

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

MARCH 30, 2023

## Mental Health Crisis Snarls Traffic

Police respond on Tuesday at lunchtime, continued through the night; still unchanged at 24 hours.

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

**T**raffic on the roads in the Hybla Valley area of Mount Vernon was at a complete standstill on Tuesday, March 28 into Wednesday, March 29 when a woman having a mental health crisis barricaded herself inside a car with a gun, according to Fairfax County Police. The situation continued through the night into Wednesday, and continued on Wednesday through the Mount Vernon Gazette's presstime.

According to an incident alert on the Fairfax County Police Department social media, police set up a barricade at 12:14 p.m. on Tuesday for a woman experiencing a mental health crisis, police said. She barricaded herself inside a car. Richmond Highway was closed in both directions while officers attempted to peacefully resolve the situation, the post stated.

Students in the area were facing

significant delays as school busses worked around the traffic.

"There is ongoing police activity on Route 1 near Arlington Drive that is causing significant traffic issues in the Mount Vernon area. This is impacting dismissal at schools across the area. Buses are being released, but many are encountering significant delays and others are being turned away as they near their final destination," said an alert on Fairfax County Public School's website.

The situation continued through Tuesday night into Wednesday, said Sgt. Jacob Pierce of the Fairfax County Police Department. "She's still barricaded, they're still negotiating," he said Wednesday at 10 a.m.

Supervisor Dan Storck (D-Mount Vernon) posted an update early Wednesday. "Richmond Hwy remains closed between Lockheed Blvd and Boswell Ave and the situation remains unchanged. Fairfax County Police Department crisis negotiators and special operations

division members

continue to work to peacefully resolve this barricade. This closure will impact rush hour traffic. Please avoid the area."

There were several people responding on social media, including a few that were stuck in the traffic on Richmond Highway. "Thanks for the updates, Dan. We can hear the helicopters here in Wessynton," one said. "Come on this should have been resolved already," posted another.

A Twitter response added "I am thankful FCPD is trying to safely resolve the situation. I think if any of our loved ones had a mental breakdown we would appreciate the same treatment. I am normally critical of FCPD and how the mentally ill are treated but today I see progress."

From the newsfeed shot from a helicopter above the scene, there were about 10 police cars, the police incident response van and an ambulance on the scene.



PHOTO FROM SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Police respond to emergency in Hybla Valley.

At 3:02 p.m. on Wednesday, the FCPD tweeted: "Members of our Crisis Negotiations Team continue to talk to the woman barricaded inside the car. We appreciate your

continued patience as we work to peacefully resolve the situation. Richmond Hwy between Lockheed Blvd and Boswell Ave remain closed."

## Ides of Bark Lets the Dogs Out

Don't say it's 'the cat's meow' of dog events.

BY SUSAN LAUME  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

**I**n what's become a dogs' rite of spring, held most years since 2015, Supervisor Dan Storck's Ides of Bark presents an opportunity to enjoy the arrival of the milder season with the company of your family pup at an event billed as "the ultimate event for you and your four-footed friend."

It seems we all feel a certain light bounce in our step with the arrival of warmer weather and pastel spring flowers. Fellow walkers passed on the trail are more likely to be brandishing open warm smiles and the dogs at their sides have shed their padded designer doggie coats, and seem to have a bounce in their steps as well. And at spring's Ides of Bark, it's all about the love of dogs.

Supervisor Storck says, "Spring is about new life, connection, and new opportunities. Key for all of that is meeting and connecting with each other. Dogs are one of the best ways we do that." Plenty of pups were on hand to facilitate those community interac-



**Ice, 2 yr old Australian Shepherd, demonstrates the enthusiasm that spring, bunnies, and especially treats, can generate for dogs, with Debbie Ford, of Alexandria**

tions inevitable when dog owners meet.

Held at Grist Mill Park on Mount Vernon Highway, the Ides of Bark, this year on March 26, had music, vendors, pet oriented demonstrations, free admission, and plenty of treat sampling. Ides provides the chance to interact with vendors and shop their pet themed wares and services, often while your



**Co-founder, marketer, salesman, and baker, Bryan Tuccillo, of non-profit bakery, Perfectly Delicious Dog Treats, introduces Max Svlich, of Mt Vernon, to the bakery's treats**

pup is sampling a courtesy dog treat or two.

One of the treat bakeries attending with sample wares was Pawfectly Delicious Dog Treats, a non-profit organization in Alexandria, founded in 2017. The bakery employs people with developmental and physical disabilities and takes pride in providing meaningful work while celebrating each person's gifts, talents and abilities. Their jobs provide work that connects them with the community and provide dogdom with more delicious treat options. Their products can be found online at [www.pawfectlydelicious.org](http://www.pawfectlydelicious.org).

The event was not an opportunity for all dogs attending to relax, play, and eat treats. Some were there on the job. Fairfax County Police dog, Duke, attended with handler Mike Scatchard. Although Duke was not actively working during the event, he could be called to duty as needed to track a missing person. Nearby, Ggideon, a three year old Belgian Malinois, a member of the Army's Fort Belvoir military police team was exercising, attending with two of his canine team mates. Ggideon is a patrol and explosives detection dog, who also can perform bite work.

