, continued economic uncertainty and our \$22 billion unfunded pension liability.

I have received hundreds of responses to my constituent survey. Only 10 percent of respondents want us to invest funds on widening roads as opposed to maintaining existing highways (48%) or investing in transit (19%). Eighty-two percent of respondents want to see reproductive choice as decided by the Roe v. Wade case codified in Virginia’s Constitution. You can complete my survey at [www.scottsurovell.org/survey](http://www.scottsurovell.org/survey).

This week, various House of Delegates committees will consider my bills. This will likely present new challenges given the partisan differences between the chambers. As always, please share your views and suggestions with me at [scott@scottsurovell.org](mailto:scott@scottsurovell.org)

## Budget Reveals Values and Priorities

BY SEN. ADAM P. EBBIN

Both bodies of the General Assembly reported a proposed budget a few days after the halfway point of our 46 day legislative session. While both budgets use the Governor’s proposal as a jumping off point, often the outcomes are drastically different – especially in years of split government. A budget is a list of priorities, and it can tell a great deal about the values and priorities of its authors. Reviewing the proposed budgets from the House of Delegates, and State Senate, it is evident that these bodies have differing sets of priorities based around a central question of governing: should we invest in core public services or cut revenues?

From a 10,000 foot view, the difference between our two proposed budgets comes down to that – the House has chosen to align with the Governor’s proposal of cutting more than \$1 billion in taxes, mainly for large corporations and Virginia’s highest earners. The

Senate proposal retains existing, already comparatively low, tax rates on those individuals and entities, and chooses instead to inject most of that \$1 billion into public education.

Still, there are some areas of agreement.

The two bodies are mostly in agreement on pay for state employees. Both amended budgets include an additional two percent raise for state employees. This raise will be on top of a five percent raise that was approved last year, in an attempt to better keep up with inflation. However, there is disagreement on how to allocate bonuses to qualified public servants. The Senate’s proposal is to send a \$1,000 dollar bonus to all state employees on Dec. 1, 2023, while the House’s proposal is to give targeted bonuses to the state employees who work in departments and agencies with the highest employment vacancies. I believe it is important to give these



Sen. Adam P. Ebbin

bonuses to the broadest possible swath of public servants, and I will be advocating for this measure in the final budget.

The largest difference between the two proposed budgets is the total allocation for public education. In recent weeks it was uncovered that the Youngkin administration had miscalculated the amount of funds that it would be able to allocate to local school divisions because their calculations did not take into account the elimination of the state portion of the grocery tax, an action we took last year. The miscalculations shorted Virginia school districts approximately \$220 million. Both houses of the General Assembly sought to replace these funds. The House of Delegates has set aside just \$4.9 million to make up this funding. The Senate on the other hand, proposes \$58.1 million to help address the short-

fall. This \$58.1 million would be enough to help school districts complete this fiscal year. Another component of the Senate’s budget that is not in the House Budget is the removal of the cap on state funding of school support positions. This cap, put in place during the great recession, limits the amount of funding available for positions such as custodians, assistant superintendents, school nurses, and other support positions. By removing it, our school districts will be able to attract and retain critical staff who make our schools run better and improve our students’ daily lives. The proposed Senate Budget includes over \$1 billion in direct aid to school divisions, over \$700 million more than the amount set aside by the House of Delegates. This critical investment in our children’s education is a strong reminder of our commitment to ensuring a better future for all Virginians. In addition to our K-12 schools, the Sen-

SEE BUDGET REVEALS, PAGE 10

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[connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe](http://connectionnewspapers.com/subscribe)

NEWS DEPARTMENT:  
[gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com)

Mary Kimm  
Editor and Publisher  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)

Jeanne Theismann  
[jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com)  
@TheismannMedia

Mercia Hobson  
Staff Reporter  
[mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mhobson@connectionnewspapers.com)

Mike Salmon  
Contributing Writer  
[msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:msalmon@connectionnewspapers.com)

Ken Moore, Glenda Booth  
Contributing Writers

ADVERTISING:  
For advertising information  
[sales@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:sales@connectionnewspapers.com)  
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk  
Display Advertising/National Sales  
703-778-9444  
[debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com)

Helen Walutes  
Display Advertising, 703-778-9410  
[hwalutes@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:hwalutes@connectionnewspapers.com)

