

# THE CONNECTION

CENTREVIEW ❖ Chantilly ❖ Great Falls ❖ Herndon ❖ McLean ❖ Oak Hill ❖ Oakton ❖ Reston ❖ Vienna

Local residents looking at maps of the Route 28 Bypass project.

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## Hemlock Overlook Park Recognized as Old Growth Forest

Trees are “treasures in our backyard”

BY SUSAN LAUME  
THE CONNECTION

Called “treasures in our backyard” by Fairfax County Board Chairman Jeff McKay, the old growth forest at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park was inducted into the Old-Growth Forest Network on April 17th during a brief ceremony in the forest. The Hemlock Overlook includes the first trees in Fairfax County to be included in the network, raising Virginia’s count to eleven recognized old-growth forests.

The Old-Growth Forest Network (OGFN) is the only national network in the United States of protected, old-growth, native forests, where people can experience biodiversity and the beauty of nature. OGFN aims to preserve at least one forest in every county in the U.S. that can sustain a forest. OGFN works to identify forests for the Network, ensure their protection from logging, and inform people of the forest locations. Founded in 2012 by Dr. Joan Maloof, “The national count is 190, across 32 states, and is rapidly growing,” said Jeffrey Wright, Old-Growth Forest Network Board President.

The Hemlock Overlook induction ceremony included unveiling of a permanent sign marking the forest’s location and importance. Additional signs will be added to educate visitors on the history and importance of these ancient

forests. McKay said, “Parks are so important for conservation and the protection [of the environment]. Equally important to me, is becoming a strong source of education. We must educate our people not only on the importance of preserving nature, but also our history, how we got to where we are now, and things people can do to stand up for and protect our environment. These things are worth fighting for.”

Old-growth trees like the Eastern hemlocks growing on the banks of Bull Run in Hemlock Overlook Regional Park are exceptionally rare; less than one percent of these original forests are thought to remain in the eastern United States. The trees offer exceptional ecological value, such as providing valuable canopy layers that shelter hundreds of species of birds, insects, and mammals. Old-growth trees also retain more pollution-causing carbon and nitrogen than younger trees, and slow growing hemlocks are especially good at absorbing carbon from the air and holding stream banks in place.

Hemlocks Overlook is a 400 acre woodland along Bull Run in southern Fairfax County, which was acquired by NOVA Parks in 1962. There are stands of old-growth eastern hemlocks along steep slopes adjacent to Bull Run, some as old as 250 years. In addition, there are old-growth sycamore and several old-growth stands of tulip poplars. A large canopy of American beech, white oak, red oak, and mountain laurel predominate. Well maintained trails through the steep topography allow visitors access to the old-growth forest areas (13220 Yates Ford Road, Clifton).



PHOTOS COURTESY NOVA PARKS

NOVA Parks and Fairfax County Park Authority employees and park visitors gather to recognize Hemlock Overlook forest’s age and beauty.

“We are thrilled to be recognizing one of the few old-growth forests in Northern Virginia,” said Cate Magennis Wyatt, Chair of the NOVA Parks Board. “NOVA Parks has been a conservation leader for 64 years. One of the properties saved in its early days was this remarkable stand of hemlock trees that is several hundred years old.”

Another forest in the OGFN is Glencarlyn Park. Although located in a highly urbanized area, it includes examples of mature, old age natural forests, unique water resources, and a great diversity of native flora. In addition to high native plant diversity, the park includes a number of Champion and

Significant Tree specimens. The active floodplain and lower slopes are documented as Mesic Mixed Hardwood Forest, with Oak Hickory and Oak Heath forests occupying the drier slopes. The estimated age of the community is 100+ years. It is most likely the second oldest extant growth of natural forest remaining in Arlington, and appears to pre-date the large-scale forest removal associated with the Civil War. The oldest forest remnant is most likely Arlington Woods within Arlington Cemetery. ( 301 S Harrison St, Arlington, VA 22204

The celebration of the Hemlock Overlook trees came at a time of year when our nation celebrates

Arbor Day; the last Friday in April. The first American Arbor Day occurred on April 10, 1872, in Nebraska City, Nebraska, when individuals and groups were encouraged to plant trees. On that day an estimated one million plus trees were planted in Nebraska. Planting trees has grown in importance as their benefit in helping to reduce the effects of climate change has become better understood. By absorbing carbon dioxide (CO2), removing and storing the carbon and then releasing the oxygen back into the air, they are helping to deter climate change. For more information on OGFN, see <https://www.oldgrowthforest.net/>



Old-Growth Forest Network board president and Virginia Master Naturalist Jeff Wright, and Mid-Atlantic Regional manager Brian Kane, a landscape architect, celebrate Hemlock Overlook Regional Park’s induction into the Old-Growth Forest Network, by hugging a Hemlock.

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NOVA Parks Executive Director Paul Gilbert; Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay; NOVA Parks Board Chair, Cate Magennis Wyatt; Supervisor, Pat Herrity; and OGFN Board President Jeff Wright, with new educational signage at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park.



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

The orange line shows where the bypass goes through Bull Run Regional Park. The stop-light at the top depicts where it will join Route 28 in Centreville.

# Residents Angry about Route 28 Bypass

**'Keep this project in Prince William County'**



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Local residents looking at maps of the Route 28 Bypass project.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Prince William County's four-lane, Route 28 Bypass project will cut a devastating swath through Bull Run Regional Park in Fairfax County before tying into Route 28 in Centreville near Ordway and Compton roads. It's also likely to increase traffic on Route 28 here because of all the additional vehicles that'll take this new shortcut.

Yet not only isn't this project on Fairfax County's Comprehensive Plan, but the Board of Supervisors seems perfectly content to just let it happen – without any concern about Prince William's encroachment on and damage to homes and property in Fairfax County.

**ANALYSIS** Indeed, at an April 19 informational meeting held by Prince William transportation staff at Centreville Elementary, Supervisor Kathy Smith (D-Sully) – whose district and constituents will be directly impacted – remained silent the entire time, never asking a question or raising a single objection.

As a result, the 100 some residents attending were left to advocate for themselves. Referring to the fact that Fairfax County's supervisors never even held a public hearing on this project that will adversely affect this county and one of its major parks, Virginia Run resident Jim Hart said, "Fairfax County was frozen out of the public-hearing process before the route was selected."

The nearly \$300 million road – aimed at reducing traffic congestion in Prince William – is now at the 30-percent design stage and should be at 60 percent by next spring. It's



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

A closer look at the tie-in point at Compton and Ordway roads in Centreville.

planned to join Route 28 in Centreville at a new traffic signal south of Compton Road and east of Ordway.

Rami Bazlamit, principal engineer with Prince William's Transportation Department, gave the project overview; and Robert Morris, with its designer, WSP, discussed the preliminary design.

And along the way, some nasty surprises for Fairfax County were revealed – including the fact that the environmental impacts on Bull Run Regional Park will be greater than residents here were initially led to believe,

and that some five homes in Centreville will need to be taken to make room for the bypass tie-in.

At a virtual, informational meeting Prince William transportation officials held, Dec. 7, 2020, Prince William Transportation Department Planning Manager Paolo Belita said that, to minimize impacts on Bull Run Regional Park, the bypass's design would follow Ordway Road and "would continue to be shifted away from the park."

Yet people attending the recent meeting learned that the route has now been shift-

ed farther west and will definitely go through the park, impacting its trees, land and wildlife and requiring a new bridge, plus a large amount of landfill to raise up the new road since it goes through a floodplain. And the road itself will be a four-lane, divided roadway with a median and a shared-use path along the northern lanes.