Along with family pets, and police and military working dogs, several rescue dogs were at work as well. They strutted through

SEE IDES OF BARK, PAGE 6



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#WeAreAlexandria



OPEN SAT 4/1 & SUN 4/2, 1-4PM



### Rosemont | \$1,599,999

Craftsman charm meets modern convenience in this stunning 4-bedroom, 4.5-bath home. Enjoy the ease of off-street parking for two cars, an open and inviting kitchen perfect for gatherings, a screened-in porch, and a flat, fenced-in backyard. 15 E Chapman Street  
**Kristen Jones 703.952.0441**  
[www.KristenJones.com](http://www.KristenJones.com)

OPEN SUN 4/2, 2-4PM



### Old Town | \$1,555,000

Historic semi-detached 3-bedroom, 2.5-bath plaqued townhouse offers 3 fireplaces, skylights, heart pine floors, renovated stainless kitchen with adjoining family room, and a generous primary suite. Lovely private terrace plus off-street parking for 2 cars. 1220 Prince St  
**Babs Beckwith 703.627.5421**  
[www.BabsBeckwith.com](http://www.BabsBeckwith.com)

OPEN SUN 4/2, 1-4PM



### Old Town | \$1,500,000

This 1770s Georgian home was modest to begin with, but as the needs of various owners changed the house was expanded. Today its just under 3,000 finished SF with 3/4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, and 2 gardens which provide abundant natural light. 304 N Pitt Street  
**Peter Crouch 703.244.4024**  
**Katie Crouch 703.447.1345**

OPEN SUN 4/2, 2-4PM



### Hollin Brook Park | \$989,000

This beautiful home has been thoughtfully updated and expanded lending a wonderful flow for entertaining inside and out. Abundant storage, an oversized two car garage, four generous bedrooms and a super cool bonus room. 7868 Middy Lane  
**Robin Arnold 703.966.5457**  
[www.RobinArnoldSells.com](http://www.RobinArnoldSells.com)

OPEN SAT 4/1 & SUN 4/2, 1-3PM



### Del Ray | \$875,000

Completely renovated down to the studs! This light-filled, end-unit townhome features 2 bedrooms, 2 full baths, a large seated kitchen granite countertop, Wolf stove and KitchenAid appliances, finished basement, back patio, fenced-in yard, & garage. 572 E Nelson Ave  
**Jen Walker 703.675.1566**  
[www.JenWalker.com](http://www.JenWalker.com)

OPEN SAT 4/1 & SUN 4/2, 1-3PM



### Del Ray | \$799,900

3-bedroom, 2.5-bath semi-detached townhouse. Open & bright floor plan. Kitchen features granite counters. Large dining area and living room with a cozy fireplace. Patio and fenced-in backyard. Driveway. Walk to the fun on "The Avenue." 1400 Wayne Street  
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OPEN SUN 4/2, 2-4PM



### Belle Haven on the Green | \$785,000

This townhome lives like a single family home! Updated throughout this is easy living! With 2 large primary suites, a study & bonus lower level guest space there is a comfortable, flexible floorplan, private rear yard and garage! Close to Metro & DCA. 1796 Duffield Lane  
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OPEN SAT 4/1 & SUN 4/2, 2-4PM



### Mary Lea Park | \$675,000

Opportunity is knocking! 3-bedroom 3-bath rambler located on a flat half-acre lot. Large, versatile front living space with a wood-burning fireplace. Huge kitchen. Family room with a fireplace leads to the large screened porch, also with a fireplace. 8725 Oak Leaf Dr  
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OPEN SAT 4/1 & SUN 4/2, 12-2PM



### Hayfield Farm | \$670,000

This 2-level, 4-bedroom, 2-bath home has "don't miss" features like a remodeled, open concept kitchen, a luxury lower level bath with a steam shower, fresh interior paint, brand new carpet in the basement & more. Huge fenced backyard. 5443 Broadmoor Street  
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Kevin Davis, chief of police, FCPD



SCREENSHOT FROM FCPD

"Nordstrom Asset Protection associates observed Johnson act in a suspicious manner, saw him select designer sunglasses and believed a 'larceny' was about to occur," says the narrator in FCPD press conference (video): McLean OIS 2.22.23.

## Video Shows Fatal Police Shooting of Unarmed Suspect

Police body camera video shocks; reactions come in.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE GAZETTE

Fairfax County Police Department on Thursday, March 23, released body-worn camera footage from the Feb. 22, 2023, fatal shooting of an unarmed shoplifting suspect, Timothy McCree Johnson, 37, of Washington, D.C.

"I, like everyone else who has seen the video, am still processing the events we witnessed. Personally, I find the video disturbing, to say the least," said Jeff McKay, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. "Under no circumstances should suspicion of shoplifting alone lead to the tragic loss of human life."

Sergeant Wesley Shifflett, a 7-year veteran of the department, and Police Officer First Class James Sadler, an 8-year veteran, discharged their firearms while chasing Johnson on foot into a wooded area outside Tysons Corner Center. The two officers, assigned to the Tysons Urban Team, a special unit of FCPD, fired their weapons during a night foot pursuit of Johnson, suspected of stealing designer sunglasses from Nordstrom at Tyson Corner Center.

"Johnson was stuck in the chest one time. Officers immediately rendered aid until fire and rescue personnel arrived," says the narrator in the released body-worn camera footage. Johnson was taken to an area hospital, where he was pronounced deceased.

"The Fairfax County Police Department and I value life, particularly the lives of those who've come into contact with our police officers," Fairfax County Police Chief Kevin Davis said. He added that best practice transparency policies share body camera footage with the community, to establish legitimacy and build trust. More often than not, the police body camera footage speaks for itself.

"This time, it does not," Davis said.

The department released an approximate-



SCREENSHOT

FCPD officers in the dark, after Timothy McCree Johnson is shot.

ly 8-minute, three-segmented video during which a female narrator read the embedded text on given frames, interpreting the scenes. The first segment was about three minutes long. It showed surveillance footage of Johnson and officers. The second section, approximately two minutes, was the released footage from the uniformed officer's body-worn camera (BWC). It, too, depicts Johnson and other officers, but some of the images are grainy and dark. The video's final section is a slowed-down and digitally enhanced BWC footage of events immediately before, during, and after the shooting.

"Mr. Johnson's family's right to know exactly what occurred led FCPD to send the body-worn camera footage to the FBI for enhancement," said McKay.

Davis said one of the two officers who discharged their guns remains on modified, restricted duty while the other officer had been served notice that day, "administratively separating" him from the Fairfax County Police Department.