David Griffin  
Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
[dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com)

Classified & Employment  
Advertising  
703-778-9431

Publisher  
Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
[jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com)

Editor & Publisher  
Mary Kimm  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
@MaryKimm

Art/Design:  
Laurence Foong  
Production Manager:  
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION  
Circulation Manager:  
Ann Oliver  
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A Connection Newspaper





Bills to Love

By Del. Paul Krizek

Each year, there are a number of promising bills introduced in the House that I am unable to vote on, as they die before reaching either the committees I sit on or the House floor. However, this past Tuesday was Valentine's Day, and in the spirit of the holiday, I thought I would share some very-much-still-alive bills to love.

I cosponsored HB 1510 from Del. Dawn Adams, which incentivises localities to encourage the preservation, restoration, or development of urban green space. HB 1510 is a two-in-one environmental and community-focused bill, which aims to uphold natural protections against greenhouse gas, urban heat, and flooding. It passed the House on Jan. 31 and is making its way through the Senate now.

Del. Bloxom's HB 1948 removes the witness requirement from absentee ballots. Voters will instead be asked to verify their information by providing their date of birth and either the last four digits of their social security number or a new, unique identifier that The Virginia Department of Elections will now assign to each registered voter. This change in required information will primarily help single-voter households who would struggle to procure a witness. Their right to vote should not be restricted by their household circumstances. For that reason, I confidently voted for this good bill both in Privileges and Elections and on the House floor, and will continue to watch HB 1948 as it moves through the Senate.

HB 1738, from Del. Carr establishes a framework for all state public bodies to provide virtual, public access to meetings and allow people to comment online during times when public comment is requested. This would allow someone in Woodlawn, for example, to much more easily engage with state activity, such as a board or commission meeting, that typically happens in Richmond.

I heard from many of you in support of this bill, and I always appreciate constituents putting good bills on my radar; 1,392 bills were introduced in the House this year and in a short session we only have a month to get through all of them before crossover. I don't always get a chance to vote on every bill I am asked to support, but I became very familiar with HB 1738 as I got the chance to vote for it in General Laws, Appropriations, and then finally on the House floor. The bill is now on its way through the Senate.

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Krizek

HB 1411 is a bill by Del. Marshall to codify the Virginia Community Development Financial Institutions Fund and Program, which was originally included in the 2021 budget. The Fund and Program will provide grants and loans to community development financial institutions and other similar entities that will promote housing access, something that has been a longtime priority of mine, and provide support for Virginia's many small businesses, including some in my district. I voted for this bill in Appropriations and on the House floor and it has now also passed the Senate, making it the closest of the bills I am sharing today to being passed into law.

Del. Sullivan's HB 1590 adds text messaging to the list of ways emergency responders, specifically 9-1-1 operators, should not be harassed. It is a small, common sense, public safety bill in response to a slew of prank texts that wasted operators' time and diverted their attention and resources from real 9-1-1 emergencies. By addressing this issue and allowing authorities to focus their attention on the people who need them, HB 1590 will make communities safer. The bill has passed the House and Senate and its history. Its Senate version, SB 1034 from Sen. McPike, is still making its way through the House.

HB 1526, from Del. Coyner extends the scope of the Virginia Literacy Act, which was passed last session, from students in kindergarten through third grade to students all the way through eighth grade. This program requires the establishment of evidence-based reading intervention programs to remedy learning loss and combat low reading scores. Another key component of this legislation is hiring one reading specialist for every 550 students who oversees students' literacy progress. This legislation is awaiting a hearing in Senate Finance and Appropriations, while its Senate version from Sen. Lucas is on its way to a vote on the House floor.

HB 1567, introduced by Del. Rasoul, will create a workgroup to evaluate strategies to reduce maternal and infant mortality rates. In 2020, Virginia was ranked the 21st highest state for infant mortality (5.6 deaths per 1,000 live births). This excellent bill passed the Senate yesterday and will head to the Governor.

I hope you enjoyed reading about these bills to love which came from both sides of the aisle and will hopefully continue on their way to the Governor's desk for his signature to become laws. Now, back to my next committee meeting.