Bazlamit said they'll have to submit an application to the Army Corps of Engineers to construct that road "because we're affecting wetlands and streams. They'll review the impacts to them and [our proposed] mitigation measures." And Stuart Tyler, environmental specialist with Parsons Transportation Group, said his company has studied the environmental impacts, mapped the wetlands within the corridor and looked at the impact on animals and streams.

He said the new bridge in the park will be "higher and longer [than the current one] and will reduce the impact because it'll be above the land and not on it." Tyler also noted

that an archaeological study will be done, "once we pin down the limits of disturbance caused by the design."

He said they "don't want runoff from the project to raise the flood levels, so storm-water management will handle it and will also treat this water." Regarding the route through the park, Tyler said, "Based on the hydrology studies, we have to shift the alignment west of the existing bridge so we can keep traffic flowing while we build the new



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Participants in a Streetsense workshop share their perspectives.



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Attendees at a Streetsense workshop on April 10 prioritize what is most important at Lake Anne in Reston, helping to define its economic vision.

# Economic Vision for Lake Anne Coming to Life

## Survey results presented at the workshop.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Seventy percent of those who responded to the digital and paper surveys distributed in late February and early March by Streetsense, the consulting firm hired by Fairfax County to lead the Lake Anne Economic Visioning Study, did not live, work, or own a business in Lake Anne. However, over 75 percent of the respondents reported visiting Lake Anne at least once a month, 30 percent a few times a month, and nearly 15 percent more than once a week. Streetsense presented these survey findings and others at its Workshop Session at the Fairfax County Reston Community Center Lake Anne, 1609 A Washington Plaza N, Reston, on April 10.

According to Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill), the goal of the county-funded study (at \$125,000) is to “develop a market-viable, aspirational economic vision across landowners in the Lake Anne Revitalization Area.”

“Participation has been excellent; I want to thank the community members that have participated to date,” Alcorn said. “My hope is that this leads to a consensus economic vision that builds on the historic and unique characteristics. Implementation of an economic vision will depend primarily on decisions made by the respective property owners in the revitalization area.”

Alcorn welcomed the roughly 50 attendees and the Streetsense team to the workshop. Alcorn was available to answer questions but did not present. According to the materials presented at the workshop, Streetsense received 933 responses in five languages for its digital and paper surveys designed to “gain an understanding of the perspectives of residents, business owners, and visitors of Lake Anne and what they see as challenges and opportunities for Lake Anne.” Kathryn Bram of Streetsense is the



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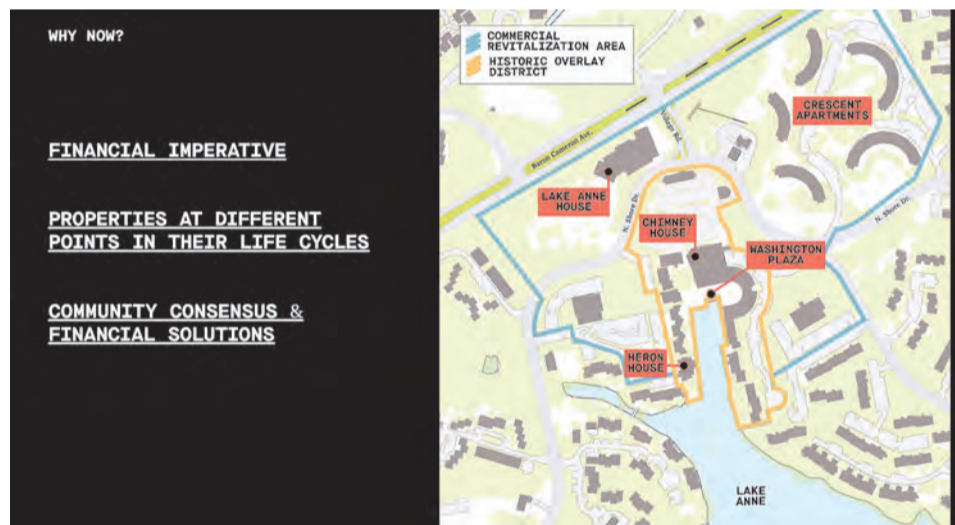
Supervisor Walter Alcorn (D-Hunter Mill)

company’s manager for the project.

According to Fairfax County Planning & Development, the total 2020 population within the Lake Anne Commercial Revitalization District Boundary is 441; the 2025 population estimate is 435.

Streetsense began its effort to create an economic vision for the Lake Anne Commercial Revitalization Area in mid-February with four virtual focus group sessions for Lake Anne residents, businesses, and institutional stakeholders. In late February and early March, the firm released its Stakeholder Online Sentiment Survey.

The final report is planned to be presented in early June. “(It) will identify a strategic position for the area within the competitive landscape and guide future developments,” according to Fairfax County Planning & Development Community Revitalization.



SCREENSHOT VIA LAKE ANNE VISION WORKSHOP, BY STREETSSENSE

The reasons for the efforts being made to develop an economic vision for the Lake Anne Commercial Revitalization Area

Other key findings presented by Streetsense at the workshop were when asked about the community’s anchor options, most respondents preferred cultural and arts facilities, activated public spaces, and a grocery store over medical institutions and office technology.

They tended to agree or express neutrality about the need for structured parking in the area, and they agreed that a broader range of parties should be responsible for Lake Anne’s public spaces than is currently the case.

Respondents were divided on the idea of new residential development in the area, with 41 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing and 36 percent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Respondents were also split on whether ecological sustainability was more important than historic preservation: 46 percent to 40 percent, with 14 percent neutral or undecided.

Less than 4 percent of those who responded to the survey owned a business in Lake Anne, less than 10 percent worked in Lake Anne, including remotely, and just over 20

percent lived in Lake Anne.

“Lake Anne is a historic and vibrant center for Reston and Fairfax County, but it is in desperate need of a real refresh,” said Fairfax County Board Chairman Jeff McKay (D-At Large) on Friday, April 21. “I look forward to working with Supervisor Alcorn and the community that lives, works, plays, and owns businesses in Lake Anne to shape a vision for the future that will keep Lake Anne a unique and attractive location for generations to come.”

Following the survey results, attendees were divided into groups and spent time at each table discussing six topics: business, retail mix, and anchors; parking, brand, and story; asset and infrastructure management; residential density; and accessibility.

Streetsense’s next effort, the “Experience Vision Presentation,” will take place in mid-May, with the project wrapping up in early June with Streetsense’s “Final Vision Presentation.”

For more information and updates, visit [www.fcevote.org/lake-anne/economic-visioning-study](http://www.fcevote.org/lake-anne/economic-visioning-study).

OPINION

# Equity Out— Opportunity In?

BY DEL. KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM

The person who planned the mandatory "inclusive excellence" training for faculty and staff at Virginia Military Institute (VMI) may have been in for a big surprise last week when the guest speaker from the Governor's Office proclaimed that "DEI is dead," that is diversity, equity and inclusion.

The guest speaker was Martin D. Brown who went from being a manager of a Chick-fil-A to the Governor's Chief of Diversity, Opportunity and Inclusion, an office created when the Governor dismantled and fired the previous professional staff of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

In a text of his speech obtained by the Washington Post, Brown said, "Let's take a moment right now to kill that cow. DEI is dead. We're not going to bring that cow up anymore. It's dead. It was mandated by the General Assembly but this Governor has a different philosophy of civil discourse, civility training—living the golden rule, right?" Brown is reported to have started his speech with a prayer as his boss often does, a prayer and directed straight to Jesus.

There were many indications in the gov-

ernorship campaign and in the Governor's early actions that he opposed the progress the Commonwealth was making over the last half dozen years in having the state be more open and inclusive in its work force and equitable in its programs and services. VMI was central in identifying the need for a change in state policies as it had taken more than a decade and a Supreme Court decision for the college to accept women as students, and a study completed several years ago found racism and sexism prevalent on its campus. Previous Governor Ralph Northam, who himself is a VMI graduate, set up the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion that the representative of the current administration has proclaimed as dead.