### Watch, Listen to Video

Listen and watch for yourself as police respond, chase and shoot Timothy Johnson. <https://fcpdnews.wordpress.com/2023/02/23/officer-involved-shooting-in-tysons/>

"He will no longer be a Fairfax County police officer," Davis said. He clarified that "administrative separation" is the equivalent of firing.

McKay said, "I know Mr. Johnson's family members are still grieving the death of their loved one, and I grieve for them. ... Today, a notice of separation was served to one of the officers who discharged their firearm, and I support the Chief's decision."

Davis said there had been no rush to judgment during the 29 days after the shooting. "We conducted a thorough administrative or internal investigation."

The second officer is on "modified, restricted duty," because of "his actions that night."



PHOTO VIA GENESIS CREMATION & FUNERAL SERVICES

**Timothy McCree Johnson**  
(Oct. 28, 1985- Feb. 22, 2023)

Before taking questions from the media on March 23, Davis made it clear he would not "characterize the evidence" nor offer an opinion on it. Doing so, Davis said, would compromise the integrity of the criminal investigation. The criminal and administrative investigations are ongoing.

The Fairfax County NAACP issued a statement the day after FCPD released the body-worn camera footage. The Fairfax County NAACP statement says in part: "At no time does Mr. Johnson [a Black man] pose a threat to the police officers, much less an immediate threat to an officer or the general public ... Under FCPD's Use of Force policy, police officers are not permitted to use deadly force on a fleeing offender unless the officer(s): (1) have 'probable cause to believe the individual committed a felony involving violence,' (2) exhaust 'all other means to effect an arrest,' and (3) the alleged offender's escape 'poses a significant threat of serious injury or death to the officer or others.'" The NAACP also demanded that "the goals and policies of the Tysons Urban Team are reviewed, and a foot pursuit policy developed and enacted."

Michelle Leete, president of the Fairfax County NAACP, said, "Public release of the body-worn camera footage underscores the urgency in addressing excessive use of force and the systemic lack of accountability and transparency in policing."

SEE VIDEO SHOCKS, PAGE 9



# Signed, Sealed, Delivered

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

**G**overnor Youngkin had until midnight March 27 to finish acting on legislation passed by the General Assembly this session. As I write this today, on March 28, the Honorable Paul Nardo, Clerk of the House of Delegates, is working hard to keep my colleagues and me apprised of the status of bills passed during session on their journey to becoming laws. He sends us prompt emails whenever a new batch of bills is acted on by the Governor, sometimes multiple times per hour. Indeed, his job is more than just acting as Clerk of the House; he also serves as Keeper of the Rolls of the Commonwealth. In this latter capacity, he is responsible for tracking and communicating all House and Senate legislation passed by the Virginia General Assembly to the Governor for his actions and certifying all Acts of the Assembly, which are the laws of the Commonwealth.

I am pleased to share that five of my bills were signed by the Governor this week, and three just at

the deadline. Bills are granted chapter numbers in the order they are signed. A further handful of bills where I am a copatron were signed into law as well.

HB 1998 (Chapter 193) encourages state agencies to prioritize the use of plants native to Virginia on state properties. HB 1993 (Chapter 215) waives certain training requirements for new fire marshals with previous law enforcement experience. HB 1995 (Chapter 401) allows localities additional time to issue citations to individuals captured illegally passing a stopped school bus. HB 1465 (Chapter 588) establishes the Problem Gambling Treatment and Advisory Committee. HB 1997 (Chapter 590) requires operators of Historical Horse Racing (HHR) machines to annually hold one live horse racing day for every one hundred HHR machines they operate.

Several other measures I copatroned were also signed by the



Krizek

Governor. HB 1408 (Chapter 204) by Delegate Brewer supports firefighters and first responders by expanding the workers' compensation presumption of compensability to include bladder and thyroid cancer for those who have completed at least five years of service. HB 1510 (Chapter 427) by Delegate Dawn Adams authorizes localities to establish programs to encourage the preservation, restoration, or development of urban green space. HB 2414 (Chapter 659) by Delegate Don Scott allows a disabled veteran or surviving spouse to apply for a real property tax exemption and receive a decision prior to purchasing a qualifying property.

With the exception of HB 1997, these bills will go into effect on July 1 of this year. HB 1997 on Historical Horse Racing machines contains a one-year delayed enactment clause, meaning that it will not become effective until July 1st of 2024. One of my bills, HB 1987, will be returned with a

small amendment which I recommended to the Governor, which makes a minor clarification.

The Governor acted on 738 bills and one constitutional amendment out of a grand total of 819 (those not acted on automatically become law after ten days) and returned recommendations on 81 pieces of legislation, including three vetoes. The bills that Governor Youngkin vetoed are Delegate Jenkins' HB 1536 which updates the Grievance Procedure Manual for employees of the Departments of Corrections and Juvenile Justice; SB 1051 by Senator McPike related to towing of utility vehicles; and SB 1085 by Senator Ebbin directing the State Police to convene a work group to examine the issue of vehicle noise in the Commonwealth. Those recommendations were just released, I am looking at them all now so that I can prepare to vote on these recommendations at the April 12 Reconvened Session. And, we still will need to return to vote on the Budget amendment bill as soon as that is ready, which could come at any time.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# Parking Reimagined Is Not Ready for Prime Time

To the Editor:

Fairfax County is proposing an amendment to its Zoning Ordinance to reduce Minimum Parking Requirements in both residential and commercial areas. But in the associated county work group and in virtual town hall meetings, residents have expressed many concerns about what is called "Parking Reimagined," including the following:

**Equity:** The proposed parking amendment benefits developers and the County at the expense of county residents. This amendment will place additional hardship on lower and middle-income residents, who are already struggling economically. I realize that as a result of this proposed amendment some additional affordable housing could be built, however, most of these residents will not obtain affordable housing, but will now have to pay additional costs for parking and commuting.