OPINION



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	Fed Struc Id	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
Charlotte	4850	92	JEB STUART HWY	BLUESTONE CREEK	1/29/2023
Franklin	7987	792	LAUREL BLUFF RD/ROUTE 792	RENNET BAG CREEK	1/27/2023
Roanoke	14980	609	E. RURITAN RD/ROUTE 609	BR GLADE CREEK	1/27/2023
Washington	19206	859	GRASSY RIDGE RD	GREEN COVE CREEK	1/26/2023
Amelia	1267	636	LODOR RD	NIBBS CREEK	1/26/2023
Goochland	8603	600	ROCK CASTLE RD	BIG LICKINGHOLE CREEK	1/26/2023
Pulaski (M)	21267	611	ROUTE 0611	NS RAILWAY	1/17/2023
Charlotte	4943	658	WELSH TRACK RD	NS RAILWAY	1/14/2023
Botetourt	3537	T1003	2ND AVE/T1003	TINKER CREEK	1/10/2023
Brunswick	3583	46	CHRISTANNA HWY	NOTTOWAY RV (SPILLWAY)	1/9/2023
Washington	19058	640	BENHAMS RD	ABRAMS CREEK	1/4/2023
Dinwiddie	6049	623	SUTHERLAND RD	NAMOZINE CREEK	1/3/2023
Campbell	4326	705	COVERED BRIDGE RD	SENECA CREEK	1/1/2023

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.

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FROM PAGE 5

and civic clubs to volunteer. Fulfill hours, give back, or pay it forward through a variety of service options. Visit [www.volunteerfairfax.org](http://www.volunteerfairfax.org) or call 703-246-3460.

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

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

The Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email [Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Respite Care volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit

and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact Kristin Martin at 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or [Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov).

Fairfax County needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

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

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

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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

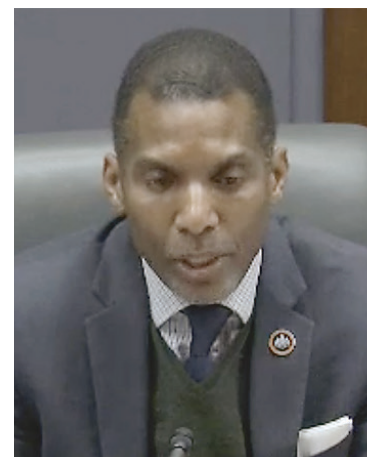
## BLACK HISTORY MONTH



Chairman Jeffrey C. McKay  
(D-At large)



Supervisor Dalia Palchik  
(D-Providence)



Supervisor Rodney L. Lusk  
(D-Franconia)

## Learn About African American Contributions

FROM PAGE 4

❖ **December 20, 1856: The 16**, which recognizes 16 enslaved individuals named in an 1856 property inventory for the land on which West Springfield High School now stands.

A four-member Fairfax County History Commission committee chose the six marker proposals from a group of 14 finalists selected by a committee of appointees from board offices, community organizations, and student representatives. Mary Lipsey worked with the Marker project/FCPS/African American marker content and winners. Lipsey is also one of three Commissioners, along with Barbara Naef and Phyllis Walker Ford, who helped design and launch the African American History Inventory database designed in conjunction with students from George Mason University's Capstone program in 2022.

"The idea for the project started as a way that students could learn more about Fairfax County local history. The emphasis of the project was to capture, preserve, and communicate the untold African American history and culture of our county," said Lipsey. Project leaders were ecstatic when there were over fifty submissions from students at all age levels.

"The difficulty of the project is that there are no textbooks that include our county's African American history," Lipsey said. "What excited me most was that I too had the opportunity to learn more about the African American History of our county. I feel any day a young person is happy to learn and share history is a great day."

"We can't go back and change our history," said McKay. "But we certainly can learn from it and do better." He praised the History Commission for doing a remarkable job of getting young people involved.

Stephanie Duffield is a 4th-grade teacher at Haycock Elementary School. The historical marker project inspired her as a teacher because of the community it created in the school and the local community. She and fifth-grade teacher Patti Gray decided to finish the historical marker project as a buddy class. Their students' proposal on Gunnell's Chapel, about five miles from the school, earned a spot to become one of the six markers.

Noa Herzog, a fifth grader at Haycock Elementary School, said, "I hope this will make people want to visit Gunnell's Chapel and appreciate what a role it played in black people's lives."