The persons at the training session where this announcement was made found themselves in a front row seat of a cultural war that is becoming a hallmark of the current administration. Professional staff who want to do their jobs and create an excellent institution find themselves in the crossfire among the Old Guard who want no changes in the institution, the far right who stoke the fires of opposition to any changes, and

SEE PLUM, PAGE 11

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# One-Lane Bridges Connect Great Falls, Divide Residents

## Members of Great Falls Citizens Association vote on preferences.

By MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

The Virginia Department of Transportation's slogan is "VDOT Keeps Virginia Moving." These four words are central to a heated debate among the Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA) members regarding two aging one-lane bridges in their community.

Some members believe that a one-lane bridge, rather than a two-lane bridge, can serve as a much-needed traffic calming and safety measure impacting the state-owned, two-lane, tree-lined roads with hilly and curved approaches to the bridges. They believe that a two-lane bridge would threaten motorists, children at bus stops, and nearby homeowners in Great Falls. Additionally, one-lane bridges would discourage the community's growing cut-through traffic. Who desires to wait in the alternating bridge crossing lines controlled by yield signs?

Other GFCA members believe that ending their fight against two-lane bridges on two-lane roads not only facilitates traffic flow but could also lead to lesser ecologic impacts, improved safety, as well as improved relationships with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and VDOT when the community needs their support for other traffic calming issues.

### GFAC Meeting, Apr 27, 2023

During the April 27 Great Falls Citizens Association meeting, members in good standing of GFCA voted for Option One or Option Two, essentially one-lane or two-lane, preferences for the Springvale Road and Walker Road bridges over Piney Run. GFCA's Walker Road Bridge Working Group and the Transportation Committee's (TRN) leadership team presented the proposals that would lead to resolutions. Michael Barclay is co-chair of the TRN and acted as moderator for the meeting.

"Bridges are an emotionally charged issue," Barclay said in his introduction.

The Springvale Road Route 674 bridge "is in very poor condition and will require replacement in the near future," according to VDOT Commissioner Stephen Brich's letter to Sen. Barbara Favola on Jan. 18, 2022, requesting a decision regarding the Springvale Road one-lane bridge. Earlier, VDOT deemed the Walker Road Route 681 bridge "substandard." Both the Walker and Springvale bridges have a history of accidents.

According to VDOT, 9,000 vehicles crossed the Walker Bridge over Piney Run daily in 2016. Approximately 5,000 vehicles per day traverse the Springvale bridge at present. VDOT has implemented maintenance and repair strategies for both bridges, assuring the public of their safety. VDOT estimated in 2016 that the cost to replace the Walker Road Bridge would be \$4.1 million, with construction commencing in the summer of 2018. VDOT halted the project due to a lack of funding.

### Comments

Speaking on behalf of the transportation leadership for GFCA, Pam Grover said they could all agree that traffic impacts Great Falls and that most of them share the same goals: to control and hopefully reduce the volume of cut-through traffic in the community and to improve safety. She advocated for two-lane bridges and opposed the continuation of the public campaign to pressure elected officials to reexamine the already-approved Walker Road bridge plan and approve waivers to replace both the Walker and Springvale bridges with "one lane pavement on one lane foundation."

Former GFCA president and retired architect in Great Falls, John Colby, said that he "wholeheartedly supports two lanes for the state-owned and maintained bridges." Homeowners cannot choose their own pavement and bridge standards. Why should GFCA, then?

"Three million other Virginia drivers and taxpayers rightly get to have their say too," Colby said, referencing NYMBYism. He argued that one-lane bridge nostalgia could be experienced in Riverbend Park. He added that vehicles waiting in line to cross one-lane bridges emit noxious fumes and "clearly sacrifice personal and vehicular safety."

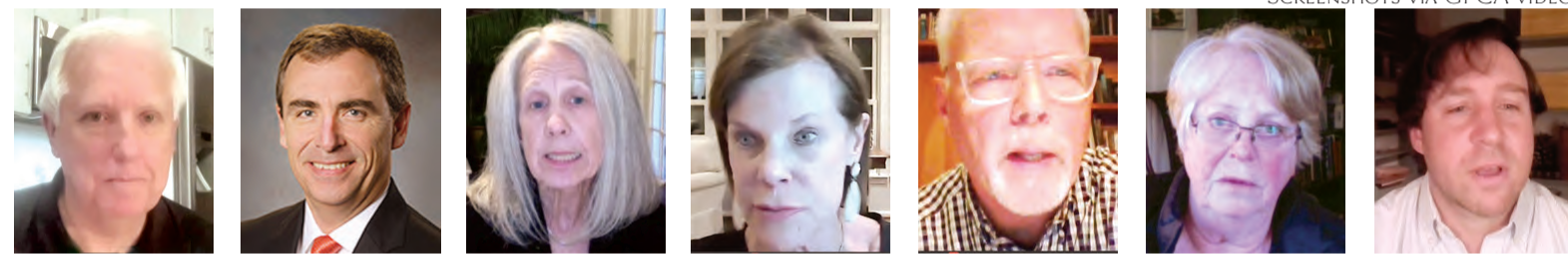
Ruth Carver, a former president of the GFCA, refuted Colby's claims. Although the one-lane



On Feb. 10, 2021, Jennifer Falcone and John Halacy, members of the Great Falls Citizens Association's Springvale Road Working Group, stand with their backs to the single-lane Springvale Road Bridge, which leads to a hill and a sharp left turn. (File Photo).



Rendering of the Walker Road (Route 681) bridge design. Construction was planned for 2018.



SCREENSHOTS VIA GFCA VIDEO

bridges evoke the semi-rural character of the community, Carver says they do more than transport traffic across Piney Run. The bridges serve as traffic deterrents against the growing number of drivers on Georgetown Pike who wish to avoid the congestion on Route 7 and the high tolls at the nearby Dulles Access toll to access I-495. The one-lane designs of the bridges

"It's happened in our yard multiple times and we actually had trees taken out of our yard to prevent people getting killed ... I think what gets to that is traffic calming; I want some teeth on that."

Henry Lippincott was "shocked" by the assertion that the bridges must adhere to AASHTO's standards, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, because the Beech Mill Road and Lee Mill Road bridges succeeded as exceptions. "Both of them exceeded the traffic limit, and we were still able to get waivers for those."

Jane Edmondson, the chief of staff for Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville), attended the meeting. "VDOT does not build one-lane bridges; they allow a waiver if the traffic is a maximum of 400 vehicles ... The horse is out of the barn. I mean, this project is moving along," Edmondson said, referring to the already funded and approved design stage of the Walker Road bridge. "There clearly is not a role for a su-