County staff has stated that lower and middle-income residents do not need as much parking because they do not have as many vehicles as wealthier residents. However, a

significant percentage of these residents have work vehicles that they need to park in a safe place near their homes. I find it inherently unfair to implement public policy that will be more costly, while decreasing the quality of life, for so many residents.

**Multifamily Dwellings & Townhouses:** Many of these communities already have issues with insufficient parking. Many multifamily dwellings and townhouses have extended families residing together, increasing the need for multiple vehicles. Parking reductions need to take this shift in family dynamics into consideration.

What happens when residents are forced to carry multiple bags of groceries several blocks in the rain, because they were unable to find a parking space near their home? Or when residents come home late after a hard day at work and cannot find a space near their home?

**Community Impact:** Residents unable to park in their own communities may be forced to encroach on other communities. Any parking reductions need to be integrated with enforcement procedures, to ensure that overflow parking

into adjacent communities is prevented. Communities surrounding these developments should not be required to spend the time nor the money implementing parking permits. Also, residents should not have to constantly patrol their communities in order to have illegally parked vehicles towed.

**Loading Spaces/Handicapped Spaces:** Delivery drivers unable to find adequate loading spaces may be forced to park in handicapped spaces while making deliveries. Parking reductions need to ensure adequate loading spaces so that handicapped spaces remain accessible for handicapped use only. What happens when handicapped residents show up at work, at an appointment or at a store and cannot find an available space?

Handicapped residents should not be forced to walk from a parking space at the back of the lot, nor should they have to arrive a half hour early to ensure that they have time to wait for access to a handicapped parking space. This is a matter of dignity and respect for the handicapped population.

**Environmental Benefit:** Parking reductions were originally viewed

as a way of improving environmental issues by reducing excess asphalt parking areas and adding more green spaces and trees. But the parking amendment fails to require developers to do so. This failure undercuts one of the major benefits of having less parking – more green space and tree canopy. Unfortunately, county staff seems to have focused solely on reducing parking, without using parking reductions to provide a net environmental benefit.

**Additional Waivers in Parking Requirements:** I am confused as to why there needs to be administrative waivers for additional parking reductions. The minimum required parking rates should be the minimum, not an intermediary step which developers can reduce further by appealing to the Director of Land Development Services or the Board of Supervisors.

If a proposed development has a unique circumstance which might call for further reductions in required parking, then public hearings need to be held so residents can have their voices heard. But additional parking reductions be  
SEE PARKING, PAGE 10

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# Romance on the River



PHOTOS BY CHARLENE JOHNSON



BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
Last week we reported that the ospreys have returned to Northern Virginia from their

wintering grounds and that locals have watched them refurbishing their nests with sticks. For many years, a pair has built a nest and raised their young each

spring on a platform at the Belle Haven Marina on the Potomac River. On March 26, Charlene Johnson captured these photographs of the pair mating at dawn.

Adult female ospreys tends to have brownish streaks on their breast. Females are typically larger than males.

## Ohio Derailment Highlights Rail Safety Locally

Could derailment with hazardous chemical spill happen here?

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

At night around eastern Springfield, it's not hard to forget the presence of a railroad line that runs on a north-south trajectory along I-95. The trains run all night long. When thinking of the recent train accident in Ohio, many may be wondering, are we safe from a similar catastrophe?

On Feb. 3, at 8:55 p.m., 38 cars of a 150-car Norfolk Southern freight train carrying hazardous materials derailed in East Palestine, Ohio.

This caused a fire and nearby residents were told to evacuate. The train was carrying toxic materials which spilled into a nearby stream and killed many fish in the stream. Following the derailment, the Environmental Protection Agency began sampling the air and water around that area to determine the danger to the nearby residents.

Following the Ohio train derailment, there was another train derailment reported, this one in West Virginia on March 8 that resulted in an "unknown" amount of diesel to spill into New River.

Northern Virginia has been on the safety radar though, says Con-

SEE OHIO DERAILMENT, PAGE 11



PHOTO BY FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE

How close is too close? In some places, townhouses look right out to the tracks.

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## MUSIC

# International Musician Brings Troupe to Workhouse

**Award-winning percussionist Tom Teasley delivers multi-cultural sounds.**

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

**T**om Teasley's music is all over the place. He's a native Alexandrian who uses all kinds of drums, cymbals, stringed instruments, keyboards and water to create a sound that is totally unique in the world of music. It's taken him all over the world too and in mid April, he's back at the Workhouse Arts Center with an international cast in a show titled "Tom Teasley and Friends."

"I grew up playing in rock bands," Teasley said. He was a drummer in a band that played at the Cellar Door club in DC, the Wharf and 219 King Street, and also toured with a 1980s group called the Nighthawks.

Now he is an internationally acclaimed percussionist who specializes in world music using a variety of instruments and sound engineering skills. One skill he's recently adopted is to play soundtracks to old, silent movies. This includes original soundtracks to Charlie Chaplin's "The Immigrant" and Buster Keaton's "Sherlock, Jr." It breathes a new life to these cinematic classics. "I started touring with the State Department," he said, and from there he played at the U.S. embassies in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Iraq, Samoa, Oman, and Jerusalem.

His upcoming show at the Workhouse has an international flair too. He will be playing with Indian bansuri master and keyboardist John Wubbenhorst, and Thai dancer Suteera Nagavajara in a premier East/West collaboration. He looks at dance as a beautiful con-



Tom Teasley is big on hand drums and cymbals of all sizes.



Tom Teasley plays the piano too.

trast. "She's bringing an entirely different element," he said.

His upcoming Workhouse show is described as a collection of "global jazz percussion stylings," incorporating the bamboo flute and the subtle movement in Thai danc-



John Wubbenhorst on wind instruments.

ing. Ganesh Kumar will be part of the show with a small tambourine called a kanjira and he will share the stage with keyboardist Geoff Rorhbach.