"The students in both of our classes paired up to research and submit their proposals," said Duffield. "It was powerful for the students to see how much history is right here in our community – it just needs to be uncovered. The project showed students how to become advocates for their communities, which I believe is so important."

Anne Marie Harris is a Louise Archer ES 4th grade teacher. On behalf of the teachers who submitted at their school, Harris said, "Last year, our fourth grade team of teachers saw the contest as a fantastic opportunity for our students to build research skills while learning more about our school's namesake as well as Virginia history. All four fourth grade classes worked to learn about Mrs. Louise Archer's impact on her community as a dedicated educator during the time of segregation; students read about and discussed the setbacks and challenges she faced and her determination to provide the very best she could for her students. We are so honored and proud to have her name and legacy formally recognized with a historic marker and to teach others about her."

The following individuals submitted the winning proposals

Brian Heintz, Teacher-Applied History Class, West Springfield High School; Maggie Gowan, Teacher, West Springfield Elementary School; Sean Miller, South County High School; Stephanie Duffield and Patty Gray from Haycock Elementary; Alicia Hunter, Coordinator, Social Studies K-12, Fairfax County Public Schools; and Deborah March, Culture Responsive Pedagogy Specialist, Fairfax County Public Schools.

The 14 finalists out of the 53 entries for the Historical marker Project submissions

Maura Keaney- Island Creek Elementary in Alexandria; Caroline Fox, Girl Scout Troop 3686; Camille McCarthy, Nancy Hanson, Jennie Moonis; Caroline Fox; Niyat Asefaw; Meron Fikru, Delano Telford, Maddie Haag; Carissa Christensen; Janea Kinder, Josephine Springer, Jamaria Miles; Anne Marie Harris -Louise Archer ES in Vienna; Brian Heintz; Stephanie Duffield and Patti Gray-Haycock Elementary in Falls Church; and Keira Guthrie reported the Communications Aide for the Office of Chairman McKay.

For a more detailed description of each marker, visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/providence/sites/providence/files/assets/documents/board%20matters/bm%209-13%20historical%20markers.pdf>

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# ENTERTAINMENT

## NOW THRU FEB. 25

"The Unseen" Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans gallery in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. "The Unseen" exhibit reveals what we typically cannot see: what is hidden, microscopic, imagined, or dreamed. Join the artists for the opening reception: Friday, Feb 3, 2023 from 7-9 p.m. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. The gallery is closed the last Sunday of the month (February 26, 2023). Visit <https://delrayartisans.org/exhibits/#event=unseen>

## NOW THRU FEB. 26

Heartfelt Art Exhibition. At Van Landingham Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. The Torpedo Factory Artists' Association's (TFAA) Van Landingham Gallery presents Heartfelt, a juried membership show featuring artworks that embody emotions such as love, empathy, and endearment. The following artists are participating: Diana Papazian, Samantha Shelton, Guido Zanni, Veronica Barker-Barzel, Laura Fall, Hernan Murno, Abol Bahadori, Karine Sapondjian, Pauline Siple, and Jon Kandel. Artworks include original hand pulled prints, original paintings, multimedia works, photography, ceramics, and sculpture. Additionally, the gallery offers small gifts, art cards, block-printed totes and tee shirts, and jewelry and unframed works by Jennifer Brewer Stone, Rebecca Mcneely, and Tara Barr.

## NOW THRU MARCH 15

"Mount Vernon" At Nepenthe Gallery. Hollin Hall Shopping Center, 7918 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Nepenthe Gallery, in partnership with Mount Vernon estate and Woodlawn mansion, presents a special "Mount Vernon" exhibit from February 1st through March 15th. This exhibit has been organized in conjunction with Mount Vernon's national birthday celebration of George Washington and Woodlawn's 60th Annual Needlepoint Show. Woodlawn was once part of George Washington's original extensive Mount Vernon estate. This "Mount Vernon" exhibit will showcase an important work by Thomas Sully - his 19th century "Athenaeum Portrait of George Washington." Other original works by Pamela Patrick White, Bryant White, Gwen Bragg, Debbie Dartez and Renée C. Gage will be included and for sale, as well as several original works by Pamela and Bryant White that will be on loan by local collectors for display in the exhibit. There will also be giclée prints available for sale of important works from the Mount Vernon estate collection. Nepenthe will host six Thursday night "ART+WINE+CHEESE" events related to this exhibit: February 16th: White Historic Art. Painters and Historians, Pamela Patrick White and Bryant White, of White Historic Art will discuss several of their original, historical American 18th century-based paintings and the stories and context behind them. Their presentation will include several of

their original works on loan for this exhibit by private collectors Janice and Dick Crosby, and Neysa and Dan Chandler.