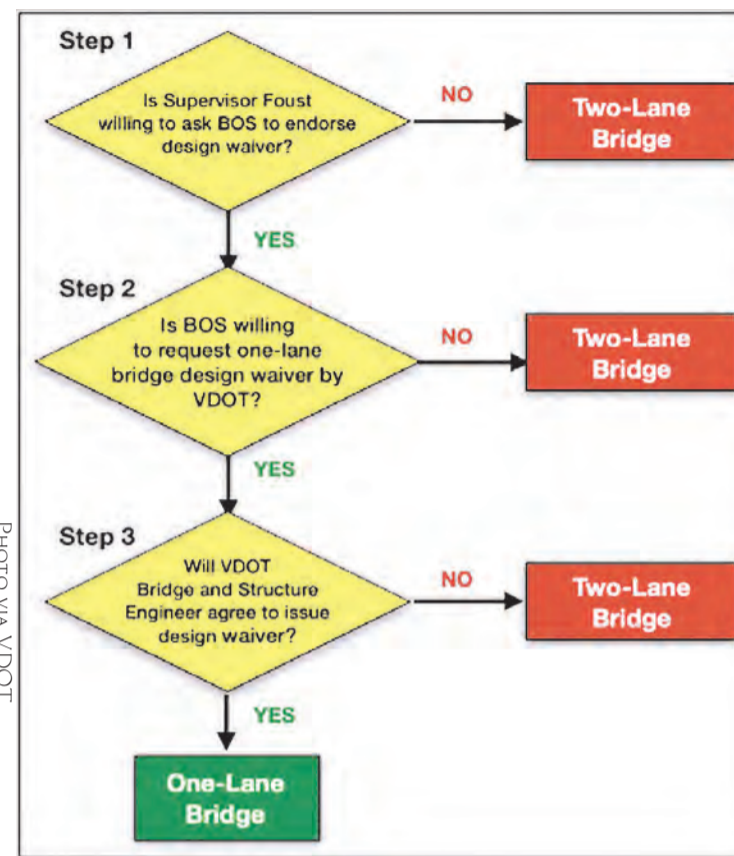
pervisor in the county ... "Whether it is John or somebody new going against VDOT, (it) is not something that would be done." Foust is not seek reelection.

What happened to a proposed board matter by Supervisor John Foust regarding Springvale bridge as a one-lane?

Some GFCA members might have been confused by Edmondson's words if they had not looked back 18 months to a series of correspondence concerning the Springvale bridge. Sharon Valentine, secretary of transportation in the office of the governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, dated the first correspondence on Sept. 15, 2021. Valentine responds to a letter from State Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31), Sen. Janet Howell (D-32), and Del. Kathleen Murphy (D-34) informing her of the GFCA's concerns about the replacement of the bridge over Piney Run on Springvale Road in Great Falls.

Valentine acknowledges that the existing one-lane bridge is perceived as a "calming measure to reduce excessive speed and discourage cut-through traffic to Georgetown Pike." Valentine shares the information with Virginia Department of Transportation Commissioner Stephen C. Brich, PE. Edmondson learns from her conver-

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How many lanes is this? Three steps must be completed with support and approvals at each stage before a one-lane bridge could be built.

### Before and After No Median Option

Existing Proposed



Springvale Road bridge (State Rt. 674) 2020 plan by VDOT: Before (single lane) and proposed two-lane, no median option.

### Before and After - Median Option

Existing Proposed



Springvale Road bridge (State Rt. 674) 2020 plan by VDOT: Before (single lane) and the proposed median option.

Supervisor Foust's Sept. 15 letter to Senators Howell, Favola, and Delegate Murphy. A flurry of correspondences lasting for three months followed.

An alternate VDOT plan? A one-lane bridge on a two-lane foundation; where is more information and a rendering?

On Jan. 18, 2022, Brich wrote to Favola, "Our engineering recommendation is to replace the existing bridge with a two-lane bridge; the Commonwealth will plan to build a one-lane bridge (bolded and in

italics) initially but provide footings and abutments to support an ultimate two-lane bridge. It should be noted the project currently is not funded for the bridge replacement project. In addition, we will work with Fairfax County to determine the best method(s) to restrict traffic and traffic calming measures for the one-lane configuration. However, in the future, based on demand and accident history, we will review the need to remove the one-lane restrictions and convert the bridge to two-lanes."

## Options: Springvale Road Bridge and Walker Road Bridge

### Springvale Bridge

Option One Bridge Working Group: "Members join with the residents of the lower Springvale Road community and surrounding neighborhoods to state their opposition to the proposal to build a one-lane bridge on abutments and footers for a two-lane bridge over Piney Run that would ultimately be expanded to a full two-lane width by the removal of the one-lane bridge restrictions ... GFCA shall continue its efforts to obtain written, formal, clarification of the language of the Commissioner Brich letter describing the proposed bridge replacement and that, in the absence of written and formal clarification of those plans, GFCA reserves the right and option to seek the support of the Board of Supervisors to endorse efforts to adopt a resolution to initiate the VDOT Waiver Application process for a one-lane bridge, should the clarification not be forthcoming or its terms acceptable to the community."

Option Two, GFCA Transportation Committee Leadership TRN: "The GFCA Board should: "Reaffirm GFCA's general policy preference for single-lane bridges throughout Great Falls wherever practicable and safe ... Accept VDOT's offer to build a one-lane bridge on a two-lane bridge foundation on Springvale Road ... View VDOT's offer as a "win" and as a testament to its dedicated and determined lobbying effort, especially considering the fact that VDOT made significant design concessions to GFCA and that any potential expansion of the Springvale Road bridge would be considered several years or more down the road ... Clarify construction and operational details of VDOT's proposed design approach, including traffic calming design features, and clarify VDOT's criteria/process for determining if a second lane should be added ... Focus advocacy on the implementation of a traffic calming program along the Springvale Road corridor between Route 7 and Georgetown Pike in conjunction with FCDOT and VDOT."

### Walker Road Bridge

Option One Bridge Working Group: "Significant changes in traffic and transportation conditions have occurred in Great Falls since GFCA accepted VDOT's proposal for a two-lane replacement bridge over Piney Run. Accordingly, the GFCA seeks prompt action by VDOT to schedule public meetings for the purpose of re-examining and re-visiting proposals for Walker Road bridge replacement that consider current and future traffic impacts on the Great Falls community."

Option Two, TRN Leadership: The GFCA Board should: " Honor its 2015 endorsement of VDOT's two-lane bridge design for the Walker Road bridge and press for the speedy replacement of the bridge while reiterating its standing preference for single-lane bridges in Great Falls (and) ... advocate and seek the cooperation of both VDOT and the Board of Supervisors/FCDOT on the design and implementation of a traffic calming program with multiple measures along the entire Walker Road corridor to reduce speeds and enhance safety."

### Next Steps

According to Jennifer Falcone of GFCA's Working Group, the next steps are that options are to be considered by the GFCA board. Ultimately the membership will ratify a position.

It appears that Option 1, single-lane, was the overwhelming winner, and Springvale had added an agreed amendment in Option 1 focusing on the implementation of a traffic calming program on the Springvale road corridor between Rt.7 and Georgetown Pike in conjunction with FCDOT and VDOT.



# Michael O'Reilly: Rotary Club of Herndon-Reston's Citizen of the Year

**M**ichael O'Reilly, recognized for his many years of service to the Town of Herndon and the wider Fairfax County community, as the 2023 Rotary Club of Herndon-Reston's 54th Annual Citizen of the Year. The Citizen of the Year Recognition and Dinner was attended by O'Reilly and many members of his family, friends, business colleagues, local and Virginia state officials and many Rotarians at the Crown Plaza Dulles Airport Hotel on April 27, 2023. From his time in elected office as former Mayor of the Town of Herndon and Town Council Member, to his work on various boards, including the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Metropolitan Washington Airport, the Silver Line Metro Rail Project, the Herndon Planning Commission, Arts Herndon, and numerous committees, Michael O'Reilly has made a significant and lasting impact. His significant efforts to improve transportation, prevent and end homelessness and bring a

new art center to downtown Herndon are particularly noteworthy. He is also the owner of the O'Reilly Law Firm.

Kerrie Wilson, President and CEO of Cornerstones, shared her thoughts, support and words honoring O'Reilly. Melissa McKenna, President and CEO of Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce, said O'Reilly's wisdom, leadership, commitment to service and work influenced her own personal and business life. Others paid respect to O'Reilly, including Maddie White for Congressman Gerald Connolly. The Honorable Pradip Dhakal, Town Council Member, presented O'Reilly with the Town of Herndon's Proclamation.