His music is perfect for the Workhouse, said Liz Colandene, Performing Arts Coordinator. "His music is always considerate and inspired by the artworks around him in our galleries and he brings with him collaborators of many diverse backgrounds to perform," she said.

### Musical Milestones

After Teasley's stint as a drummer in a rock band, he went to Peabody Music School, and then played for the U.S. Navy Band for six years while he was finding his niche. It wasn't until he landed in New Orleans and experienced all the different versions of jazz that he began experimenting with percus-

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION



Thai dancing with Suteera Nagavajara.



Ganesh Kumar with the "kanjira," a small tambourine.

sion sounds using all his musical skills adhering to sounds of traditional music.

Teasley's list of awards includes DRUM! Magazine Drummie Award World Percussionist of the Year, five Fulbright-Hayes Awards for collaborating with indigenous master musicians and WAMA Washington Area Music Award for Outstanding World Music Instrumentalist 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2020. This spring, he starts his residency as a musician at George Mason University "where I will present workshops and write music featuring my eclectic world/jazz approach to percussion," he said.

"I've been fortunate to follow my passion with the music," he said, "helps keep me young at heart."

## Ides of Bark Lets the Dogs Out

FROM PAGE 1

the area displaying their "looking for a forever home" bandannas and collars. Their behaviors showed how perfectly suited they could be to the role of family dog if only given the opportunity.

When not hosting Ides of Bark, Grist Mill Park boasts a full acre off-leash dog park as part of its 75 acres. The dog park is shady in summer with grassy edges and a surface that prevents muddy conditions.

The dog park earned a four out of five bones rating with "BringFido," a pet travel brand. Human family members can enjoy Grist Mill's playing fields, playgrounds, garden plots, trails, forest area, and in the summer, a free concert series. A recently renovated grassy area improves the picnicking prospects there. If you missed Ides of Bark this year, your pup will praise you for sniffing it out the next time a young dog's fancy turns to thoughts of tender spring grasses.



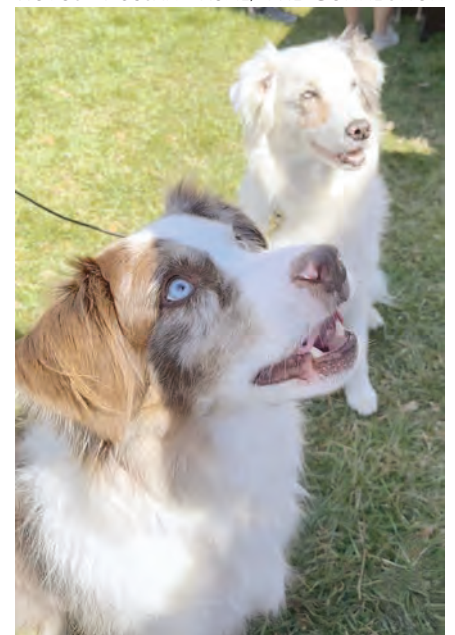
Although Frolick Dogs teaches agility skills and obedience, which typically includes staying off furniture, representative Rigatoni, a one yr old Brittany Spaniel demonstrates following a place stay command on a table, anticipating the reward for good behavior

MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 7



Marty Sanchez-Lowery and Celeste, a 14 yr old Sillky Yorkie, of Alexandria, met when Celeste needed a new home at the age of six

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Drax and Arizona, both 8 yrs old, who live with Zane & Tamara Ward of Alexandria, wait open-mouthed with an expression that suggests "put it here!"



# IDES OF BARK

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Grist Mill Park offers a 4 out of 5 bone rated dog park for year round use



Rachel Michael, of Mt Vernon, attending with 8 month old Shitzu, Theo



Stubbs may have been dismayed at being challenged for the "longest ear" recognition with the arrival of 4 yr old Basset Hound, Chewy, of Kingstowne with Kevin Webb



Working police dog, Duke, a 2 yr old Bloodhound tracks missing persons, which handler Mike Scatchard says for Duke is "where all the fun is"

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Fort Belvoir Army military police dog, Gideon, 3 yrs old, follows a jump command from handler, Trey Adams, to stay in shape for patrol, explosive detection, and bite work



Working hard to find new homes are 2 yr olds, Scobbysnacks, with Julie Ann Frid, and Doc, with Camille Level with Lost Dog & Cat Rescue of Falls Church



There was no 'longest ears' contest ,but Stubbs, 5 yr old Basset Hound, seemed a likely winner, as demonstrated by owners Max Cowan and Sam Giller of Alexandria



Molly, an 11 yr old Lab mix, waits with the patience that comes with being a senior dog as her people, Aaron Maslow and family of Mt Vernon, wait in the food truck line for human treats



# CALENDAR

## ALEXANDRIA EARTH DAY

April 2023, various events, Virtual and In-Person. Help commemorate the 53rd anniversary of Earth Day with a month full of environmentally focused events, activities, and online initiatives that center on the Eco-City Vision in which Alexandria's residents, businesses, and City government participate in a vibrant community that is always mindful of the needs and lifestyle of the generations to come. We all need to do our part and what better way than through fun, educational, and engaging opportunities. For more information go to: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/EarthDay>

## 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. Reception will be held from 1 - 3 p.m. on March 12. Many of the paintings were created onsite at River Farm, and all are available to purchase. Reception free and open to the public.

## NOW THRU APRIL 1

The "Fun With One" exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans features monochromatic artwork by members. Come see the variety that can be accomplished using just one color. The artist awards are juried by Robin Croft. View at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA.