February 23rd: Interesting facts about Mt. Vernon and Whiskey Tasting. Steve Bashore, Distiller, Miller and Historian, will lead guests through a Whiskey Tasting and describe the process that still takes place today at Mt. Vernon. Jim Woods, historical interpreter at Mount Vernon, will share stories and information about George Washington's home and property. March 2nd: Scenes from Mount Vernon. Alexandria based watercolorist and juried artist, Gwendolyn ("Gwen") Bragg, is an art instructor at both the Art League School in Alexandria and the Workhouse Art Center in Lorton. Gwen will display and discuss many of her watercolor paintings from Mount Vernon. March 9th: Nelly's Needlers Needlework Group. Established in 1975 to help preserve Woodlawn, the group was named after Martha Washington's granddaughter, Eleanor ("Nelly") Parke Custis, who was raised at Mount Vernon, later lived at Woodlawn, and learned her needlework skills from her cherished grandmother. Nelly's Needlers will be at Nepenthe Gallery to display works from their 60th Annual Needlepoint Show and discuss their organization and needlepointing as an art form.

## NOW THRU MARCH 19

Nicole Santiago Exhibition. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Poetry Workshop on Feb. 25 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Nicole Santiago's work

consists of semi-autobiographical narrative paintings and drawings that depict scenes of love, loss, and duty, thinly veiled in the mundane debris of everyday life. While the impetus for Nicole's work is highly personal, she intends to construct something more universal that stretches beyond the limits of her own experiences, expanding into broader familiar theme.

## NOW THRU APRIL 3

NOVA Plein Air Art Exhibit. At River Farm, 7931 East Blvd. Drive, Alexandria. Nova Plein Air Artists (NPPA) will be presenting "Celebrations of the Land, Inspired by River Farm," an art exhibit of over 50 paintings inspired by nature. Opening reception on Sunday, Jan. 22 at 1 - 3 p.m. Additional receptions will be held from 1 - 3 p.m. on February 12 and March 12. Many of the paintings were created onsite at River Farm, and all are available to purchase. Receptions are free and open to the public.

## THURSDAY/FEB. 16

Lecture + Short Film: Fort Reno Park. 7 p.m. At Alexandria's History Museum at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, Alexandria. At Fort Reno Park, near Tenleytown, an important chapter in the history of Washington, D.C.'s Black community is barely visible to the modern-day visitor. Fort Reno was a bustling neighborhood in which men, women, and children lived, died, loved, worked, worshipped, and played. Brian Taylor (author of Fighting for Citizenship [UNC Press, 2020]), Miriam Gusevich

(Catholic University) and Martin Paddock (Howard University) will share their work on the history of the Fort Reno neighborhood and their efforts to bring this history to the public.

## OUR FACES IN FILM SERIES

All month long for Black History Month, Charles Beatley Central Library will show films featuring African American lead characters. Join for great films and snacks. At the Charles E. Beatley, Jr., Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. February 17, 2023, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.: "Soul" February 24, 2023, from 2 to 4:30 p.m.: "Harriet" Admission: Free. Call 703-746-1702. Visit [alexlibraryva.org](http://alexlibraryva.org)

## SATURDAY/FEB. 18

Starting from Scratch with Seeds. 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. (16-Adult) Grow flowers, vegetables and herbs from seed and expand your garden. Be inspired by Green Spring staff members as they discuss potting mixes, containers, seed treatments, lighting, fertilization, watering, seed sources and timing. Then take home a few seeds to start your own collection. \$23 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code J1VT698.

## SATURDAY/FEB. 18

Concert: Washington Revels Jubilee SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

# Black History Month Events in City of Alexandria 2023

## Throughout February 2023:

Visit Freedom House Museum (1315 Duke St.) honors the lives and experiences of the enslaved and free Black people who lived in and were trafficked through Alexandria. Purchase timed entries in advance. <https://shop.alexandriava.gov/SelectEvent.aspx?eventid=6000324>

Martin Luther King, Jr. Poster Exhibition at Vola Lawson Lobby in Alexandria City Hall, 301 King St.