The former Honorable Town of Herndon Mayor Richard Thoesen recognized and thanked O'Reilly for his esteemed work and contributions. Rotary's Immediate Past President Don Owens spoke of O'Reilly's leadership and kindness and the impact he has had, helping so many, especially in business. Don Owens and Rotary's President, Jane



Jane Nash with Michael O'Reilly

Nash, presented Michael O'Reilly with the distinguished Citizen of the Year award. His acceptance speech and heartfelt remarks in-

cluded his love and devotion to his wife Annie, as they celebrate 45 years of marriage, his four children and extended family.

ROUNDUPS

## Full Closure of Route 29 – Daytime, Too

Route 29 South, at I-66 in Centreville, will be completely shut down next weekend, May 5-8 – during both daytime and nighttime hours. The southbound lanes will be closed, with two-way traffic reduced to a single travel lane in each direction on the northbound lanes. The closure will begin Friday, May 5, at 10 p.m. and continue through Monday, May 8, at 5 a.m.

It's for drainage work that's part of the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Project. Drivers using ramps to and from I-66 won't be allowed to make left turns. The ramp from southbound Route 29 to westbound I-66 will also be closed. Drivers should expect delays in this area and should consider using alternative routes.

## Car Seat Inspections, May 4, 18

Parents may get their children's car seats inspected on Thursday, May 4, from 5-8:30 p.m., outside the Sully District Police Station. It's at 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. Inspections are done on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants should install the child safety seat themselves, so the inspection can be performed. The seat will be properly re-installed, if necessary, and parents will be taught how to install the seat properly. Everyone is eligible. Another car-seat inspection is scheduled for May 18, at the same place and time.

## Join Reston Museum for This Way to Reston

Join Reston Museum, May 10, 7pm for This Way to Reston. Whether walking, biking, or driving Reston's paths and roads tell a story. Join a program that explores the history behind street names, Reston's evolving transportation system, and how Reston's community has advocated for accessibility. Program is free to attend, registration is required.

<https://www.restonmuseum.org/event.../this-way-to-reston>



Shawn James

## Artist Selected for Fairway Drive Underpass Reston Public Art Project

Public Art Reston selected Shawn James of Mural Masters, Inc., by its Art Selection Committee for the Fairway Drive Underpass Project. Though now based in Baltimore, James grew up in and around central and northern Virginia.

James received his BFA in painting, photography, and art education from Old Dominion University, and went on to complete an MFA at the Maryland Institute College of Art. He has extensive experience with small- and large-

## Philanthropy Group of the Great Falls Women's Club Raises Funds for Friends of Riverbend Park

The Great Falls Women's Club Philanthropy Group held its annual Bluebells and Eagles Walk at Riverbend Park in early April. Funds raised from ticket sales and donations through their website benefitted the nonprofit organization Friends of Riverbend, Inc. (FORB). The event was a 1.5-mile guided nature walk culminating in a chance to look through the powerful Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope to view resident bald eagles and their three eaglets hatched at the Minnehaha Island nest.

Stephanie Anderson and Hugh Morrow III led the event for children and adults, which raised \$2,011. The total donation from the Philanthropy Group of the Women's Club of Great Falls this club year is \$3,536, which includes a Nov. 1, 2022, Renwick Gallery private museum tour and a casual lunch event, which raised \$1,525.

— MERCIA HOBSON

scale public art projects and working collaboratively with municipal organizations, private businesses, and community members.

His dedication to education includes his role as a program director for the Access Art Youth Center -- an outreach program that provides art lessons for inner-city youth. Since his tenure, the organization expanded to a million-dollar program, spanning three schools on the west side of Baltimore.

Public Art Reston is excited by what James will create for the walls of the Fairway Drive Underpass, and also how he will involve Lake Anne Elementary School students and families in his artistic process. The project will include artist-led workshops at LAES that will contribute to the development of the design concept and final public artwork.

# OPINION

## Plum

FROM PAGE 7

the opportunists like the Governor who sees the political gain that might be realized by furthering the divisions on issues like diversity and equity.

Those in the broader community who saw opportunities open up for them in education and the workforce with the DEI effort may have to wait another day. Those who worshiped the granite statues that have been removed from public spaces may get some momentary satisfaction in stopping or at least delaying equitable and inclusive

programs that can bring about changes for a fairer society.

The Governor is scheduled to speak at the VMI commencement program later this month. Will he respond before that time to demands of the Legislative Black Caucus and the NAACP that Brown be fired? Maybe he can use the opportunity to give some clarity to this issue. Is diversity, equity and inclusiveness dead in his administration? What will he be doing to bring about the golden rule in educational institutions, the workplace, and society? Does he have plans beyond a prayer meeting?

### 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 the event.

#### IN-PERSON VOTING LOCATIONS FOR 2023 ENDORSEMENT CAUCUS

The Fairfax County Democratic Committee (FCDC) is pleased to announce its in-person voting locations for its 2023 Endorsement Caucus. Any Democratic voter who would like to participate in this process and is not a member of FCDC must sign up by May 5th at [fairfaxdems.org/caucus](http://fairfaxdems.org/caucus). Voting for the

caucus will be conducted online from May 13th until May 20th, and at in-person locations on Saturday, May 20th from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Participants must sign up by May 5th to be permitted to vote if they are not approved FCDC members.

In-person voting for the 2023 Endorsement Caucus will take place at the following sites:

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

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Reston ♦ Herndon ♦ Oak Hill  
Chantilly ♦ CENTREVIEW

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## CIVIL WAR

BOOKS, RELICS & MEMORABILIA SHOW

Saturday, May 20, 10:00 – 5:00

Arlington-Fairfax Elks Lodge, Rt. 50, Fairfax, VA

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Vendors Welcome

703-389-1505 / 703-785-5294

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# Here's What's Happening at MCC!

**MAY 4**

**Presented by The Alden**

Foreign Language Film  
Thursday, May 4, 1 p.m.  
Free admission

**Presented by The Alden**

Unruly Theatre Project  
Friday, May 5, 7 p.m.

The Old Firehouse Center,  
1440 Chain Bridge Rd.  
Free admission

**MAY 5**

**MAY 6**

**Presented by The Alden**

"The Pa'akai We Bring"  
Saturday, May 6, 4 p.m.

\$15/\$12 seniors and students  
\$10 MCC district residents



**Presented by The Alden**

Jewish American Heritage Month Event  
"L'Chaim" Jewish Legacy of Broadway  
Sunday, May 7, 2 p.m.

\$30/\$25 seniors and students  
\$20 MCC district residents

**MAY 7**

**MAY 12**

**Old Firehouse Center**

APs Out! High School Party  
Friday, May 12, 7 p.m.

Admission: \$5.  
Registration is required.

**Presented by The Alden**

Jennifer Cutting OCEAN Celtic Quartet  
"The Lusty Month of May"  
New Date! Sunday, May 14, 2 p.m.

McLean Central Park,  
1468 Dolley Madison Blvd.  
Free admission

**MAY 14**



The McLean  
Community Center  
[www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org)

Home of The Alden Theatre  
[www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org)

1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean, VA 22101

703-790-0123

[@mcleanvacenter](https://www.facebook.com/mcleanvacenter)  
[@mcleancenter/va](https://www.instagram.com/mcleancenter/va)



## CALENDAR

### SPRING WILDFLOWERS

Lace up your hiking shoes, grab your camera and enjoy the ephemeral wildflowers that bloom in our parks. Ephemeral flowers are those that bloom temporarily. Their short-lived beauty allows them to grow and reproduce quickly before the canopy of the forest comes alive. Take advantage of the opportunity to get out, during this limited time, to see many of our native ephemeral blooms including bluebells, toad lilies, spring beauties, may apples and more!