Opening Reception: Friday, March 3 from 7-9pm. Gallery hours: Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. (closed on April 2). Details: [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](http://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

## ONGOING

Cherry Blossom Water Taxi to The Wharf. Departures beginning at 1:30 p.m. Departs from the Alexandria Marina, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Cruise from Old Town Alexandria to Washington, D.C., to enjoy the famous cherry blossoms. City Cruises Potomac Water Taxi offers a 25-minute direct water taxi from Old Town to The Wharf development in D.C. From the dock at The Wharf, it is a 10-minute walk to the cherry blossoms at the Tidal Basin. The water taxi docks at the Transit Pier, 950 Wharf St. SW, near the Tidal Basin, the National Mall, Hains Point and a Capital Bikeshare station. Visit [citycruises.com](http://citycruises.com)

## BEGINNING SATURDAY/MARCH 18

Traveling Exhibit, We The People: Portraits of Veterans in America. At National Museum of the U.S. Army, 1775 Liberty Drive, Fort Belvoir. Exhibit tour with artist Mary Whyte. In 2010, Whyte set out on an inspirational seven-year mission to paint 50 large-scale watercolor portraits of current-day American veterans. WE THE PEOPLE, depicts military veterans of all ages and in all walks of life. Images including a Missouri dairy farmer, a Rhode Island lobsterman, a Pennsylvania

science teacher, a South Carolina single mother, and 46 other moving portraits will be showcased. Visit [theNMUSA.org](http://theNMUSA.org).

## NOW THRU APRIL 16

Cherry Blossom Guided Tours with Pedego Electric Bikes Alexandria. Departures at 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on weekends; by appointment on weekdays. Admission: \$69 per bike (\$10 for passenger riders on cargo or tandem bikes). At Pedego Alexandria, 210 North Lee St., Alexandria. Join a three-hour guided tour from Old Town Alexandria to the cherry blossoms in Washington, D.C., including a ride through the blossoms around East Potomac Park. The views of the blossoms from a Pedego are fantastic, and you don't have to fight traffic or find a place to park downtown. Weekend tours fill up quickly, so contact Pedego early to make your reservations. Call 571-312-5168 or email [info@pedegoalexandria.com](mailto:info@pedegoalexandria.com). [Pedegoalexandria.com](http://Pedegoalexandria.com)

## MARCH 23 TO APRIL 30

Matthew McLaughlin Art Exhibit. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Reception: Sunday, March 26, 4 - 6 p.m.; Artist Talk: Sunday, April 30, 2 - 3. Matthew McLaughlin's work explores how people define space in relationship to themselves on multiple levels, through personal and public forums, by bringing together those themes via mixed-media works from multiple series. The exhibition covers three distinct series, Proxemic Boundaries, Plotting Truths, and Reflective Cartography.

## THURSDAY/MARCH 30

Book Talk with Lilianne Milgrom. 7 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. L'Origine: The secret life of the world's most erotic masterpiece. She will be speaking about her serendipitous encounter in Paris with a notoriously controversial 19th century painting that changed the course of her life. Topics open for discussion include the relevance of art then and now, what makes a work of art timeless and how becoming an author has shaped her studio practice as an artist. A short reading from L'Origine will be included in the program.

## THURSDAY/MARCH 30

France and the Gauls: From Caesar to Astérix at The Lyceum. 7 to 9 p.m. At Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum, 201 S Washington St., Alexandria. How did Gaul come under Roman rule, and what is the legacy of the Gauls in France today? In this lecture offered by the Office of History Alexandria, Dr. Jennifer Paxton will look at the complex chain of circumstances that led Julius Caesar to undertake the conquest of Gaul and explore the resonance of the Gaulish past in French politics and popular culture.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 1

Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs,

DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 1

"The Grandest Congress": The French and Indian War in Alexandria at Carlyle House. 12 to 4 p.m. At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. In 1755, Major General Edward Braddock, Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in North America, lodged at Carlyle House. While staying at Carlyle House, he convened a meeting of five colonial governors. One of Braddock's objectives was to secure funding for his upcoming campaign against the French. Carlyle called this gathering "the Grandest Congress ... ever known on the Continent." Visitors to the Carlyle House will experience Braddock's visit and the French and Indian War firsthand through costumed interpreters.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 2

Del Ray Dog Fest. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At George Washington Middle School Parking Lot, 1005 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Del Ray Dog Fest is a springtime festival celebrating dogs, their owners and the Del Ray community. This fun outdoor event which will include dog-centered activities, doggie menu items, live music and vendors and will be

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

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# Police Body Camera Video Shocks

FROM PAGE 3

On March 3, Davis said that the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) would examine “officer involved shooting” incidents in Fairfax County since the start of 2021. PERF will review incident details and “identify any performance patterns, deficiencies, or trends,” according to FCPD. PERF will also provide FCPD with guidance regarding a foot pursuit policy from national best practices. PERF has begun its review and will present findings and recommendations to FCPD. Davis said he will share the findings and recommendations with the Board of Supervisors and the community.

PERF’s review will not be focused, independent examination of the most recent shooting, the police shooting death of Timothy Johnson, but will instead be an examination of recent incidents to determine how FCPD can better prevent these “officer involved shootings” going forward.

Karen Keys-Gamara, an at-large member of the Fairfax County School Board and candidate for the delegate seat being vacated by Ken Plum, said, “The misappropriation of police authority wounds our community, especially when it results in the loss of life. As the mother of three young men who are of African American and Hispanic descent, I understand the trauma caused by such violations. Thus, the response must recognize the history of such actions and seek healing-healing that can only occur with the acknowledgment of the concerns of those within our community.”

**“Current policies are insufficient to maintain a sense of safety for people of color in our county.”**

— Fairfax County Democratic Committee Black Caucus statement

On Sunday, March 26, the Fairfax County Democratic Committee Black Caucus released a statement regarding the fatal shooting. “The avoidable death of Timothy Johnson shows that, when pressure-tested against the reality of how these situations occur in the field, the current policies are insufficient to maintain a sense of safety for people of color in our county.”



Chairman Jeff McKay (D)

**“Personally, I find the video disturbing, to say the least. Under no circumstances should suspicion of shoplifting alone lead to the tragic loss of human life.”**

— Jeff McKay, Chairman, Board of Supervisors

“In May 2021, the Black Caucus opposed the leadership of FCPD Chief Kevin Davis. ... due to his history of use or justification of excessive force in policing. Sharing the results from the current Police Executive Research Forum investigation (PERF) is another important step that the Board of Supervisors must take in demonstrating a commitment to transparency and fairness in holding its community officials accountable for the failures of the organizations they lead.”