## Thursday, Feb. 16

7 - 8 p.m. Lecture and Short Film - The African American History of Fort Reno Park at Alexandria's History Museum at The Lyceum (201 S Washington St.) At Fort Reno Park, near Tenleytown, an important chapter in the history of Washington's D.C.'s Black community is barely visible to the modern-day visitor. Fort Reno was a bustling neighborhood in which men, women, and chil-

dren lived, died, loved, worked, worshipped, and played. Register here <https://shop.alexandriava.gov/EventPurchase.aspx?dateselected=2/16/2023>

## Saturday, Feb. 18

2 p.m. Concert: Washington Revels Jubilee Voices 2023 at Alexandria's History Museum at The Lyceum (201 S Washington St.) The Washington Revels Jubilee Voices ensemble is committed to the preservation of African American history and traditions - presenting songs and stories of struggle and perseverance, trials, and triumphs, as expressed through a cappella music, drama, and dance. Register here. <https://shop.alexandriava.gov/EventPurchase.aspx?dateselected=2/18/2023>

## Tuesday, Feb. 21

1 - 2 p.m. Virtual Event: African Americans and Clara Barton. Join Kevin Patti from National Park Service to learn about Clara Barton's work with African Americans during the Civil War and with the American Red Cross. Register here. <https://alexlibraryva.org/event/7873345#branch>

## Wednesday, Feb. 22

4:30 - 5:30 p.m. Black History Month Buttons at Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St. Celebrate Black History Month by making a button with one of our designs or create your own! Program open to teens and adults. More information here. <https://alexlibraryva.org/event/7929511>

## Thursday, Feb. 23

5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Black History Cooking Demonstration at Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St. The Creator and Chef of Black Folk Food will prepare a handful of dishes, teach us a brief history to show us what makes the cuisine so amazing! Yum! More information here. <https://alexlibraryva.org/event/7440584>

## Sunday, Feb. 26

2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Black History Live with Culture Queen at Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St. Original and interactive music, movement, and storytelling to show your royal children how to celebrate the Kings and Queens of African American History. More information here. <https://alexlibraryva.org/event/7862774>



Black History Live with Culture Queen at Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library Feb. 26.



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**OPINION**

## Budget

FROM PAGE 6

ate Budget includes an additional twenty million dollar increase in funding for Pre-K, ensuring access to affordable early education – a key indicator of long term educational success. Finally, the Senate budget diverts all proposed additional funding from Governor Youngkin's "lab school" proposals, which have come to be seen by many as a backdoor to publicly funded charter schools. I am a firm believer that public funds should be spent on public education.

Additionally, the proposed Senate Budget includes an increase in funding for mental and behavioral health services. Our budget sets aside an additional \$8 million on top of what was introduced by the Governor to address the mental health crisis in Virginia. Providing greater access to mental health-care, particularly for our youth, will help increase the quality of life for Virginians. Additionally, providing more funding for mental health professionals will ultimately take pressure off of law enforcement as police officers will not be in the position to be responding to mental health calls.

There are major differences between the two budgets both in terms of what is in the budget and on how much money should be dedicated to particular projects. In the coming weeks, members of the House and Senate money committees will work to alleviate the discrepancies and create a conference budget that can pass in the coming weeks.

It remains a privilege to serve the 30th District.

**BULLETIN BOARD**

FROM PAGE 8

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

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

Mount Vernon At Home is a community Village, providing support, services, and community to seniors in the area. Volunteers are needed for a variety of services, with transportation to medical appointments are greatest need. They can also use help with in-home handyman work and handling IT problems. If you are interested in volunteering, contact us at [info@mountvernonaathome.org](mailto:info@mountvernonaathome.org) or call 703-303-4060. Hollin Hall Senior Center is looking for a DJ ballroom and dance instructor. The Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road.

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# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 9

**Voices 2023.** 2 p.m. At Alexandria's History Museum at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, Alexandria. The Washington Revels Jubilee Voices ensemble is committed to the preservation of African American history and traditions—presenting songs and stories of struggle and perseverance, trials and triumphs, as expressed through a cappella music, drama and dance. Established in 2010, the group now performs regularly throughout the Washington, D.C., area, singing, sharing and learning the stories of the people in those communities.