Spring Wildflowers Programs  
May 6 (Noon to 1 p.m.): Wildflowers Walk and Craft, Burke Lake Park, \$8  
May 7 (3 to 4 p.m.): Wonderful Wildflowers, Ellanor C. Lawrence Park, \$7

### FARMERS MARKETS OPENING AROUND THE COUNTY

The Fairfax County Park Authority hosts 10 markets at locations throughout Fairfax County, where residents can find a variety of fresh and locally grown produce, delicious baked goods, prepared foods and family-friendly market activities, including live musical performances. Check out the full market schedule for the latest times and locations.

#### WEDNESDAYS

McCutcheon/Mount Vernon  
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/mccutcheon-mount-vern>  
Open through to Dec. 20, from 8 a.m. to noon  
Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane

#### Oak Marr

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/oak-marr>  
May 3 to Nov. 8, from 8 a.m. to noon  
Oak Marr Recreation Center, 3200 Jermantown Road

#### Wakefield

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/wakefield>  
May 3 to Oct. 25, from 2 to 6 p.m.  
Wakefield Park, 8100 Braddock Road

#### THURSDAYS

Annandale  
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/annandale>  
May 4 to Nov. 2, from 8 a.m. to noon  
Mason District Park, 6621 Columbia Pike

#### Herndon

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/herndon>  
May 4 to Nov. 9, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Old Town Herndon, 700 Block of Lynn St., by the Red Caboose

#### FRIDAYS

McLean  
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/mclean>  
May 5 to Nov. 17, from 8 a.m. to noon  
Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road

#### Kingstowne

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/kingstowne>  
May 5 to Oct. 27, from 3 to 7 p.m.  
In the Giant parking lot, 5870 Kingstowne Towne Center

#### SATURDAYS

Burke  
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/burke>



"The Pa'akai We Bring" will perform on Sunday, May 6, 2023 in McLean.

Through Dec. 16, from 8 a.m. to noon  
VRE parking Lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway

#### Reston

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/reston>  
Through to Dec. 3, from 8 a.m. to noon  
Lake Anne Village Center, 1609-A Washington Plaza

#### SUNDAYS

Lorton  
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/lorton>  
May 7 to Nov. 19, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
VRE parking lot, 8990 Lorton Station Blvd.

For a complete list of park authority market times and locations, visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets>. For questions, contact the Community Horticulture Office at 702-642-0128.

### NOW THRU JUNE 25

Falls Church Arts All Member Show. More than 155 artists will be featured in the All Member Show at the Falls Church Arts gallery from April 22 to June 25. To handle the expansive show, the exhibit will be held in two parts this year: submissions from members with last names from A-K will be on view from April 22 to May 21. Submissions from artists with last names from L-Z will be on view from May 27 to June 25. The show features the work of emerging and established member artists from Falls Church Arts and encompasses an extensive range of media from the more traditional watercolor, acrylic, mixed media, pastel, fused glass, oil, photography, and sculpture to a wide variety of mixed media and printing techniques. The Falls Church Arts gallery is at 700-B West Broad St. (Route 7), Falls Church. Admission is free and the gallery is open Tuesdays-Fridays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Artworks can be viewed online at [www.fallschurcharts.org](http://www.fallschurcharts.org). All pieces can be purchased at the gallery or on the website.

### NOW THRU MAY 31

Candytopia Opens. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Candytopia, in partnership with Tysons Corner Center announces the arrival of its sweet interactive concept to the center. It will feature 16,000 square feet with 14 different

interactive environments, Instagram-worthy photo opportunities, and delectable tastes of your favorite sweet treats. There is a candy art gallery, a state-of-the-art candy confetti room, complete with confetti-farting pigs, a marshmallow pit filled with a quarter-million marshmallows, as well as DMV-inspired elements throughout the experience. The journey includes candy samples throughout the experience. Visit [www.candytopia.com](http://www.candytopia.com).

### THROUGH JULY 27

Senior Slow-Pitch Softball Seasons. 9 a.m. to noon. At Braddock, Wakefield, and Nottaway Softball Fields. Join NoVa Senior Softball, men 50+, women 40+, average age 66. Skill-level assessment. 24 teams, three levels of play. Tuesday/Thursday morning double-headers. Begin Spring Training now. 703-663-7881. Visit the website: [www.nvss.org](http://www.nvss.org)

### NOW THRU JUNE 3

"Urinetown." 7:30 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. In a Gotham-like city, a terrible water shortage, caused by a 20-year drought, has led to a government-enforced ban on private toilets. The citizens must use public amenities, regulated by a single malevolent company that profits by charging admission for one of humanity's most basic needs. Amid the people, a hero decides that he's had enough and plans a revolution to lead them all to freedom! Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/urinetown>

### NOW THRU MAY 7

Mojada by Luis Alfaro. At 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons. Mojada, written by Luis Alfaro who takes the chilling ancient Greek tale of Medea and re-imagines it in a Los Angeles Mexican-American immigrant community. Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 and 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$50 general admission, \$47 seniors (65+), \$15 students, educators, and military. Purchase online at [www.1ststage.org](http://www.1ststage.org) or 703-854-1856.

### NOW THRU MAY 7

"Unnecessary Farce." At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. 8 p.m.: Fridays and Saturdays -April 28, 29; May 5, 6; and 2 p.m.: Sundays: April

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



The Unruly Theatre Project will perform Friday, May 5, 2023 in McLean.



The Taste of Tysons Corner Center will take place on Saturday, May 6, 2023 at Tysons Corner Center.

30, May 7, 2023. "Unnecessary Farce," an award-winning comedy by Paul Slade Smith, combines all the elements of classic farce with a contemporary plot. Two cops. Three crooks. Eight doors. Go! Set in an economy motel, an embezzling small-town mayor is to meet with his female accountant. In the room next door, two inept undercover cops aim to catch the mayor on camera doing the guilty deeds. When the camera catches a bit of unrehearsed hanky-panky and a kilt-wearing, bagpipe-wielding, hit-man stumbles into the fray, comic pandemonium ensues! Visit [www.viennatheatrecompany.org](http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org).

#### THURSDAY/MAY 4

Foreign Language Film. 1 p.m. At The Alden at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. The Alden's foreign language movie series is curated by Performing Arts Director Sarah Schallern Treff, with more than a little help from audience members! The series has a few surprises thrown in. Schedule subject to change.

#### MAY 4-6

Mason Film Festival. 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. At George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. The Mason Film Festival is an annual film festival at George Mason University representing the diverse work of Film and Video Studies students, including that of beginning video students, intermediate directing students, and graduating seniors. This year, the festival will span three days beginning on Thursday, May 4, 2023, and ending on Saturday, May 6, 2023. For more information and to register to attend, visit <https://film.gmu.edu/events/mason-film-festival-2023>. The event is free and open to the public. Each attendee (regardless of age) must have their own separate reservation. Seating is extremely limited and is first come, first served. A reservation does not guarantee admission, so make sure you arrive early. Seats cannot be held for people arriving late. If you have any specific accessibility needs, email [film@gmu.edu](mailto:film@gmu.edu) as soon as possible. Visit the website: <https://film.gmu.edu/events/mason-film-festival-2023>

#### MAY 5 AND 6

Mason School of Dance Spring: Dance Innovations. 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. At GMU Harris Theatre, Fairfax. Mason choreographers showcase new

[www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)

works performed by the Mason Dance Company. Tickets: \$15 General Public; \$10 students, faculty/staff, and seniors, \$7 Groups

#### FRIDAY/MAY 5

Unruly Theatre Project. 7 p.m. At The Old Firehouse Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd., McLean. Come enjoy a night of laughs on us! (the) Unruly Improv is The Alden's professional teen improv company dedicated to bringing comedic performances to the community. In May 2022, UTP was named 1st place Champions at Improvicon of Northern Virginia!