“The FCDC Black Caucus is compelled to advocate for policies that reflect the voice of the Black community in Fairfax County,” said Kelly Hebron, chair of the FCDC Black Caucus. “We urge the Board of Supervisors to ensure Chief Davis responds with transparency and accountability on this matter and in the development of policies related to suspect pursuits, use of force, officer accountability, and timely dissemination of information to the community.”

Some questions reporters asked Davis and his answers at the March 23 press conference. Text is lightly edited for clarity and length.

**Q: What was found at the scene?**

**Davis:** Two pairs of sunglasses were recovered from the scene, but no firearm or other weapon.



PHOTO BY AUBREY SYLVESTER.

Karen Keys-Gamara

**Q: Is there a history of officer-involved shootings with either officer?**

**Davis:** No, there is not.

**Q: Why was the officer separated from the department, and what about his actions that night?**

**Davis:** There was a failure to live up to the expectations of our agency, in particular, the use of force policies, protocols and procedures.

**Q: What is PERF (Police Executive Research Forum) doing?**

**Davis:** I want to be clear: PERF is not independently investigating either criminally or administratively. PERF is a think tank organization; they look at our policies and, if there are gaps in them, (and) our training. The Feb. 22 officer-involved shooting was the first of the year. For the last decade, FCPD averaged 1.5 shootings per year. During the first decade of the 21st century, the number of officer-involved shootings was significantly higher. Some of the years were six, seven, and even eight. So, as we look at 2022, we had six. In 2021, we had one. We’ve had one so far in 2023. The goal is zero

**Q: After the incident, you noted Mr. Johnson’s history in a press conference; did the officers know that then, and do you have any regrets about mentioning that?**

**Davis:** At the time of the officer-involved shooting, they didn’t even know who he was. I should have answered that question differently t... I could have been more careful with my words, and to the extent that those words caused any harm to the Johnson family, I apologize.

Summary of FCPD Release of Officer Body-Worn Camera Footage

**Surveillance Cameras: (0:42-3:56)**

**Summary:** according to text: A man, later identified as Timothy Johnson, enters Nordstrom around 6:13 p.m. The store’s Asset Protection associates see the man select designer sunglasses and believe a larceny is about to occur. They call FCPD’s Tysons

Urban Team, who respond. A plain-clothes officer observes Johnson is in the vicinity of an anti-theft alarm at the store’s exit when it is activated; next, a plain-clothed officer observes Johnson set off a second alarm as he goes through it and leaves the store near the parking garage. Plain-clothed officers follow Johnson into the garage and see him go down the stairwell.

**Uniformed Officer BWC Footage: (0:3:57-7:54))**

**(3:57) Text/Narrator:** “A uniformed officer and plain-clothed officer chased Johnson as he exited the parking garage stairwell, ran through the parking garage, and toward Route. 7.”

**(5:06-5:15)** “Bloomington front lot. A Black male going toward 7, Fashion (Blvd.) He’s crossing over.”

**(5:16) Text/Narrator:** “Officers continued to pursue as Johnson changed direction and ran across Fashion Blvd. toward a wooded area.”

**(5:25- 5:27)** “Crossing over, guys. Get on the ground. Get on the ground.”

**(5:29) Text/Narrator:** “While following Johnson into the wood line, both officers discharged their firearms. Johnson was struck in the chest one time.”

**(5:39- 5:44)** “Going into the woods. Through the woods. Get on the ground; get on the ground.”

**(5:44-5:46) Non-speech sounds heard (Later identified as consistent with a firearm.)**

**(5:47)** “Stop reaching. Stop reaching.”

**(5:52)** “Don’t move.”

**(5:53)** “Shots fired.”

**(6:05)** “God damn it. He was reaching. Oh, my God.”

**(6:39) Text/Narrator:** “Officers render aid until fire and rescue personnel arrive.”

**(7:15) Johnson says:** “I’m not reaching for nothing. I have nothing. ...I’m shot, man. Hurry....

“We got you. Roll over. Chest seal.

**(7:37- 7:44):** Sir, “What’s your name? (Unintelligible)... Let’s get a chest seal on.”

**Replayed Section-Footage Slowed Down and Digitally Enhanced (8:08-8:56)**

**(8:08-8:18)** “Get on the ground. Get on the ground. Going into the woods. Through the woods.”

**(8:23-8:26)** “Get on the ground; get on the ground.”

**(8:27-8:29) Text/Narrator:** “Two pops consistent with gunfire can be heard.”

**(8:32) Text/Narrator:** “Third pop heard consistent with gunfire. “Stop reaching; stop reaching.”

**(8:46-8:49)** “Shots fired. Shots fired”

**(8:56) Text/Narrator:** “Johnson was taken to a nearby hospital where he was pronounced deceased.”



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**OPINION**

**Parking**

FROM PAGE 4

low the minimum should not be a common occurrence.

Public Hearings: Public hearings before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will be held later this year. Meanwhile, residents can email concerns about parking reductions to:

ClerktotheBOS@fairfaxcounty.gov  
Plancom@fairfaxcounty.gov

Residents can also sign up to speak at the Planning Commission public hearing at: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planningcommission/speaker> Resident testimony can be given in person, via telephone or via video.

Parking reductions will affect the quality of life of residents for years. They need to be implemented in a fashion that ensures Fairfax County has the resources to support the changes. But most importantly, the costs of reducing minimum parking requirements should not be borne solely by the residents.

**Donna Jacobson.**

President, Lafayette Village  
Community Assn.  
Annandale

*Editor's note: Find out more about the county proposal at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning-development/zoning-ordinance/parking-reimagined>*

**CALENDAR**

FROM PAGE 8

capped with Yappy Hour specials along Mount Vernon Avenue in Del Ray. The event is dog friendly and will take place outdoors, rain or shine.