## SUNDAY/FEB. 19

**The Art League's Patrons' Show.** 6-9 p.m. At The Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Ticket holders may choose to attend the event in person at the Torpedo Factory or from the comfort of home via the streaming platform Vimeo. This much-anticipated event, now in its 55th year, allows ticket holders to acquire high-quality, original fine art—valued from \$235 to upwards of thousands of dollars—while supporting a great non-profit organization and community of artists. The Patrons' Show Exhibit features over 600 original fine artworks donated by Art League and Torpedo Factory artists. Visit [www.theartleague.org](http://www.theartleague.org)

## SUNDAY/FEB. 19

**George Washington Birthnight Supper & Ball.** At Mount Vernon Estate, Mount Vernon. Mount Vernon's longest-running fundraiser, proceeds from the annual Ball support the restoration and preservation of George Washington's historical home. Supporters will enjoy a cocktail reception, a three-course seated dinner, a live auction, entertainment, dancing, and a birthday toast delivered to General Washington.

## MONDAY/FEB. 20

Alexandria residents and visitors will line the streets of Old Town Alexandria to cheer on the oldest and largest George Washington Birthday parade in the country. <http://washingtonbirthday.com/>

## TUESDAY/FEB. 21

**African Americans and Clara Barton.** 1 to 2 p.m. Virtual via Zoom. Join Park Ranger Kevin Patti from the National Park Service to learn about Clara Barton's work with African Americans during the Civil War and with the American Red Cross. Clara Barton lived

through the Civil War, Reconstruction and beyond. Discover the fascinating history of her experience working with and for African Americans. This talk will highlight her work with the African American soldiers of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment as they stormed Fort Wagner. The talk will focus on her long-standing advocacy for African American rights and will explore the history of the American Red Cross relief effort Clara Barton led to help African Americans affected by the Sea Islands South Carolina hurricane of 1893.

## WEDNESDAY/FEB. 22

**Ash Wednesday Service.** 12-1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. At St. John's Lutheran Church, 5952 Franconia Road, Alexandria. The 40 days of the Lenten season begin with special worship services. The services will include imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. Visit the website: [www.sjlc.com](http://www.sjlc.com)

## SATURDAY/FEB. 25

**Potomac River Cleanup** at Jones Point Park. Join them and partner, the National Park Service, for a 9 a.m. cleanup at Jones Point Park in Alexandria. This is a bike- and car-accessible location. Come meet like-minded people and make a real difference for the Potomac River. Sign up at <https://potomac.org/>

## THE BIRCHMERE

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

## FEBRUARY

Thu. 16: Gaelic Storm \$45.00  
Fri. 17: Matt Nathanson w/ Stephen Kellogg \$69.50 **SOLD OUT!**  
Sat. 18: Matt Nathanson w/ Stephen Kellogg \$69.50 **SOLD OUT!**  
Mon. 20: Keb' Mo' w/ Anthony D'Amato \$95.00  
Tue. 21: Keb' Mo' w/ Anthony D'Amato \$95.00  
Thu. 23: FOREVER TINA: The World's #1 Salute to Tina Turner! \$39.50  
Fri. 24: Richard Thompson (Solo Acoustic) \$79.50  
Sat. 25: Richard Thompson (Solo Acoustic) \$79.50  
Sun. 26: DOC AT 100: A TRIBUTE TO DOC WATSON featuring Ted Olson, T. Michael Coleman, Jack Lawrence, Wayne Henderson, Jack Hinshelwood \$45.00  
Mon. 27: Lalah Hathaway \$99.50  
Tue. 28: Lalah Hathaway \$99.50

# Transportation Projects

FROM PAGE 3

VDOT acquired 16 properties and is in talks with the owners of three other properties that will need to be removed. If the talks do not go as planned for VDOT, there is the possibility of acquiring them through eminent domain.

To the west of the Mount Vernon District, VDOT is planning a project at Frontier Drive near the Springfield Town Center. They are planning on extending Frontier Drive past the Franconia-Springfield Metro Station where the road will head west and connect with Loisdale Road, which runs parallel to I-95. Officials are still looking for funding for this \$224 million project, and hope to start construction in 2026, but this may get pushed to 2030, said Zamir Mirza, the VDOT project manager. It will be funded by federal, state, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and county funding, the VDOT website said.