#### SATURDAY/MAY 6

Historic Pohick Tours. 1-3 p.m. At Historic Pohick Episcopal Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. During the Colonial period, Pohick Church was the congregation of many of our country's most prominent families, including the Washingtons, Masons and Fairfaxes. The Historic Pohick Church Docent Guild will give free guided tours of the historic colonial church on the first Saturdays of the month between 1:00-3:00 p.m. Call 703-339-6572 or visit the website at <http://www.pohick.org>

#### SATURDAY/MAY 6

World Pilates Day Celebration with Club Pilates Burke. 1-1:45 p.m. At Club Pilates Burke, 5765 Burke Centre Parkway, Suite S, Burke. Club Pilates Burke will offer a complimentary intro class Saturday, May 6 and Monday, May 8 at 1 PM. Sign up at [www.clubpilates.com/potomacriver-running](http://www.clubpilates.com/potomacriver-running). On Friday, May 5, they are a sponsor of the 2nd annual 5K/1 mile at Burke Lake Park to support the Burke Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department (BVFRD) and will be outside Potomac River Running store in Burke on Friday, May 5 from 1:30 - 6 p.m. collecting used running shoes to be recycled and reused for "Get Sneakers" non-profit. On Saturday, May 6 race sign up: <https://potomac.enmotive.com/events/register/2023-bvfrd-fire-drill-5k-1m>

#### SATURDAY/MAY 6

Spring Farm Day. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Frying Pan Farm Park, Herndon. See what life is like on the farm with real sheep shearing and antique farm equipment demonstrations. Get hands-on and try milking cows and goats. Enjoy

crafts, games, and get an up-close introduction to the baby farm animals. Admission is \$10 online and \$12 in-person.

#### SATURDAY/MAY 6

Onstage: Bobby BlackHat. 7:30 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Bobby BlackHat, Virginia's Blues Ambassador, award winning recording artist, harmonica player, vocalist, songwriter. Bobby BlackHat blends the influences of Chicago, Memphis, Piedmont, and Delta style blues along with a little Gospel into a Toe Tappin', Finger Poppin', Hip Shakin' Blues experience. You Never Know What's Gonna Happen at a Bobby BlackHat Show! Visit the website: <https://www.workhousearts.org/calendar/bobby-blackhat>

#### SUNDAY/MAY 6

"The Pa'akai We Bring." 4 p.m. Presented by The Alden, McLean Community Center, McLean. This original production introduces young audiences to the Native Hawaiian relationship to pa'akai (salt). Traditionally, pa'akai is food, medicine, a sacrament and a treasured gift. The play follows a family with multiple generations of salt farmers on the island of Kauai, mixing in ancient stories, hula, live music, original songs and plenty of audience participation into a tasty potluck of performance, joyously served up with aloha.

#### MAY 6 THRU OCT. 28, 2023

Vienna Optimists' Farmers Market. 8 a.m. to noon. At Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. Premiere local vendors feature fresh, seasonal produce, beautiful flowers, hardy plants, sweet and savory treats, free garden advice and free live music. Admission is free.

Each week at the Farmers Market, different talented local musicians perform. Here is May's schedule. On May 6, the Jazz Trotters perform; On May 13, Swingology performs; On May 20, Accotink Rising performs; On May 27, Carter Farm Band performs; For more information about the Farmers Market or the Optimists, visit <https://www.optimistclubofgreatervienna.org/>

#### SATURDAY/MAY 6

Taste of Tysons Corner Center. 1-4 p.m. At Tysons Corner Mall, McLean. Indulge in a fun afternoon

experiencing the wide array of delicious food and beverage offerings from 40 restaurants at Tysons Corner Center with food sampling, cooking demos, chef appearances, Barrel & Bushel Beer Garden, VIP Tent, live music & entertainment, giveaways, and more!

#### SATURDAY/MAY 6

Culmore Community Day. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Woodrow Wilson Library, 6101 Knollwood Drive, Falls Church. Join the Fairfax County Park Authority and a host of county and community partners to celebrate the diverse culture of the Culmore area! Culmore Community Day was created more than 17 years ago by the global Bailey's Crossroads and Culmore area community as a means of building a strong, well-connected, multicultural community. This year's theme is "Safety: A Community Responsibility." In addition to free entertainment, games and activities, the event also features many of Fairfax County's supportive services provided by county agencies and local nonprofits.

#### SATURDAY/MAY 6

Spring Farm Day. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, in Herndon. Explore what life is like on an operating farm with real sheep shearing and antique farm equipment demonstrations. Get hands-on and try milking cows and goats. Enjoy crafts, games, and get an up-close introduction to the baby farm animals. One wagon ride included with each paid admission. Registration is \$10 per person for ages 2 and older before May 6. Walk-ins are welcome; \$12 at the door on the day of the event. Call 703-437-9101 or visit Frying Pan Farm Park.

#### MAY 6-7

"Alice in Wonderland." Presented by the Traveling Players Studio. May 6 at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.; May 7 at 6 p.m. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Performed by Traveling Players students in grades 5-7, the play is a new imagining of Carroll's classic daydream, a perfect spring outing for the whole family! To purchase tickets, and for more information about the show, visit <https://www.travelingplayers.org/performances/>

#### SUNDAY/MAY 7

"EChaim" Jewish Legacy of Broadway. 2 p.m. At The Alden, McLean

Community Center, McLean. From the stages of the lower east side to the bright lights of Broadway, "EChaim" is a musical journey that pays tribute to the Jewish legacy of musical theater by exploring and celebrating the unique role of Jewish composers and lyricists. Rooted in history, heritage and tradition, four Jewish performers bring to life the most iconic songs from the stage of past and present and the historical stories that go with them.

#### SUNDAY/MAY 7

Taizé Worship Service. 7 p.m. At Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Taizé worship comes to us from the Taizé Community, a Christian community of prayer, music, and hospitality in France. On Sunday evening, May 7, we will gather at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary for a time of prayer, Scripture, simple songs, and silence.

#### SUNDAY/MAY 7

Third Annual Tour de Hunter Mill. At Reston Community Center at Hunters Woods 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. There are three routes that all begin and end at Reston Community Center at Hunters Woods. The routes take you through scenic Hunter Mill District. The short and long rides include a pitstop at Frying Pan Farm Park.

#### Three Routes:

Family Ride: 5.9 miles

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The fee is \$30, which includes a donation to our Tour de Hunter Mill partner, Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling and the popular Tour de Hunter Mill socks. Visit the website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/huntermill/tour-de-hunter-mill>

#### SUNDAY/MAY 7

Grind Day. 12- 3 p.m. at Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Rd, Great Falls. Cost is \$10. Register Online.

#### SUNDAY/MAY 7

Wetlands Awareness Day. Noon to 4 p.m. At Huntley Meadows Park, Alexandria. This year's theme for World Migratory Bird Day focuses on the importance of water. Wetlands, rivers, lakes, streams, marshes and ponds are essential for feeding, drinking and nesting. Enjoy exploring the beauty of Fairfax County's premier wetland sanctuary at Huntley Meadow Park. There is no cost to participate.

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**THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS**

# Route 28 Bypass

FROM PAGE 4

bridge. And that will cause impacts to Bull Run Regional Park that we were hoping to avoid.”

According to the project timeline, both counties will officially endorse the final design in fall 2024, with an estimated two years of construction beginning in 2026. Morris said they’re currently completing the traffic, drainage, floodplain and geotechnical reports.