**APRIL 7 TO APRIL 29**

"A Tale of Two Studios." Del Ray Artisans partners with Art Enables Gallery & Studio in an open-themed showcase of the inspiring art of these two community organizations to convey an essential story about creative expression and art-making. At Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Opening Reception: Friday, April 7 from 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays 12-6 p.m., and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (closed April 30). [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](http://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

**APRIL 14-15**

Spring Garden Market. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The American Horticultural Society presents the ultimate two-day shopping experience, the Spring Garden Market, on Friday, April 14 and Saturday, April 15, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at River Farm in Alexandria. Join 2,000 fellow gardening enthusiasts, 30+ vendors, food trucks, and the ever-popular alpacas for family-friendly festivities on the beautiful 25-acre historic property along the Potomac. This year, the AHS celebrates 50 years at River Farm. [www.ahsgardening.org/sgm](http://www.ahsgardening.org/sgm)

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PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE

Fairfax County took place in rail emergency exercises last summer.

# Ohio Derailment Highlights Rail Safety Locally

FROM PAGE 5

nor Spielmaker Sr. Communications Manager at Norfolk Southern. The actual train accident numbers are down, he said. Norfolk Southern partnered with emergency responders from Alexandria last summer for the latest Operation Awareness & Response training session aboard the Norfolk Southern HazMat Safety Train. Team members from the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department learned firsthand from safety experts about the fundamental steps required for an adequate response to a locomotive emergency.

Spielmaker did add that there are other

freight carriers in the Northern Virginia area too. "Norfolk Southern is not the only railroad in the DMV," he said.

Fairfax County has a Hazardous Materials Response Team that consistently conducts training specific to railway incidents. They coordinate efforts with the Northern Virginia Regional Intelligence Community to gather information about the hazardous materials that are transported through this area to develop effective and realistic emergency response plans for any hazardous spills that may occur, said the Fairfax County Department of Emergency Management and Fire and Rescue.



Near Fleet Drive in Franconia, there are neighborhoods along the tracks.

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nection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

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

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## A Definite Maybe



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

For the first time in 14 years, my current scan interval has been almost five months. This represents a quantum leap from my long-standing every-three-month scan and is a record. After years of "stable" results, my wife, Dina, who has been a part of every Kenny-with-cancer decision acquiesced at our last – and first face-to-face meeting with my oncologist (the first in two+ years) and agreed, per my oncologist's suggestion, to increase the time between my previously quarterly scans (a recurring discussion between Team Lourie and my oncologist). The apparent slow-growing cancer that I have combined with the risk of accumulating radiation from the various scans I regularly have, leading to possible new cancers/tumors as a side effect, convinced her to agree/allow this change. This month (March) is that first scan at the "record" interval.

To say I'm anticipating trouble when the results are emailed to me is a bit of an overstatement. To say I'm worried about the possible consequences of having waited an extra two months – to see what's going on inside my lungs, where my papillary thyroid cancer has spread, is more accurate. Though the reason for extending the interval seems logical and prudent, all things considered (14 years a cancer patient and the tumors have moved and/or grown so marginally that what amount of growth or movement would likely occur during that extra month or more is a minimal risk, according to my oncologist). Still, the waiting and wondering during that extra month or two is hardly for the weak of heart. Nevertheless, it is a goal of every cancer patient to be able increase the interval of their scans because they conquered or at least stalled/survived, the cancer. That's progress and the beginning of a less cancer-centric lifestyle. It's what every cancer patient undergoing treatment dreams about.

I'd be lying if I said waiting for the results of the first scan after having extended the quarterly interval was just another day in the office, so to speak. Hardly. I kind of feel that my future hangs in the balance somehow. I'm not any more symptomatic than I've been, I'll just have to wait longer to find out/have it confirmed. Even though I've been down nearly every road in my 14-plus years as a cancer patient, this road (interval) represents a road not travelled and as such, it seems to be giving me pause. Not fits by any means. But a more challenging fall-asleep at night.

Part of this anxiety/insecurity comes from having been given a "terminal" diagnosis originally in Feb. '09. Ever since I've lived with the inevitability that one day, to invoke Bob Marley, "the bottom will drop out" and one of these scans is going to show tumor growth and movement or involvement with another major organ (like my kidneys, as an example); end-of-life-type trouble. That's the fear I've been loathing every time I've had these scans up until I receive the all-clear (sort of) from my oncologist. The reality is cancer is an insidious and semi unpredictable intruder and quite often it wins, while the patient loses. And 14 years is an awfully long time for a "terminal" patient like me to keep winning while the cancer is losing/not doing what it almost always does: create havoc and in many cases, death.

Every time, in person when we had post-scan appointments with my oncologist or I received an email indicating that scan results were in, I almost always closed my eyes, took a deep breath and said a bit of a prayer when the oncologist knocked on the door of the examining room where Dina I were waiting or when at home, when I would I click on the message on the provider's website.

The evolution of our sitting and waiting experience has matched the evolution of how we all communicate nowadays. Back in the day, we always had to go to the facility for an in-person appointment with the oncologist specifically to discuss the results of my most recent scan. Now, the results are released automatically from the radiologists before my oncologist has likely even seen the report. The report is not lay-person friendly. It is in doctor-speak and not particularly clear. Though there are sections titled "Findings" and "Impressions," there's a lot of additional information that might be telling, that is if I knew what I was being told.

This has been my life every three months for the past 14 years. Now it's my life every four months. Is it better or worse? I can't say yet. As long as the results are "stable," then I'd say it's better.

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





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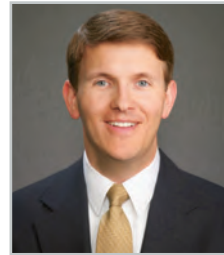
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