The Springfield garage and transportation hub is the only project presented at the meeting that is currently under

construction. All is going well on the construction and the bus plan for this transit hub. The project does include a pedestrian bridge that will span Old Keene Mill Road to the Springfield Plaza shopping center. To build that bridge, there will need to be beams placed over Old Keene Mill Road, and this will require traffic to be completely stopped for a period of time. Most likely, this will be done in the overnight hours, said Fairfax County DOT planner Caijun Luo.

The Chamber's membership and scope has changed a little in recent months. In late 2022, the Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce was created by combining the former Mount Vernon Lee Chamber and the Greater Springfield Chamber into a new regional chamber of commerce. "Joining forces expands our reach, offers a stronger support network for businesses, a greater voice to our members and more opportunity for all. The future is bright for a united chamber of commerce working to strengthen our community," it said on the joint website.

# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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

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

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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 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 ominous clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

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

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# You can't Make This Stuff Up



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I had my first dream a few nights ago in which my recently deceased brother, Richard was front and center (actually, he was off to the side). He was standing in a non-descript room with our late mother standing off to his right and yours truly standing a similar distance to his left. He was wearing a button-down sweater with the bottom four or five buttons, buttoned. There was a diamond pattern alternating blue and khaki featured throughout his sweater. Also, he was wearing a white/beige cotton-type sheet underneath the sweater and light-colored pants to match. His sweater was form-fitting from its bottom to just over Richard's waist. There was no conversation and no touching.

He looked fabulous, svelte, and extremely fit. He had a big smile on his face and a crinkle in his eyes. He looked like a movie star. I remember thinking: "Wow. He looks great," and then looking across the room to where my mother was standing, and noticed she had a similar expression to what I was feeling, or at least that's what the dream made me think. Then this dream sequence was over. But not the dream.

Next, I was sitting in my car on the left side of the island/pumps at a service station, and again saw my brother - on the right side of the pump island. He was standing alongside a Volkswagen Rabbit-type convertible with its top down. He was wearing the same outfit and had the same big smile. He seemed to have an aura around him. He appeared - to me anyway, positively, absolutely alive and well, vigorous and super confident. Then the dream/my sleep ended. I woke up smiling, joyful that I had experienced this spiritual interaction with my brother, Richard. I knew we were very close and connected in so many ways. But I hadn't considered as to whether it would transfer somehow when one of us died. Quite frankly, even though he was the older brother, once I was diagnosed with a terminal form of lung cancer originally back in 2009 giving me a "13 month to two-year prognosis," Richard predeceasing me didn't seem likely. And since I never think of myself actually dying, I'm likewise never thinking about what I'm going to be doing after I die (up there, down there, Book of Judgment).

While I was viewing this dream, I was cognizant somehow that as soon as I woke up, I needed to write down what I had just dreamt. I remember deciding that writing about this dream as soon as I woke wasn't necessary. The dream was so important, how could I possibly forget about it. Well, I forgot about it for a couple of hours.

Then the substance of the dream reappeared in my conscious mind, and I immediately called Vanessa (Richard's widow) and shared with her what I have just shared with you. She was eager to hear any and all details and was quite happy (which of course is the wrong word, especially under the circumstances) to hear that I thought Richard looked so handsome, and so fit and healthy, a version of him neither of us had seen in the previous four or five months since he was first hospitalized.

Unfortunately, Vanessa had not yet had a Richard-centric dream. She was excited (again the wrong word, but I imagine you can appreciate the wide range of highs and lows one feels over time concerning the passing of a loved one/hugely significant presence in one's life) with the prospect of Richard getting into our respective subconscious. I think she felt encouraged by my dream experience vis-à-vis the possibility/expectation that soon she might be experiencing a similar connection.

I mean, if he's going to reach out/touch (hopefully literally, as my late father did to me a few weeks after his death) me, he's definitely going to reach out to Vanessa, his wife of 29 years. If anybody is worthy and deserving of a spiritual connection, it's Vanessa. She was a great wife, and he was a great husband. They had everything to live for and look forward to. Now alone, Vanessa is trying to find her footing. I'm hoping she sees Richard in a dream soon. I'm sure he would be an overall positive experience for her, as it has been for me. And if there's anything Vanessa and I could use right now - since Richard's death, is a positive experience.

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





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