“We did a whole new traffic study in February 2022, counting the cars at the intersections in the study area,” said Cody Smith, traffic engineer with Kimley-Horn. “And we adjusted the information to account for lower numbers caused by the pandemic.”

Since the tie-in site – which is also in a historic-resource area – is upstream from the Occoquan Reservoir and could potentially pose threats to the public’s water source, both during and after construction, a Centreville man asked how this project would impact it.

“The purpose of the stormwater-management pond is to treat the nutrients,” replied Tyler. “And we’ll talk to Fairfax Water.”

But Centreville’s Hart wasn’t assuaged. “The impacts on Bull Run Regional Park seem to be greater than what we were initially led to believe,” he said. “The new bridge will be about four-feet higher than the existing one, and the elevated roadway would involve a tremendous volume of fill to raise the road above the current elevation, north of the bridge.”

Hart also wondered “what kind of fill” material would be imported for this work. And, he warned, “Whatever chemicals leach out over time [from it] would go into the Occoquan Reservoir – our drinking-water supply.”

In response, Prince William Transportation Director Rick Canizales said, “We’ll make sure the water quality is good.”

Resident Robert Forgione asked about the project’s traffic impact on Old Centreville Road. Cody Smith replied that the current, Route 28 widening project between the two counties “should alleviate some of the road-hopping people do onto Old Centreville Road now to escape the Route 28 traffic. And the bypass should also help relieve the Old Centreville Road traffic.”

A local woman asked, “As an Ordway Road resident, why is the Route 28 Bypass

hitting Fairfax County, instead of connecting to Route 28 [further south] in Prince William County?”

“We looked at different alignments, and this will actually pull traffic off of Ordway,” said Canizales. “And we want your thoughts about whether there should be a connection at all at Ordway.”

Forgione then said the intersection of Ordway, Compton and Old Centreville would be “adversely impacted, so it would be better if you could keep this project in Prince William County.”

Indeed, according to one of the project maps on display, at the site where the bypass would join Route 28 in Centreville – next to where Mount Zoar Baptist Church is being built – are some five homes between Ordway Road and Route 28. And with the current design alignment, they’d be in the path of the new road and, quite possibly, would need to be taken so the connection could be accomplished.

Furthermore, said resident Carol Gladney, with Prince William’s bypass emptying out right there, said, “It’ll be tough for people in the Ordway area to get to and from their homes.” Canizales answered that they’d try to mitigate that problem as much as possible.

In addition, Cody Smith advised people that the plan eliminates the left turn for drivers coming from the Route 28 Bypass and wanting to go north on Ordway to reach Old Centreville Road. But a resident told him, “You need to be able to get onto Old Centreville to get to Route 29 if Route 28 is all jammed up.”

Cody Specketer, who lives off Compton Road on Confederate Ridge Lane, also explained a problem he and others in his area would have because of the proposed change. “When we’re coming home to Centreville from Old Town Manassas or the Deepwood Veterinary Clinic [on Ordway Road], we almost always take Old Centreville Road because it’s more convenient and has less traffic in the evenings and on weekends,” he said. “And I can avoid getting stuck at a stoplight on Route 28.”

In response, Canizales said Old Centreville Road wasn’t intended to be a cut-through road.

For more information about this project, go to [www.route28bypass.com](http://www.route28bypass.com).

## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 11

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The Fairfax County Democratic Committee encourages all eligible Democratic voters to sign up for and vote in the 2023 Endorsement Caucus. This process will help strengthen the Democratic party and candidates as we campaign ahead of the November elections. Full details about the caucus can be found at [fairfaxdems.org/2023endorsement](http://fairfaxdems.org/2023endorsement).

**WEDNESDAY/MAY 3**  
Virginia Assembly Report. 10-11:30 a.m. At Mason District Government Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Senator Dave Marsden and Delegates Kaye Kory and Vivian Watts will report on legislative matters considered at the recent session. Website: [www.narfe.org/chapter1159](http://www.narfe.org/chapter1159). Visit the website: <http://narfe.org/chapter1159>.

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

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The 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.

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## Kicking the Bucket - List



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Whether it's literally been true or not, it feels like I've been off the Kenny-with-cancer-go-round for a few months, especially since I've been focused/preoccupied with my brother's death and its impact on me (see lots of previous columns). And if the reason for the break-in-the-cancer action wasn't so horrible, I might have enjoyed the past few months of non-cancer centrality. Because if there's one thing a cancer patient needs are time/life when cancer isn't front and center, but rather back and to the side. These non-cancer moments may be a delusion, but oh, what a feeling!

And therein lies the key to surviving/trying to thrive with cancer. Living like you're living, not "Living like you were dying," as Tim McGraw sang in 2004. Moreover, for me, it's living as if you have something to live for, not just die from. And while you're living, not just dying, let's stop blaming the cancer. God knows (and everyone else knows to) that cancer is a great excuse for not doing a whole host of things. Nevertheless, as much as possible – and it's not always possible, I've tried not to use it as an excuse. If it were used, it's so easy, so acceptable; using it as the ultimate excuse becomes almost narcotic. Once you start using it, it's hard to stop. Although a cancer diagnosis is hardly a privilege, it is an explanation for whatever you don't want to do. Be it household, personal or business. And these decisions are not always intended. The cancer has a way – through its many emotional tentacles – and physical challenges, to control one's subconscious. Without really thinking about it, doing – or not doing, almost is out of your control. And so, you blame the cancer.

But I don't want to. I want to blame me. I want to take responsibility for myself/my actions – or lack thereof. In addition, I don't want to be seen as Kenny-with-cancer. I want to be treated as if I didn't have cancer: for good, bad, or indifferent. Nor do I want to do things/go places/make lists just because I'm diagnosed with a "terminal" form of cancer. Again, I don't want to live like I'm dying because if I do, I know I'll do whatever I'm doing because I'm dying, and I want/need a certain experience. To me, that would be reinforcing a negative (premature death; although aren't they all?) which is exactly the vibe I don't want in my life. I want normalcy. 'Normalcy,' to me doesn't equate with dying. It equates with living. You just have to work in the cancer stuff as if it's just another variable, not an end-of-life, do-and-die set of insurmountable hurdles. If I've accomplished anything in my 14+ years as a cancer patient, it is that I never (or tried to never) let it get the best of me or have it be the dominant reason for my decisions/choices. I've tried to treat cancer as just another blip on life's radar. Sometimes, it has mattered, and other times, it has not.

Even watching my brother's struggles to survive and then overcome the septic shock that hospitalized him for six-plus weeks didn't adjust my thinking. I was doing exactly – by visiting him every day, what I wanted to do, cancer be damned. The diagnosis was not going to interfere with my responsibility to my brother. And being there every day for a few hours, being in surgical intensive care, medical intensive care, a regular room or in the rehab center adjacent to the hospital, my cancer situation was so far onto the back burner that it was completely out of sight. In fact, it was so far out of my mind that Kenny-with-cancer was replaced by Kenny-whose-brother-was-possibly-dying. And for the nearly three months in total, until his death on Dec. 3rd, I was a complementary player of sorts. I was living to benefit my brother and trying to help him in any way he needed.

And I wouldn't have had it any other way, other than wishing he had survived. I was a cancer patient who for the many moments that transpired during Richard's nearly three-month struggle to survive, did not ever think I needed to be anywhere else because I was "terminal" and needed to check an item off a list. Hardly. My brother was my list. My brother was – despite my cancer diagnosis, the most important consideration in my life and I was going to do everything I could to help him. I did for him everything I would have done regardless of my cancer diagnosis. I was going to treat his situation as normally as possible. I didn't necessarily neglect my own health but rather didn't let it get in the way of my priorities: Richard's recovery. "Cancer sucks," for sure. But septic shock turned out to be worse.

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



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